

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

### **A descriptive report to NIKK**

by

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## Contents

	Page
1. Introduction	3
1.1 Purpose and motivation	3
1.2 Definition of part-time work	4
1.3 Limitations	5
1.4 Outline	5
2. Trends in part-time work in the Nordic countries	6
2.1 Full-time and part-time work among women and men in 1995-2012	6
2.2 Involuntary part-time work among part-time working women and men	10
2.3 Reported reasons for working part time	14
2.3.1 Introduction	14
2.3.2 Women's reported main reasons for working part time	14
2.3.3 Men's reported main reasons for working part time	17
3. Forecasted pensions for typical cases of full-time and part-time workers	20
3.1 Typical cases--construction and assumptions	21
3.2 Results	22
4. Compositional differences	26
4.1 Introduction	26
4.2 Gender	26
4.3 Age-distribution	27
4.4 Education	29
5. Feelings about economic situation and work	30
5.1 Satisfaction with pay	30
5.2 Economic problems	32
5.3 Job satisfaction and life satisfaction	35
6. Concluding discussion	37
References	41

## 1. Introduction

### 1.1 Purpose and motivation

The purpose of this report is to provide a description of 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 among men. Also, it should be interesting to compare the Nordic countries in this regard since they are generally seen as forerunners when it comes to gender equality. This should be particularly valuable since to our knowledge there is no previous comparative study of full-time and part-time work among women and men in all the five Nordic countries.<sup>1</sup> Moreover, we know of no study, for any country, comparing male part-time workers with male full-time workers as well as with female part-time workers.

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 rate of unemployment 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—could not find a full-time job as well as other reasons—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 work during a period of 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

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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) which compares 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>

same for all countries, and made a minimum number of simplifying assumption. We have computed the forecasted pensions for Sweden but have had 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 full-time and part-time working women and men in Denmark, Finland, Norway and Sweden experience and feel about their income level and economic situation.<sup>3</sup> For Iceland we present similar information on two questions based on another data source. 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 the ESS-data are that the respondents in the four countries have been asked exactly same questions, data are relatively recent and 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. Thus, in Denmark the standard workweek is 37 hours and in Norway 37.5 hours while it is 40 hours in Finland, Iceland and Sweden. Also, when we use data from Eurostat we have to use its definitions. Thus, 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 we can define part-time work in the same way for the four countries and have chosen to follow the ILO standard of classifying those who had contracted weekly hours of 35 or more as full-time workers and those who had contracted weekly hours of less than 35 as part-time workers.<sup>4</sup> This

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<sup>3</sup> ESS has collected data for several European countries but not all, for example, not for Iceland. ESS was established in 2001. The first survey was conducted in 2002 and since then it has been held every second year. The survey is directed by a scientific board and has been used in much 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/>

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

means that in Denmark and Norway some persons who are classified as part-time workers are 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, not on the implications of part-time work for social groups or society as 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 may see, for example; the country reports in Blossfeld and Hakim 1997; Halldén, Gallie and Ying 2012 and the references in there). Neither 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, for example, 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 answering it requires the use of panel data and, thus, a much more ambitious approach than ours.

### **1.4 Outline**

The outline of the report is the following: In the next section we discuss the levels and trends in full-time and part-time work among women and men in the Nordic countries in 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 the 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 the 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 by 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 in 1995-2012**

In this section we examine the levels and trends in part-time work among employed women aged 25-64 years 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 data come from the Swedish labour force surveys<sup>6</sup> and for the years 1995-2004 include only employees but for 2005-2012 also self-employed persons. We focus on the population in active working ages, that is, persons aged 25-64 years, because we do not want the trends to be influenced by changes in work patterns among students and persons of retirement age.

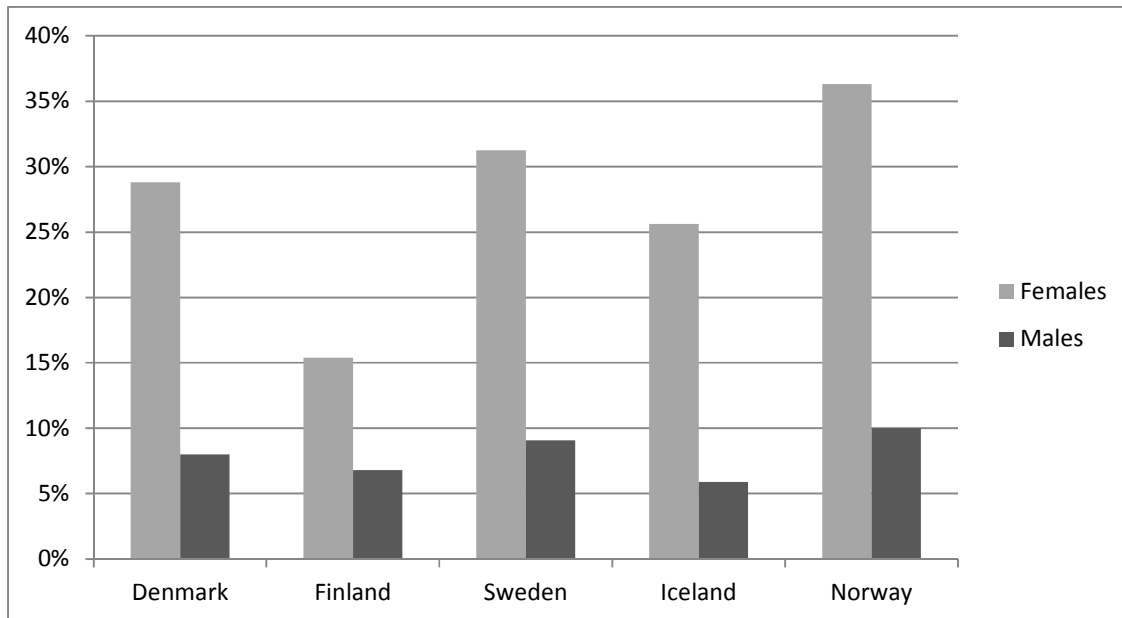
We start by looking at the situation in 2012 when it comes to percentages of part-time workers among employed women and men in the Nordic countries in Figure 1A. The well-known gender difference is evident in all countries but is smallest in Finland. Thus, we see that the fraction of female part-time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

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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.

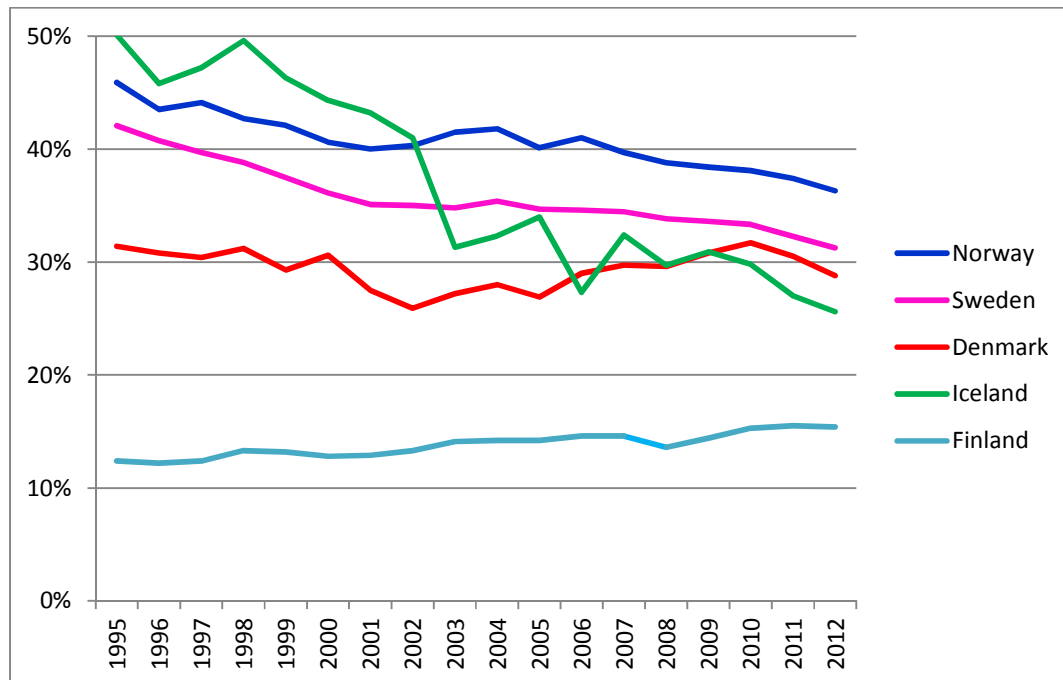
**Figure 1A. Part-time work among employed women and men 25-64 years in the Nordic countries in 2012. Per cent.**



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

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

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

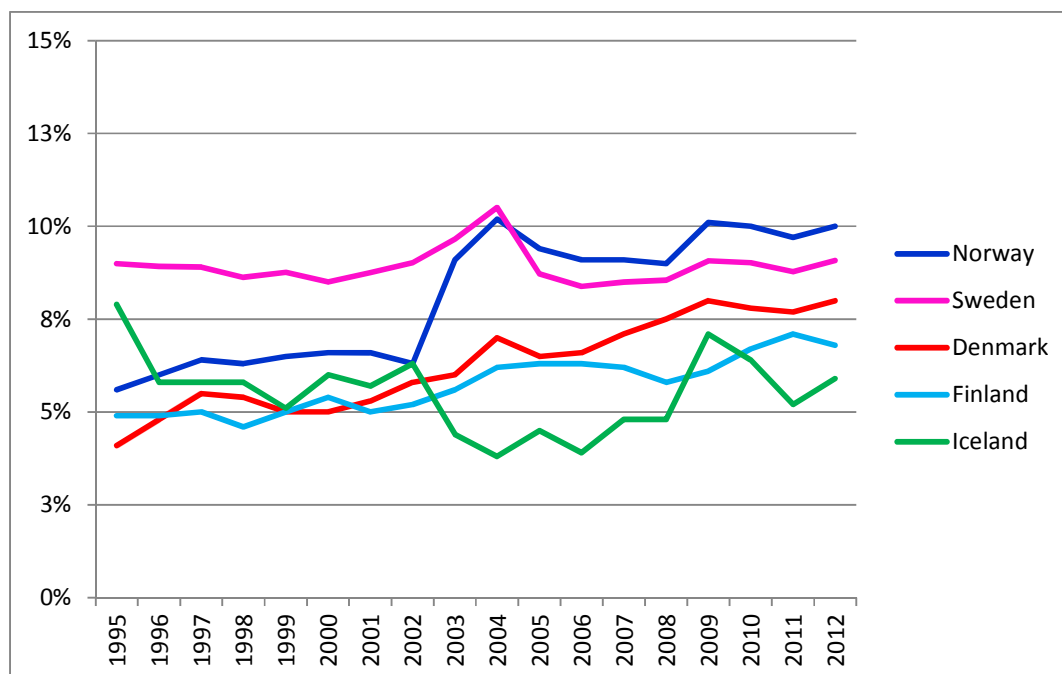


Source: Eurostat, own computations.

When it comes to part-time work among men, we see that the levels do not differ as much across countries as they do among women (Figure 1C). (Note the change of scale). For example, in 2000 the fractions working part time among employed men varied from about 5 per cent in Denmark and Finland to about 9 per cent 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 in the Nordic countries in 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, mainly full time; 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 1978, 73 per cent of Finnish mothers of children 0-6 years were employed compared to 69 per cent among Swedish mothers and only 48 per cent among 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 fraction of rental flats with accompanying higher housing costs in Finland.

Clearly, there are aspects of the trends in part-time work which we have not examined in this section, such as the numbers 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 part-time working women and men**

Among the individuals working part time there are those who declare that they work part time 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 part-time working women and men aged 25-64 years in 1995-2012 using group-level data from Eurostat. We relate the percentage of involuntary part-time work to the rate of unemployment since involuntary part-time work has previously been found to be highly correlated with unemployment 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.

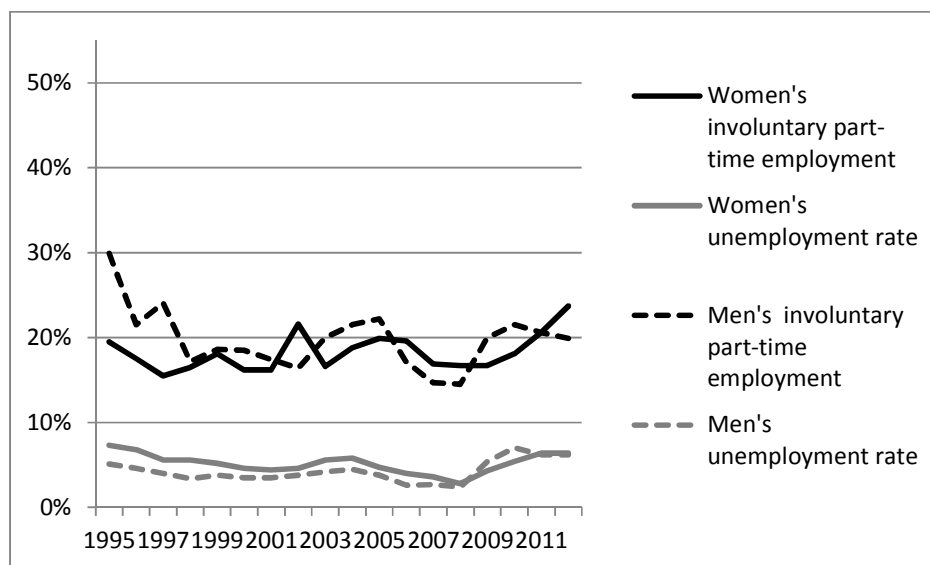
Comparing the graphs in Figure 2 we see that there are considerable country-variations in the fraction of involuntary part-time work; the percentages being highest in Finland and Iceland (about 30 per cent in 2012) and lowest in Denmark and Norway (about 20 per cent in 2012) with Sweden in the middle. The developments in 1995-2012 also differ quite much but seem to follow the changes in unemployment quite closely. Thus, Finland had a very high fraction of involuntary part-time work among its part-time workers in the mid-1990s (almost 50 per cent) when unemployment was high but as unemployment declined so did the fraction of involuntary part-time work. In the mid-1990s Sweden had a high percentage of involuntary part-time work, 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 most hardly 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 because it suggests that it could be influenced by similar policies as unemployment, for example, measures aimed at improving matching and increasing mobility in the labour market.

Finally and interestingly, the fractions of involuntary part-time work as well as the trends are very similar among female and male part-time workers in all countries, except in Norway, which is a bit surprising since the overall gender differences in part-time employment are large.

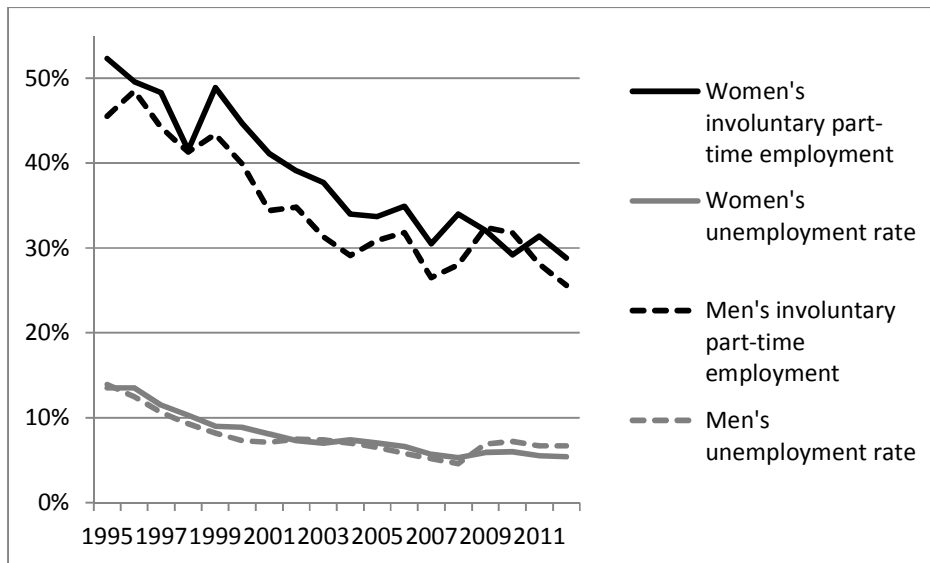
**Figure 2. Fractions of involuntary part-time workers among female and male part-time workers 25-64 years and the rate of unemployment among women and men in 1995-2012. Per cent.**

### Denmark



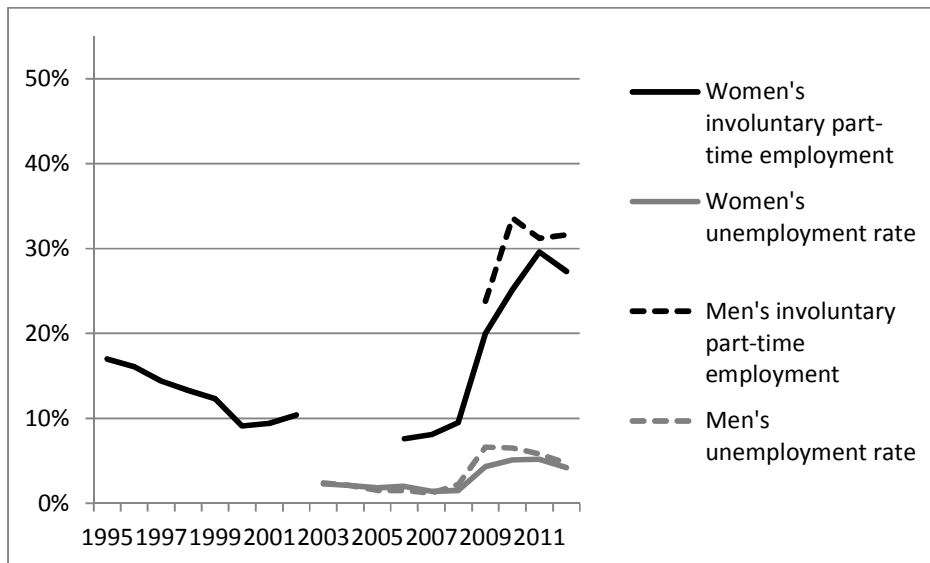
Source: Eurostat, own computations.

## Finland



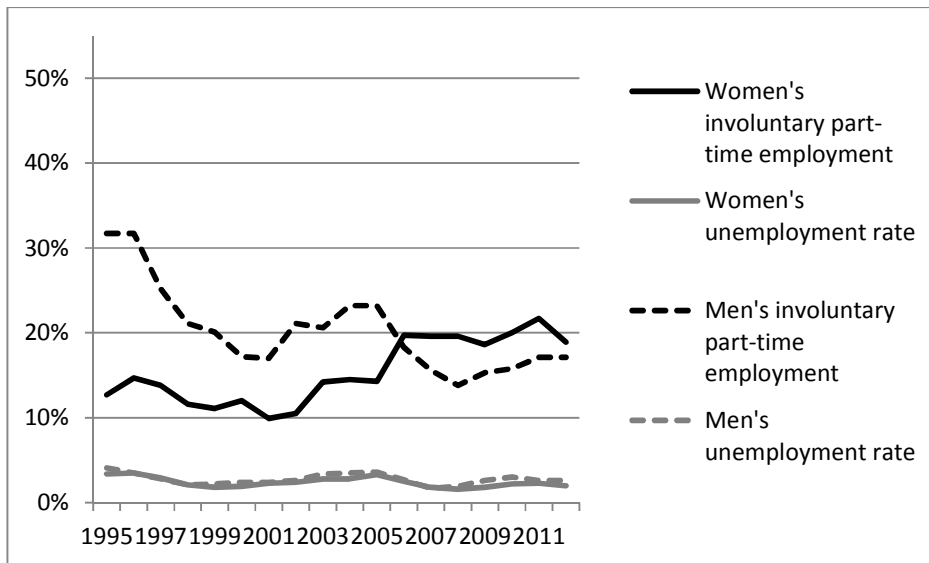
Source: Eurostat, own computations.

## Iceland



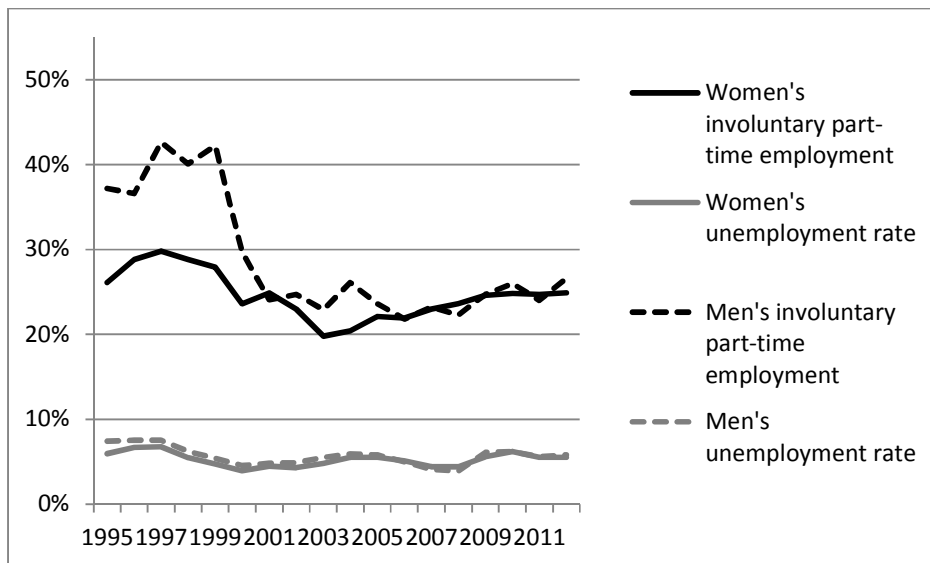
Source: Eurostat, own computations. Data are missing for involuntary part-time work in 2002-2004 and for unemployment before 2002.

## Norway



Source: Eurostat, own computations.

## Sweden



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 “could not find a full-time job” discussed above. We use data from Eurostat for women and men aged 25-64 years 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.

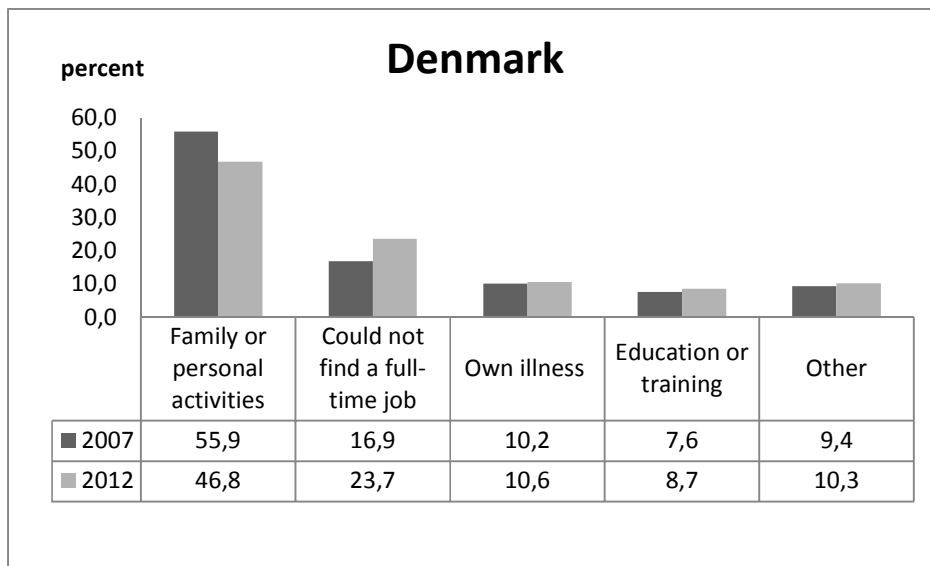
Eurostat has classified the respondents answers the question of main reason for working part time into the following six categories: (1) Could not find a full-time job, (2) Own illness or disability, (3) Other family or personal responsibilities, (4) Looking after children or incapacitated adults, (5)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

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

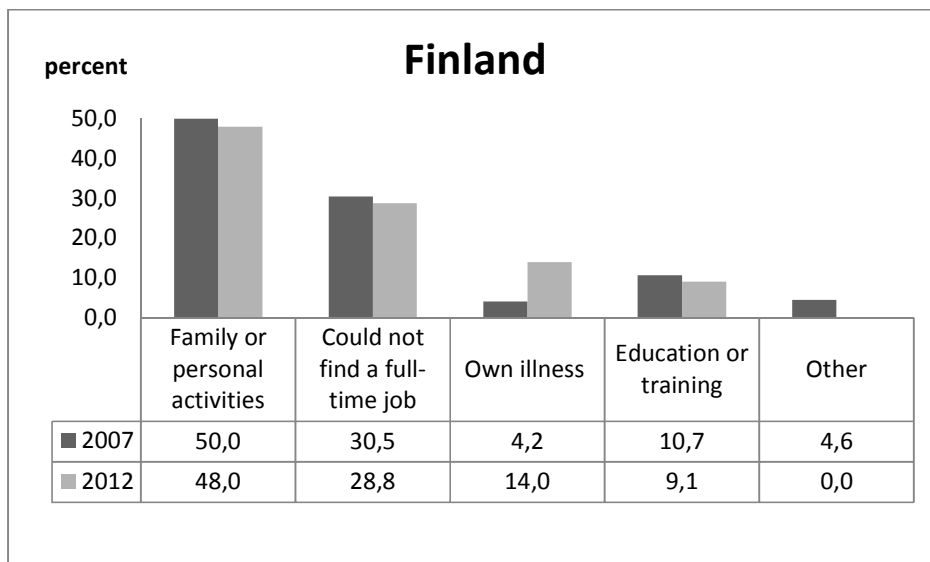
It is clear from Figure 3 that in all countries “family or personal activities” is the most frequently reported reason for working part time among women. In 2007 the percentage giving that reason ranged from about 36 per cent in Iceland to about 56 per cent in Denmark, while in 2012 it ranged from about 30 per cent in Norway to 48 per cent in Finland. In addition, a substantial fraction report “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 there are non-negligible percentages which state own illness as the main reason for working part time, particularly in Norway, and these percentages have been stable in all countries except in Finland where they increased. Furthermore, a rather stable fraction, ranging from about 4 per cent in Sweden to 12 per cent in Iceland, report that they are in education or training. The fraction with other reasons is particularly high in Iceland but has declined after the financial crisis; possibly it

includes persons who have more than one part-time job which was rather common in Iceland before the financial crisis.<sup>7</sup>

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

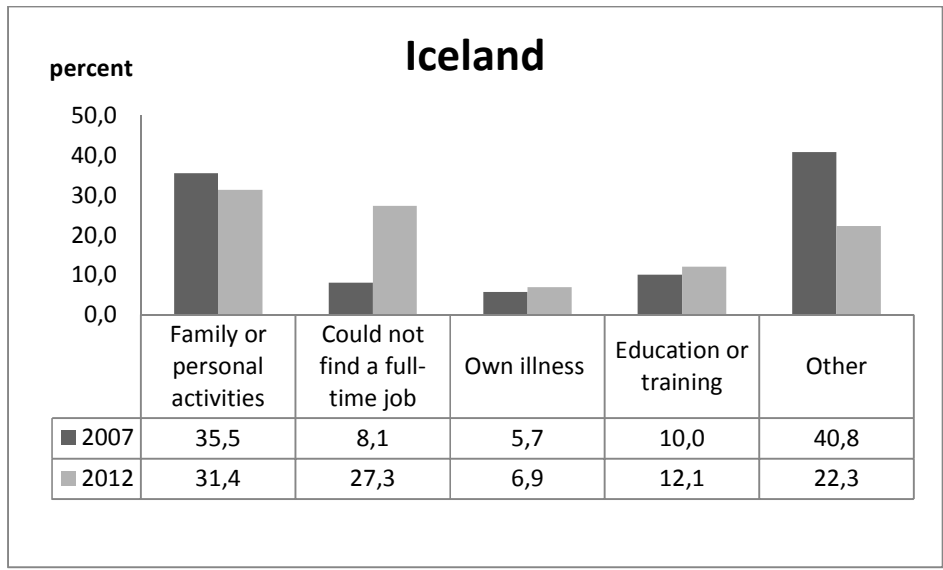


Source: Eurostat, own computations.

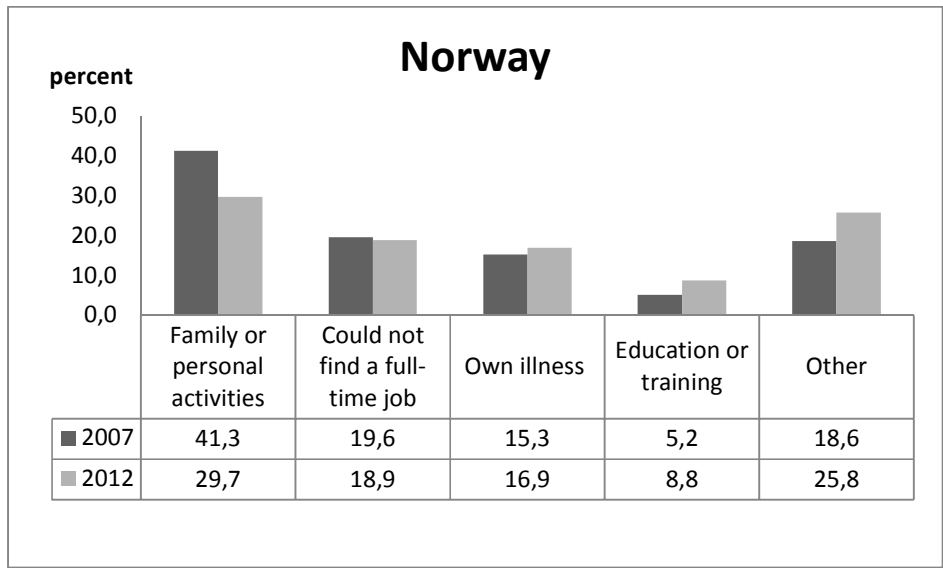


Source: Eurostat, own computations.

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

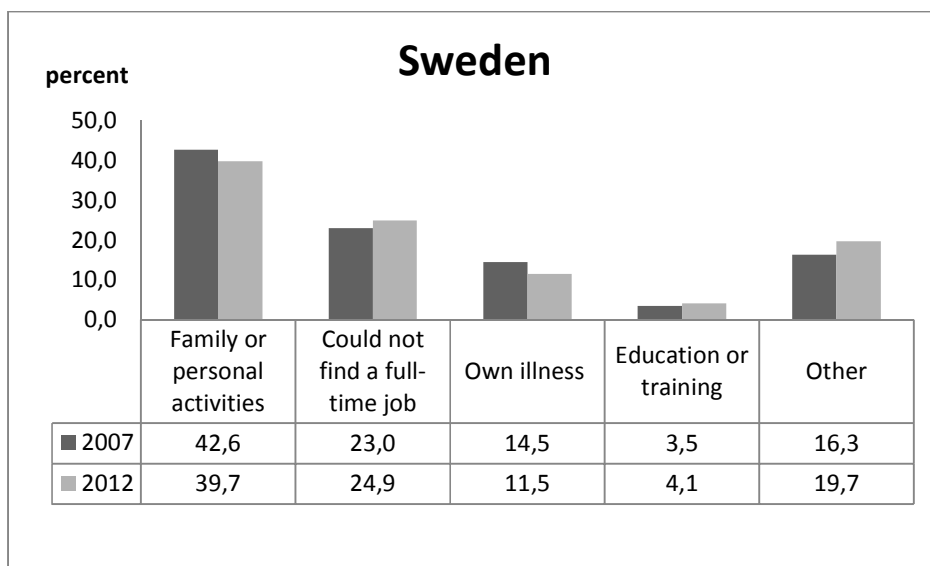


Source: Eurostat, own computations.



Source: Eurostat, own computations.





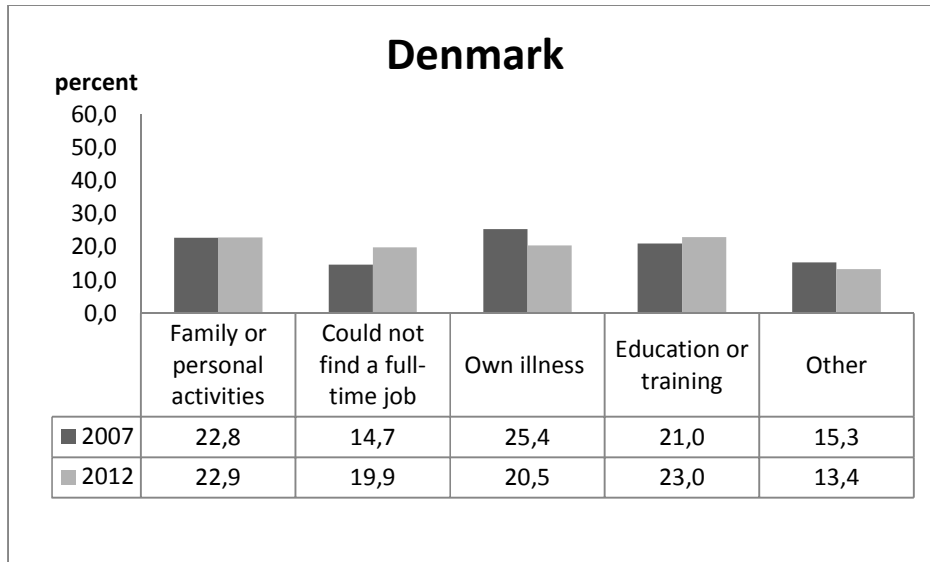
Source: Eurostat, own computations.

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

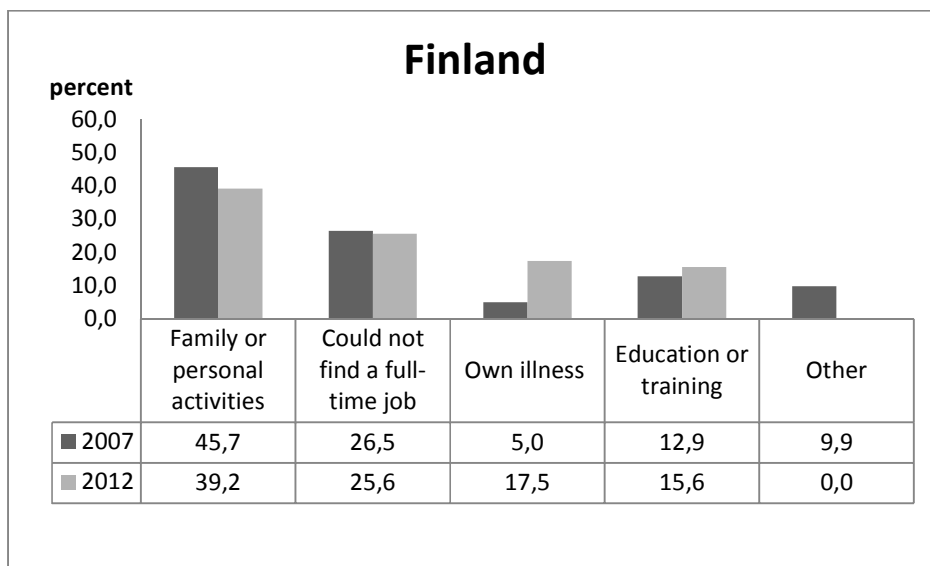
Figure 4 shows the reported main reasons for working part time among men in the Nordic countries. As expected, the distribution differs a great deal from that among women. First of all, “family or personal activities” is not as dominant a reason, except among Finnish men for which it is an important reason. We also see that own illness and education and 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 percentage reporting the reason own illness that we observed above for Finnish women can be seen 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 giving “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.

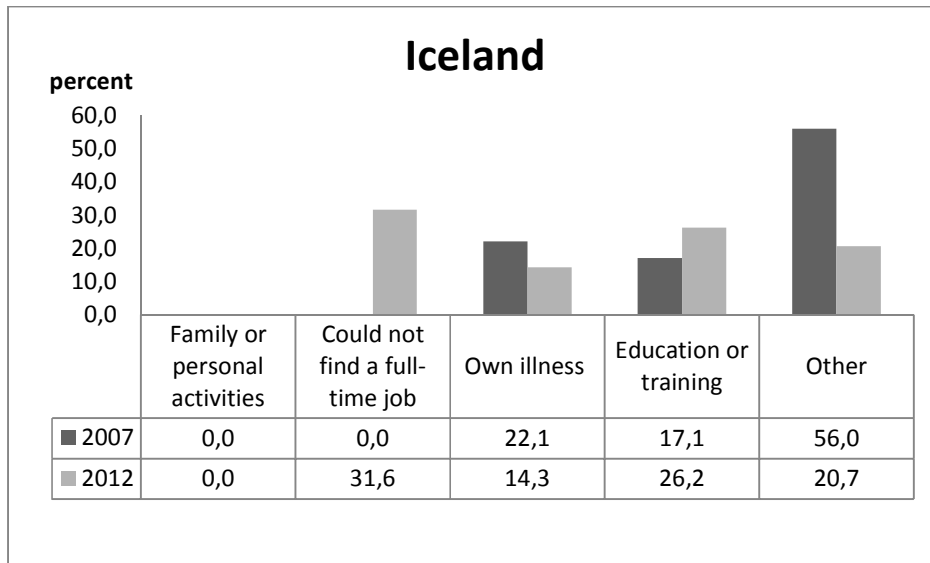
**Figure 4. Reported main reasons for part-time work among part-time working men in the Nordic countries in 2007 and 2012. Per cent.**



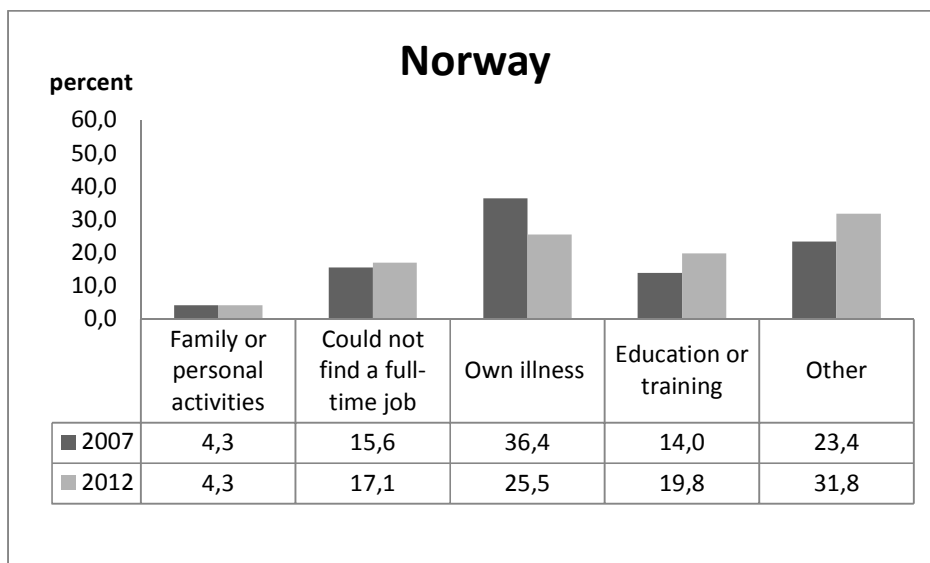
Source: Eurostat, own computations.



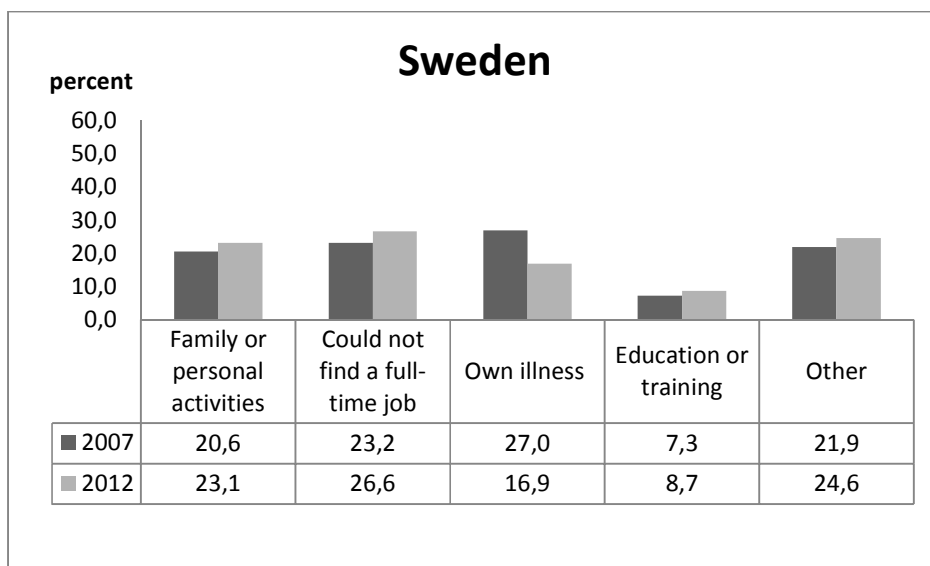
Source: Eurostat, own computations.



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. We made some simplifying assumptions and a minimum number of assumptions necessary to do the computations with the aim of obtaining cases that, within each occupation and country, differ only in the extent to which they work part time.<sup>10</sup> Thereby, 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 of 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>

<sup>9</sup> The forecasted pensions for Denmark have been 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 have constructed the typical cases in much the same way as ATP faktum (2013) has done for Denmark.

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

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 woman who works part time--75 per cent of full time--for ten years (2001-2010) and full time in all other years. The elementary school teachers spend longer time in education--four years--than the assistant nurses so they start working at a higher age, 24 years (in 1999) as compared to 20 years (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 have parental leave after child birth which is not explicitly take account of since the pension systems in some of the countries compensates for childrearing in other ways which is accounted for in the forecasted pensions and discussed in the next section. Moreover, we have assumed that within each occupation parental leave has the same impact on the subsequent wages of the full-time worker and the part-time worker and have therefore not taken it into account.

Average wages in the occupations in 1995 and 1999, respectively, have been obtained from the official statistics of the countries. 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 out from work leads to lower wage growth (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

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<sup>12</sup> In Norway the 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 has decided 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.

to be 1.9 per cent compared to 2 per cent for the full-time cases in Finland and Sweden, 4.24 compared to 4.34 in Norway and 6.5 per cent compared to 6.8 per cent in Iceland---during each of the ten years they work part time.<sup>14</sup> For Denmark all cases are assumed to have three per cent annual wage growth equally, since small differences in wage growth would not affect the pension differences. Also, in the Danish calculations inflation has been assumed to be two per cent per year but for the other countries it has been assumed to be zero. Inflation does not affect the pension differences between full-time and part-time workers as it is the same for all workers in each country each year.

We have refrained from attempting to take account of the tax and transfer systems both before and after retirement. This means, for example, that to the extent that our typical part-time workers receive any transfers, such as unemployment benefits and sick pay, which contributes 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 in the different countries. 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. This may be surprising but is not unexpected since the part-time cases work full time for many more years than they work part time and over their whole

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

working life only work about six per cent 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 parental leave. Hence, it is only the occupational pension that is affected by part-time work and that pension, in turn, constitute 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, during 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 to 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 child care 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 has a basic pension but it is very low so 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.

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<sup>15</sup> The six per cent is obtained in the following way:  $10 - 7.5 = 2.5$  and  $2.5/43 \times 100 = 5.8$

For the Swedish cases we observe that the lower pensions of the part-time cases, as in Finland and Iceland, corresponds 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 among the elementary school teachers the part-time worker get compensated according to alternative 2 but for the full-time worker the alternative 3<sup>17</sup> is more favourable. 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 system in Finland, Iceland and Sweden are more actuarial than those in Denmark and Norway where part-time work during the childrearing years is subsidised by other tax payers. In addition, in Norway and Sweden childless persons will lose more in terms of pensions from working part time than those who have children.

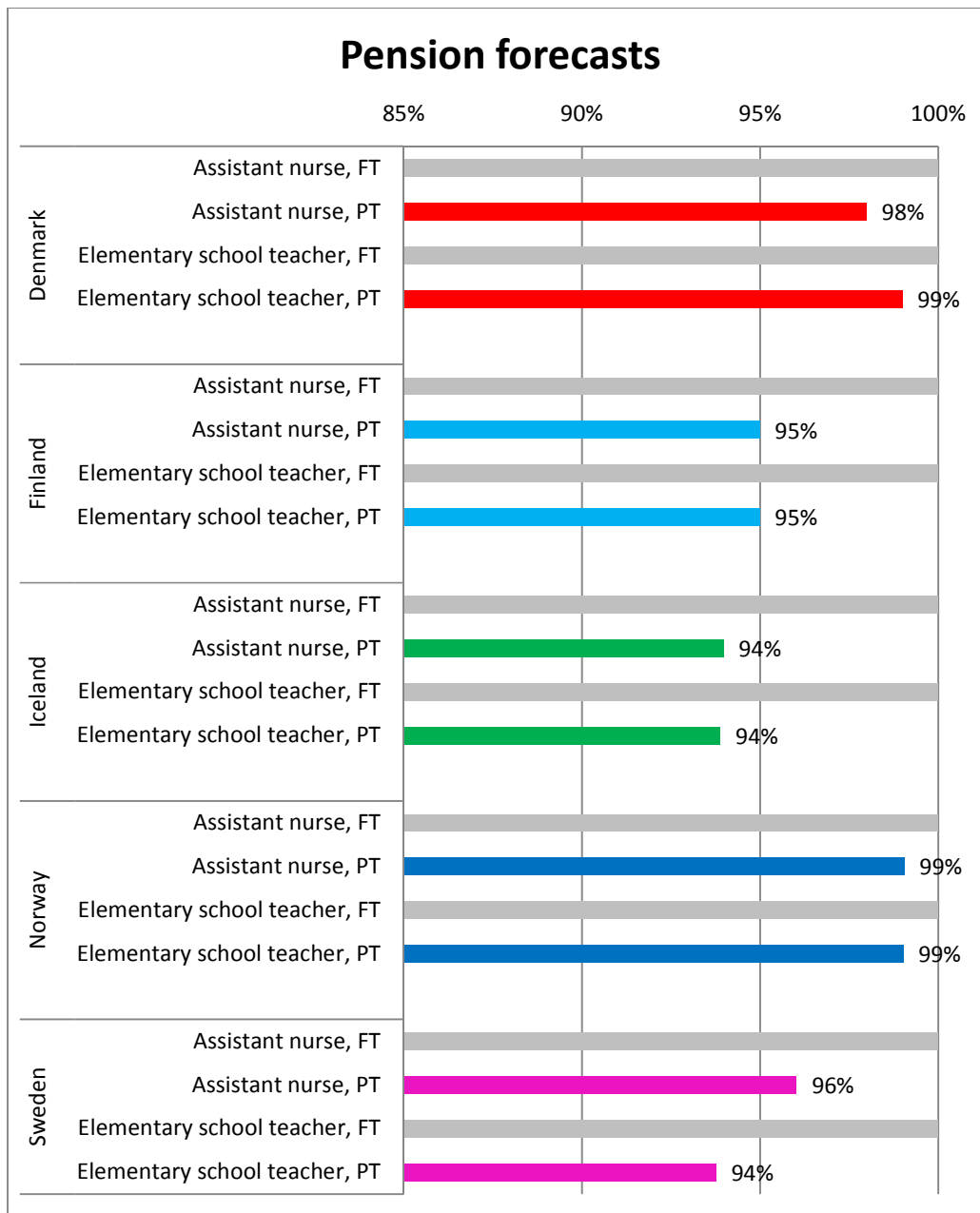
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<sup>16</sup> Alternative 2 implies that the pensionable income is based on 75 per cent of the average wage for Swedish employees in the year.

<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 which 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. Full-time workers = 100 and pensions of part-time workers in per cent of these.**



Source: Computations for Denmark by Ole Beier Sørensen, for Finland by Suvi Ritola, for Iceland by Steinunn Rögnvaldsdóttir, for Norway by Fredrik Haugen and computations 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 the week preceding the interview, including those temporary absent, as employees. Among these, those who had contracted weekly hours of 35 or more are defined as full-time workers, while those who had contracted weekly hours of less than 35 are defined as part-time workers, as mentioned above. 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 years to 74 years. Hereby, the reader also gets 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 the expected. In all countries part-time work is much more common among women than among men with Finland having the smallest gender-difference as seen above. Consistent with what we saw in Figure 1A, the fraction working part time among men differ much less across the countries than the fraction among women. (The ESS estimates differ from those from Eurostat for a number of reasons. First, the ESS has much smaller sample sizes than the labour force surveys on which Eurostat base its figures which give less precision, that is, larger standard deviations. Second, ESS captures the employment status the week preceding the interview whereas the Eurostat figures are annual averages.)

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<sup>18</sup> The number of observations differs between tables for the age-range 20-64 years due to partial non-response.

**Table 4.1 Percentage employed full time and part time among women and men 20-64 years 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 to 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-- aged 15-24 years-- is higher among part-time workers than among full-time workers in all countries. When it comes to workers aged 55-74 years the percentage is 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 15-74 years in Denmark, Finland, Norway and Sweden averages for 2008 and 2010. Per cent.**

<i>Women</i>	Denmark	***	Finland	***	Norway	***	Sweden	***
Age	Full-time	Part-time	Full-time	Part-time	Full-time	Part-time	Full-time	Part-time
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-distribution of full-time and part-time workers differs 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. In all countries, the fraction of older workers-- 55-74 years-- is higher, too, among part-time workers, but in Denmark and Sweden those aged 65-74 years constitute a particularly large fraction. In Finland working at ages 65 or older seems to be less common among both groups of workers.

Finally, comparing the age-distribution of female and male part-time workers, we find, unsurprisingly, that they differ substantially; female part-time workers tend to be concentrated to the ages 25-54 years while the majority of male part-time workers are found in the ages 15-24 years and 55-74 years. 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 15-74 years in Denmark, Finland, Norway and Sweden, averages for 2008 and 2010. Per cent.**

<i>Men</i>	<b>Denmark</b>	***	<b>Finland</b>	***	<b>Norway</b>	***	<b>Sweden</b>	***
Age	Full-time	Part-time	Full-time	Part-time	Full-time	Part-time	Full-time	Part-time
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 have significantly lower levels of education than those working full time. Thus, 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. In Finland the difference in level of education between female full-time and part-time workers is smaller.

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

<i>Women</i>	Denmark	***	Finland	***	Norway	***	Sweden	***
	Full-time	Part-time	Full-time	Part-time	Full-time	Part-time	Full-time	Part-time
Education								
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). Thus, while part-time working men in Denmark, Finland and Norway have lower education than those working full time, there is no difference between the two groups in Sweden.

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

<i>Men</i>	<b>Denmark</b>	<b>*</b>	<b>Finland</b>		<b>Norway</b>		<b>Sweden</b>	
Education	Full-time	Part-time	Full-time	Part-time	Full-time	Part-time	Full-time	Part-time
Secondary education or lower	55.4	71.7	53.4	58.1	45.6	51.5	60.4	62.2
More than secondary education	44.6	28.3	41.6	31.9	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, 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 there is a rather large fraction among both full-time and part-time working women saying that they feel they are not being paid appropriately, 32-47 per cent. In Denmark and Sweden the fraction agreeing with the statement is lower and the fraction disagreeing somewhat higher among part-time workers than among full-time workers but the difference is not statistically significant. In Finland the opposite relationship exists and in Norway there is virtually no difference.

**Table 5.1A Percentage feeling that they get paid appropriately or not among full-time and part-time employed women 20-64 years in Denmark, Finland, Norway and Sweden in 2010.**

<i>Women</i>	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). But part-time working men, except in Denmark, disagree to a higher extent than those working full time with the statement.

**Table 5.1B Percentage feeling that they get paid appropriately or not among full-time and part-time employed men 20-64 years in Denmark, Finland, Norway and Sweden in 2010.**

<i>Men</i>	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 per cent 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 women's reports on how they "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. It seems, further, that in Finland the percentage reporting that they feel comfortable about 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 full-time and part-time employed women 20-64 years in Denmark, Finland, Norway and Sweden, averages for 2008 and 2010. Per cent.**

<i>Women</i>	<b>Denmark</b>	<b>**</b>	<b>Finland</b>	<b>*</b>	<b>Norway</b>		<b>Sweden</b>	<b>*</b>
Feeling about household's 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 answer to the same question. We see that particularly in Sweden but also in Denmark the fraction which feels comfortable about household income is lower among part-time workers than among full-time workers. In addition, the fraction that finds it difficult is higher among male part-time workers in Finland and Sweden.



**Table 5.2B Feelings about household income among full-time and part-time employed men 20-64 years in Denmark, Finland, Norway and Sweden, averages for 2008 and 2010. Per cent.**

<i>Men</i>	Denmark		Finland		Norway		Sweden		***
Feeling about household's 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 having had to manage on a lower household income in the last three years among full-time and part-time employed women 20-64 years in Denmark, Finland, Norway and Sweden in 2010.**

<i>Women</i>	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  $p < 0.10$  \*

Among men we observe the same pattern as for 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 particularly large in Finland and Sweden (Table 5.3B). Answers to a similar question for Iceland are presented in Table 5.3C. We see that the fraction that has 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 having had to manage on a lower household income in the last three years among full-time and part-time employed men 20-64 years in Denmark, Finland, Norway and Sweden in 2010.**

<i>Men</i>	<b>Denmark</b>	<b>**</b>	<b>Finland</b>	<b>***</b>	<b>Norway</b>	<b>***</b>	<b>Sweden</b>	<b>***</b>
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 standard of living today 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 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.

### 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 differ 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 full-time and part-time employed women 20-64 years in Denmark, Finland, Norway and Sweden in 2010. Per cent.**

<i>Women</i>	Denmark		Finland		Norway		Sweden	
	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 are working involuntary 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 the Danish women. However, in Finland, Norway and Sweden the fraction which says they are dissatisfied is larger among part-time workers than among full-time workers, but the difference is only significant for Norway.

Among men the pattern is similar; 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>

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

**Table 5.4B Satisfaction in main job among full-time and part-time employed men 20-64 years in Denmark, Finland, Norway and Sweden in 2010. Per cent.**

<i>Men</i>	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  $p < 0.10$  \*

Finally, for most people there is more in life than work and the quality of life outside work – leisure, friends and family – matter more for some people than for others. For this reason we also investigate whether there are any differences between full-time and part-time workers in life satisfaction. 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 full-time and part-time employed women 20-64 years in Denmark, Finland, Norway and Sweden, averages for 2008 and 2010. Per cent.**

<i>Women</i>	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	
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 working Danish men. Employed women and men in Iceland seem also to have a high degree of life satisfaction, although the percentage saying “very satisfied” is a bit lower than in the other countries (Table 5.5C).

**Table 5.5B Life satisfaction among full-time and part-time employed men 20-64 years in Denmark, Finland, Norway and Sweden, averages for 2008 and 2010. Per cent.**

<i>Men</i>	Denmark		Finland		Norway		Sweden	
	Full-time	Part-time	Full-time	Part-time	Full-time	Part-time	Full-time	Part-time
Satisfaction in main job								
Very satisfied	83.9	88.3	77.0	71.6	72.9	66.3	70.1	63.5
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 full-time and part-time employed women and men in Iceland in 2009. Per cent.**

	Women		Men	
	Full- time	Part- time	Full- time	Part- time
I'm satisfied with my life				
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 part-time working women and men in the Nordic countries. We began by presenting trends in full-time and part-time work among employed women and men 25-64 years 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 these years, 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 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 involuntary part time among female and male part-time workers in the same years and found considerable cross-country variations in that fraction, from about 20 per cent in Denmark and Norway to about 30 per cent 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. By comparing the percentage working involuntary part time 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 unemployment, for example, 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. Thus, 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 but for the remaining years she works full time. 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 pensions, 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 per cent lower than those for the typical full-time workers 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 get almost the same pension as the full-time worker (98-99 per cent).

Thus, in Denmark and Norway part-time work during the childrearing years is subsidised by other tax payers. In Norway and Sweden childless persons will lose more in terms of future pensions from working part time than those who have children due to the compensation for childrearing.

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 involuntary. 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 part-time working women in Finland.

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

Job satisfaction is part of the rewards of work and could potentially be influenced by dissatisfaction with pay. When we examined whether there were differences between the two groups of workers in this regard, we saw that between 80 and 90 per cent of both full-time and part-time working women in the four countries report that they are satisfied or very satisfied in their main job. However, there is a somewhat higher fraction saying they are dissatisfied among part-time working women than among those working full time in Finland, Norway and Sweden which is only statistically significant for Norway. Among men we saw a similar pattern; overall a high degree of job satisfaction but a higher percentage reporting that they are dissatisfied among part-time working men 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 per cent among women as well as men report that they are very satisfied. However, in Finland part-time working women 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 which could be issues for future research. Thus, it seems vital to get 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 know more about the part-time workers that experience economic difficulties. Asking, for example, what the characteristics of involuntary part-time workers are and who the part-time workers that face difficulties when it comes to household income are.



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