

PATTERNS OF LABOUR MARKET INTEGRATION IN EUROPE, A LIFE COURSE PERSPECTIVE ON TIME POLICIES¹

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ABSTRACT

This paper examines the patterns of labour market integration over the life course of men and women in seven European countries (France, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, Spain, Sweden and the UK). In order to map the profile of labour market integration we select a range of household categories coinciding with different phases in the life course: transition from the parental home and 'adult' labour market entry, union formation, parenting - differentiating couples according to the age of the youngest child -, the subsequent 'empty nest' period and lastly the older pre-retirement phase and exit from the labour market. Using the European Community Household Panel (ECHP) survey and standard econometric methods we identify four broad patterns of labour market integration and working time arrangements over the life course, which are associated with different state regimes with regards to 'time policy': The Nordic '*universal breadwinner*' model of high participation involving long part-time or full-time hours and high employment continuity over the life course; The '*modified breadwinner*' model (France) where family formation and motherhood are still associated with withdrawal from the labour market for some groups of women and where mothers who are employed work predominantly full-time; The *Mediterranean 'exit or full-time'* model (Italy and Spain) where fewer women are employed, but when employed generally work full-time; finally different models of '*Maternal part-time work*' (Dutch, German and UK) where motherhood is associated with a reduction in the employment rate that is less than that found in the Mediterranean countries and in France, but where part-time hours are the norm for mothers, even when children are older. Several policy implications are drawn from this comparative analysis in relation to current European policy objectives of raising the employment rate for women and older workers, and promoting more time flexibility across the working life. The analysis presented here suggests that in relation to labour supply a more extensive range of working time and income replacement options is required in order to better equip the workforce to adapt their working time to various events/risks over the life course.

¹ The present paper summarizes some part of a recent project founded by the European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions and coordinated by D. Anxo and J-Y Boulin (2004). The overall objective of this project was to provide new empirical evidence concerning the current state and development of time options, time arrangements and income over the life course and to examine the disparities between demographic groups and also across member states. The researchers involved in this project was Inma Cebrian (Alcala University), Colette Fagan (Manchester University), Ute Klammer (Hans Boeckler Stiftung), Kristina Klenner (Hans Boeckler Stiftung), Saskia Keuzenkamp (Sociaal Cultureel Planbureau, the Netherlands), Gloria Moreno (Alcala University) and Luis Toharia (Alcala University).