

LMF2.1: Usual working hours per week by gender

Definitions and methodology

This indicator presents information on usual working hours by gender through the distribution of employed men and employed women across five hours bands for usual weekly working hours:

- i. 1-19 hours per week
- ii. 20-29 hours per week
- iii. 30-34 hours per week
- iv. 35-39 hours per week
- v. 40 hours or more per week

Data for most countries concern usual weekly working hours in the main job, and cover all employed (both employees and self-employed) of all ages. The definition of usual weekly working hours includes overtime if it occurs systematically, but irregular or unusual overtime is not included. Data for the United States cover those in dependent employment only, while data for Australia, New Zealand and Norway refer to usual weekly working hours in all jobs, rather than just the main job. Data for Japan and Korea refer to actual weekly working hours in all jobs.

Key findings

In most OECD countries, the most common hours-band for both male and female workers is 40 hours or more per week (Chart LMF2.1.A). The main exceptions are France, Denmark and Norway (where roughly 50% of male and female workers usually work between 35 and 39 hours per week), and the Netherlands and Switzerland where many female workers usually work less than 30 hours per week. The distribution of the workforce across working hour bands is generally more even for women than for men, due largely to the higher incidence of part-time work among women and, thus, a greater proportion of women working fewer hours (see indicator LMF1.6 *Gender differences in employment outcomes*).

This document, as well as any data and any map included herein, are without prejudice to the status of or sovereignty over any territory, to the delimitation of international frontiers and boundaries and to the name of any territory, city or area.

The statistical data for Israel are supplied by and under the responsibility of the relevant Israeli authorities. The use of such data by the OECD is without prejudice to the status of the Golan Heights, East Jerusalem and Israeli settlements in the West Bank under the terms of international law.

Note by Türkiye: The information in this document with reference to “Cyprus” relates to the southern part of the Island. There is no single authority representing both Turkish and Greek Cypriot people on the Island. Türkiye recognises the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus (TRNC). Until a lasting and equitable solution is found within the context of the United Nations, Türkiye shall preserve its position concerning the “Cyprus issue”.

Note by all the European Union Member States of the OECD and the European Union: The Republic of Cyprus is recognised by all members of the United Nations with the exception of Türkiye. The information in this document relates to the area under the effective control of the Government of the Republic of Cyprus.

Other relevant indicators: LMF1.2: Maternal employment; LMF1.3: Maternal employment by family status; LMF1.5: Gender pay gaps for full and part-time workers; LMF1.6: Gender difference in employment outcomes; and LMF2.4 Family-friendly workplace practices.

Chart LMF2.1.A. Distribution of the employed by usual weekly working hours bands and gender, 2021 or latest available

Distribution (%) of employed men and women (all ages) by usual weekly working hours bands

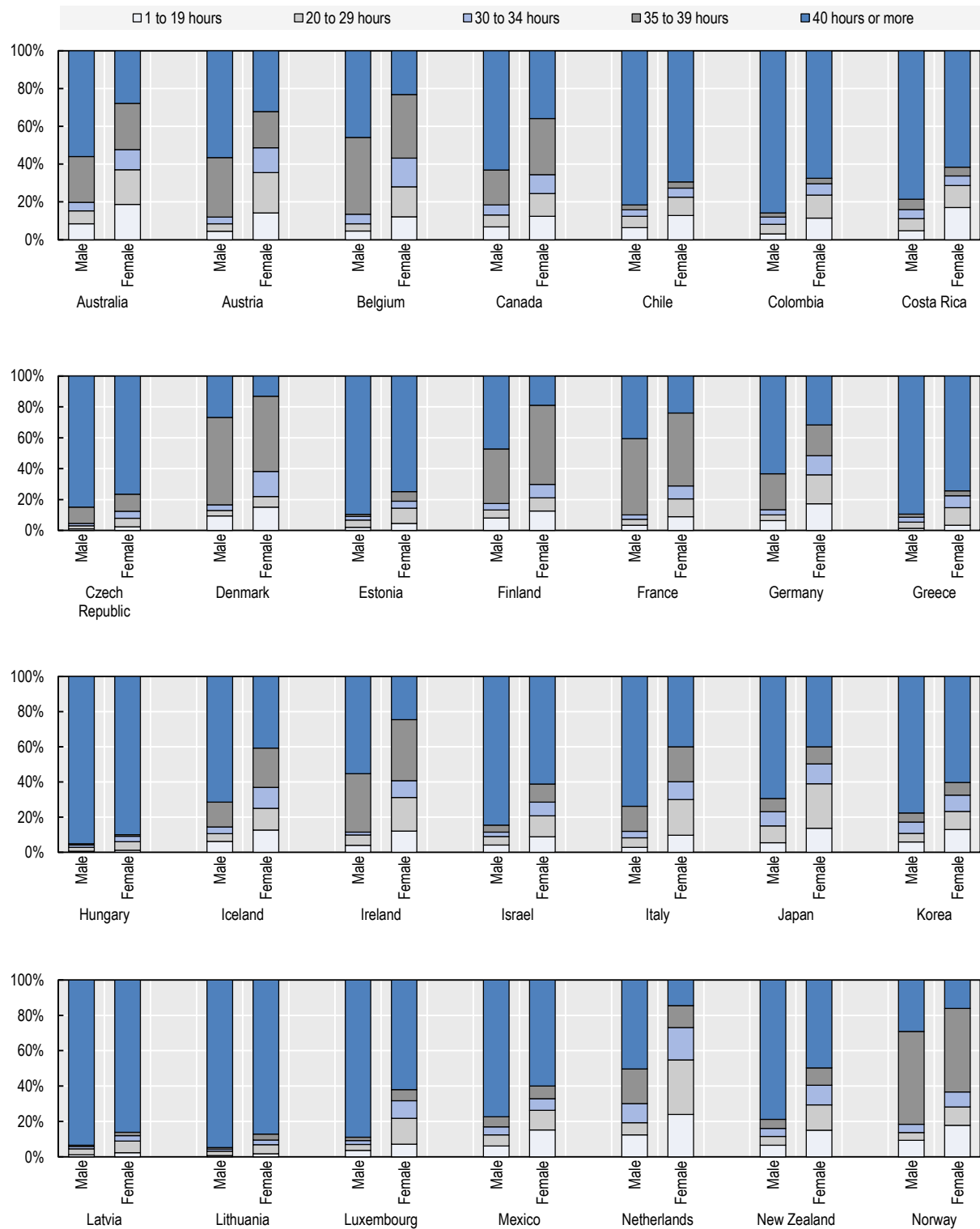
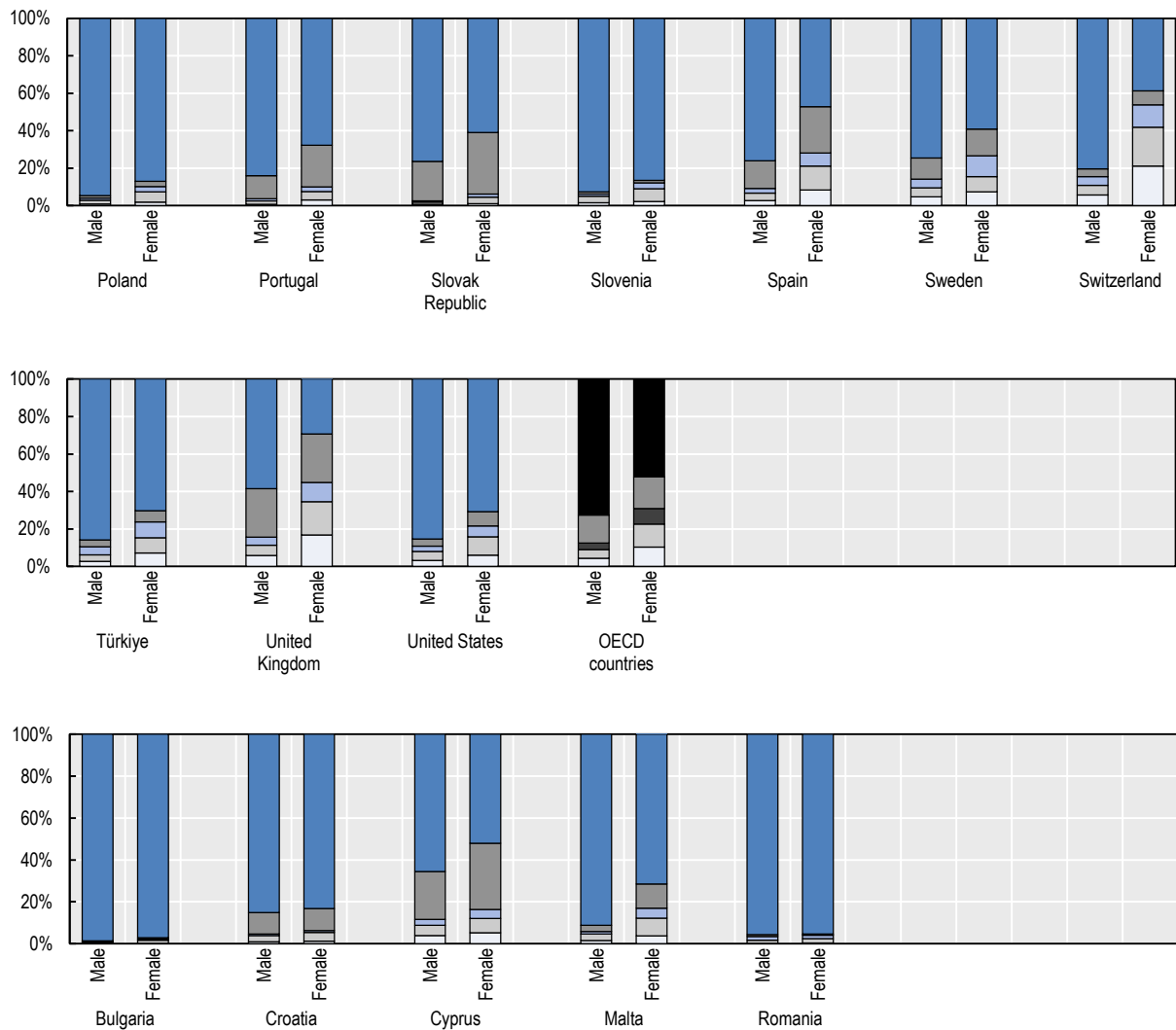


Chart LMF2.1.A. Distribution of the employed by usual weekly working hours bands and gender, 2021 or latest available (cont.)

Distribution (%) of employed men and women (all ages) by usual weekly working hours bands



Notes: For Australia, Japan, Korea, New Zealand, and Norway, data refer to all jobs rather than the main job, for Japan and Korea data refer to actual weekly working hours rather than usual weekly working hours, and for the United States data refer to those in dependent employment only. Data refer to 2019 for Australia and to 2020 for the United Kingdom.

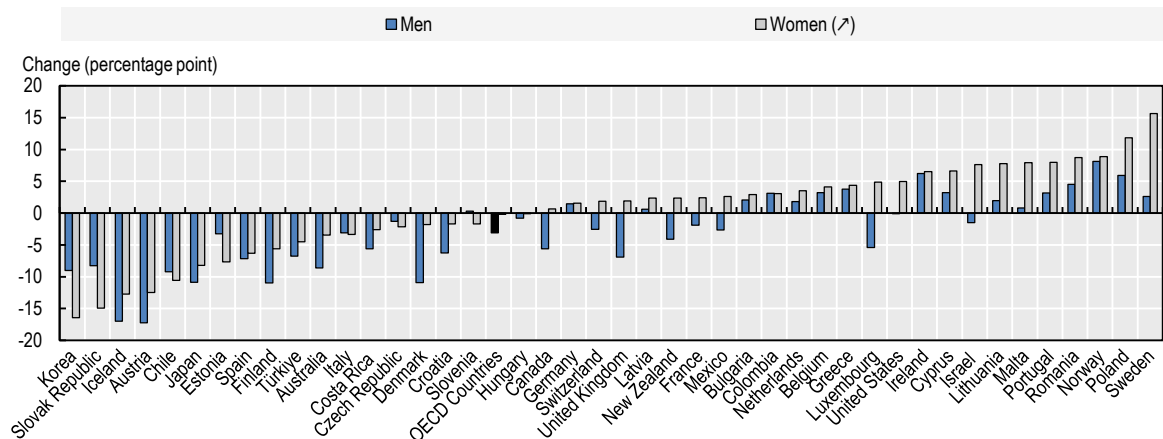
Source: [OECD Employment Database](https://oe.cd/fdb)

In many countries, the share of the workforce usually working at least 40 hours per week is declining (Charts LMF2.1.B). In Austria and Iceland, for example, the share of male workers usually working 40 or more hours per week has fallen by 17 percentage points since 2005, and the share of female workers by almost 13 percentage points. In Korea and the Slovak Republic, the share of female workers usually working 40 or more hours per week has declined by roughly 15 percentage points. However, these changes in working hours should be considered in conjunction with wider increase in employment: increases in female employment in particular have coincided with a larger proportion of employees working part-time or reduced hours (see indicator LMF1.6 *Gender differences in employment outcomes*).

In other countries, the share of the workforce usually working at least 40 hours per week is increasing. In Sweden, for example, the share of female workers usually working 40 or more hours per week has increased by over 15 percentage points since 2005. In Ireland, Norway and Poland, the share of male workers working 40 or more hours per week has increased by over 5 percentage points, while the share of female workers has increased by 7, 9 and 12 percentage points respectively.

Chart LMF2.1.B. Percentage point change in the proportion of the employed working 40 hours or more, by gender, 2005 to 2021

Percentage point change in the proportion (%) of the employed (all ages) with usual weekly working hours equal to 40 hours or more, 2005 to 2021



Notes: For Korea, New Zealand, and Norway, data refer to all jobs rather than the main job, for Korea data refer to actual weekly working hours rather than usual weekly working hours, and for the United States data refer to those in dependent employment only. Data refer to 2019 for Australia and 2020 for the United Kingdom. Data refer to 2010 and 2021 for Costa Rica. The OECD countries average is unweighted.

Source: [OECD Employment Database](https://oe.cd/fdb)

Data and comparability issues

All data used in this indicator have been taken from the *OECD Employment Database*, which collects data annually through the OECD Labour Force Questionnaire, and are based on information drawn from national labour force surveys. For most countries, data on usual weekly working hours refer to usual hours in the *main* job only, but for some (Australia, Japan, Korea, New Zealand, and Norway) data cover hours in *all* jobs. Compared to countries that report only hours worked in the main job, data for these countries are more likely to contain individuals with working hours in the longer hours-bands. Two countries (Japan and Korea) provide actual hours worked rather than usual hours, but it is unclear how this affects international comparison. For example, available information for France and the Netherlands for 2011 show that reported actual hours per week were slightly higher than usual weekly working hours; by contrast actual hours worked in the United Kingdom were shorter than usual working hours in the same year.

Sources and further reading:

OECD (2022, forthcoming), *OECD Employment Outlook 2021*, OECD Publishing, Paris, <https://doi.org/10.1787/5a700c4b-en>

OECD (2017), *The Pursuit of Gender Equality: An Uphill Battle*, OECD Publishing, Paris, <https://doi.org/10.1787/9789264281318-en>