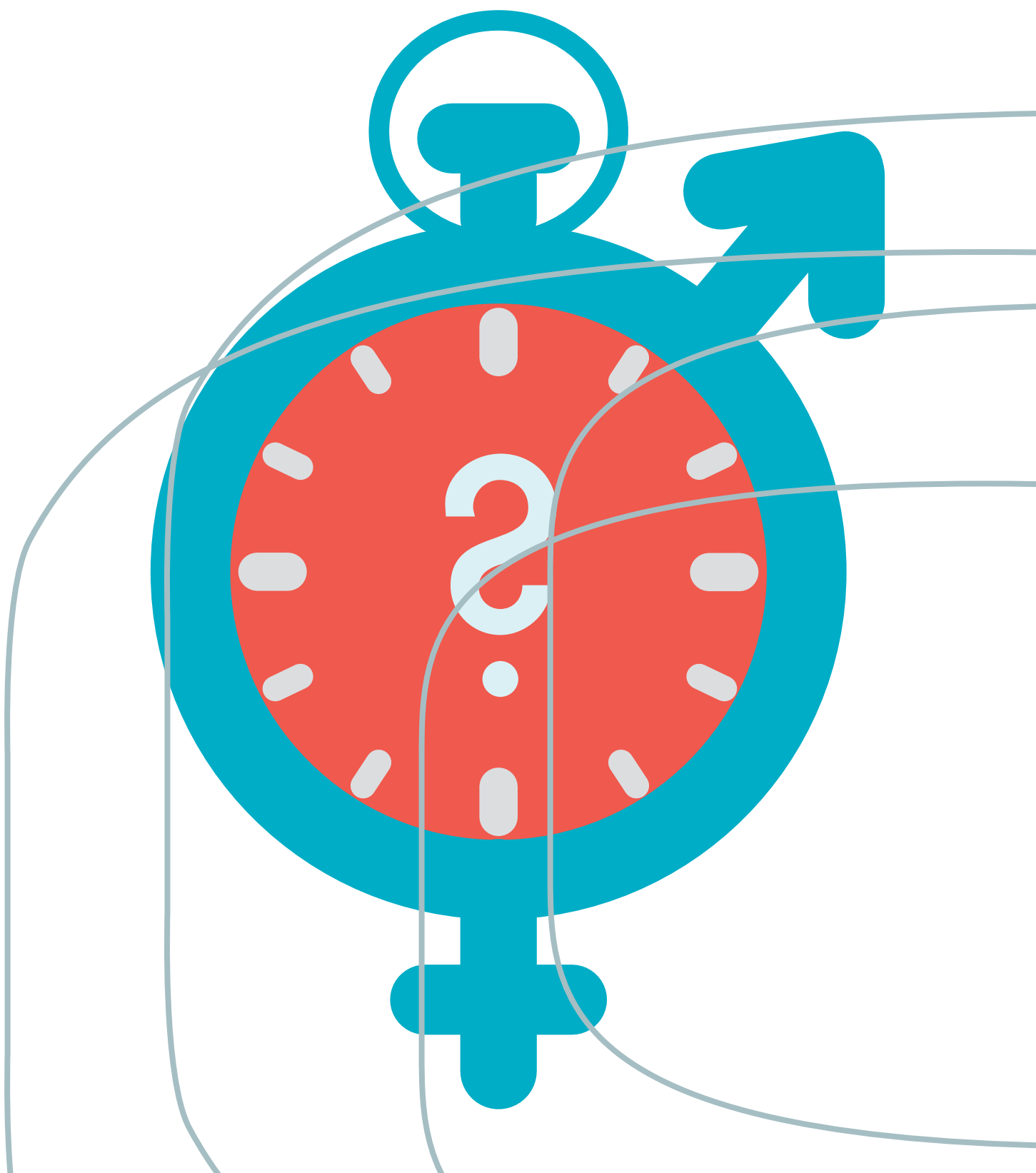


# Part-Time Work in the Nordic Region

Part-time work, gender and economic distribution in the Nordic countries









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*Alma Wennemo Lanninger and Marianne Sundström*

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# Preface

Gender equality in the labour market is a key topic in the Nordic cooperation on gender equality 2011–2014. One important challenge is to reduce the gender divide in the labour market and thus reduce the income differences between women and men. Another challenge is that part-time work is more common among women than men. This affects both the economic opportunities of women and men at the individual level and the gender equality in the labour market.

As part of the Nordic cooperation on gender equality, the Nordic Council of Ministers has asked NIKK, Nordic Information on Gender, to coordinate the project *Part-Time Work in the Nordic Region*. The project is part of NIKK's assignment to gather and distribute comparative information that can inform political discussions related to gender equality. The aim of the project is to shed light on and analyse part-time work in the Nordic region, develop reports and arrange conferences.

During the Swedish presidency of the Nordic Council of Ministers in 2013, the project identified how part-time work affects the economic resources of women and men. This first report presents statistics on full- and part-time work and compares the effects of part-time work on pensions in the Nordic countries. Marianne Sundström, professor of labour economics at Stockholm University, and Alma Lanninger Wennemo, Master's student at Stockholm University, wrote the report on a request by NIKK. Calculations, results and conclusions presented in the report are the authors' own and not those of NIKK.

During the Icelandic presidency in 2014, the project will explain why the patterns differ between women and men. It will also describe relevant measures taken by actors in the labour market and the political sphere.

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## Acknowledgements

The authors thank Ole Beier Sørensen, Suvi Ritola, Steinunn Rögnvaldsdóttir and Fredrik Haugen for their assistance in calculating forecasted pensions for the typical cases for Denmark, Finland, Iceland and Norway, respectively, and Ann-Charlott Ståhlberg for valuable advice on our calculations for Sweden. We are grateful for valuable comments and suggestions from Cathrine Egeland, Laura Hartman, Helle Holt, Johanna Lammi-Taskula and Guðbjörg Linda Rafnsdóttir. We also thank Edda Björk Kristjánsdóttir for computing the tables for Iceland in Section 5.

# 1. Introduction

## 1.1 Purpose and motivation

The purpose of this report is to describe part-time employment among women and men in the Nordic countries with particular regard to the labour-market and economic situation of part-time workers as compared to full-time workers. This is motivated from the perspective of gender equality since in these countries part-time work is much more common among women than men. Comparing the Nordic countries in this respect is of interest since they are generally seen as forerunners when it comes to gender equality and, to our knowledge, there is no previous comparative study of full-time and part-time work among women and men in all five Nordic countries.<sup>1</sup> Moreover, we are not aware of any study, for any country, that compares male part-time workers with male full-time workers and female part-time workers, respectively.

With this aim we begin by providing an overview of the levels and developments of full-time and part-time work among women and men in the five Nordic countries over the period 1995–2012 using group-level data from Eurostat.<sup>2</sup> We then present the trends and extent of involuntary part-time work, that is, those who declare that they work part time because they could not find a full-time job, and relate these to the changes in the unemployment rate in the same period. We do so because involuntary part-time work has previously been found to be correlated with unemployment. Next, we turn to the reported reasons – for example, could not find a full-time job – for working part time among women and men and investigate whether these reasons changed between 2007 and 2012 in the five countries.

After that we examine the long-term economic consequences of part-time work in terms of forecasted total pensions, analysing how part-time

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<sup>1</sup> Studies comparing some of the countries have been made for subgroups of the population; see for example Rønsen and Sundström (2002), who compare Finland, Norway and Sweden with regard to women's return to full-time and part-time work after the birth of the first and second child, respectively.

<sup>2</sup> Eurostat is the statistical office of the European Union. Its aim is to compile comparative statistics from the European countries. <http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/eurostat/home>

work during a period in life affects total pensions as compared to life-long full-time work. In order to obtain comparable cases for the five countries, we constructed a couple of typical cases of full-time and part-time employees, the same for all countries, and made a minimum number of simplifying assumptions. We were able to compute the forecasted pensions for Sweden but used help from national experts to compute pensions for the other countries.

Finally, we use individual-level data from the European Social Survey (ESS) to study how male and female full-time and part-time workers in Denmark, Finland, Norway and Sweden experience and feel about their income level and economic situation.<sup>3</sup> For Iceland we use a different data source to present similar information on two topics. This examination is preceded by a section describing the composition of our ESS sample in terms of gender, age and education. The advantages for our purpose of using ESS data are that the respondents in the four countries have been asked exactly the same questions, that the data are relatively recent and that we can define full-time and part-time work in the same way for the four countries.

## 1.2 Definition of part-time work

At first glance, defining part-time employment seems simple; one could for example classify all those who do not work full time as part-time workers. However, in a cross-country study, one is faced with the problem that the standard workweek differs across countries. For example, in Denmark the standard workweek is 37 hours and in Norway 37.5 hours, while in Finland, Iceland and Sweden it is 40 hours. Also, when we use data from Eurostat, we have to use Eurostat definitions. For Iceland, Norway and Sweden, Eurostat defines part-time employment as work of 1–34 contracted hours per week, while for Denmark and Finland the distinction between part-time and full-time work is based on the respondent's answer to the questions "Do you work full time? Do you work part time?" However, as mentioned, when using the ESS data

---

<sup>3</sup> ESS has collected data for several European countries but not all, for example Iceland. ESS was established in 2001. The first survey was conducted in 2002 and since then it has been conducted every second year. The survey is directed by a scientific board and has been used in a great deal of research. The aim of the cross-national surveys is mainly to explain interactions between changing institutions and behavioural patterns as well as attitudes and beliefs in the European population. <http://www.europeansocialsurvey.org/>

we can define part-time work in the same way for all four countries and have therefore chosen to follow the ILO (International Labour Organisation) standard of classifying those with 35 or more contracted hours per week as full-time workers and those with less than 35 contracted hours per week as part-time workers.<sup>4</sup> This means that in Denmark and Norway, some persons who are classified as part-time workers are in fact working nearly full time. On the other hand, in Finland and Sweden some part-time workers may be classified as full-time workers.

### 1.3 Limitations

Our study focusses on the labour-market and economic situation of individual women and men, and not on the implications of part-time work for social groups or society as a whole. Further, while there is a large Nordic and international literature on various aspects of part-time work, it is not within the scope of this report to survey that literature (interested readers, see for example the country reports in Blossfeld and Hakim 1997; Halldén, Gallie and Ying 2012 and the references therein). Nor is it within the scope to summarise what we already know about part-time work in the Nordic countries (for a survey of some aspects of Nordic part-time work, see Albertsen *et al.* 2008). Furthermore, when it comes to the economic situation of part-time workers, some immediate aspects are rather obvious, such as lower earnings than full-time workers in the same job and lower sick pay. But part-time workers also have more leisure and time for household production, possibly resulting in lower expenditures on, for example, child care and food, which we cannot investigate. How the wages of part-time workers change over time compared with those of full-time workers is an interesting issue, but studying it would require the use of panel data and, thus, a much more ambitious approach than ours.

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<sup>4</sup> Contracted hours are the number of hours of work per week that the employee ordinarily works. Thus, overtime is excluded.

## 1.4 Outline

The report is outlined as follows: In the next section (Section 2) we discuss the levels and trends in full-time and part-time work among women and men in the Nordic countries 1995–2012. Trends in involuntary part-time work in the same period are also described, as well as the reported reasons for part-time work among women and men in 2007 and 2012. Section 3 presents and compares the forecasted pensions for typical cases in Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden. Section 4 describes the characteristics of female and male full-time and part-time employees in Denmark, Finland, Norway and Sweden using data from ESS. In Section 5 we present our findings on how female and male full-time and part-time employees in Denmark, Finland, Norway and Sweden experience their economic situation using data from ESS. The report ends with a concluding discussion (Section 6).

## 2. Trends in part-time work in the Nordic countries

### 2.1 Full-time and part-time work among women and men 1995–2012

In this section we examine the levels and trends in part-time work among employed women age 25–64 in the Nordic countries from 1995 to 2012 using data from Eurostat.<sup>5</sup> The computed percentages are annual averages and include only employees, except for Sweden where the data come from the Swedish labour force surveys<sup>6</sup> and for the years 1995–2004 include only employees and for 2005–2012 also include self-employed persons. We focus on the population of active working age, that is, 25–64 year olds, as we do not want the trends to be influenced by changes in work patterns among students and persons of retirement age.

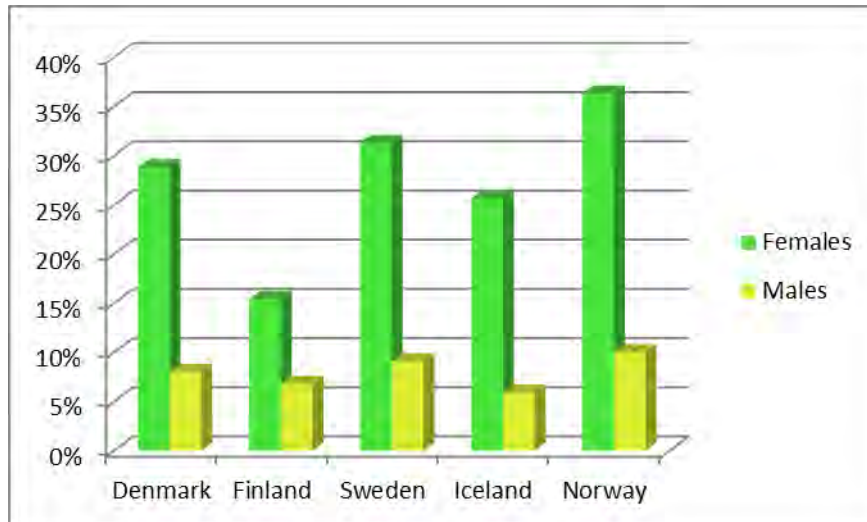
We start by looking at Figure 1A, which depicts the percentages of part-time workers among employed women and men in the Nordic countries in 2012. The well-known gender difference is evident in all countries but was smallest in Finland. We see that the fraction of female part-time workers was highest in Norway, about 36%, followed by Sweden at about 31%, Denmark at about 29%, Iceland at 26% and Finland at a much lower level, about 15%. Among employed men, again Norway had the highest fraction of part-time workers, about 10%, and Iceland had the lowest, about 6%.

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<sup>5</sup> The definition of part-time work used by Eurostat is discussed in Section 1.2.

<sup>6</sup> We use the labour force surveys for Sweden since there seems to be mistakes in the Eurostat data for Sweden in 2001–2004.

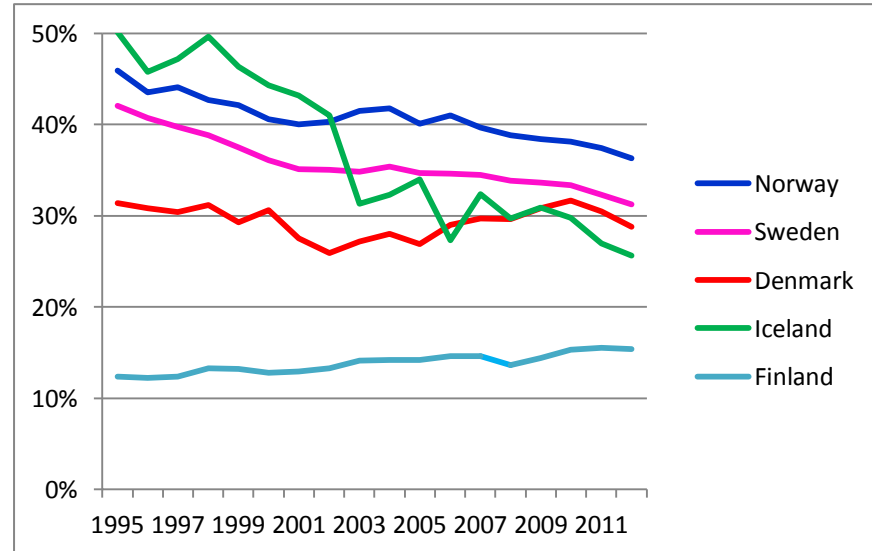
**Figure 1A. Part-time work among employed women and men 25–64 years old in the Nordic countries in 2012. Per cent**



Source: Eurostat & The Swedish Labour Force Surveys, own computations.

Turning to the trends in part-time work among women, we see that they vary considerably across countries (Figure 1B). Since 2002, the level of female part-time employment has been highest in Norway, and although the fraction declined slightly over the period in that country, the decline was stronger in Iceland and Sweden. By contrast, Finland shows the lowest fraction but a slightly increasing trend since 2001. In Denmark the level remained almost constant throughout the period.

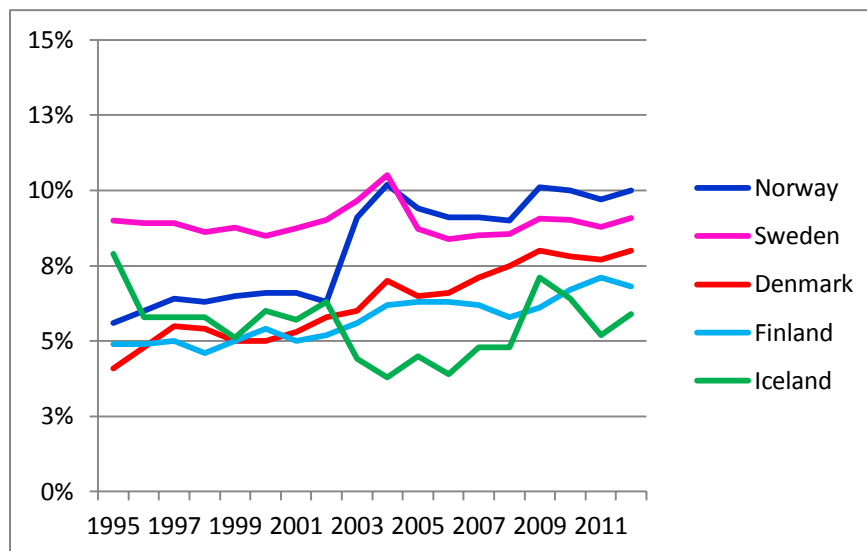
**Figure 1B. Trends in part-time work among employed women 25–64 years old in the Nordic countries 1995–2012. Per cent**



Source: Eurostat, own computations.

When it comes to part-time work among men, we see that the levels do not differ as much across countries as they do for women (Figure 1C). (Please note the different scale.) For example, in 2000 the fractions of employed men working part time varied from about 5% in Denmark and Finland to about 9% in Sweden. Since then the percentages have risen slightly in all countries.

**Figure 1C. Trends in part-time work among employed men 25–64 years old in the Nordic countries 1995–2012. Per cent. (Larger scale than in Figure 1B)**



Source: Eurostat & The Swedish Labour Force Surveys, own computations.

Finally, although it is not within the scope of this report to explore the explanations for the country differences in levels and trends, a few comments on the striking differences between Denmark, Iceland, Norway and Sweden, on the one hand, and Finland, on the other, in part-time work among women may be in order. In fact, Finland differs from the other Nordic countries by having a longer tradition of female employment, especially when it comes to full-time work; female labour force participation rates were high already in the 1950s and 1960s when few married women and mothers worked for pay in the other countries (Rønsen and Sundström 2002). For example, as recent as in 1978, 73% of Finnish mothers of 0–6 year olds were employed, compared to 69% of Swedish and only 48% of Norwegian mothers (the labour force surveys of the countries). This longer tradition in Finland may be the result of its lower per capita income after the Second World War and of differences in country-specific cultural norms and values generated by the way industrialisation took place, among other factors (Pfau-Effinger 1993). Another contributing factor, pointed out by Nätti (1995), was the lower availability of rental flats with accompanying higher housing costs in Finland.

Clearly, there are aspects of the trends in part-time work that we have not examined in this section, such as the number of hours worked by part-time workers, the fractions employed on temporary contracts and country-differences in involuntary part-time work. In the next section we investigate the latter of these aspects.

## 2.2 Involuntary part-time work among male and female part-time workers

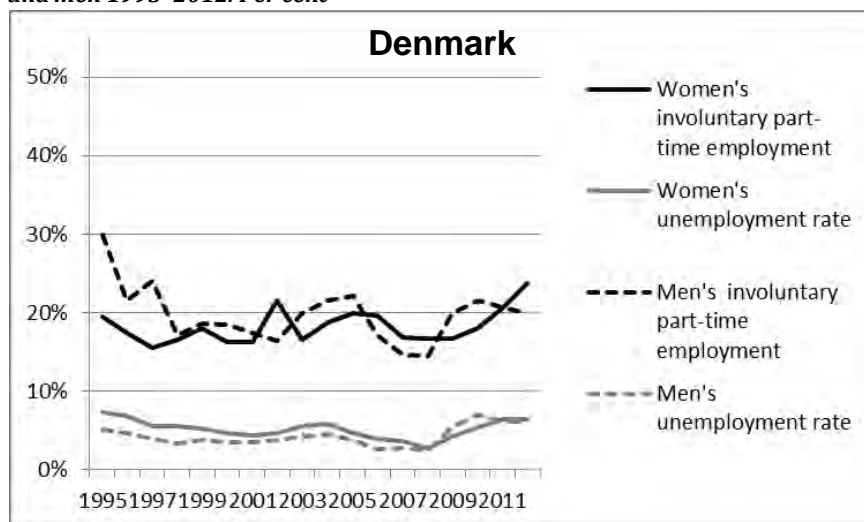
Some of the individuals working part time declare that they do so because they are unable to find full-time work. Eurostat defines these persons as involuntary part-time workers. The question does not distinguish between those who could not get full-time work at their current place of work and those who could not get a full-time job anywhere else. In this section we describe the trends and country differences in the fraction of involuntary part-time workers among all female and male part-time workers 25–64 years old 1995–2012 using group-level data from Eurostat. We relate the percentage of involuntary part-time work to the rate of unemployment since the two have previously been found to be highly correlated in Sweden (Sundström 1987 pp 159) and we want to examine whether this is still the case and whether the countries differ in this respect.

Comparing the graphs in Figure 2, we see that there are considerable country variations in the fraction of involuntary part-time work, with the percentages being highest in Finland and Iceland (about 30% in 2012), lowest in Denmark and Norway (about 20% in 2012) and Sweden in between. The developments in 1995–2012 also differ quite a lot but seem to generally follow the changes in unemployment. Thus, Finland had a very high fraction of involuntary part-time workers among its part-time workers in the mid-1990s (almost 50%) when unemployment was high, but as unemployment declined so did the fraction of involuntary part-time workers. In the mid-1990s, Sweden had a high percentage of involuntary part-time workers, particularly among men, which reflects its recession in 1992–97. We also see a sharp rise in involuntary part-time work and unemployment in Iceland after 2007 following the financial crisis. Although Iceland was the Nordic country hit the hardest by the financial crisis, the impact of the crisis can be observed also in Denmark and Sweden. In Norway, by contrast, the unemployment rate has remained low and stable during the period and, consequently, involuntary part-time work does not seem to be as linked to unemployment as in the other countries. The fact that involuntary part-time work is correlated with unemployment is interesting as it suggests that it could be influenced by similar policies as those used to combat unemployment, such as measures aimed at improving matching and increasing mobility in the labour market.

Finally and interestingly, with the exception of Norway, the fractions of involuntary part-time work are very similar among female and male

part-time workers, which is a bit surprising since the overall gender differences in part-time employment are large.

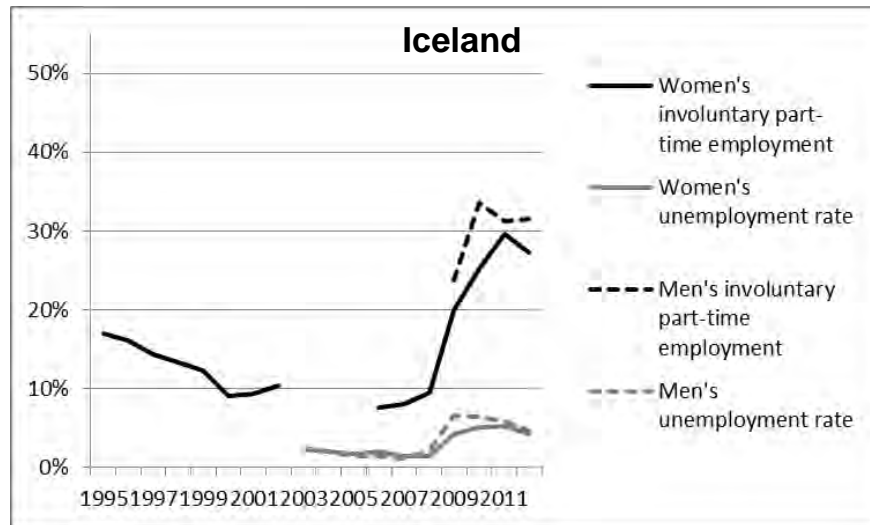
**Figure 2. Fractions of involuntary part-time workers among female and male part-time workers 25–64 years old and the rate of unemployment among women and men 1995–2012. Per cent**



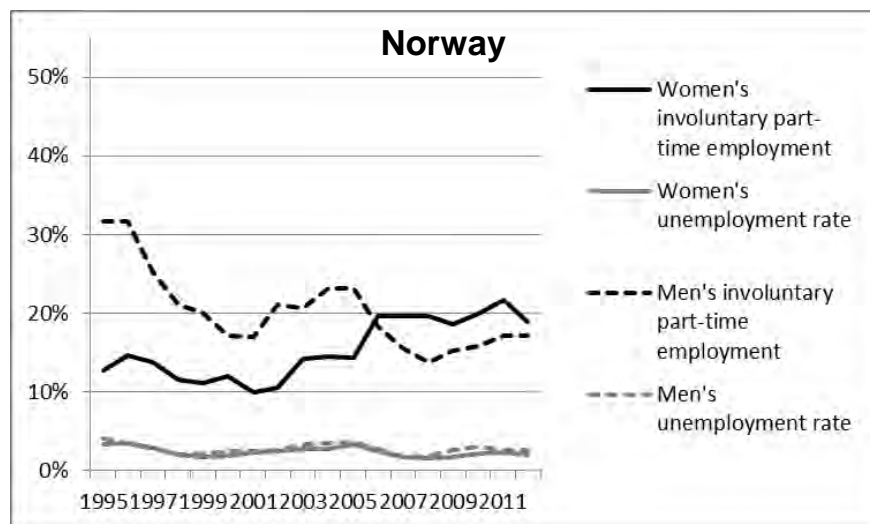
Source: Eurostat, own computations.



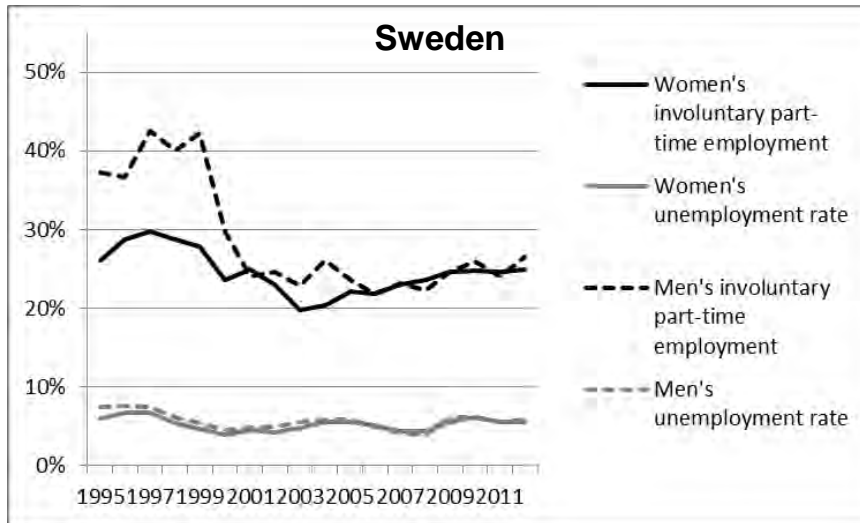
Source: Eurostat, own computations.



Source: Eurostat, own computations. Data are missing for involuntary part-time work in 2002–2004 and for unemployment before 2002.



Source: Eurostat, own computations.



Source: Eurostat, own computations.

## 2.3 Reported reasons for working part time

### 2.3.1 Introduction

To get a fuller picture of the situation of part-time workers, we now turn to the reported main reasons for working part time among women and men, thereby supplementing the reason of not being able to find a full-time job discussed above. We use data from Eurostat for women and men age 25–64 and the years 2007 and 2012 since we want to compare the situation in a recent year with that a year prior to the financial crisis.

Eurostat classifies responses to the question of the main reason for working part time into the following six categories: (1) Could not find a full-time job, (2) Own illness or disability, (3) Other family or personal responsibilities, (4) Looking after children or incapacitated adults, (5) In education or training and (6) Other reasons. Since we have no further information about the difference between alternatives 3 and 4, in the following we have combined them into “Family or personal activities.” Also, we have no knowledge about the reasons classified as “Other” but believe it may include having more than one part-time job, having a pension and wanting to have more leisure.

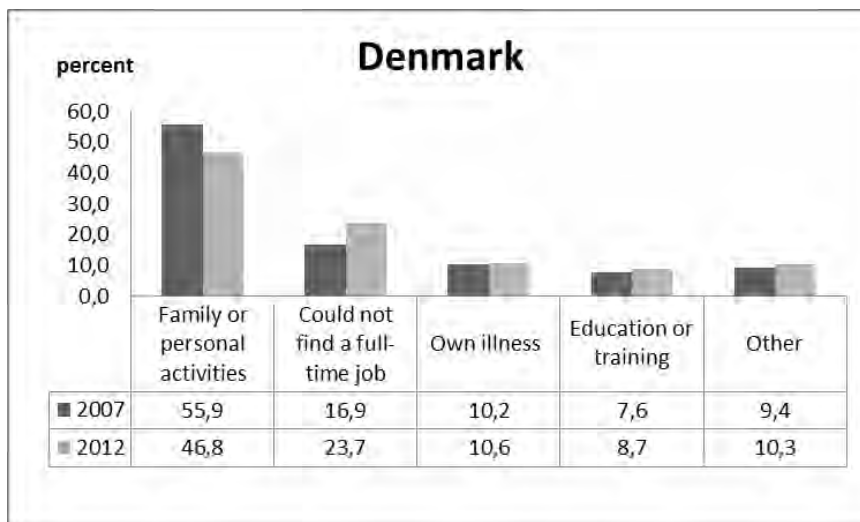
### **2.3.2 Women's reported main reasons for working part time**

It is clear from Figure 3 that in all countries, "Family or personal activities" is the most frequently reported reason for working part time among women. In 2007 the percentage stating this reason ranged from about 36% in Iceland to about 56% in Denmark, while in 2012 it ranged from about 30% in Norway to 48% in Finland. In addition, a substantial fraction reported "Could not find a full-time job" and, as seen above, that fraction rose especially in Iceland but also in Denmark and Sweden from 2007 to 2012. We also observe that non-negligible proportions stated "Own illness or disability" as the main reason for working part time, particularly in Norway, and these percentages were stable in all countries except Finland, where they increased. Furthermore, a rather stable fraction, ranging from about 4% in Sweden to 12% in Iceland, reported that they were "In education or training." The fraction stating "Other reasons" was particularly high in Iceland 2007 but then shrunk after the financial crisis; possibly the figure includes persons with more than one part-time job, which was rather common in Iceland before the financial crisis.<sup>7</sup>

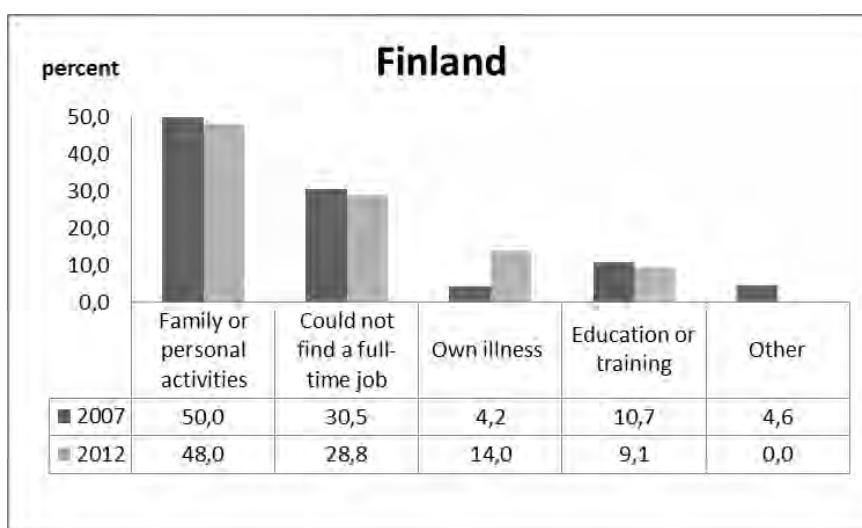
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<sup>7</sup> Personal communication with Guðbjörg Linda Rafnsdóttir.

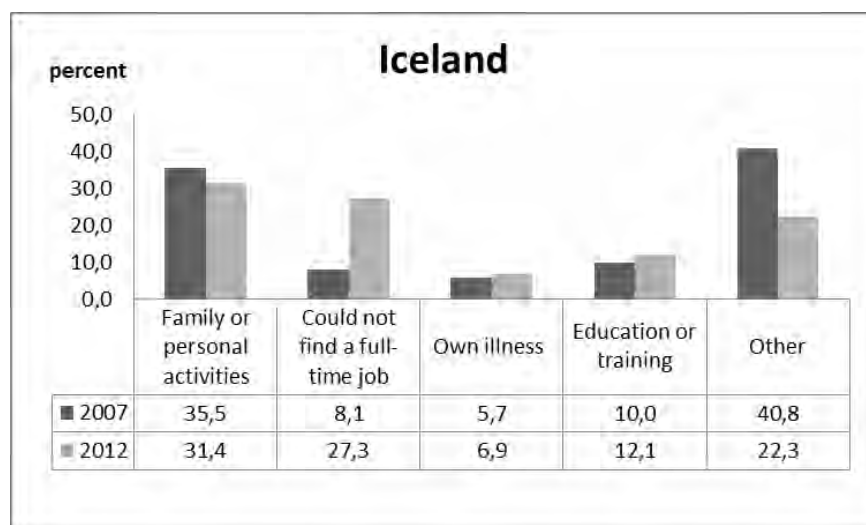
**Figure 3. Reported main reasons for part-time work among female part-time workers in the Nordic countries in 2007 and 2012. Per cent**



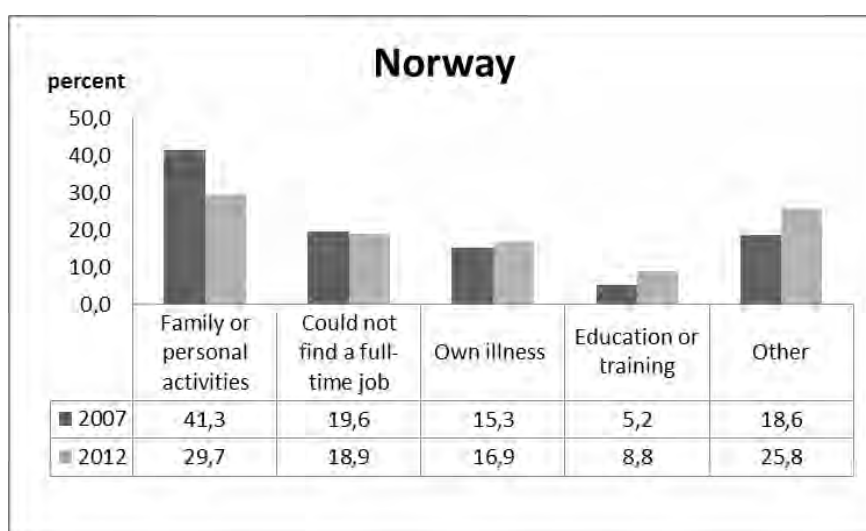
Source: Eurostat, own computations.



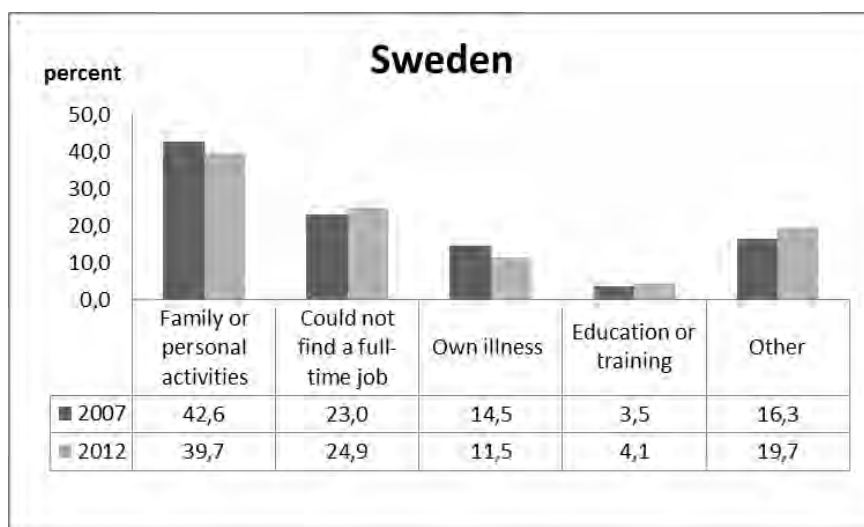
Source: Eurostat, own computations.



Source: Eurostat, own computations.



Source: Eurostat, own computations.



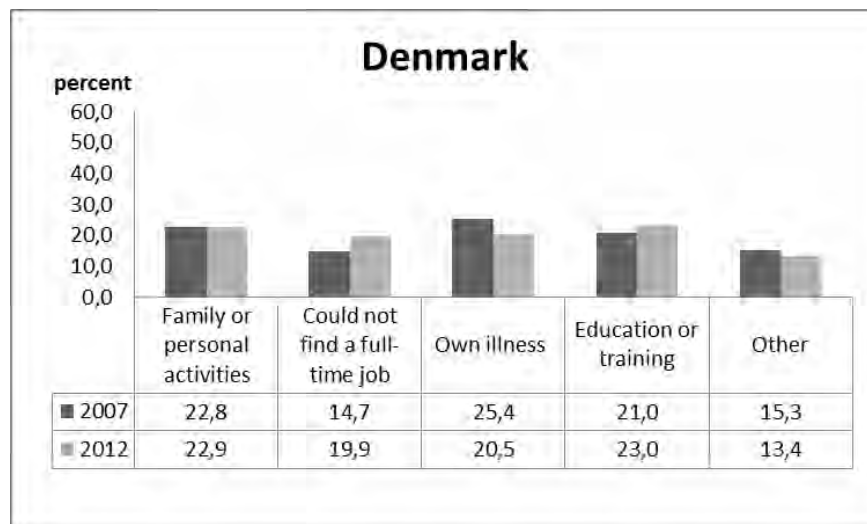
Source: Eurostat, own computations.

### 2.3.3 2.3.3 Men's reported main reasons for working part time

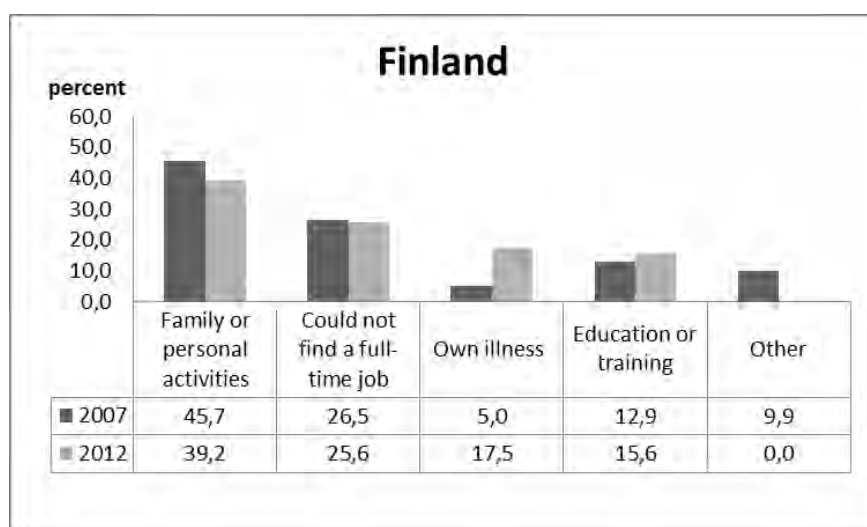
Figure 4 shows the reported main reasons for working part time among men in the Nordic countries. As expected, the distributions differ a great deal compared with those for women. First of all, "Family or personal activities" is not as dominant a reason, except among Finnish men for whom it is an important reason. We also see that "Own illness" and "Education or training" are more frequently reported reasons than among women. In particular, it is interesting to note that the increase from 2007 to 2012 in the proportion reporting "Own illness" that we observed above for Finnish women is found also for Finnish men. Similar as for women, we see a rather high fraction of Icelandic men reporting "Other reasons," possibly reflecting a high but declining fraction with more than one part-time job. Among Norwegian men we also see a rather high but increasing fraction referring to "Other reasons," which perhaps includes persons who have a pension or simply want to have more leisure.<sup>8</sup>

<sup>8</sup> Personal communication with Cathrine Egeland.

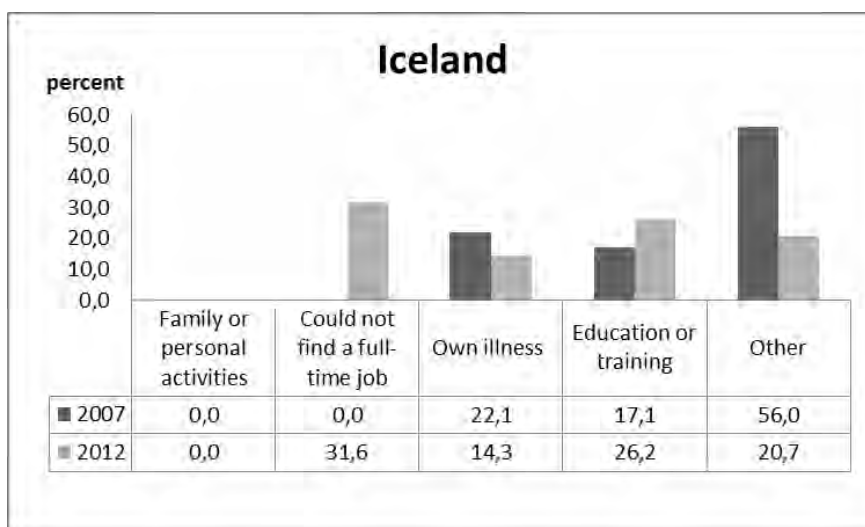
**Figure 4. Reported main reasons for part-time work among male part-time workers in the Nordic countries in 2007 and 2012. Per cent**



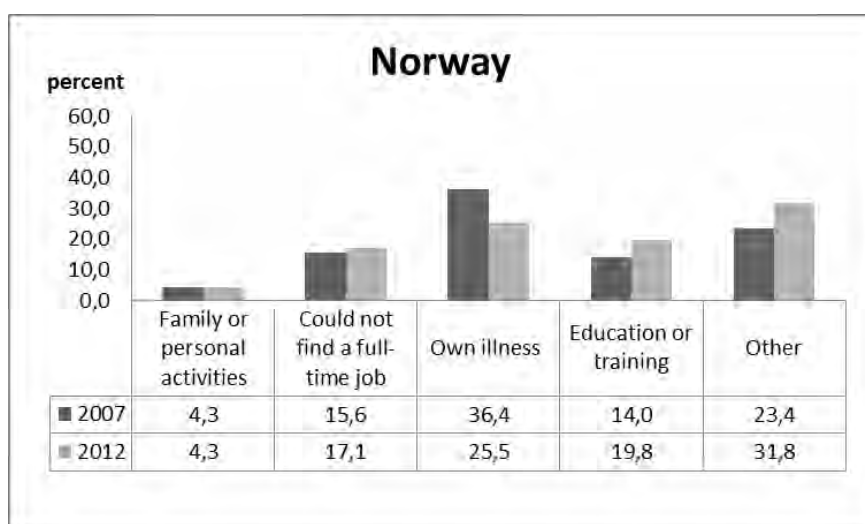
Source: Eurostat, own computations.



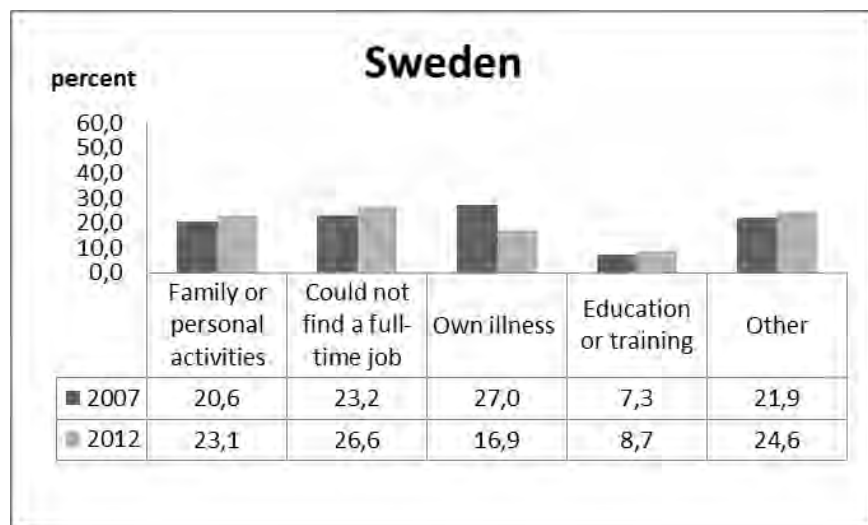
Source: Eurostat, own computations.



Source: Eurostat, own computations.



Source: Eurostat, own computations.



Source: Eurostat, own computations.



### 3. Forecasted pensions for typical cases of full-time and part-time workers in the Nordic countries

#### 3.1 Typical cases – construction and assumptions<sup>9</sup>

To obtain rough but comparable estimates for the Nordic countries of how much part-time work affects pensions, we constructed a couple of typical cases, the same for all countries. With the aim of obtaining cases that, within each occupation and country, differ only in the extent to which they work part time we made some simplifying assumptions. In addition, we made a minimum number of assumptions necessary to do the computations.<sup>10</sup> Thus, the differences in impact of part-time work on pensions across the Nordic countries will depend mainly on the design of the pension systems. We compute and add up all public pensions in the countries, including basic pensions, earnings-related public pensions and occupational pensions. Since the pension systems differ across countries, these different types of pensions make up different shares of the forecasted pensions in the countries.<sup>11</sup>

The typical cases are all born in 1975 and have the occupations *Assistant nurse* and *Elementary school teacher*. Within each occupation there is one woman who works full time all her working life and another who works part time – 75% of full time – for ten years (2001–2010) and full time in all other years. The elementary school teachers spend a longer time in education – four years – than the assistant nurses, so they start working at a higher age, that is, at age 24 (in 1999) as compared to age

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<sup>9</sup> The forecasted pensions for Denmark were computed by Ole Beier Sørensen, those for Finland by Suvi Ritola, those for Iceland by Steinunn Rögnvaldsdóttir, those for Norway by Fredrik Haugen and those for Sweden by the authors. Further information about the computations can be obtained from the authors.

<sup>10</sup> We constructed the typical cases in much the same way as in ATP (2013) for Denmark.

<sup>11</sup> For a short and recent introduction to the Nordic pension systems, see Lindqvist and Wadensjö (2013).

20 (in 1995). We have disregarded work for pay prior to these years since we have no reason to assume that it differs between full-time and part-time workers. Within each occupation and country, full-time and part-time workers work equally many years and retire at the statutory retirement age. Thus, assistant nurses retire at age 65 in Finland, Norway,<sup>12</sup> Iceland and Sweden but at age 71 in Denmark.<sup>13</sup> Elementary school teachers retire at age 67 in Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden but at age 71 in Denmark.

Further, we have assumed that all typical cases have two children, born in 2001 and 2003. All cases take out paid parental leave after child birth, yet this is not explicitly taken into account since the pension systems in some of the countries compensate for childrearing in ways that are accounted for in the forecasted pensions and discussed in the next section. Moreover, since we assume that within each occupation, parental leave has the same impact on subsequent wages for full-time and part-time workers, we have not taken such wage effects into account.

The average wages in the occupations in 1995 and 1999, respectively, were obtained from the different countries' official statistics. When it comes to wage growth, we have assumed that the part-time cases get a slightly lower annual wage increase than the full-time cases because they accumulate less work experience and previous research has shown that more work experience leads to higher wage growth whereas time away from work has the opposite effect (see, for example, Björklund, Edin, Holmlund and Wadensjö 2006 Ch. 4; Albrecht, Edin, Sundström and Vroman 1997). Thus, the annual wage growth for the part-time cases is assumed to be 1.9% compared to 2% for the full-time cases in Finland and Sweden, 4.24% compared to 4.34% in Norway and 6.5% compared to 6.8% in Iceland – for each of the ten years they work part time.<sup>14</sup> For Denmark all cases are assumed to have an annual wage growth of 3% equally, since small differences in wage growth do not affect pension differences. Also, in the Danish calculations inflation has been assumed to be 2% per year while in the other countries it has been assumed to be zero. Inflation does not affect the pension differences

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<sup>12</sup> In Norway, assistant nurses retire at age 65 but at that time they only get their occupational pension, which amounts to 66 per cent of the last wage for both typical cases, until age 67. At age 67 they get their full pension, and therefore the forecasted pensions have been computed from age 67.

<sup>13</sup> The Danish parliament decided in 2010 to raise the retirement age gradually for younger cohorts, so for the cohort born in 1995 it will be 71 years. Denmark also has an optional system of early pension but the parliament has decided to phase out this system.

<sup>14</sup> Ideally one would of course want to investigate this empirically.

between full-time and part-time workers as it is the same for all workers in each country each year.

We have not attempted to take account of the tax and transfer payment systems before and after retirement. This means, for example, that to the extent that our typical part-time workers receive any transfer payments – for example unemployment benefits and sick pay that contribute to pensions, the difference in pensions between full-time and part-time workers will be overstated.

Finally, it should perhaps be pointed out that the main difference between our typical cases and real individuals is that our cases have uninterrupted work careers without long spells of unemployment, sick leave or unpaid absence from work and no time out of the labour force.

## 3.2 Results

We present the forecasted pensions for the typical cases in Figure 5 below. For each country and each occupation, we set the forecasted pension of the full-time worker to 100 and express the pension of the part-time worker in per cent of that. We do so because our aim is to examine how working part time for a few years affects pensions as compared to working full time all years. We attempt to keep the presentation easy to grasp without digging too deeply into the particularities of each pension system.

We see that the loss in pensions from working part time is small for our typical cases, especially in Denmark and Norway. While this may be surprising at first, it is not unexpected since the part-time cases work full time for many more years than they work part time and over their whole working life only work about 6% less than the full-time cases.<sup>15</sup> Obviously, individuals will get lower pensions if they work part time for more years than our typical cases.

So, why do the typical part-time workers get almost the same pension as the full-time workers in Denmark and Norway? Starting with the explanation for Denmark, its pension system consists of three parts: basic pension, supplementary pension (ATP) and occupational pension where the basic pension is not earnings-related but compensates for lower life-time earnings. In addition, the state pays premiums into the supplementary pension system for the individual during paid

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<sup>15</sup> The six per cent figure is obtained as follows:  $10 - 7.5 = 2.5$  and  $2.5 / 43 \times 100 = 5.8$

parental leave. Hence, only the occupational pension is affected by part-time work and that pension constitutes only a small fraction of the total pension.

By contrast, in the Norwegian occupational pension system for the public sector, those who work full time for at least 30 years, which all the typical cases do, will get a full pension. In addition, the Norwegian system of compensating for childrearing compensates only the part-time workers since only they have reduced their hours of work. They get the compensation until the youngest child is five, that is, for seven years for the typical part-time workers. This is in contrast to the Swedish system (see below).

Let us now turn to the typical cases for Finland. We see that the part-time workers in both occupations receive forecasted pensions in relation to how much they worked compared with full-time workers. This is because in the Finnish system, the individual's contribution to the pension system in each year is strictly based on his/her earnings and so is the resulting pension. Further, the compensation for childrearing does not affect the pension difference between full-time and part-time workers.

In Iceland, pensions are also closely related to the individual contributions based on earnings in each year. Iceland does have a basic pension, but since it is very low the major part of the pensions consists of occupational pensions, which are mandatory and funded. As in Denmark, premiums are paid by the state during paid parental leave and do not affect the difference in pensions between the full-time cases and the part-time cases.

For the Swedish cases we observe that the lower pensions of the part-time cases, as in Finland and Iceland, correspond approximately to their lower contributions. We also see that the difference in forecasted pensions between the full-time worker and the part-time worker is slightly larger among the elementary school teachers than among the assistant nurses. This is mainly due to differences in the compensation for childrearing (*barnår*). Thus, both assistant nurses receive equal amounts of compensation (alternative 2),<sup>16</sup> while for the elementary school teachers the part-time worker gets compensated according to alternative 2 but the full-time worker according to

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<sup>16</sup> Alternative 2 implies that the pensionable income is based on 75 per cent of the average wage for Swedish employees in the year.

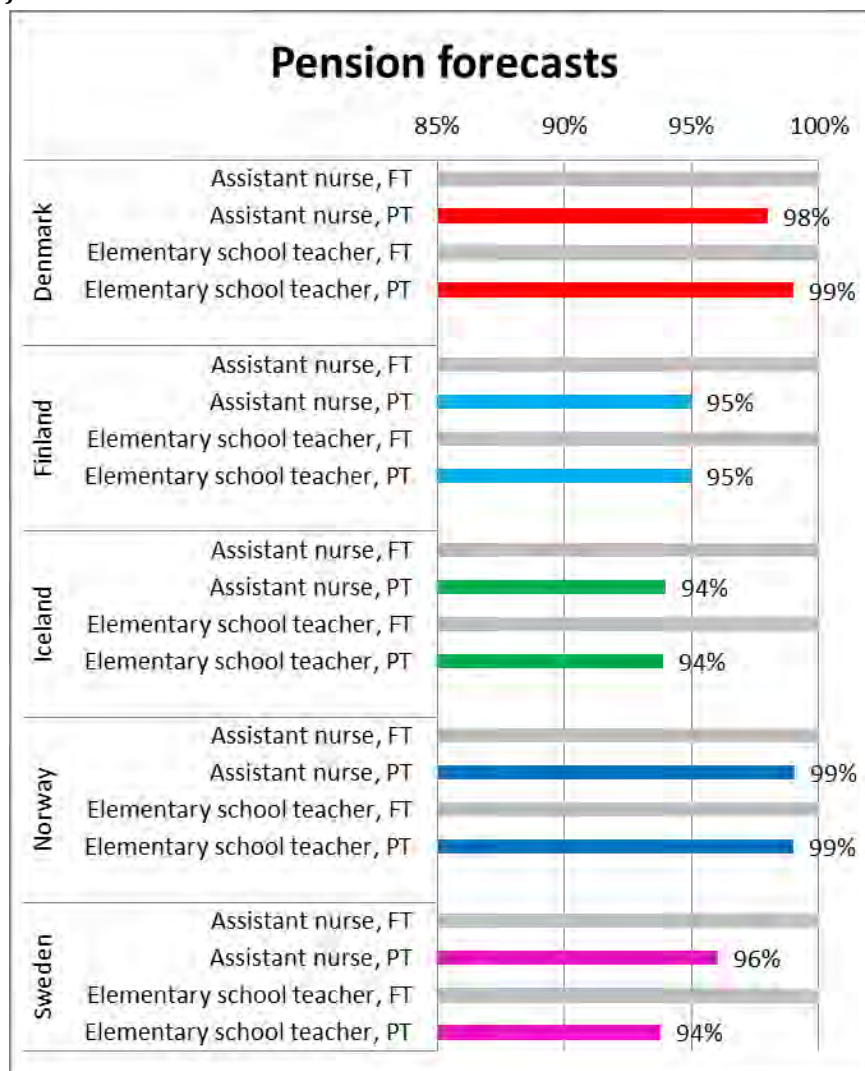
alternative 3,<sup>17</sup> which is more favourable for her. All cases are compensated for childrearing until the youngest child is four, that is, six years equally for the typical full-time workers and part-time workers.

Thus, we may conclude that the pension systems in Finland, Iceland and Sweden are more actuarial than those in Denmark and Norway, where the pensions of those who work part time during the childrearing years are subsidised by other tax payers. In addition, in Norway and Sweden childless persons will lose more than parents in terms of pensions from working part time.

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<sup>17</sup> Alternative 3 implies that the individual receives one extra income base amount for the years 2005 and 2006. In addition, she is assumed to have one year of paid parental leave for each child. For this year, her contributions to the pension system are based on 80 per cent of her pre-birth salary. For the remaining two years, her contribution to the pension system is based on 100 per cent of her salary as she works full time.

**Figure 5. Forecasted pensions for the typical cases in Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden. Pensions of part-time workers in per cent of pensions of full-time workers**



Source: Computations for Denmark by Ole Beier Sørensen, for Finland by Suvi Ritola, for Iceland by Steinunn Rögnvaldsdóttir, for Norway by Fredrik Haugen and for Sweden by the authors.

## 4. Compositional differences

### 4.1 Introduction

In order to clarify the compositional differences between part-time workers in the Nordic countries, in this section we describe the characteristics of male and female full-time and part-time workers in Denmark, Finland, Norway and Sweden using data from the European Social Survey (ESS) in 2008 and 2010. We classify individuals who had paid work in the week preceding the interview, including those temporarily absent, as employees. Among these, those who had 35 or more contracted hours per week are defined as full-time workers, while those who had less than 35 contracted hours per week are defined as part-time workers, as mentioned earlier. Self-employed individuals are excluded. We focus on the key characteristics gender, age and education and limit the presentation to the age range 20–64 years except when it comes to the age distribution (Section 4.3), where for the sake of completeness we present the whole age range from 15 to 74 years. This also gives the reader a view of the size and composition of our sample.<sup>18</sup>

### 4.2 Gender

Table 4.1 displays the percentages working full time and part time among women and men in Denmark, Finland, Norway and Sweden. Although the percentages differ somewhat from those presented in Section 2, the pattern is as expected. In all countries, part-time work is much more common among women than among men, with Finland having the smallest gender difference. Consistent with what we saw in Figure 1A, the fraction of men working part time differs much less across the countries than the fraction of women. (The ESS and Eurostat estimates differ for a number of reasons. First, the ESS has much smaller sample sizes than the labour force surveys on which Eurostat bases its figures, which

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<sup>18</sup> For the age range 20–64, the number of observations differs between tables, due to partial non-response.

implies less precision and hence larger standard deviations. Second, ESS captures the employment status in the week preceding the interview whereas the Eurostat figures are annual averages.)

**Table 4.1 Percentage employed full time and part time among women and men age 20–64 in Denmark, Finland, Norway and Sweden. Averages for 2008 and 2010**

	Denmark		Finland		Norway		Sweden	
	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men
Full-time employees	62.3	92.4	79.6	91.6	70.9	89.3	73.0	90.9
Part-time employees	37.7	7.6	20.4	8.4	29.1	10.7	27.0	9.1
	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
No. obs.	756	792	854	879	795	926	851	814

Source: European Social Survey (ESS), own computations.

### 4.3 Age distribution

Next, we compare the age distribution of part-time workers with that of full-time workers in the four countries by gender. Looking, first, at employed women, we see that in all countries the age distribution differs significantly between full-time workers and part-time workers (Table 4.2A). Thus, the percentage of young workers – age 15–24 – is higher among part-time workers than full-time workers in all countries. When it comes to workers aged 55–74 years, the percentages are rather similar among full-time and part-time workers in all countries except in Norway, where older workers constitute a larger fraction of the female part-time workers.

**Table 4.2A. Age-distributions of female full-time and part-time workers age 15–74 in Denmark, Finland, Norway and Sweden. Averages for 2008 and 2010. Per cent**

Women	Denmark***		Finland***		Norway***		Sweden***	
	Full-time	Part-time	Full-time	Part-time	Full-time	Part-time	Full-time	Part-time
Age								
15–19	2.3	10.5	0.9	3.3	1.4	11.5	0.5	6.3
20–24	2.7	3.7	3.6	14.3	4.7	7.9	5.7	12.7
25–34	19.1	10.8	20.2	22.5	21.7	15.1	19.8	17.8
35–44	27.7	27.6	25.9	22.0	27.0	21.2	25.4	21.3
45–54	29.6	26.3	28.8	17.0	27.9	20.5	26.4	17.8
55–64	17.7	19.8	20.4	19.8	15.8	18.4	20.9	21.3
65–74	1.0	1.2	0.2	1.1	1.6	5.4	1.4	2.8
	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
No. obs.	487	323	687	182	581	278	633	253

Source: European Social Survey (ESS), own computations.

Test of statistical significance: distributions of full-time and part-time workers significantly different at  $p < 0.01$  \*\*\*; at  $p < 0.05$  \*\*; at  $p < 0.10$  \*.

Turning to employed men, we see that the age distributions of full-time and part-time workers differ even more than for women (Table 4.2B). Thus, compared to full-time workers, the fraction of young workers aged 15–24 years is much higher among male part-time workers in all countries, especially in Denmark. Similarly, in all countries, the fraction of older workers – age 55–74 – is higher among part-time workers, and in Denmark and Sweden those aged 65–74 constitute a particularly large fraction. In Finland working at ages 65 or older seems to be less common in both groups of workers.

Finally, comparing the age distributions of female and male part-time workers, we find, unsurprisingly, that they differ substantially; female part-time workers tend to be concentrated to the 25–54 age group while the majority of male part-time workers are found in the age groups 15–24 and 55–74. In the remainder of this section and the next, we focus on the ages 20–64 years.

**Table 4.2B Age-distributions of male full-time and part-time workers age 15–74 in Denmark, Finland, Norway and Sweden. Averages for 2008 and 2010. Per cent**

Men	Denmark***		Finland***		Norway***		Sweden***	
	Full-time	Part-time	Full-time	Part-time	Full-time	Part-time	Full-time	Part-time
Age								
15–19	0.7	17.4	1.1	6.2	1.7	13.5	0.7	5.6
20–24	5.3	17.4	4.8	11.1	4.8	12.7	5.3	21.4
25–34	15.8	8.1	24.0	32.1	22.3	15.1	21.7	21.4
35–44	26.3	12.8	23.1	12.4	27.3	15.9	30.0	14.6
45–54	27.5	9.3	29.6	9.9	23.1	15.1	21.6	6.7
55–64	22.3	22.1	16.6	25.9	18.6	19.8	18.0	19.1
65–74	2.0	12.8	0.9	2.5	2.3	7.9	2.8	11.2
	100.0	100	100.0	100.0	100	100	100	100
No. obs.	752	86	821	81	862	126	760	89

Source: European Social Survey (ESS), own computations.

Test of statistical significance: distributions of full-time and part-time workers significantly different at  $p < 0.01$  \*\*\*; at  $p < 0.05$  \*\*; at  $p < 0.10$  \*.

## 4.4 Education

It is clear from Table 4.3A that in all countries, women who work part time on average have significantly lower levels of education than those working full time – the majority of women who work part time have at most secondary education while those working full time to a greater extent have more than secondary education. Finland shows the smallest difference in level of education between female full-time and part-time workers.

**Table 4.3 A Level of education among female full-time and part-time workers age 20–64 in Denmark, Finland, Norway and Sweden. Averages for 2008 and 2010. Per cent**

Women	Denmark***		Finland***		Norway***		Sweden***	
	Full-time	Part-time	Full-time	Part-time	Full-time	Part-time	Full-time	Part-time
Secondary education or lower	36.7	50.9	44.6	56.9	35.5	54.1	41.3	60.4
More than secondary education	63.3	49.1	55.4	43.1	64.5	45.9	58.7	39.7
	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
No. obs.	471	285	680	174	560	231	618	227

Source: European Social Survey (ESS), own computations.

Test of statistical significance: distributions of full-time and part-time workers significantly different at  $p < 0.01$  \*\*\*; at  $p < 0.05$  \*\*; at  $p < 0.10$  \*.

Among men, the level of education differs less between full-time and part-time employees than among women (Table 4.3B). Still, in Denmark, Finland and Norway, male part-time workers have lower education than those working full time, yet no such difference is found for Sweden.

**Table 4.3B Level of education among male full-time and part-time workers age 20–64 in Denmark, Finland, Norway and Sweden. Averages for 2008 and 2010. Per cent**

Men	Denmark*		Finland		Norway		Sweden	
	Full-time	Part-time	Full-time	Part-time	Full-time	Part-time	Full-time	Part-time
Secondary education or lower	55.4	71.7	58.4	58.1	45.6	51.5	60.4	62.2
More than secondary education	44.6	28.3	41.6	41.9	54.4	48.5	39.6	37.8
	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
No. obs.	731	60	805	74	827	99	735	74

Source: European Social Survey (ESS), own computations.

Test of statistical significance: distributions of full-time and part-time workers significantly different at  $p < 0.01$  \*\*\*; at  $p < 0.05$  \*\*; at  $p < 0.10$  \*.

## 5. Feelings about economic situation and work

### 5.1 Satisfaction with pay

We now use the ESS-data to examine how full-time and part-time workers experience and feel about their economic situation and their work and life circumstances, starting with pay. Table 5.1A presents women's answers to the question "Considering my efforts and achievements in my job I feel I get paid appropriately. Agree – Disagree." We see that a rather large fraction, that is, 32–47%, of both full-time and part-time working women feel that they are not being paid appropriately. In Denmark and Sweden, the fractions agreeing with the statement are lower and the fraction disagreeing somewhat higher among part-time workers than among full-time workers, but the difference is not statistically significant. Finland shows the opposite relationship and in Norway there is virtually no difference.

**Table 5.1A Perceived appropriateness of pay among female full-time and part-time workers age 20–64 in Denmark, Finland, Norway and Sweden in 2010. Per cent**

Women	Denmark		Finland		Norway		Sweden	
Get paid appropriately	Full-time	Part-time	Full-time	Part-time	Full-time	Part-time	Full-time	Part-time
Agrees	52.3	45.5	38.8	42.3	51.5	51.7	51.8	41.4
Neither agrees or disagrees	13.6	14.6	14.6	19.7	12.1	14.3	15.9	18.9
Disagrees	34.1	39.8	46.6	38.0	36.4	34.1	32.2	39.6
	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
No. obs.	214	123	294	71	264	91	245	111

Source: European Social Survey (ESS), own computations.

Test of statistical significance: distributions of full-time and part-time workers significantly different at  $p < 0.01$  \*\*\*; at  $p < 0.05$  \*\*; at  $p < 0.10$  \*.

Looking at men's answers to the same question, it seems that they overall are more content with their pay than women (Table 5.1B). Yet male part-time workers, except in Denmark, disagree with the statement to a higher extent than those working full time.

**Table 5.1B Perceived appropriateness of pay among male full-time and part-time workers age 20–64 in Denmark, Finland, Norway and Sweden in 2010. Per cent**

Men	Denmark		Finland**		Norway		Sweden	
Get paid appropriately	Full-time	Part-time	Full-time	Part-time	Full-time	Part-time	Full-time	Part-time
Agrees	62.2	79.0	55.4	45.2	64.0	63.8	58.9	50.0
Neither agrees or disagree	14.0	5.3	19.5	9.7	19.2	15.0	19.9	17.5
Disagrees	23.8	15.8	25.2	45.2	16.8	21.3	21.3	32.5
	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
No. obs.	344	19	318	31	406	47	282	40

Source: European Social Survey (ESS), own computations.

Test of statistical significance: distributions of full-time and part-time workers significantly different at  $p < 0.01$  \*\*\*; at  $p < 0.05$  \*\*; at  $p < 0.10$  \*.

## 5.2 Economic problems

Since about 25% of the part-time workers say they work part time because they could not find a full-time job, it is motivated to investigate to what extent they experience economic difficulties and whether there are country differences in this regard. Table 5.2A displays how women “feel about their household income nowadays.” Clearly, the fraction reporting that they feel comfortable about household income is lower among part-time working women than among those working full time in Denmark, Norway and Sweden. However, the fraction reporting that they find it difficult is unexpectedly low, except among part-time workers in Finland. Further, it seems that in Finland the percentage reporting that they feel comfortable about their household income is much lower among both full-time and part-time female workers than in the other countries. That this difference prevails also for men is seen below.

**Table 5.2A Feelings about household income among female full-time and part-time workers age 20–64 in Denmark, Finland, Norway and Sweden. Averages for 2008 and 2010. Per cent**

Women	Denmark **		Finland*		Norway		Sweden *	
Feeling about household income	Full-time	Part-time	Full-time	Part-time	Full-time	Part-time	Full-time	Part-time
Comfortable	77.3	73.3	28.7	30.5	62.3	58.9	69.2	60.0
Coping	19.3	24.2	63.2	52.9	32.2	36.8	26.9	30.9
Difficult	3.4	2.5	8.1	16.7	5.5	4.3	3.9	9.1
	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
No. obs.	471	285	679	174	563	231	621	230

Source: European Social Survey (ESS), own computations.

Test of statistical significance: distributions of full-time and part-time workers significantly different at  $p < 0.01$  \*\*\*; at  $p < 0.05$  \*\*; at  $p < 0.10$  \*.

Table 5.2B presents the men's responses to the same question. We see that, particularly in Sweden but also in Denmark, the fraction of respondents who feel comfortable about household income is lower among part-time workers than among full-time workers. In addition, the fraction of respondents who find it difficult is higher among male part-time workers in Finland and Sweden.

**Table 5.2B Feelings about household income among male full-time and part-time workers age 20–64 in Denmark, Finland, Norway and Sweden. Averages for 2008 and 2010. Per cent**

Men	Denmark		Finland*		Norway		Sweden***	
Feeling about household income	Full-time	Part-time	Full-time	Part-time	Full-time	Part-time	Full-time	Part-time
Comfortable	78.8	71.7	24.9	25.7	65.6	68.7	70.8	51.4
Coping	19.1	25.0	68.9	55.4	30.6	26.3	26.1	31.1
Difficult	2.1	3.3	6.2	18.9	3.8	5.1	3.1	17.6
	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
No. obs.	732	60	804	74	826	99	739	74

Source: European Social Survey (ESS), own computations.

We now turn to the question of whether the individuals have had to manage on lower household income in the three last years, which is a broader measure of economic difficulties. We see that female part-time workers in all countries, but especially those in Finland and Sweden, more often than full-time workers answer “a great deal” (Table 5.3A). The difference is, however, only significant for Sweden.

**Table 5.3A Percentage who have had to manage on a lower household income in the last three years among female full-time and part-time workers age 20–64 in Denmark, Finland, Norway and Sweden in 2010.**

Women	Denmark		Finland		Norway		Sweden***	
Manage on lower household income	Full-time	Part-time	Full-time	Part-time	Full-time	Part-time	Full-time	Part-time
Not at all	63.1	59.4	32.4	22.5	50.9	44.3	53.2	34.2
Some	20.3	20.3	42.8	42.5	33.6	35.9	27.0	36.8
A great deal	16.6	20.3	24.8	35.0	15.5	19.8	19.8	29.1
	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
No. obs.	217	133	299	80	271	106	248	117

Source: European Social Survey (ESS), own computations.

Test of statistical significance: distributions of full-time and part-time workers significantly different at  $p < 0.01$  \*\*\*; at  $p < 0.05$  \*\*; at  $p < 0.10$  \*.

We observe the same pattern among men and women. In all countries, part-time workers more often than full-time workers say they have had to manage on lower household income “a great deal.” The difference is significant for all countries but is particularly large in Finland and Sweden (Table 5.3B). Answers to a similar question for Iceland are present-

ed in Table 5.3C. We see that the fraction of respondents who had experienced economic difficulties is similar to that in the other Nordic countries but does not differ between full-time and part-time workers.

**Table 5.3B Percentage who have had to manage on a lower household income in the last three years among full-time and part-time employed men age 20–64 in Denmark, Finland, Norway and Sweden in 2010**

Men	Denmark**		Finland***		Norway***		Sweden***	
Manage on lower household income	Full-time	Part-time	Full-time	Part-time	Full-time	Part-time	Full-time	Part-time
Not at all	66.1	40.7	28.5	11.1	59.2	49.1	56.7	33.3
Some	19.4	33.3	53.9	47.2	31.7	25.5	31.0	31.0
A great deal	14.5	25.9	17.6	41.7	9.1	25.5	12.3	35.7
	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
No. obs.	351	27	319	36	407	55	284	42

Source: European Social Survey (ESS), own computations.

Test of statistical significance: distributions of full-time and part-time workers significantly different at  $p < 0.01$  \*\*\*; at  $p < 0.05$  \*\*; at  $p < 0.10$  \*.

**Table 5.3C Answers to the question “How does your current standard of living compare to that before the financial crisis in October 2008 (Iceland in 2009)?” Per cent**

The standard of living better or worse than before 2008	Women		Men	
	Full-time	Part-time	Full-time	Part-time
Very or rather much better	2	1	2	4
About the same	74	75	75	78
Very or rather much worse	24	24	23	18
Total	100	100	100	100
No. obs.	574	570	792	201

Source: Health and well-being of the Icelandic population 2009.

Note: In the Icelandic data, part-time work is defined as less than 40 hours/week and full-time work as 40 hours/week or more.

## 5.3 Job satisfaction and life satisfaction

Since women and men not only care about wages but also value job satisfaction, we now turn to whether the level of job satisfaction differs between female and male full-time and part-time workers and across countries. The question asked in the ESS was: “How satisfied are you in your main job?”

**Table 5.4A Satisfaction in main job among female full-time and part-time workers age 20–64 in Denmark, Finland, Norway and Sweden in 2010. Per cent**

Women	Denmark		Finland		Norway**		Sweden	
Satisfaction in main job	Full-time	Part-time	Full-time	Part-time	Full-time	Part-time	Full-time	Part-time
Very satisfied	50.5	51.6	28.2	32.9	38.4	33.0	30.5	25.7
Satisfied	46.3	44.4	65.3	56.2	56.3	53.9	59.7	57.8
Dissatisfied	3.3	4.0	6.5	11.0	5.3	13.2	9.9	16.5
	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
No. obs.	214	124	294	73	263	91	233	109

Source: European Social Survey (ESS), own computations.

Test of statistical significance: distributions of full-time and part-time workers significantly different at  $p < 0.01$  \*\*\*; at  $p < 0.05$  \*\*; at  $p < 0.10$  \*.

Since some of the women were involuntarily working part time and some were dissatisfied with their pay, we would expect to see a bit of dissatisfaction. However, we find that a majority of women working full time and part time report that they are satisfied or very satisfied in their main job (Table 5.4A), particularly in Denmark. However, in Finland, Norway and Sweden the fraction saying they are dissatisfied is larger among part-time than full-time workers, but the difference is only significant for Norway.

The pattern is similar among men: there is a high degree of job satisfaction among both full-time and part-time workers but a higher fraction reporting they are dissatisfied among part-time workers, especially in Sweden (Table 5.4B).<sup>19</sup>

**Table 5.4B Satisfaction in main job among male full-time and part-time workers age 20–64 in Denmark, Finland, Norway and Sweden in 2010. Per cent**

Men	Denmark		Finland		Norway		Sweden***	
Satisfaction in main job	Full-time	Part-time	Full-time	Part-time	Full-time	Part-time	Full-time	Part-time
Very satisfied	39.5	63.2	28.8	22.6	34.0	21.3	20.1	26.3
Satisfied	51.7	36.8	63.0	61.3	60.1	72.3	71.0	42.1
Dissatisfied	8.7	0.0	8.2	16.1	5.9	6.4	8.9	31.6
	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
No. obs.	344	19	319	31	406	47	269	38

Source: European Social Survey (ESS), own computations.

Test of statistical significance: distributions of full-time and part-time workers significantly different at  $p < 0.01$  \*\*\*; at  $p < 0.05$  \*\*; at  $p < 0.10$  \*.

<sup>19</sup> Note however the small sample sizes for part-time working men.

Finally, for most people there is more to life than work, and the quality of life outside work – leisure, friends and family – matters more for some people than for others. For this reason we also investigate whether there are differences in life satisfaction between full-time and part-time workers. The question posed in the survey was: “How satisfied are you with your life as a whole?” We see in Table 5.5A that there is a high degree of life satisfaction among working women in these countries, particularly in Denmark, and only in Finland are part-time working women somewhat less satisfied with their lives than those working full time. Thus, the economic difficulties appear not to have a noticeable impact on life satisfaction.

**Table 5.5A Life satisfaction among female full-time and part-time workers age 20–64 in Denmark, Finland, Norway and Sweden. Averages for 2008 and 2010. Per cent**

Women	Denmark		Finland***		Norway		Sweden	
Satisfaction in life	Full-time	Part-time	Full-time	Part-time	Full-time	Part-time	Full-time	Part-time
Very satisfied	84.0	85.3	79.7	77.5	72.2	77.0	72.4	67.7
Quite satisfied	14.5	14.4	19.6	17.9	25.4	20.0	24.8	27.5
Dissatisfied	1.5	0.4	0.7	4.6	2.5	3.0	2.7	4.8
	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
No. obs.	468	285	680	173	564	230	620	229

Source: European Social Survey (ESS), own computations.

Test of statistical significance: distributions of full-time and part-time workers significantly different at  $p < 0.01$  \*\*\*; at  $p < 0.05$  \*\*; at  $p < 0.10$  \*.

In Table 5.5B we observe a similar pattern of high levels of life satisfaction for both groups of employed men, especially among part-time workers in Denmark. Employed women and men in Iceland seem also to have a high degree of life satisfaction, although the percentage responding “very satisfied” is a bit lower than in the other countries (Table 5.5C).

**Table 5.5B Life satisfaction among male full-time and part-time workers age 20–64 in Denmark, Finland, Norway and Sweden. Averages for 2008 and 2010. Per cent**

Men	Denmark		Finland		Norway		Sweden	
Satisfaction in life	Full-time	Part-time	Full-time	Part-time	Full-time	Part-time	Full-time	Part-time
Very satisfied	83.9	88.3	77.0	71.6	72.9	66.3	70.1	63.5
Quite satisfied	14.8	8.3	21.2	27.0	24.0	29.6	26.4	35.1
Dissatisfied	1.4	3.3	1.7	1.4	3.2	4.1	3.5	1.4
	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
No. obs.	732	60	805	74	826	98	739	74

Source: European Social Survey (ESS), own computations.

Test of statistical significance: distributions of full-time and part-time workers significantly different at  $p < 0.01$  \*\*\*; at  $p < 0.05$  \*\*; at  $p < 0.10$  \*.

**Table 5.5C Life satisfaction among female and male full-time and part-time workers in Iceland in 2009. Per cent**

I'm satisfied with my life	Women		Men	
	Full-time	Part-time	Full-time	Part-time
Very satisfied	59	56	59	59
Satisfied	39	42	39	39
Dissatisfied	2	2	2	2
Total	100	100	100	100
No. obs.	580	573	793	200

Source: Health and wellbeing of the Icelandic population 2009.

Note: In the Icelandic data, part-time work is defined as less than 40 hours/week and full-time work as 40 hours/week or more.



## 6. Concluding discussion

In this report we have described the labour market and economic situation of female and male part-time workers in the Nordic countries. We began by presenting trends in full-time and part-time work among employed women and men 25–64 years old in the Nordic countries for the period 1995–2012. We saw a well-known gender difference; part-time work is much more common among women than among men in all countries and the difference is smallest in Finland. Over the period studied, the fraction working part time among employed women has declined in all countries, except in Finland. For men, by contrast, the percentages have risen slightly in the last decade and do not vary as much across countries as among women. Thus, if the gender difference in part-time work is considered an equality problem, at least it is a decreasing one.

Further, we examined the trends in the fraction working part time involuntarily among female and male part-time workers in the same years and found considerable cross-country variations in that fraction, from about 20% in Denmark and Norway to about 30% in Finland and Iceland in 2012. Although part-time work is more common among women than men, we found the fraction of involuntary part-time work to be highly similar. When looking at the percentage working part time involuntarily in relation to the national unemployment rate for women and men, respectively, we observed that these trends were closely related. This is interesting as it suggests that involuntary part-time work could be influenced by similar policies as those used to combat unemployment, such as measures aimed at improving matching and increasing mobility in the labour market.

Importantly, we studied the impact of part-time work on a long-term economic outcome, namely total pensions, based on a comparison of a couple of typical cases of full-time and part-time workers, the same for all countries. Our typical cases are assistant nurses and elementary school teachers, all born in the same year (1975). Within each occupation there is one woman who works full time all her working life and another one who works part time for ten years and full time the remaining years. Both have two children, born in 2001 and 2003. We – and the national experts for Denmark, Finland, Iceland and Norway – computed and added up all public pensions of the countries, including basic pen-

sions, earnings-related public pensions and occupational pensions. The results show that in Finland, Iceland and Sweden, the forecasted pensions for the typical part-time worker is about 4–6% lower than those for the typical full-time worker, which corresponds roughly to the fewer hours they work over the years. In Denmark and Norway, by contrast, it seems to make very little difference if the individual works part time for ten years, since the typical part-time worker still gets almost the same pension as the full-time worker (98–99%).

This means that in Denmark and Norway the pensions of those who work part time during the childrearing years are subsidised by other tax payers. Due to the compensation for childrearing in Norway and Sweden, childless persons in these countries will lose more in terms of future pensions from working part time than those who have children.

Furthermore, we investigated how full-time and part-time workers experience their economic situation using ESS data from 2010. This is interesting since about a quarter of part-time workers are working part time involuntarily. First of all, we found that part-time workers tend to report less often than full-time workers that they feel they are paid appropriately, but the difference was not statistically significant. Further, we found the percentage reporting that they feel “comfortable” about household income to be significantly lower among female part-time workers than full-time workers in Denmark and Sweden. The fraction finding it “difficult” was especially high among Finnish women working part time.

A broader measure of economic difficulties is the question of whether the respondent has had to manage on a lower household income in the last three years. In all countries, the results show a significantly higher fraction saying “a great deal” among part-time working women than among those working full time. There was a similar response pattern among men.

Job satisfaction is part of the reward of working and could potentially be influenced by dissatisfaction with pay. When we examined whether there were differences between full- and part-time workers in this regard, we saw that between 80 and 90% of the women in both groups in the four countries said they were satisfied or very satisfied in their main job. However, in Finland, Norway and Sweden, the fraction of dissatisfied individuals was somewhat higher among female part-time workers than among their full-time counterparts, yet the difference was only statistically significant for Norway. We saw a similar pattern among men, that is, overall a high degree of job satisfaction but a higher proportion of part-time workers being dissatisfied in Finland, Norway and Sweden.

In addition, since we observed a higher frequency of reported economic difficulties and a bit lower levels of job satisfaction among part-time workers, it is motivated to investigate whether these circumstances impinge on their overall life satisfaction. The results showed that there is a remarkably high degree of life satisfaction among both full-time and part-time workers – more than 90% of both women and men report that they are very satisfied. However, in Finland female part-time workers report somewhat more often than those working full time that they are dissatisfied, and the difference is statistically significant.

Finally, we would like to point out a couple of important questions that we have touched upon but not been able to answer. Hence, they could be issues for future research. First, it seems vital to gain a better understanding of how wages of women and men are affected in the long run by part-time work. Further, it would be interesting to learn more about the part-time workers who experience economic difficulties. For example, what are the characteristics of involuntary part-time workers, and who are the part-time workers that face difficulties when it comes to household income?



# Sammanfattning

Kvinnor i Norden arbetar deltid i högre utsträckning än män. Det får betydelse för kvinnors ekonomi både på kort och lång sikt. Men konsekvenserna för pensionen blir olika i de nordiska länderna. Det visar denna nordiska rapport som Nordisk information för kunskap om kön, NIKK, har tagit fram på uppdrag av Nordiska ministerrådet. Rapporten är skriven av Marianne Sundström, professor i arbetsmarknadsekonomi vid Stockholms universitet, och masterstudenten Alma Wennemo Lanninger.

I de nordiska länderna är det betydligt vanligare att kvinnor arbetar deltid än att män gör det. Skillnaden mellan kvinnor och män är ungefär lika stor i alla nordiska länder, utom i Finland. Mellan 1995 och 2012 har deltidsarbetet minskat för kvinnor i alla nordiska länder utom Finland. Andelen deltidsarbetande kvinnor är störst i Norge; 36 % av de sysselsatta kvinnorna mellan 25 och 64 år arbetade deltid 2012. 29 % av de danska och 31 % av de svenska kvinnorna arbetade deltid samma år, medan 26 % av de isländska kvinnorna arbetade deltid och 15 % av de finska kvinnorna.

De nordiska männen uppvisar betydligt mindre skillnader sinsemellan – deltidsarbetande män är fortfarande ett undantag. Deltidsarbetande män är vanligast i Norge och ovanligast i Island.

Åldersskillnaderna mellan deltidsarbetande kvinnor och män i Norden är stora. Bland kvinnor är det vanligast att arbeta deltid i åldersgruppen 25 till 54 år, medan det är vanligare att män är antingen yngre eller äldre när de arbetar deltid.

I alla nordiska länder är det vanligare att lågutbildade kvinnor arbetar deltid medan högutbildade kvinnor arbetar heltid. Denna skillnad är inte lika stor när det gäller män.

I rapporten sätts också det som kan kallas för "ofrivillig deltid" under lupp. Ofrivillig deltid innebär att man arbetar deltid, men skulle vilja arbeta heltid. Andelen kvinnor och män som arbetar ofrivillig deltid varierar mycket mellan de nordiska länderna. Det är vanligast i Finland och Island, medan Danmark och Norge har lägst nivå av ofrivillig deltid. När arbetslösheten ökar så jobbar också fler deltid ofrivilligt. Det syns särskilt i spåren av den ekonomiska krisen på 1990-talet och i samband med finanskrisen 2008.

Den vanligaste orsaken som kvinnor själva uppger till varför de arbetar deltid berör familjelivet och personliga aktiviteter. Det visar en jämförelse mellan 2007 och 2012. 2007 var det 36 % som uppgav det svaret i Island och 56 % i Danmark, medan det varierade mellan 30 % i Norge och 48 % i Finland år 2012. Andelen kvinnor som arbetar deltid för att de inte kan hitta ett annat jobb är också relativt stor, särskilt i Island och i Danmark. En ökande andel kvinnor uppger i flera av länderna att deltidssarbetet beror på egen sjukdom. Deltidsarbetande män uppger inte lika ofta att familjelivet är orsaken till att de arbetar deltid, med undantag av Finland. Vanligare är sjukdom och utbildning som orsak till deltidssarbetet.

För att undersöka vad deltidssarbete betyder för pensionen har forskarna bakom rapporten ställt upp några förenklade exempel. Beräkningar har gjorts på fyra typfall:

- En kvinna som arbetar heltid som undersköterska hela yrkeslivet.
- En kvinna som arbetar som undersköterska, men deltid på 75 % under tio år.
- En kvinna som arbetar heltid som grundskollärare hela yrkeslivet.
- En kvinna som arbetar som grundskollärare, men deltid på 75 % under tio år.

Alla kvinnorna är födda 1975 och har två barn. Forskare i alla nordiska länder har genomfört beräkningar av vilken pension kvinnorna i typfallen får utifrån om de arbetar heltid eller deltid. Förutsättningarna för typfallen är desamma, men rapporten utgår från nationella lönenivåer och pensionssystem. Beräkningarna bygger på alla offentliga pensioner och pensioner knutna till yrkestillhörigheten.

Resultaten visar att skillnaden i pension mellan heltids- och deltidssarbete är liten i Danmark och i Norge. Anledningen till att skillnaden blir så liten är att de beräknade typfallen ändå arbetar heltid större delen av yrkeslivet, vilket får större betydelse i Danmarks och Norges pensionssystem än de tio åren av deltidssarbete. Pensionssystemen kompenserar dessutom för tid hemma med barnen. I Danmark kompenserar också delar av pensionssystemet för lägre inkomster. Men om typfallen skulle beräknas utifrån längre tids deltidssarbete än tio år skulle det märkas mer i pensionen. I Finland, Island och Sverige är pensionen 4–6 % lägre för den deltidssarbetande kvinnan jämfört med den heltidsarbetande. I dessa länder korresponderar pensionen i högre grad med antalet arbetade timmar under yrkeslivet.

Resultat från tidigare enkätundersökningar visar att män är generellt mer nöjda med sin lön än kvinnor, även om de som arbetar deltid tenderar vara mindre nöjda – förutom i Danmark. Bland kvinnor i Danmark och Sverige är det vanligare att deltidsarbetande inte känner sig tillfreds med sin inkomst. Andelen som anser att deras ekonomiska situation är svår är särskilt stor bland deltidsarbetande kvinnor i Finland. En relativt stor andel kvinnor och män som arbetar deltid i de nordiska länderna uppger att de har haft svårigheter att klara sig på en lägre inkomst de tre senaste åren.

Nästan alla kvinnor och män är nöjda med sitt arbete och vare sig de arbetar heltid eller deltid. Det finns dock fler missnöjda bland deltidsarbetande än heltidsarbetande i flera av de nordiska länderna. De allra flesta av de heltids- och deltidsarbetande är också nöjda med sina liv. I Finland uppger något fler deltidsarbetande kvinnor att de inte är nöjda med sina liv jämfört med heltidsarbetande kvinnor.



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## Part-Time Work in the Nordic Region

Gender equality in the labour market is a key topic in the Nordic cooperation on gender equality. The Nordic Council of Ministers has asked NIKK, Nordic Information on Gender, to coordinate the project Part-Time Work in the Nordic Region. The aim of the project is to shed light on and analyse part-time work in the Nordic region, develop reports and arrange conferences.

During the Swedish presidency of the Nordic Council of Ministers in 2013, the project identified how part-time work affects the economic resources of women and men. This first report presents statistics on full- and part-time work and compares the effects of part-time work on pensions in the Nordic countries. Marianne Sundström, professor of labour economics at Stockholm University, and Alma Lanninger Wennemo, Master's student at Stockholm University, wrote the report on a request by NIKK.

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