

WORKING TIME AND WORKING CONTRACTS FLEXIBILITY IN SLOVAKIA AND IN EUROPE – INTERCOUNTRY COMPARISON

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Abstract

The paper presents inter country comparison of work flexibility in Slovakia and in Europe. Especially we pay attention to working time flexibility (part time) and contractual flexibility (temporary working contracts). A prerequisite for the wider application of flexibility are environment and conditions (political, economic and non-economic). In this paper we will identify these conditions and we will classify groups of countries in terms of the level and the nature of labor flexibility (in the above-mentioned aspects). We will use data about working contracts flexibility from the statistical database Eurostat and we will describe and compare the average level of contractual flexibility of European Union countries with data for Slovak Republic and the Czech Republic. Subsequently we identify the causes of work in flexible configurations, distinguishing between positive and negative flexibility, respectively required from enforced flexibility. In conclusion we will mention recommendations to support the practice and development of positive flexibility of working contracts arrangements in Slovakia.

Key words: work flexibility, working time, working contracts, intercountry comparison

JEL Code: J21: Labor Force and Employment, Size, and Structure; J22: Time Allocation and Labor Supply; J23: Labor Demand

Introduction

Labor market flexibility is a current trend at home and abroad. In this paper we focus on one component of a flexible labor market in a flexible industrial relations (other than work on permanent working contract and full time). Specifically, the paper is devoted to part-time work and work performed under fixed-term contracts, which are the two most commonly used forms of flexible employment. Our intention was to describe the peace and nature (in terms of positive/desirable vs. negative/enforced) of flexible work (the two most frequently used and most popular forms). We recall also that the description and inter-country comparison is the

basis for further usage of data about flexibility for economic and political decision making for the state, for local and municipal governance and at corporate level decision making.

Labor flexibility is one aspect of broader concept of decent work. Decent Work¹ reflects priorities on the social, economic and political agenda of countries and the international system. In a relatively short time this concept has forged an international consensus among governments, employers, workers and civil society that productive employment and decent work are key elements to achieving a fair globalization, reducing poverty and achieving equitable, inclusive, and sustainable development.

Putting the Decent Work Agenda into practice is achieved through the implementation of the ILO's four strategic objectives, with gender equality as a crosscutting objective: promoting jobs, guaranteeing rights at work, extending social protection and promoting social dialogue.

1 Reasons for flexible working contracts

Nunez and Livanos (2015) examined and interpreted four possible reasons in the light of four different labor economics theories. These include temporary employment as: a) signal; b) screening mechanism; c) flexible contract; and d) friction of the labor market. Personal and socio-economic characteristics, along with national and institutional factors, driving each type of temporary employment, are identified and scrutinised. With data on over 200 000 young (aged 20-35) temporary employees across Europe (EU-15) in order to investigate the factors leading to different types of temporary employment signed a temporary contract as likely to depend upon various social, cultural and political characteristic. Their research provides an excellent platform for investigation due to the diverse environments of its member states. Their findings showed that temporary employment is segmented into two broad groups; "precarious" temporaries and temporaries "by choice".

How and why it is important to measure employment precariousness? Puig-Barrachina, V.; Vanroelen, C.; Vives, A.; Martinez, J. M.; Muntaner, C.; Levecque, K.; Benach, J.; Louckx, F. (2014) analysed sample of 21,415 participants in the EU-27 from the Fourth European Working Conditions Survey-2005. A cross-sectional study of the social distribution of precarious employment was conducted through the analysis of proportional differences according to gender, social class and credentials for the European Union as a whole and

¹ The Decent Work concept was formulated by the ILO's constituents – governments and employers and workers – as a means to identify the Organization's major priorities. It is based on the understanding that work is a source of personal dignity, family stability, peace in the community, democracies that deliver for people, and economic growth that expands opportunities for productive jobs and enterprise development.

within each country. The 8 dimensions of the employment precariousness construct they represented by 11 indicators. Results of their research showed, that in general, women, workers without supervisory authority, those with fewer credentials, and those living in Eastern and Southern European countries suffer the highest levels of precarious employment. Exceptionally, men, workers with supervisory authority and those with the highest credentials suffer the highest levels of long working hours, schedule unpredictability and uncompensated flexible working times.

Also Kauhanen, M. and Nätti, J. (2015) studied motives for working temporary or part-time. They also studied the impact of job contract types on perceived job quality, using the Finnish 2008 Quality of Work Life Surveys (QWLS) from the years 1997, 2003 and 2008. Their research results imply that there are clear differences in job quality and work well-being by the type of job contract and it confirmed the importance of distinguishing between types of temporary and part-time work by the contract preference, i.e. whether these nonstandard employment arrangements are exercised involuntarily or not. Almost without exception, involuntary temporary and involuntary part-time workers' experiences of their job quality are weaker with respect to core job quality indicators studied in this paper, such as training possibilities, participation in employer-funded training, career possibilities, possibilities to learn and grow at work, job insecurity, and job autonomy. About job satisfaction, health status and psychosocial aspects of full-time work versus part-time work, about gender and welfare-type differences see also Bartoll, X. – Cortes, I. – Artazcoz, L. (2014). Bartoll, X. – Cortes, I. – Artazcoz, L. (2014) emphasize importance of equal treatment between full-time and part-time employees, they highlight importance of social norms forming different welfare states regimes (socio-cultural and institutional approach) and they point to the need of effective measures in this area.

It is obviously needed to understand the reasons of demand for flexible working and to support of positive flexible working contracting. We incline to accept the opinion of Kalleberg, A. L. (2000), that our understanding of these nonstandard work arrangements has been hampered by inconsistent definitions, often inadequate measures, and the paucity of comparative research. We need to investigate macroeconomic, political and institutional factors affecting the nature of employment relations too, taking into account multidisciplinary nature of this issue too (see also Muehlberger, 1999). It is important not only to monitor the impact of factors flexibility of working contracts, but impacts of positive contracting flexibility on subjective well-being (Orviska, Caplanova, Hudson, 2014) also.

2 Comparable research of flexible working contracts across European Union

In chapter two we describe and analyse data from Eurostat on two main types of contractual flexibility for the time period 2004 - 2013. Table 1 shows data on the number of employees aged 15-64 years working part-time. Data are reported as % of total number of employees and the countries are listed in descending order in the year 2013. When reviewing the order of countries in terms of the percentage of part-time workers, the countries of Central and Eastern Europe are at the end of the ranking, which led the Netherlands with 50% or Sweden with more than one third of staff and Norway with 27%.

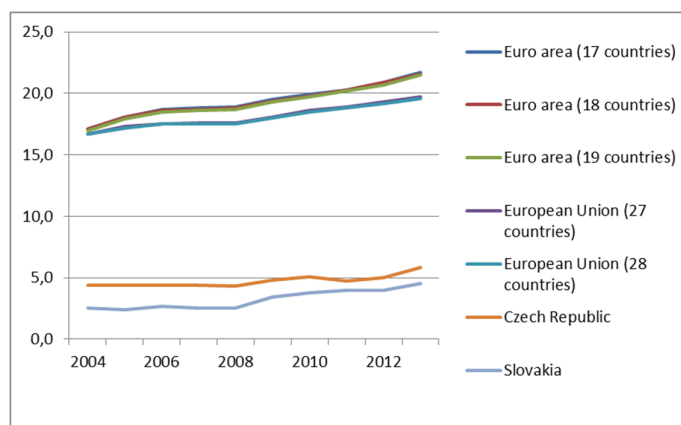
Tab. 1: Employees working part-time in EU countries in the years 2004 – 2013 (in % of total employees)

GEO/TIME	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
Netherlands	45,2	45,7	45,8	46,3	46,8	47,7	48,3	48,5	49,2	50,0
Switzerland	32,0	32,2	32,4	32,5	33,3	33,7	34,1	33,9	34,5	35,1
Norway	29,1	27,7	28,1	27,5	27,4	27,8	27,6	27,3	27,2	27,0
Germany	21,9	23,4	25,2	25,4	25,1	25,3	25,5	25,9	25,8	26,7
Austria	19,9	21,0	21,5	22,0	22,7	23,9	24,4	24,5	25,2	26,0
United Kingdom	25,1	24,2	24,3	24,2	24,2	25,0	25,7	25,6	26,0	25,6
Denmark	21,9	21,5	23,0	23,0	23,8	25,2	25,6	25,1	24,8	24,7
Sweden	23,1	24,0	24,3	24,2	25,7	26,0	25,8	25,2	25,0	24,7
Belgium	21,5	21,7	22,0	21,9	22,4	23,2	23,7	24,7	24,7	24,3
Ireland	16,6	:	16,6	17,4	18,2	21,0	22,2	23,1	23,5	23,5
European Union (15 countries)	19,0	19,7	20,2	20,3	20,4	21,0	21,4	21,8	22,3	22,9
Euro area (17 countries)	17,1	18,1	18,7	18,8	18,9	19,5	19,9	20,3	20,9	21,7
Euro area (18 countries)	17,1	18,1	18,6	18,7	18,8	19,4	19,8	20,3	20,9	21,6
Euro area (19 countries)	17,0	17,9	18,5	18,6	18,7	19,3	19,7	20,2	20,7	21,5
Iceland	19,2	21,8	16,6	21,1	20,1	23,0	22,4	20,5	20,8	20,8
European Union (27 countries)	16,7	17,3	17,5	17,6	17,6	18,1	18,6	18,9	19,3	19,7
European Union (28 countries)	16,7	17,2	17,5	17,5	17,5	18,0	18,5	18,8	19,2	19,6
Luxembourg	16,3	17,4	17,1	17,8	17,9	17,6	17,5	18,0	18,5	18,7
France	16,9	17,1	17,1	17,2	16,8	17,2	17,6	17,6	17,7	18,1
Italy	12,4	12,7	13,1	13,4	14,1	14,1	14,8	15,2	16,8	17,6
Spain	8,8	12,0	11,6	11,4	11,6	12,4	12,9	13,5	14,4	15,7
Malta	7,8	9,0	9,7	10,6	11,1	11,0	11,6	12,6	13,2	14,2
Finland	12,8	13,3	13,5	13,4	12,7	13,3	13,9	14,1	14,1	14,0
Cyprus	7,5	7,6	6,6	6,4	6,8	7,5	8,3	9,0	9,7	11,9
Turkey	:	:	7,2	7,9	8,7	10,6	11,1	11,3	11,5	11,9
Portugal	8,2	8,2	8,2	8,9	8,8	8,5	8,5	10,3	11,2	11,1
Slovenia	8,3	7,8	8,0	8,1	8,1	9,5	10,3	9,5	9,0	9,3
Romania	9,2	9,2	8,6	8,6	8,6	8,5	9,9	9,5	9,3	9,0
Estonia	6,9	6,8	6,8	7,1	6,4	9,4	9,8	9,3	9,2	8,9
Greece	4,5	4,8	5,5	5,4	5,4	5,9	6,3	6,7	7,7	8,4
Lithuania	8,4	6,9	10,0	8,6	6,5	7,9	7,8	8,3	8,9	8,4
Latvia	10,2	7,6	5,9	5,6	5,9	8,2	9,4	8,8	8,9	7,5
Poland	9,6	9,8	8,9	8,5	7,7	7,7	7,7	7,3	7,2	7,1
Hungary	4,3	3,9	3,7	3,9	4,3	5,2	5,5	6,4	6,7	6,4
Czech Republic	4,4	4,4	4,4	4,4	4,3	4,8	5,1	4,7	5,0	5,8
Croatia	6,5	7,8	7,0	6,1	6,5	6,5	7,0	7,2	5,6	5,4
Slovakia	2,5	2,4	2,7	2,5	2,5	3,4	3,8	4,0	4,0	4,5
Former Yugoslav Republic	:	:	6,3	6,4	5,6	5,3	5,6	6,0	6,1	4,4
Bulgaria	2,7	1,9	1,8	1,5	2,0	2,1	2,2	2,2	2,2	2,5

Source: own processing based on data from the database Eurostat: <http://appsso.eurostat.ec.europa.eu>

In Figure 1 we compare average European indicators of flexibility with data for Slovakia and the Czech Republic. The data of the EU average are higher order than the data for the Slovak and Czech Republics. Data from the years 2004 - 2013 allow us to monitor the trend in part-time employment and the trend of averaged European Union data, which is more dynamic than in the Czech Republic and Slovakia.

Fig. 1: Slovak and Czech employees working part-time trend in the years 2004 – 2013 (in % of total employees) compared with EU average values



Source: own processing based on data from the database Eurostat: <http://appsso.eurostat.ec.europa.eu>

Discussing flexible forms of work it is important to distinguish the reasons for part-time work and, therefore, whether it is a positive / desirable flexibility or one forced by the employer. After describing we subsequently analysed the data on the causes of part-time work. The data clearly show that the largely negative flexibility, with almost 30% of citizens of European Union countries part-time workers using this scheme because they could not find full-time work. The share of involuntary part-time workers in the total number employees in this mode varies between countries. Table 2 is compiled ranking countries according to this indicator in 2013, involving the descending arrangement. Most -over 68%- involuntary part-time employees has Greece, followed by Spain, Italy, Bulgaria, Romania, Cyprus. In all these countries exceeds the share of involuntary part-time employees in the total number of part-time 50%. More than a third of total part time employees represent involuntarily part-time employees in Portugal, Hungary, Ireland, Latvia, France, Slovenia. The Table 2 also includes other reasons to work part-time.

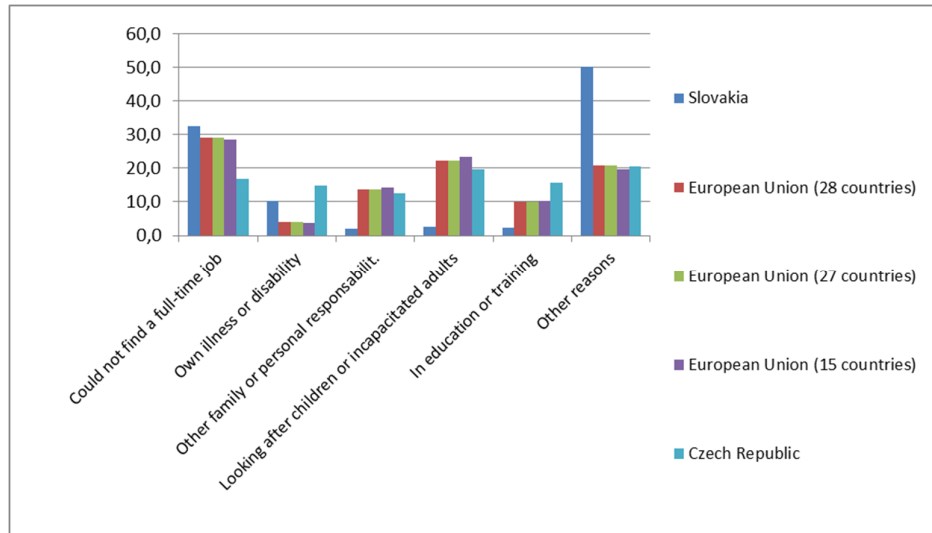
Tab. 2: Reasons of working part-time (in %, in the year 2013)

GEO/REASON	Could not find a full-time job	Own illness or disability	Other family or personal responsibilities	Looking after children or incapacitated adults	In education or training	Other reasons
Greece	68,2	0,5	7,2	4,1	3,9	16,1
Spain	63,3	1,2	4,0	11,6	5,0	15,0
Italy	62,8	1,6	4,5	16,9	1,8	12,4
Bulgaria	61,8		12,1		7,8	13,2
Romania	55,9	3,6	6,6	2,3	1,6	30,1
Cyprus	55,8	4,7	10,3	11,1	5,1	13,0
Portugal	48,8	7,1	5,0	3,2	6,3	29,6
Hungary	43,2	16,0	4,8	8,6	5,2	22,3
Ireland	43,1	1,2	17,3	16,1	13,4	9,0
Latvia	40,7	3,1	12,7	3,2	9,8	30,4
France	39,3	6,3	16,2	26,1	5,0	7,0
Former Yugoslav Republic	35,1	1,7	12,3	2,1	5,7	43,1
Lithuania	32,7	6,8	14,2		10,5	32,8
Slovakia	32,4	10,4	2,1	2,7	2,2	50,2
Euro area (19 countries)	30,9	3,7	13,2	21,7	9,2	21,3
Poland	30,9	6,3	3,1	6,1	9,6	44,1
Euro area (18 countries)	30,8	3,7	13,2	21,7	9,2	21,3
Euro area (17 countries)	30,8	3,7	13,2	21,8	9,2	21,2
Sweden	29,7	10,1	10,6	17,2	12,9	19,5
European Union (28 countries)	29,2	3,9	13,7	22,3	10,1	20,8
European Union (27 countries)	29,2	3,9	13,7	22,3	10,1	20,7
European Union (15 countries)	28,6	3,6	14,3	23,5	10,3	19,7
Finland	26,1	10,7	25,0	10,4	27,9	
Croatia	24,8	9,1	10,7	5,2	2,2	48,1
United Kingdom	20,3	2,1	18,1	32,8	11,7	15,0
Norway	18,8	15,9	5,2	12,1	27,4	20,6
Estonia	18,5	7,2	6,1	8,9	20,2	39,0
Denmark	18,3	7,7	21,1	2,7	40,8	9,4
Iceland	17,6	7,5	5,7	7,1	42,2	19,9
Czech Republic	16,9	14,7	12,6	19,8	15,6	20,4
Malta	16,0	1,6	28,4	16,6	15,7	21,6
Germany	15,6	3,5	19,0	23,5	10,2	28,2
Austria	11,8	3,3	17,6	31,8	11,6	24,0
Luxembourg	10,6	4,0	41,6	22,1	5,7	16,0
Slovenia	10,6	20,7	2,1	9,2	28,0	29,3
Netherlands	9,9	4,0	4,2	29,6	22,3	30,0
Belgium	9,5	5,3	28,1	18,1	2,8	36,2
Switzerland	7,5	4,0	20,8	21,1	9,7	36,9
Turkey	7,0	2,4	5,3	5,7	6,2	73,3

Source: own processing based on data from the database Eurostat: <http://appsso.eurostat.ec.europa.eu>

In Slovakia this share of involuntary part-time employees is 32.4% and in the Czech Republic 16.9%. Slovakia and the Czech Republic are dominated by the so-called "Other reasons". Figure 2 shows differences of Slovakia and Czech Republic in terms of reasons of part-time work from the EU average. In particular, in Slovakia is among the reasons most numerous category "other reasons" followed by the reason "inability to find a full-time job." In the Czech Republic the structure of part-time employees is closer to the European average, with the dominance of reason "care children and adults who are dependent on care" (with 1/5 employed in this mode), and also with a 15% share of part-time employees because of education or training.

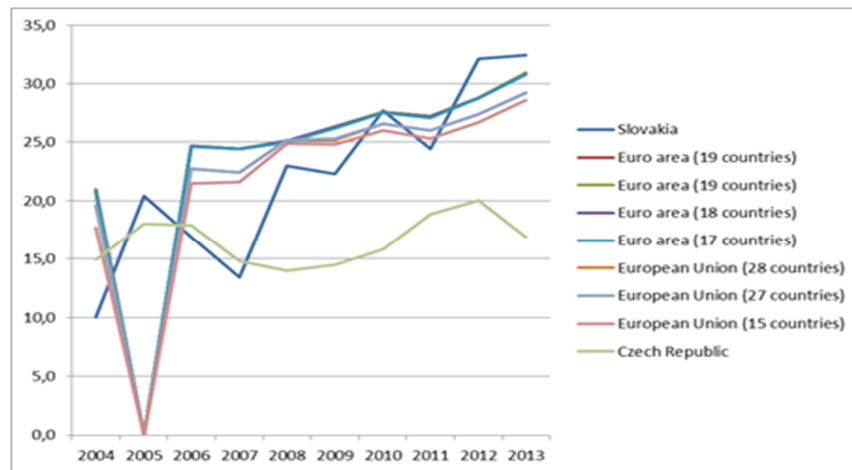
Fig. 2: Slovak and Czech employees working part-time by reasons (in %) compared with EU average values



Source: own processing based on data from the database Eurostat: <http://appsso.eurostat.ec.europa.eu>

In Figure 3 we follow the development trend of involuntary unemployment in the years 2004 to 2013 on average in the EU alone and in Slovakia and the Czech Republic. Data are listed as a percentage (the percentage of involuntary part-time in the total number of part-time). European trend and Slovak trend in the long-term horizon (ten-year) is growing, the trend line of Czech Republic has the shape of a sinusoid.

Fig. 3: Slovak and Czech involuntary part-time working employees trends in the years 2004 - 2013 (in %) compared with EU average values



Source: own processing based on data from the database Eurostat: <http://appsso.eurostat.ec.europa.eu>

The same kind of analysis as above me made below for second most frequently used and known flexible working contract arrangement – temporary working contract. In Table 3 we describe percentage of temporary employees in EU countries, ranked descending by values in the year 2013.

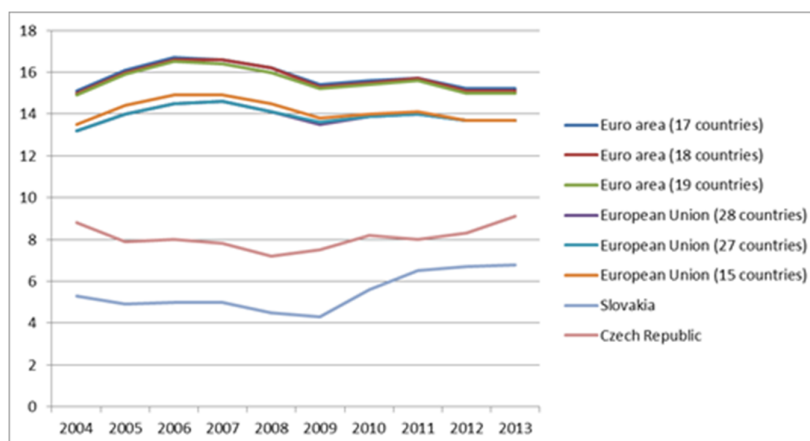
Czech and Slovak trends in temporary working employees percentage in the years 2004 - 2013 are showed in Figure 4. There is an obvious below average level of temporary employees in the Czech Republic and in Slovakia.

Tab. 3: Temporary employees in EU countries in the years 2004 – 2013 (in % of total employees)

GEO/TIME	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
Poland	22,5	25,6	27,3	28,2	26,9	26,4	27,2	26,8	26,8	26,8
Spain	32,2	33,4	34,0	31,6	29,2	25,3	24,8	25,2	23,4	23,2
Portugal	19,7	19,4	20,4	22,3	22,8	21,9	22,8	22,0	20,5	21,4
Netherlands	14,4	15,4	16,4	17,9	17,9	18,0	18,3	18,2	19,3	20,3
Cyprus	13,1	14,0	13,2	13,3	14,0	13,8	14,0	14,2	15,1	17,5
Slovenia	17,8	17,2	17,1	18,4	17,3	16,2	17,1	18,0	17,0	16,3
Sweden	15,5	15,7	17,0	17,2	15,8	14,9	16,0	16,5	15,9	16,3
France	12,8	13,9	14,8	15,0	14,8	14,3	14,9	15,1	15,0	15,9
Finland	17,1	16,5	16,3	15,9	14,9	14,5	15,4	15,5	15,5	15,3
Euro area (17 countries)	15,1	16,1	16,7	16,6	16,2	15,4	15,6	15,7	15,2	15,2
Former Yugoslav Republic	:	:	11,8	12,6	14,7	15,5	16,4	14,8	14,3	15,2
Euro area (18 countries)	15,0	16,0	16,6	16,6	16,2	15,3	15,5	15,7	15,1	15,1
Euro area (19 countries)	14,9	15,9	16,5	16,4	16,0	15,2	15,4	15,6	15,0	15,0
Croatia	12,4	12,3	12,9	13,2	12,3	12,0	12,8	13,5	13,3	14,5
Iceland	:	7,0	11,7	12,4	9,7	9,8	12,5	12,4	13,3	14,4
European Union (28 countries)	13,2	14	14,5	14,6	14,1	13,5	13,9	14	13,7	13,7
European Union (27 countries)	13,2	14	14,5	14,6	14,1	13,6	13,9	14	13,7	13,7
European Union (15 countries)	13,5	14,4	14,9	14,9	14,5	13,8	14	14,1	13,7	13,7
Germany	12,5	14,3	14,6	14,7	14,8	14,6	14,7	14,6	13,8	13,4
Italy	11,9	12,2	13,1	13,2	13,3	12,4	12,7	13,3	13,8	13,2
Switzerland	12,2	12,8	13,5	12,9	13,2	13,3	13,1	12,9	12,9	12,9
Turkey	:	:	12,4	11,8	11,1	10,7	11,4	12,2	12,0	11,9
Hungary	6,9	7,0	6,8	7,3	7,8	8,5	9,7	9,1	9,5	10,9
Greece	12,5	12,0	10,8	11,0	11,6	12,3	12,6	11,8	10,2	10,2
Ireland	3,4	3,7	6,0	8,5	8,6	8,8	9,6	10,2	10,1	10,0
Austria	9,5	9,0	8,9	8,8	8,9	9,1	9,4	9,6	9,3	9,2
Czech Republic	8,8	7,9	8,0	7,8	7,2	7,5	8,2	8,0	8,3	9,1
Denmark	9,8	9,8	8,9	9,0	8,5	8,7	8,5	8,9	8,6	8,8
Norway	10,2	9,6	10,1	9,5	9,0	8,1	8,4	8,0	8,5	8,4
Belgium	8,7	8,8	8,7	8,6	8,3	8,2	8,1	8,9	8,1	8,1
Malta	3,2	4,3	3,7	5,1	4,2	4,9	5,3	6,5	6,8	7,5
Luxembourg	4,8	5,3	6,1	6,8	6,2	7,2	7,1	7,1	7,6	7,0
Slovakia	5,3	4,9	5,0	5,0	4,5	4,3	5,6	6,5	6,7	6,8
United Kingdom	5,6	5,7	5,7	5,7	5,3	5,5	6,0	6,0	6,2	6,1
Bulgaria	8,0	6,3	6,1	5,1	4,9	4,6	4,4	4,0	4,4	5,6
Latvia	9,6	8,7	7,2	4,2	3,4	4,3	7,1	6,7	4,7	4,3
Estonia	2,9	2,7	2,6	2,2	2,4	2,4	3,7	4,5	3,5	3,5
Lithuania	6,5	5,5	4,6	3,8	2,4	2,3	2,4	2,7	2,6	2,7
Romania	2,8	2,4	1,8	1,6	1,3	1,0	1,0	1,4	1,5	1,4

Source: own processing based on data from the database Eurostat: <http://appsso.eurostat.ec.europa.eu>

Fig. 4: Slovak and Czech temporary employees in the years 2004 – 2013 (in % of total employees) compared with EU average values



Source: own processing based on data from the database Eurostat: <http://appsso.eurostat.ec.europa.eu>

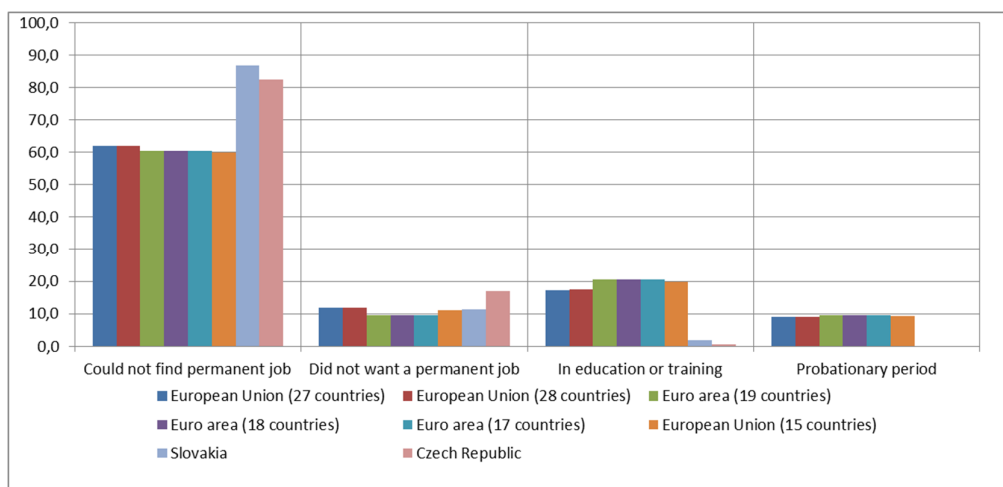
Unlike under average total temporary employment, in Slovak (86,9 %) and Czech Republic (82,4 %) prevails involuntary temporary employment (Table 4 and Figure 5).

Tab. 4: Reasons of temporary working (in%, in the year 2013)

GEO/REASON	Could not find permanent job	Did not want a permanent job	In education or training	Probationary period
Germany	:	:	:	:
United Kingdom	:	:	:	:
Iceland	:	:	:	:
Cyprus	95,2	1,1	2,7	1,0
Spain	91,7	3,3	4,4	0,6
Turkey	87,9	6,7	5,1	0,3
Greece	87,8	2,2	5,7	4,2
Romania	87,7	:	:	:
Slovakia	86,9	11,4	1,7	:
Portugal	86,1	4,1	4,6	5,2
Fomer Yugoslav Republic	86,1	1,2	10,3	2,5
Czech Republic	82,4	17,0	0,6	:
Belgium	78,0	16,7	5,3	:
Italy	73,4	2,8	15,2	8,6
Hungary	73,4	13,7	1,1	11,8
Bulgaria	70,9	7,1	:	20,4
Latvia	69,1	14,7	:	14,5
Poland	66,8	14,4	10,4	8,4
Finland	66,8	25,8	6,0	1,4
Ireland	65,3	16,7	14,4	3,6
Lithuania	64,5	:	:	27,4
European Union (27 countries)	62,0	11,8	17,1	9,1
European Union (28 countries)	61,9	11,7	17,4	9,0
Euro area (19 countries)	60,6	9,5	20,4	9,5
Euro area (18 countries)	60,6	9,5	20,5	9,5
Euro area (17 countries)	60,6	9,5	20,5	9,4
France	60,5	19,4	17,7	2,4
European Union (15 countries)	59,9	11,1	19,7	9,3
Sweden	58,6	30,8	1,0	9,6
Slovenia	55,9	36,2	2,3	5,6
Luxembourg	53,1	13,0	20,9	13,0
Norway	52,7	35,0	12,1	0,2
Malta	51,6	17,3	12,4	18,8
Denmark	50,6	10,0	35,3	4,1
Croatia	49,9	:	48,4	1,5
Netherlands	40,6	14,4	0,2	44,9
Estonia	34,8	13,2	3,6	48,4
Switzerland	10,4	6,5	80,5	2,5
Austria	8,2	33,2	47,7	10,9

Source: own processing based on data from the database Eurostat: <http://appsso.eurostat.ec.europa.eu>

Fig. 5: Slovak and Czech temporary working employees by reasons (in %, in the year 2013) compared with EU average values



Source: own processing based on data from the database Eurostat: <http://appsso.eurostat.ec.europa.eu>

Conclusion

In Slovakia and Czech Republic there are different values of flexible working contractual arrangements to average European values. Slovakia and Czech Republics also differ with respect to flexible working contractual arrangements, with obviously higher percentage of involuntary employees in flexible working regimes.

It is obviously needed to understand reasons of demand for flexible working and to support positive flexible working contracting. We incline to accept the opinion of Kalleberg, A. L. (2000), that our understanding of these nonstandard work arrangements has been hampered by inconsistent definitions, often inadequate measures, and the paucity of comparative research. We need to investigate macroeconomic, political and institutional factors affecting the nature of employment relations too, taking into account multidisciplinary nature of this issue too (see also Muehlberger, 1999).

Between labor flexibility and macroeconomic a microeconomic environment there exist mutual relationship. Labor flexibility is affected by macroeconomic, social, political factors (of institutional and structural character) and on the other hand labour flexibility is discussed as factor of influence or determinant of these environments. To macroeconomic and structural aspect and labour market institutions (such a passive and active labor market policies, the power of trade unions or the tax burden on labor) see also Cazes, Nesporova (2003, p. 25).

We agree with arguing of Kalleberg (2000), who focuses on cross-national research, which is needed to investigate how macroeconomic, political, and institutional factors affect the nature of employment relations. He suggested areas for future research in this area. Kalleberg (2000, p. 357, 358) also highlights importance of progress in understanding the nature and consequences of nonstandard work, which requires more valid and reliable measures of these work arrangements. More sophisticated indicators about workers' and employers' relationships to flexible working are needed. We agree with his statements.

Flexibility of work today is presented as a necessity, as a tool for achieving a number of economic and non-economic objectives. It is necessary to distinguish the various forms and level of importance of this issue. At the macroeconomic level it is necessary to mention the problems associated with the issue of employment, labor market, productivity and economic performance. At the microeconomic level we distinguish the demand for flexible work and supply of flexible working and structural and institutional context in which the demand for and supply of labor flexibility are performed (legislation - national and corporate policies, social security system, employment support, labour market policies and so on). Social background - values, social norms, ambitions, preferences (at work and in the private sphere of family and individual person) are other important non-economic factors that determine the level and structure of flexibility and in opposite direction acts this relation too (closer to the obvious and specific Slovak socio-economic aspects of the demand for flexible working see Koróny-Lapinová (2014); Lapinová (2013)).

In our paper we describe and compare level and structure of labor flexibility to obtain knowledge needed not only for labour market policies, but also for broader macro-, meso- and microeconomic politic decisions making with the aim to support of positive labour flexibility implementation in Slovak and Czech conditions within the meaning of the ILO's Decent Work Agenda.

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