

PART-TIME EMPLOYMENT

Opportunities for part-time work are especially important for people whose obligations prevent them from working full-time, such as women with young children and those caring for elderly relatives. Indeed, recent surveys in a large number of OECD countries show that most people who work part-time do so from choice. This suggests that countries with little part-time employment could foster increased employment by policies that promote the availability of part-time positions.

Definition

Part-time employment refers to persons who usually work less than 30 hours per week in their main job. This definition has the advantage of being comparable across countries as national definitions of part-time employment vary greatly from one country to another. Part-time workers include both employees and the self-employed.

Employment is generally measured through household labour force surveys. According to the ILO Guidelines, employed persons are those aged 15 or over who report that they have worked in gainful employment for at least one hour in the previous week. The rates shown here refer to the number of persons who usually work less than 30 hours per week as a percentage of the total number of those in employment.

Overview

The incidence of part-time employment for the OECD area as a whole was 15.5% in 2008. But this incidence in 2008 differed significantly across countries. In the Netherlands and Switzerland over 25% of all those in employment were working part-time, while this share was under 10% in one third of OECD countries, as especially low in the Slovak Republic, Hungary and the Czech Republic, as well as in several non-member countries – Estonia, Slovenia, the Russian Federation and Chile.

In recent years, part-time work has accounted for a substantial share of overall employment growth in many OECD countries. For the OECD as a whole, the incidence of part-time employment rates increased by 3.6 percentage points between 1998 and 2008. Part-time employment rates grew by more than 5 percentage points in Austria, Germany, Italy and the Netherlands, while they fell by more than 1 percentage point in several countries including Iceland, Poland, Greece and France, as well as in the Russian Federation.

The growth of part-time employment has been especially important for groups that are often under-represented in the labour force such as women, youths and, to a lesser extent, older workers.

Comparability

All OECD countries use the ILO Guidelines for measuring employment. Operational definitions used in national labour force surveys may, however, vary slightly across countries. Employment levels are also likely to be affected by changes in the survey design and the survey conduct. Despite these changes, the employment rates shown here are fairly consistent over time. Information on the number of hours usually worked is collected in household labour force surveys. The part-time rates shown here are considered to be of good comparability.

Sources

- OECD (2009), *OECD Employment Outlook*, OECD, Paris.
- For Non-Member Countries: National Sources.

Further information

Analytical publications

- OECD (1999), *Implementing the OECD Jobs Strategy: Assessing Performance and Policy*, OECD, Paris.
- OECD (2002-2008), *Babies and Bosses – Reconciling Work and Family Life*, series, OECD, Paris.
- OECD (2003), *The Sources of Economic Growth in OECD Countries*, OECD, Paris.

Statistical publications

- OECD (2009), *Labour Force Statistics*, OECD, Paris.

Online databases

- *Employment Statistics*.

Web sites

- OECD Employment Data, www.oecd.org/els/employment/.
- OECD Labour Statistics Database, www.oecd.org/statistics/labour.



Incidence of part-time employment

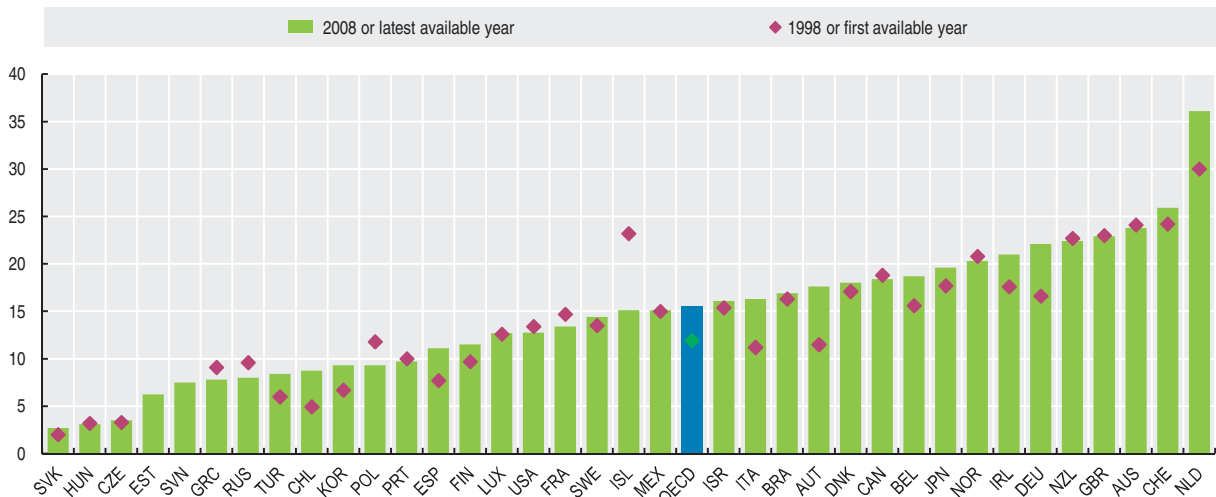
As a percentage of total employment

	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
Australia	..	..	..	..	..	..	24.1	24.0	24.3	23.8	24.0	23.9	23.7	23.8
Austria	11.1	10.9	10.8	11.5	12.3	12.2	12.4	13.6	13.5	15.4	16.0	17.3	17.2	17.6
Belgium	14.6	14.8	15.0	15.6	19.9	19.0	17.0	17.9	18.0	18.9	18.5	19.3	18.3	18.7
Canada	18.8	19.1	19.1	18.8	18.4	18.1	18.1	18.8	18.9	18.5	18.3	18.1	18.2	18.4
Czech Republic	3.4	3.4	3.4	3.3	3.4	3.2	3.2	2.9	3.2	3.1	3.3	3.3	3.5	3.5
Denmark	16.9	16.6	17.2	17.1	15.3	16.1	14.7	16.0	15.7	17.3	17.6	18.1	17.7	18.0
Finland	8.7	8.5	9.3	9.7	9.9	10.4	10.5	11.0	11.3	11.3	11.2	11.4	11.7	11.5
France	14.2	14.0	14.8	14.7	14.6	14.2	13.8	13.8	12.9	13.3	13.4	13.3	13.4	13.4
Germany	14.2	14.9	15.8	16.6	17.1	17.6	18.3	18.8	19.6	20.1	21.8	22.0	22.2	22.1
Greece	7.8	8.0	8.3	9.1	8.0	5.5	4.9	5.6	5.6	6.0	6.1	7.5	7.8	7.8
Hungary	2.8	2.7	2.9	3.2	3.2	2.9	2.5	2.6	3.2	3.3	3.2	2.7	2.8	3.1
Iceland	22.5	20.9	22.4	23.2	21.2	20.4	20.4	20.1	16.0	16.6	16.4	16.0	15.9	15.1
Ireland	14.3	14.2	15.0	17.6	17.9	18.1	17.9	18.6	19.3	19.3	19.6	19.9	20.3	21.0
Italy	10.5	10.5	11.3	11.2	11.8	12.2	12.2	11.9	12.0	14.8	14.6	14.9	15.1	16.3
Japan	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	17.7	18.2	18.1	18.3	18.0	18.9	19.6
Korea	4.3	4.3	5.0	6.7	7.7	7.0	7.3	7.6	7.7	8.4	9.0	8.8	8.9	9.3
Luxembourg	11.3	10.4	11.0	12.6	12.1	12.4	13.3	12.5	13.3	13.2	13.9	12.7	12.7	12.7
Mexico	16.6	14.9	15.5	15.0	13.7	13.5	13.7	13.5	13.4	15.1	..	..	..	..
Netherlands	29.4	29.3	29.1	30.0	30.4	32.1	33.0	33.9	34.6	35.0	35.7	35.5	36.1	36.1
New Zealand	20.9	21.9	22.3	22.7	23.0	22.2	22.4	22.6	22.3	22.0	21.7	21.3	22.0	22.4
Norway	21.4	21.6	21.0	20.8	20.7	20.2	20.1	20.6	21.0	21.1	20.8	21.1	20.4	20.3
Poland	..	..	11.9	11.8	14.0	12.8	11.6	11.7	11.5	12.0	11.7	10.8	10.1	9.3
Portugal	8.6	9.2	10.2	10.0	9.4	9.4	9.2	9.7	10.0	9.6	9.8	9.3	10.0	9.7
Slovak Republic	2.3	2.1	2.0	2.0	1.8	1.9	1.9	1.6	2.3	2.8	2.6	2.5	2.6	2.7
Spain	7.0	7.5	7.9	7.7	7.8	7.7	7.8	7.7	8.0	8.5	11.3	11.1	10.9	11.1
Sweden	15.1	14.8	14.2	13.5	14.5	14.0	13.9	13.8	14.1	14.4	13.5	13.4	14.4	14.4
Switzerland	22.9	23.7	24.0	24.2	24.8	24.4	24.8	24.8	25.1	24.9	25.1	25.5	25.4	25.9
Turkey	6.4	5.5	6.1	6.0	7.7	9.4	6.2	6.6	6.0	6.6	5.8	7.9	8.4	8.4
United Kingdom	22.3	22.9	22.9	23.0	22.9	23.0	22.7	23.3	23.7	24.0	23.4	23.3	23.0	22.9
United States	14.0	13.9	13.5	13.4	13.3	12.6	12.8	13.1	13.2	13.2	12.8	12.6	12.6	12.8
OECD total	11.6	11.5	11.8	11.9	12.1	11.9	12.1	14.6	14.7	15.1	15.2	15.2	15.3	15.5
Brazil	16.2	15.3	15.9	16.3	16.9	..	16.0	17.0	17.1	17.3	18.0	18.1	17.3	16.9
Chile	..	5.4	4.7	4.9	5.2	5.4	5.8	6.0	6.1	7.5	7.6	7.8	8.7	..
Estonia	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	6.9	7.5	6.8	6.7	6.7	6.8	6.2
Israel	15.2	15.1	14.2	15.4	15.9	15.6	16.3	16.5	16.6	16.8	16.9	16.6	16.1	..
Russian Federation	11.2	10.6	9.1	9.6	11.2	10.2	9.0	8.5	8.3	8.1	8.3	7.6	7.5	8.0
Slovenia	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	4.9	5.0	7.5	7.4	7.8	7.8	7.5

StatLink <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/825487183524>

Incidence of part-time employment

As a percentage of total employment



StatLink <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/820431217732>



From:
OECD Factbook 2010
Economic, Environmental and Social Statistics

Access the complete publication at:
<https://doi.org/10.1787/factbook-2010-en>

Please cite this chapter as:

OECD (2010), "Part-Time Employment", in *OECD Factbook 2010: Economic, Environmental and Social Statistics*, OECD Publishing, Paris.

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1787/factbook-2010-47-en>

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