

THE PART-TIME PHENOMENON: EVIDENCE FROM THE UK AND THE EU

Martin Sullivan

Faculty of Economics and Social Science
University of the West of England

INDEX

1. INTRODUCTION.... 103; 2. PART-TIME EMPLOYMENT IN THE EARLY 1990S.... 105; 3. REASONS FOR GROWTH.... 109; 4. UNEMPLOYMENT IN THE EU 1980-92.... 110; 5. BENEFITS AND COSTS.... 112; 6. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS.... 115; 7. BIBLIOGRAPHY.... 117.
--

1. Introduction

In the early 1990s, the European Commission began to encourage European companies to make greater use of part-time employment contracts. The Commission took the view that increased part-time working could play an important role in the fight against unemployment and help to boost the international competitiveness of European companies. The inequality of employment protection afforded to part-timers and full-time employees was, however, seen as a major disincentive for workers to take up part-time jobs. In July 1994 the Commission submitted a revised version of an earlier draft Directive on part-time and temporary employment, aimed at establishing equal rights between full-time and part-time employees and between permanent and temporary staff. Although Britain rejected the revised Directive at a meeting of the Social Affairs Council in December, on the grounds

that it would cost jobs and undermine competitiveness, the Government decided to fall into line with the other member states following a ruling by the UK House of Lords, in February 1995, extending employment rights to part-timers working less than 16 hours per week.

Against a background of high and persistent unemployment and falling industrial competitiveness, the Commission saw the increased use of part-time working, along with other forms of "atypical" employment, such as temporary and agency working, as an effective strategy for job creation and enhancing labour market flexibility. The potential for part-time employment to contribute to job creation and the preservation of existing jobs was an important theme in the Commission's 1993 White Paper "Growth, Competitiveness, Employment". However, part-time employment was already an important feature of the European labour market. In 1991, there were nearly 16 million part-time workers in the EU, representing 14.4% of total employment¹. Moreover, the share of total employment accounted for by part-time workers had been growing in virtually all member states throughout the 1980s.

Definitions of part-time employment vary throughout the EU and are not always enshrined in law. In France, for example, part-time work is defined in law as work for 80% or less of the statutory or agreed working week in a given enterprise. In Germany part-time work is legally defined as work carried out by individuals for fewer hours each week than are carried out by comparable full-time employees in an establishment. Although there is no statutory definition of part-time employment in the UK, for statistical purposes an employee is defined as being part-time if he or she is contracted to work for no more than thirty hours per week, excluding paid meal breaks and overtime. The lack of uniformity of definition makes inter-country comparisons problematical, since employees defined as part-timers in some member states can actually work more hours in a week than those defined as full-time elsewhere in the EU.

This paper begins with an analysis of the statistical data on part-time employment in the EU in the early 1990s. It then goes on to examine the social and economic factors which have given rise to the upward trend in part-time working during the 1980s and early 1990s. Since the utilization of labour on a part-time basis has a number of important costs, as well as benefits, an analysis of the main benefits and costs for both employers and their employees follows. Finally, it is suggested that the share of total EU employment represented by part-time working will continue to increase, with important implications for young workers, academics and policy-makers. It is also suggested that the social welfare systems of individual

1. The term employment refers to employees in paid employment, and does not include the self-employed.

member states need to be modified if the EU is to fully realize the potential benefits of increased part-time working.

2. Part-Time employment in the early 1990s

In 1992, there were 16,905,000 part-time workers in the EU, accounting for 14.7% of total employment. Although part-time working was a feature of every sector of economic activity, agriculture accounted for the smallest share of total EU part-time employment, at 5.8%. The service sector, by contrast, made extensive use of part-time labour, with service sector jobs representing 80.6% of all part-time employment. Although employment in manufacturing has traditionally been characterized by full-time contracts, the number of part-time jobs has grown in recent years and in 1992 the sector accounted for 13.6% of all EU part-time employment.

Despite its importance to the EU as a whole, considerable variation existed in the proportion of total employment accounted for by part-time working in the individual member states. There was a broad North-South divide with, for example, Denmark, the Netherlands and the UK all having over 23% of their domestic employment accounted for by part-timers and Greece, Spain and Portugal all with less than 6% of their respective workforces in part-time occupations. A disparity between Northern and Southern states was also evident in the rates at which this form of employment had been growing relative to full-time working since the early 1980s. For example, it can be seen from Table One that between 1983 and 1992, the number of part-time workers and their share of total employment grew most rapidly in Belgium, France, Ireland and the Netherlands.

Table One

PART-TIME EMPLOYMENT IN THE EU 1983-1992

	ALL 83 (,000s)	%PT	ALL 92	%PT (,000s)
Belgium	230,6	8,3	432,0	14,0
Denmark	525,5	25,6	550,0	23,4
France	1579,6	8,9	2414,0	12,9
Germany	2727,6	12,0	4672,0	14,2
Greece	83,7	4,9	69,4	3,6
Ireland	48,0	5,8	87,0	10,0
Italy	513,3	3,5	812,0	5,5
Luxembourg	7,8	6,2	10,0	6,8
Netherlands	907,7	20,9	2005,0	34,2
Portugal	NA	NA	144,0	4,3
Spain	NA	NA	456,0	5,0
UK	4033,0	19,4	5250,0	23,8
EUR12	10656,9	12,2	16905,0	14,7

Source: Eurostat 1995

At the beginning of the 1990s, the vast majority of part-time workers were females. It can be seen from Table Two that in 1991 women accounted for 84.7% of all part-time workers in the EU. In fact, the share of all part-time employment represented by females was more than 60% in all but two of the member states. In Germany the figure was 91.5%. In terms of its sectoral distribution, part-time working among women was dominated by service sector employment. As Table Three shows, the service sector accounted for 82.8% of all female part-time employment in the EU in 1992. Although male part-timers are in the minority in all EU member states, in France the share of part-time employment accounted for by males doubled during the 1980s and early 1990s. Over the same period, there was a threefold increase in the number of French males aged 24 years or less engaged in part-time employment². In Great Britain³ the rate of growth of male part-time employees was more than three times that of female part-timers between 1984 and 1991.

Table Two

PART-TIME EMPLOYMENT IN THE EU BY SEX IN 1991

	ALL (,000s)	MALE (,000s)	%PT	FEMALE (,000s)	%PT
Belgium	409	40	9,8	368	90,0
Denmark	566	133	23,5	433	76,5
France	2302	335	14,6	1968	85,5
Germany	3989	338	8,5	3651	91,5
Greece	54	21	38,9	32	59,3
Ireland	78	19	24,4	59	75,6
Italy	791	239	30,2	552	69,8
Luxembourg	11	1	9,1	9	81,8
Netherlands	1816	542	29,8	1274	70,2
Portugal	123	31	25,2	92	74,8
Spain	392	69	17,6	323	82,4
UK	5207	638	12,3	4569	87,7
EUR12	15736	2406	15,3	13330	84,7

Source: Eurostat 1993

2. See IDS Employment Europe, No 404, August, 1995.

3. The UK excluding Northern Ireland.

Table Three

FEMALE PART-TIME EMPLOYMENT BY SECTOR OF ACTIVITY IN 1992

% OF ALL	
Agriculture	4,6
Industry	12,6
Services	82,8

Source: Eurostat 1995

On average, part-timers in the EU worked for 19.6 hours per week, 49% of the average full-time working week. Italy had the longest part-time working week of all EU member states at an average of 28 hours. By contrast, part-timers in the UK had the shortest working week averaging only 17.4 hours. In all but two countries - Denmark and Germany - male part-timers worked longer hours than their female counterparts. The extent to which part-time employees can actually choose the number of hours they wish to work each week varies between different occupations and employers. For example, annualized hours contracts, which provide workers with considerable flexibility, are widespread among clerical employees in the UK. In the German chemical industry, on the other hand, all part-timers are required to work a minimum of four hours per day.

Table Four

AVERAGE WEEKLY HOURS WORKED BY PART-TIMERS IN 1992

	ALL	MALES	FEMALES
Belgium	20,7	21,3	20,6
Denmark	18,7	12,2	20,7
France	22,1	22,3	22,0
Germany	20,0	17,3	20,2
Greece	25,5	28,8	23,1
Ireland	18,5	20,2	18,0
Italy	28,0	33,0	25,8
Luxembourg	20,0	26,8	19,2
Netherlands	18,7	19,0	18,6
Portugal	24,5	30,7	22,8
Spain	18,5	20,0	18,1
UK	17,4	15,5	17,7
EUR12	19,6	19,2	19,6

Source: Eurostat 1995

Although part-time employment was evident among workers of all ages, it was much less common amongst very young workers and those approaching the end of their working lives. In 1991, more than 60% of all part-time workers in the EU were aged between 25 and 49 years. Only in Denmark, Greece and Portugal did this age group represent less than 50% of the part-time workforce. Less than 15% of all part-timers in the EU were aged between 14 and 25 in 1991. However, the share of total part-time employment represented by this age group varied significantly between the individual member states. In Denmark, for example, 14 to 25 year olds accounted for 31.1% of all part-timers compared to just 5.2% in Germany. Workers aged 65 and over made up a tiny fraction of all part-timers in all EU member states.

Table Five

PART-TIME EMPLOYMENT BY BROAD AGE GROUP IN 1991

	14-24	25-49	50-64	65 +
Belgium	13,0	75,4	11,1	0,6
Denmark	31,1	45,8	19,0	4,0
France	14,8	63,4	19,7	2,1
Germany	5,2	66,9	25,0	3,0
Greece	17,2	44,2	25,7	12,8
Ireland	19,5	59,3	17,4	3,8
Italy	18,0	55,3	19,9	6,7
Luxembourg	17,7	66,7	13,1	—
Netherlands	24,3	60,5	13,5	1,7
Portugal	13,9	35,9	29,6	20,6
Spain	19,2	53,7	22,6	4,4
UK	14,9	56,9	22,6	5,6
EUR12	14,4	60,1	21,3	4,2

Source: Eurostat 1993

For the majority of part-time workers, this mode of employment represented their sole source of earned income. However, a Eurostat survey of employment covering the period 1987-92⁴ found that in 1992 2.7% of EU workers held more than one job, the majority of whom had a full-time "main" job. The figure was 6.4% in Portugal, 5.4% in Denmark and 5% in the Netherlands. The survey also showed that in all member states, with the exception of the UK, males were more likely than females to hold a second job. Although most part-timers in the early 1990s had only one job, a significant proportion also worked the equivalent of a full-time week by dividing their time among two or more part-time occupations.

4. See IDS Employment Europe, No 400, April 1995.

3. Reasons for growth

The enormous increase in part-time working in the EU as a whole, appears to have come about as a result of a number of important changes taking place more or less simultaneously in the various national labour markets. Moreover, these changes, which began in the early 1980s and profoundly altered the supply of, and the demand for, certain types of labour, seem set to continue. On the supply-side the most significant developments appear to be: an increase in female labour market participation rates; a decline in economic activity among males; high and persistent unemployment; and demographic change.

The growth in labour market participation among women was one of the most important labour market developments of the 1980s and early 1990s. As Table Six shows, labour market participation rates among women rose significantly in all EU member states between 1983 and 1991. The most dramatic increases were recorded in the Netherlands, Spain and the UK. Labour market participation among males, on the other hand, declined in all but two countries -Denmark and the Netherlands- over the same period.

Table Six

MALE AND FEMALE LABOUR MARKET PARTICIPATION RATES IN 1983 AND 1991

	MALES 1983	MALES 1991	FEMALES 1983	FEMALES 1991
Belgium	76,8	72,8	48,7	53,2
Denmark	87,6	88,5	74,2	78,9
France	78,4	74,2	54,4	56,8
Germany	82,6	80,6	52,5	58,1
Greece	80,0	—	40,4	—
Ireland	87,1	81,9	37,8	39,9
Italy	80,7	79,4	40,3	45,8
Luxembourg	85,1	77,7	41,7	44,8
Netherlands	77,3	80,3	40,3	54,5
Portugal	87,6	85,9	57,2	62,8
Spain	80,2	76,0	33,2	41,2
UK	87,5	86,1	57,2	64,5

Source: OECD Employment Outlook, July 1993

As table Seven shows, unemployment in the EU rose sharply after 1980, reaching a peak of 10.8% in 1985. Although it declined somewhat thereafter, by

1992 unemployment still stood at 9.1%, more than 50% above its 1980 level. With rising unemployment, many workers with a preference for full-time employment would almost certainly have been more willing to accept part-time jobs. At the same time, employers who, under tight labour market conditions would have had to offer full-time contracts in order to recruit additional workers, would have found it easier to recruit part-timers. In addition, it is likely that part of the increase in labour market participation by females was due to increased male unemployment, since redundant males would have been available to help with child care and other domestic responsibilities usually undertaken by women.

Table Seven

4. Unemployment in the EU 1980-92

	1980	1982	1985	1987	1990	1992
Belgium	7,9	11,4	11,8	11,3	8,1	8,6
Denmark	6,9	9,0	7,2	5,6	8,2	9,6
France	6,2	8,0	10,1	10,4	9,0	10,1
Germany	2,8	5,6	7,1	6,3	5,1	5,0
Greece	2,8	5,8	7,7	7,4	7,5	9,3
Ireland	8,0	12,4	18,2	18,0	15,6	18,1
Italy	6,5	7,9	9,6	10,3	9,8	9,5
Luxembourg	4,4	3,6	3,0	2,5	1,7	1,6
Netherlands	6,1	9,8	10,5	10,0	8,1	7,7
Portugal	8,0	7,6	8,8	6,9	4,6	4,2
Spain	11,7	16,3	21,6	20,4	16,1	15,5
UK	5,5	10,1	11,4	10,4	6,4	9,8
EUR12	6,0	8,9	10,8	10,3	8,4	9,1

Source: Eurostat (SECOS)

Finally, demographic trends have also had an important influence on the supply of labour in the EU. Declining birth rates throughout Europe have significantly reduced the number of school leavers entering the labour market looking for full-time employment. At the same time, increases in life expectancy have led to a steady increase in the average age of the workforce. Many employers have, therefore, begun to offer part-time employment contracts as a means of recruiting married women and retaining older workers who no longer wish to work full-time.

While the recruitment of part-time employees from groups such as married women and older workers represented a response by employers to changing conditions on the supply-side of the labour market, a number of other factors, unrelated to the supply of labour, gave rise to a rapid increase in the demand for part-timers vis-

a-vis full-timers. The most important factors were: the relative decline in manufacturing employment and an enormous expansion of the service sector; increased competition in product markets; and economic recession. Between 1983 and 1992, the share of total employment in the EU represented by manufacturing, with its traditional preference for full-time employment, declined from 35.5% to 32.7%. Over the same period, service sector employment, a large proportion of which has always been part-time, rose from 55.3% to 61.4% of all employment.

Throughout the 1980s and early 1990s there was a continuous intensification of competition in global product markets. European firms faced heightened competition in export markets from their traditional rivals in Japan and the US, as well as from producers in the rapidly developing Asian "tiger" economies. Moreover, the removal of protective trade barriers at home, under the auspices of the single market programme, exposed European firms to greater competition in their domestic markets. With the onset of recession at the end of the 1980s, European producers were faced with an urgent need to develop strategies for survival and growth. Faced with an increasingly competitive environment and dwindling consumer demand, many firms are thought to have identified greater flexibility as the most effective strategy for increasing their return on capital.

The flexible firm model, developed during the 1980s, (Atkinson 1985, Atkinson and Meager 1986) identifies two types of labour flexibility. These are numerical and functional flexibility. Whereas numerical flexibility relates to the ability of an organization to adjust the quantity of labour employed in line with short-run fluctuations in demand for its output, functional flexibility refers to the degree to which the organization can vary the tasks performed by its employees, in order to accommodate changes in market demand. The model postulates that employers obtain maximum functional flexibility by providing a core group of workers with a very high level of security. These core workers are typically, though not exclusively, full-time employees who utilize substantial firm specific skills and knowledge. Firms obtain numerical flexibility, and at the same time insulate the core workers from short-run fluctuations in demand, by employing a second group of peripheral workers. These workers are characterized by a low level of job security, a lack of high level firm specific skills and employment on a part-time and/or temporary basis. A third group of still more peripheral employees will also be used, made up of temporary, casual and subcontract labour.

The central proposition of the flexible firm model, that firms make use of core and peripheral groups of employees within the workplace, has parallels with the theories of dual and segmented labour markets developed in the 1970s and 1980s. (Doeringer and Piore 1971, Berger and Piore 1980, Wilkinson 1981, Tarling 1981) These theories see the labour market as broadly consisting of a primary sector, in which jobs are hierarchical, usually full-time, relatively secure and well paid,

and a secondary sector comprising low status unskilled and relatively insecure jobs, many of which are part-time. The extent to which employers offer primary or secondary sector jobs depends upon the degree of competition they face. Large oligopolistic firms faced with stable or growing demand for their outputs will tend to offer jobs in the primary sector. Small and medium sized firms operating under conditions of intense competition, on the other hand, will seek to reduce labour costs by making extensive use of secondary sector employment, especially where market exit barriers are high.

According to segmentation theories then, the extent to which firms offer primary or secondary sector employment is determined by market structure. Changes in market structure will, therefore, alter the balance between the shares of total employment accounted for by each sector. Of course, the ease with which firms can fill secondary sector jobs depends crucially upon supply-side factors. Tarling, (1981) sees social security arrangements, employment legislation and demographic factors as important determinants of the supply of secondary sector labour. The supply of secondary sector labour could be increased by, for example, real reductions in the value of unemployment benefits, a relaxation of the employment protection rules relating to part-timers or an increase in the number of older workers looking to reduce their hours.

The flexible firm model and the theory of labour market segmentation both offer apparently plausible explanations for the rapid growth in part-time working during the 1980s and early 1990s. Moreover, they also appear to have some predictive power, since both approaches imply that if competition in product markets continues to intensify, the proportion of all employment accounted for by part-time working will also increase. However, Pollert, (1987) has suggested that the flexible firm model has little relevance to the real world. (see also Hunter and MacInnes, 1992) Other commentators (Rubery 1988) have challenged the validity of some aspects of labour market segmentation theory.

5. Benefits and costs

It will be clear from the discussion so far, that the demand for part-time employment comes from both sides of the labour market. This is because part-time working can be beneficial for both employees and their employers. There are, however, a number of important costs associated with this type of employment. An analysis of the benefits and costs associated with part-time working, moreover, suggests that whilst the benefits accrue to the employer and the employee in roughly equal proportion, the negative aspects of part-time employment tend to fall disproportionately upon employees.

One of the most important benefits derived by employers from the utilization of labour on a part-time basis stems from the opportunity it provides for numerical flexibility. This is especially relevant to firms engaged in labour intensive activities where demand for their output fluctuates over time. Hence the disproportionate share of all part-time employment accounted for by the service sector, compared to manufacturing, which is more capital intensive and where demand tends to be more stable. The extensive use of part-timers has enabled firms in the service sector to employ the precise quantity of labour required at any time and to vary this in accordance with seasonal, daily or hourly fluctuations in demand. Where numerical flexibility has been required by manufacturing firms, this has traditionally been achieved through overtime and shift working.

The employment of part-timers rather than full-timers can also yield substantial improvements in productivity. This is because full-time employees do not work consistently throughout the day. The productivity of a full-timer tends to decline towards the end of the working day. Full-timers also "pace themselves" in order not to tire themselves early on in a shift. Part-timers, on the other hand, tend to work harder, because there is less time to get the job done. (Sidaway and Wareing, 1992) Thus the employment of two or more part-timers in the place of a full-timer can give rise to an increase in the volume of output while leaving the quantity of labour employed unchanged. This is almost certainly the reason behind the growing utilization of part-time labour in the manufacturing sector.

In addition to its potential to generate productivity gains, the utilization of part-timers in place of full-time labour can give rise to significant reductions in a firm's labour costs. This is because, even where the hourly rate of pay is the same for both types of worker, non-wage labour costs are frequently lower in the case of part-timers. For example, in a number of EU states there is no legal requirement for employers to extend to part-time employees the right to paid sickness or maternity leave often available to full-time workers. In addition, by permitting full-timers to convert to part-time working, employers are also able to retain valued employees and reduce their rates of staff turnover.

For part-timers themselves, one of the principal benefits of this mode of employment is that it makes paid work available to individuals who, due to family responsibilities, are unable or unwilling to take up a full-time job. Given the unequal distribution of child care and other domestic responsibilities between the sexes, this aspect of part-time working is clearly of greater significance to women, and is, therefore, likely to be an important explanatory factor behind the growth in female labour market participation. Surveys of female part-timers in three EU member states have shown that the vast majority, 69% in the Netherlands, 71% in the UK and 72% in Ireland, chose this type of work in preference to full-time employment. (Industrial Relations Services, 1990)

The availability of part-time employment also makes it possible for individuals to structure their working week so as to combine paid employment with other non-work activities. It also provides a means for combining paid work with training and education. In this way, part-timers are able to upgrade their marketable employment skills and enhance their earning potential. In the UK, moreover, university students often find it necessary to take a part-time job, in order to supplement the low level of grant provided by the state. The ability to work part-time also permits those who, for whatever reason, have temporarily left full-time employment to maintain valuable employment skills that would be lost to them if they gave up working altogether.

Part-time employment also permits individuals to gain experience of a number of different tasks in a variety of working environments. In addition, it can also provide a route into full-time employment. In Belgium, France, Greece, Italy and Luxembourg for example, part-time employees have a legal entitlement to be offered first refusal when full-time vacancies arise. Even in those member states where the law does not give part-time workers first call on full-time vacancies, part-timers are often well placed to secure full-time jobs. For older workers, part-time working affords an opportunity to reduce the length of their working week prior to retirement. The availability of part-time work also represents a valuable source of supplementary income for large numbers of full-time employees in low-paid occupations.

The main drawback for employers arising from the utilization of part-time labour is an increase in supervisory and administrative costs resulting from the need to manage a larger workforce than would otherwise be employed. For many firms these additional costs are relatively low, being more than compensated for by increases in efficiency and reductions in labour costs. For firms employing large numbers of part-timers, however, the increase in total management costs can be very significant⁵. The negative aspects of part-time working for employees include: low earned incomes; diminished employment status; limited promotion opportunities; and reduced job security.

The problem of low earned incomes, which is endemic among part-time workers, stems first from the fact that they work relatively few hours each week. In addition, part-time jobs are very often characterized by low hourly rates of pay compared to their full-time equivalents. Where they exist, these pay differentials are usually justified on the grounds that part-timers enjoy the benefits of convenient working arrangements which are denied to full-timers who must, therefore, be com-

5. Some large UK companies have actually reverted to full-time employment after experiments with part-time contracts proved too expensive.

compensated for this loss by higher rates of pay. According to a recent report⁶ produced by Britain's Trade Union Congress, the earnings of 4.5 million part-time workers in the UK fall below the level of the Council of Europe's decency threshold. Of these, 2.5 million earn less than the lower earnings limit for UK National Insurance Contributions and are, therefore, excluded from unemployment benefit, statutory sick pay and the state pension.

The low employment status and lack of opportunity for career progression often associated with part-time working derives from an outmoded attitude to part-timers on the part of many employers and full-time workers. Traditionally, the part-timer has been viewed by employers, as well as full-time workers, as having less commitment to the organization. Part-timers are often regarded as supplementary to the core of the company's workforce and, therefore, inherently unreliable and likely to leave at a moment's notice. Thus, there is little incentive for employers, or their full-time supervisory staff, to invest time and money in the training and development of part-time staff.

A significant problem affecting large numbers of part-time workers is the lack of job security frequently associated with this form of employment. Although part-time workers have the same entitlement to employment protection as full-timers under EU law, firms often find it cheaper to dispense with part-timers when it becomes necessary to shed labour. This is because severance payments are usually linked to an individual's weekly earnings which, in the case of part-timers, are less than full-time earnings. Part-timers are also more likely to be employed on fixed term contracts than their full-time counterparts.

6. Summary and conclusions

When, in the early 1990s, the European Commission began to promote part-time working as an important strategy for job creation and enhancing labour market flexibility, this mode of working already accounted for a large and growing share of total employment in the EU. Although part-time working was a feature of all sectors of economic activity, the overwhelming majority of part-time workers were employed in the service sector. While women dominated the part-time workforce, in the UK and France the rate of growth was much higher for males than it was for females. Most part-timers were aged between 25 and 49 years, with young workers, and those close to retirement, representing a relatively small share of all

6. Quoted in IDS Employment Europe, No 400, April 1995.

part-time employees. Whilst part-time employment represented a secondary source of earned income for some individuals, most part-timers held only one job.

The large share of total employment now accounted for by part-time working has important implications for academic economists and EU policy-makers. Part-time employment is now the norm for a large and growing section of the EU's labour force. It is, therefore, no longer useful to think of the employment relationship in terms of a full-time and continuous contract between the employee and his or her employer. Moreover, there is a growing awareness that the core/periphery distinction that forms the basis of a great deal of labour market analysis, is becoming increasingly irrelevant, given the crucial role played by part-timers in many business enterprises, especially in the service sector. (Morton, 1987)

The growth of part-time working also has important implications for young people entering the European labour market. School leavers can no longer take it for granted that they will begin their working lives with a full-time job that is well paid and has good promotion prospects. The increased availability of part-time employment does, however, provide young people with the opportunity to simultaneously try out a variety of occupations and experience different working environments, prior to deciding upon a full-time career. It also permits young people to combine paid employment with additional training and education.

Probably the greatest challenge for EU policy-makers arising from increased part-time working is in the area of social protection. Although considerable progress has been made towards the establishment of equality between part-timers and full-time employees with regard to employment rights and protection, this is not the case with social policy⁷. For example, state pension schemes often discriminate against part-timers, since the level of retirement benefits they provide is usually determined with reference to an individual's contributions record and/or their final salary at retirement. Similarly, part-timers fare worse than full-time employees in those countries where the level of unemployment benefits received is directly related to a redundant worker's previous in-work earnings. If Europe is to fully realize the potential for job creation and improved efficiency leading to greater competitiveness from increased part-time working, cost-effective mechanisms for removing the discrimination against part-time workers that currently characterize social policy throughout the EU will need to be devised.

7. In fact, all references to equality of social protection for part-timers were removed from the 1994 Draft Directive in an attempt to forestall British objections and secure unanimity.

7. Bibliography

- ATKINSON, J. (1985) "Flexibility: Planning for an Uncertain Future", Manpower Policy and Practice, Vol 1, Summer, IMS.
- ATKINSON, J.; MEAGER, N. (1986) "Is Flexibility Just a Flash in the Pan?", Personnel Management, September.
- BLANCHFLOWER, D.; CORRY, B. (1987) Part-time Employment in Great Britain, Research paper 57, Department of Employment.
- BERGER, S.; PIORE, M. (1980) Dualism and Discontinuity in Industrial Societies, Cambridge University Press.
- DOERINGER, P.; PIORE, M. (1971) Internal Labour Markets and Manpower Analysis, Lexington: D.C. Heath.
- European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions. (1991) Part-time Work in the European Community: Laws and Regulations, Office for Official Publications of the European Communities, Luxembourg.
- HUNTER, L.; MACINNES, J. (1992) "Employers and Labour Flexibility: The Evidence from Case Studies", Employment Gazette, June.
- Incomes Data Services. (1995) European Report, various issues.
- Incomes Data Services. (1995) Employment Europe, various issues.
- Industrial Relations Services. (1990) Non-standard Forms of Employment in Europe, Report No 3.
- MacInnes, J. (1987) The Question of Flexibility, CRIDP Research Paper No 5, Department of Economic and Social Research, University of Glasgow.
- MARULLO, S. (1995) Comparison of Regulations on Part-time and Temporary Employment in Europe, Research Series No 52, UK Department of Employment, May.
- MCGREGOR, A.; SPROULL, A. (1991) Employer Labour Use Strategies: Analysis of a National Survey, Department of Employment Research Paper No 83.

- MORTON, L. (1987) *The Part-Time Predicament: The Rise of Part-time Employment in Britain*, West Midlands Low pay Unit.
- Office for Official Publications of the European Communities. (1995) *Employment in Europe*, Luxembourg.
- POLLERT, A. (1987) *The Flexible Firm: A Model in Search of Reality*, Warwick Papers in Industrial Relations No 19, University of Warwick.
- RICE, P. (1994) *Post-War Trends in Part-time Employment: A Survey*, Department of Economics, University of Southampton.
- ROBINSON, O.; WALLACE, J. (1984) "Growth and Utilization of Part- Time Labour in Great Britain", *Employment Gazette*, Vol 92 No 9.
- RUBERY, J.; TARLING, R.; WILKINSON, F. (1987) "Flexibility, Marketing and the Organization of Production", *Labour and Society*, January.
- RUBERY, J. (ed.) (1988) *Women and Recession*, Routledge and Kegan Paul.
- SIDAWAY, J.; WAREING, A. (1992) "Part-timers with Potential", *Employment Gazette*, UK Department of Employment, January.
- TARLING, R. (1981) "The Relationship Between Employment and Output: Where Does Segmentation Theory Lead Us?" In Wilkinson F. *The Dynamics of Labour Market Segmentation*, Academic Press.
- WALSH, T. (1989) "Part-time Employment and Labour Market Policies" *National Westminster Bank Quarterly Review*, May, London.
- WATSON, G.; FOTHERGILL, B. (1993) "Part-time Employment and Attitudes to Part-time Work", *Employment Gazette*, UK Department of Employment, May.
- WILKINSON, F. (ed.) (1981) *The Dynamics of Labour Market Segmentation*, Academic Press.