

***New Forms of Employment
and Working Time
in the Service Economy -
Review of Literature***

Ivan Thaulow & Joachim L. Boll

***The open Labour Market
18:2000***

Working Paper

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The Danish National Institute of Social Research



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The Study

The Danish National Institute of Social Research is carrying out a program on the Open Labour Market, to be concluded in 2002. The research program was initiated by the Ministry of Social Affairs.

The study presented in this paper is part of the European project: New forms of Employment and Working Time in the Service Economy/NESY. The overall objective of the project is to analyse the emergence and the effects of new forms of employment, work organisation and working time patterns in the service sector. The focus of research in the NESY project is to identify the driving forces for the emergence and diffusion of new employment and working time forms, which are attributable to particular features of the service sector and service activities. The project covers the following EU-countries: Belgium, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Italy, Netherlands, Portugal, Sweden and United Kingdom.

The NESY-project is financed by the TSER Programme of the European Commission, DG XII. The project is coordinated by the Institut Arbeit und Technik, Gelsenkirchen, Germany. The Danish part of the project is co-financed by the Danish Research Councils (welfare research) under the research programme: "Human Resources in Working Life". The Danish research team consists of Ivan Thaulow, Joachim L. Boll and Agi Csonka, from the Danish National Institute of Social Research, the Open Labour Market unit.

This paper presents the results of a literature study on service sector employment in Denmark.

Contents

1. Introduction	5
1.1. General Remarks on the Danish Literature	5
2. Trends in the Development of the Danish Service Sector	7
2.1. Driving Forces Behind the Growing Service Sector	10
3. New Forms of Employment and Working Time in the Danish Service Sector	13
3.1. Atypical Working Hours	13
3.1.1. Variable weekly working hours	13
3.1.2. Part time employment	14
3.2. Atypical Forms of Employment Originating from the Need for Flexibility.....	15
3.2.1. Time or task-limited employment.....	15
3.2.2. Some other tendencies of relevance.....	16
3.3. Atypical Forms of Employment Originating from Public Policy Schemes.....	17
3.3.1. Senior policies	17
3.3.2. Job rotation schemes in Denmark.....	18
3.3.3. The Danish Home-Service Scheme	19
4. The Regulation of Working Hours in Denmark	21
4.1. Legislation	21
4.2. Collective Agreements	21
5. Summary	23
Annex. Gross-references	25
References	31
Working Papers published by the Danish National Institute of Social Research.....	33

1. Introduction

The purpose of this working paper is to present an overview of the available knowledge and research on employment and working time in the Danish service sector. The paper is a slightly revised version of the first paper prepared for the project “New Forms of Employment and Working Time in the Service Economy (NESY)”. The NESY project is a European project with participation from ten EU countries. The purpose is to establish knowledge about new forms of employment in the service sector, and to analyse the employment potential arising from these. As new forms of employment we mainly analyse employment characterised by flexible working time systems, reduced hours, and contractual work and outsourcing.

The goal of the paper is as mentioned above to present an overview of the available knowledge on the employment and working time in the service sector, specifically for Denmark. This is done mainly in the form of a review of the existing Danish literature. As we mention several times throughout the paper, only a negligible amount of research has been done regarding the specific relationship between developments in the service sector and the consequences for employment and working time in Denmark. The literature review, therefore, has a broader focus on the general development and characteristics of the service sector in Denmark. Further, a number of labour market schemes and measures, such as senior policies, job rotation and Home Service will be briefly described.

1.1. General Remarks on the Danish Literature

The Danish literature study includes about 40 reports etc. on the service-sector in Denmark. These reports are mentioned in the list of references. The themes of the existing literature on the Danish service sector are limited and rather unfocused. Furthermore, the focus of the reports are, in many cases, somewhat peripheral to the aim of this study, which is to describe and analyse new forms of employment and working time.

2. Trends in the Development of the Danish Service Sector

As one would expect, development of the Danish employment structure within the last fifty years has been characterised by a drop in the primary sector, a small decline in the second sector and a significant increase in the service sector. In an international perspective it is worth noticing firstly that the growth in the service sector almost exclusively originates from growth in the public sector. The private service sector has only gone through minor changes regarding employment and since the mid-sixties it has actually not expanded at all. The private service sector has constantly employed about 35 % of the total Danish employment in this period.¹

The drop in employment in the secondary sector has also been rather moderate in Denmark compared with other countries. Denmark was never as heavily industrialised as other European countries were, and at the end of the 1940's the employment in the primary sector (about 25 %) was almost as high as in the secondary sector (about 30 %).

So, by far the most striking change in the Danish employment structure is the steep increase in the public service sector that took place between the 1960's and the 1980's.

However, if we view the private and public service sectors combined development does not seem so different from the other European countries. As Table 1 shows almost all net growth in employment throughout the economic upturn in the 1990's has been created in the service sector. Whereas the non-service industries have seen a slight decline in employment.

Table 1. Employment in service/non.service sector by sex. 1982- 1997, column percent.

	1982	1988	1993	1997
Non service, men	24.4	23.7	22.4	21.6
Non service, women	8.4	8.5	8.2	7.4
Non service, all	32.8	32.2	30.5	29.0
Service sector, men	31.0	30.9	31.8	32.8
Service sector, women	36.1	36.8	37.6	38.1
Service sector, all	67.1	67.7	69.4	70.9
All	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
N	2 528 198	2 679 223	2 586 877	2 657 783

Number of people employed, including part time and self employed.

Source DS: Statistiske efterretninger: Arbejdsmarked, 1984:15, 1991:1, 1994:11 1998:2.

Because of the early entrance of woman into the Danish labour market - which mainly took place in the 70's and early 80's - the Danish workforce today consists of almost as many women (46 %) as men (54 %).

Nevertheless, men and women are far from employed in the same sectors. Thus, the service sector employs far more women (about 60 %) than men (about 40 %), additionally women are particularly likely to work in very specific parts of the service sector, notably public sector services like education, health care and social institutions.

¹ Lind (1999).

Male employees on the other hand tend to predominate in mainly private sector industries like car sales and service, wholesale and transport.

Table 2. Employment in Denmark, 1997. Specified by sex and subsectors in the service sector, column percent.

	Men		Women	
Non service industry		39.58		16.11
Service industry:		59.99		83.26
<i>Sale and repair of motorvehic.</i>	3.51		1.12	
<i>Wholesale etc.</i>	7.52		3.89	
<i>Retail etc.</i>	5.65		8.29	
<i>Hotel and restaurants</i>	2.16		3.51	
<i>Transport</i>	6.77		2.22	
<i>Post and telecom</i>	2.21		1.69	
<i>Finance and insurance</i>	2.46		3.22	
<i>Letting and sale of real estate</i>	1.77		1.07	
<i>Business activities</i>	6.78		6.91	
<i>Public administration, defense</i>	6.25		7.36	
<i>Education</i>	5.44		9.34	
<i>Health care etc.</i>	2.01		9.63	
<i>Social institutions etc.</i>	2.73		19.67	
<i>Ref. Disposal, organiz., entert.</i>	4.71		5.33	
Not specified		0.43		0.63
Sum		100.00		100.00
n		1 452 824		1 216 843

Source DS: Statistiske efterretninger: arbejdsmarked, 1998:2.

The Danish Ministry of Industry (Industry-review, 1994) divides the service sector in a slightly different and perhaps more interesting way. They distinguish between **production service**, such as banking, counselling, transportation etc., where enterprises have to compete on an international market, **consuming service** such as amusements, retail, household-service, car-repair etc., and **welfare service** which includes social, health and education services.

In Denmark production and consuming services are almost exclusive to the private sector while 90 % of the welfare services are produced in the public sector. The usefulness of this distinction appears when one regards the development of the Danish service sector over a couple of decades as shown in table 3. The table illustrates some major differences in the development of different parts of the services sector: Consumer service actually declines over the period, production service increases constantly, while welfare service almost tripled!

Within the welfare services the private and the public services increase at about the same speed. Although the private welfare service is increase in size, it still only amounts to about 10 per cent of the welfare services all together. So, again the magnitude of the public sector growth in Denmark is obvious.

More surprising is the decline in consumer services. This decline is usually regarded as a result of the rather high minimum wages in Denmark combined with a very high marginal tax rate. In order to pay for a one hour consumer service provided by a minimum waged un-skilled worker, an average wage-earner in Denmark has to work for about three to five hours himself.

Table 3. Employment in Denmark 1966 – 1993.

	1966	1982	1993	Change 1966-93
	<i>1 000 persons</i>			
Goods production ¹⁾	1 116	827	784	-332
Production service ²⁾	324	433	500	176
Consumer service ³⁾	473	373	360	-113
Welfare service	219	531	589	360
Private	27	43	53	26
Public	192	488	536	343
All employment	2 237	2 421	2 502	265
Unemployment	23	263	349	326
Workforce	2 260	2 684	2 851	591

- 1) Includes agriculture, fishing, quarrying, manufacturing, electricity, water and gas supply, and construction.
- 2) Includes that part of employment in the industries transport, wholesale trade, financial intermediation and business activities, which produces services for other industries.
- 3) Includes household service, maids, hotels and restaurants, sale and repair of motor vehicles, recreational and cultural activities, and retail trade. Also includes that part of employment in the industries transport, wholesale trade, financial intermediation and business activities, which produces services for consumption.

Source: Ministry of Industry, 1994, p. 34.

Therefore, the Ministry of Industry concludes that the need for household services is still far from fulfilled in Denmark and the decline in consumer services is an indication on this. Other indications are the facts that the population is getting older, the need for education is still growing, and many families lack time and need assistance in their everyday life.²

At the same time another tendency can be observed: A large part of the people employed in production and production service are low skilled workers, but they are increasingly being replaced by more well-educated employees. Thus, it has been a major concern for successive Danish governments has been the fate of the low-skilled workers, who are made superfluous.

One opportunity to create jobs for these low skilled workers, is to stimulate growth in the consumer services. If this could be achieved, unfulfilled need could be covered while at the same time necessary jobs for semi-skilled workers could be created. So, the notion that growth in consumer services might solve several social problems at the same time has been part of the industry and employment strategy in Denmark since the mid-90's.

A major element in this strategy was the creation of the so-called "HomeService" scheme. The scheme was launched in 1994 and it subsidises consumer services given directly to households. The Danish Home-Service scheme is further described below in paragraph 3.3.3.

When comparing employment in the Danish service sector to that in other EU countries, it can be seen that the part of the Danish workforce employed in service is only slightly higher than the EU average. In 1994 approximately 69 % of the Danish workforce were employed in services, compared to approximately 67 % in the EU³. A comparatively large part of the Danish service sector employment is in non-market services, reflecting mainly the large public service sector in Denmark.

² Ministry of Industry (1994), page 81

³ European Commission (1997), page 88

At the same time Denmark appears to be among the countries with the lowest employment growth in the service sector. In the period from 1984 to 1995 the average annual growth in employment in the Danish service sector stood at only 0.5 %, compared to 1.5 % as the EU average⁴.

2.1. Driving Forces Behind the Growing Service Sector

The driving forces behind the growing service sector are underexposed in the Danish literature. Probably, this is due to the fact that the growth of the Danish service sector has almost exclusively taken place within the public sector. Consequently, the growing service sector is understood and analysed as a transition from a market driven society to a public sector driven welfare state more than a transition from an industry to a service society.

Characteristically, one of the few Danish books which explicitly deals with the causes of the growing service sector, is a review of a large part of the international literature on the location and development of services (Illeris, 1996).

The reasons Illeris gives for the growth of the service sector aims at the development of the service sector seen from a general international perspective not from a specific Danish point of view. According to the literature study of Illeris the main development of the household services is the externalisation of service production from households to the formal economy. In Denmark, this means that the public sector has taken over large part of the household services. In general Illeris sees the employment growth in the **household services** as the result of four factors:

- □ The development of new family patterns that do not allow families to produce the necessary services themselves
- □ Societal changes imply increased needs for services
- □ Lower prices (and simultaneously higher productivity) increase the demand for some services
- □ Growing affluence leads to increased consumption of for instance leisure and health services⁵

At first glance, it can be hard to see the case for a growing household service sector in Denmark. Much of this argument has its roots in Gershuny's theory of the self-service economy, which due to the high taxes in Denmark has a certain credibility here (one has to work three to five hours to pay for one hour of basic household service). However, there are factors, which work against the trend towards the self-service economy.

Most important is arguably the high participation rate of women in the labour market. This has externalised many of the services previously performed by housewives, from the informal into the formal economy. Other implications for the service sector stemming from changes in family patterns include an increasing number of childless, well to do households, who can afford even relatively expensive services, and the increasing number of elderly, who might not be able to perform the services themselves.

Another factor, which has been hiding the effect of the high cost of household services in Denmark, is that the majority of household services in the formal economy have been performed and paid for

⁴ European Commission (1997), page 94

⁵ Illeris (1996), page 49.

by the public sector. In many ways household services like elder care, childcare, and health care has formed the core of the welfare state. The costs of producing these services in the formal economy instead of performing them as self service in the household has therefore been largely invisible to the individual.

As regards the employment growth in **producer** services Illeris mentions five probable explanations:⁶

The first explanation is a **net externalisation of services from user organisations**. As was the case for consumer services, producer services can also be either internalised in the production firm or externalised to a service firm. It has been quite common for firms to concentrate on their core activities and competencies and offload peripheral activities to suppliers and service firms. Cleaning and catering are typical examples of non-core service activities which many firms no longer undertake themselves. Advertising, tax and legal advice, and transportation are other examples of services that are often purchased from external sources. If apparent growth in producer services is only a consequence of firms externalising functions they previously performed internally, then growth in producer services could be seen mainly as a “statistical illusion”.

A great number of service functions, however, seem to be kept within the firms. Even in traditional manufacturing firms a large part of the workforce is often performing service-like activities, due to the growing flexibility and knowledge content of products. As many of these services are closely connected to the products and often an important part of the core competence of the firm, they are often performed internally and therefore rarely recognisable as services in official statistics. Services that are typically produced internally include book keeping, marketing, management, recruiting and R&D.

Hence, Illeris finds the trend to be towards an overall growth in the producer service sector. The apparent growth in services is also a real growth, not just a matter of services being externalised. In a way there is a degree of complementarity between growth in internal and external services. As producers increase the part of their own organisation performing service like activities, they also tend to use more services from external suppliers.

One important - though often overlooked - source of growth is **the general growth in the economy**, which, all other things being equal, causes the different sectors - including the service sector - in the economy to grow.

The above average growth rate of employment in producer services (and services in general) can be seen as a product of the overall growth in the economy and **the relatively lower productivity growth of services**. When labour productivity is growing slower in the service sector than in manufacturing, the service sector will come to account for an ever larger share of employment relative to its share of the economy.

A fourth source of above average growth of services is the fact that most West European countries and the USA are **net exporters of producer services**. This causes a relative larger growth of services, as services are not only produced to meet domestic demand, but increasingly also for export markets.

⁶Illeris (1996), page 74.

Finally, Illeris points to a **relatively increasing domestic demand for producer services**. This originates from a general shift in the allocation of resources in the user organisations. The fraction of the resources spent on the actual manufacturing process has declined considerably due to the increasing knowledge content of products and automatisation of the production process.

3. New Forms of Employment and Working Time in the Danish Service Sector

In Denmark, the need for flexibility in production of goods and services has traditionally been handled by hiring and firing. The rules for dismissal are quite liberal in Denmark and the public maintenance system is highly developed. It gives instant help to persons who become unemployed and the unemployment benefits have a high coverage.

Moreover, employment forms and working hours in Denmark are regulated through collective agreements. In general these agreements are considered as rather rigid and as a barrier to changes toward more flexible forms of employment and working hours. This rigidity has not necessarily been caused by the general agreements, but rather by the local complements of the general agreements.

However, the stiffness of the collective agreements has changed through the last decade. The perpetually and increasing demand for local flexibility have promoted new forms of employment and working time in Denmark, although - as we shall see - these changes are rather modest.

3.1. Atypical Working Hours

3.1.1. Variable weekly working hours

Besides firing and hiring, the most common way to provide flexibility is to vary the weekly working hours. Until recently this measure of flexibility has only been used sparingly, but the development within the last ten years or so seems to have changed this radically.

Today **all** employees covered by a collective agreement in the Danish production sector have weekly working hours, which are potentially variable.⁷ According to these collective agreements the weekly working hours may vary within a period of reference. To what degree this potential flexibility is used is up to the local agreements at the enterprise level.

Just five years ago only 75 % of these employees were covered by such variable working hour rules.

Another sign of the increasing flexibility is the prolonging of the period of reference. Today it is typically one year or more, whereas it was less than three months just five years ago.⁸

Information on how weekly working hours are changing specifically in the service sector are not available in the literature. However, interviews with experts suggest that the trend towards more flexibility in weekly working hours is stronger in the service sector than in the other sectors. Ostensibly, this is due to changes in, for instance, sub-sectors like retailing or banking. A very new and well known example of this is the new collective agreement of the finance sector, which now gives

⁷ Danish Federal Employer Organisation (1999), page 160.

⁸ The period of reference is not regulated by law as in many other countries, but by collective agreement. Danish Federal Employer Organisation (1999), page 161.

scope for a four day work-week as well as variations in the weekly working hours between 31 and 41 hours.⁹ (According to survey data 60 % of employees in the private sector work 37 hours per week. About 20 % work more the 37 hours, and 20 % work less).

Flexibility and increased job security

In some parts of the Danish production service sector there seems to be a trend toward combining more flexible organisation of working hours with increased (formal or informal) job security. For instance agreements may be made where the employer is allowed to vary the weekly working hours according to the variations in demand. In return the employer has to keep a larger part of the employees permanently employed.

It is an open question how such agreements affect the employment situation in a broader perspective. They probably create some extra "core" jobs, but this on the other hand confines the use of contractual worker. But since contractual work can be an important way for the unemployed to be integrated in the enterprises it may hamper their integration on the labour market. In this way agreements where flexibility is exchanged with job security may sharpen the contradiction between the insiders with their secure jobs and outsiders with a reduced possibility to get a job at all.

3.1.2. Part time employment

The overall part time frequency in the labour market seems to have fallen significantly over the past 15 years. This goes specifically for the service sector, where the part time frequency has dropped from 25 % in 1982 to 16.5 % in 1998.

Anyway, the service sector still accounts for by far the largest share of part time employment, even though the structure of part time employment has been undergoing considerable change. From being a form of employment almost exclusively used by women, the gender gap has narrowed considerably. At the same time the fall in the part time frequency for women has been far greater than the accompanying rise in the men's rate.

Table 4. Part time frequencies in Denmark, percent.

	1982	1988	1993	1997
Part time in non service, men	5.9	7.8	7.8	6.9
Part time in non service, women	24.4	22.3	19.5	15.7
Part time in non service, all	10.6	11.6	10.9	9.1
Part time in service sector, men	9.9	12.1	13.3	13.4
Part time in service sector, women	37.9	31.2	25.6	19.1
Part time in service sector, all	25.0	22.5	20.0	16.5
Part time frequency, all	20.2	18.9	17.1	14.3

Source DS: Statistiske efterretninger: arbejdsmarked, 1984:15, 1991:1, 1994:11 1998:2.

It should be emphasised that part time in Denmark normally constitutes approximately 30 hours per week. Shorter part time, such as 15 - 20 hours per week is rare in Denmark.

The rise in part time frequency among men could be a result of better access to various labour market schemes, rather than reflecting a general trend towards a greater preference for part time work. Several of these schemes, such as part time pension and early retirement schemes and various forms

⁹ Danish Federal Employer Organisation (1999), page 161

of unemployment activation only allow the recipient to work part time. Consequently, an increased use of such schemes will increase the incidence of part time work too.

Another explanation for the rising number of men working part time is that part time work is increasingly being used as a way of getting younger people integrated to the labour market. New statistics indicate that part time frequency of younger men (17 %) is twice as high as the frequency of the elder (8 %).¹⁰

Whether or not these explanations are the real explanations of the rise in men's part time employment can not be settled. They must be seen as hypotheses, which can not be tested, through the available data.

All in all it is tempting to conclude that part time work does not seem to be the most suitable subject for a further study on new forms of employment and working time. First, the general part time frequency is falling, and second part time work in some cases is the result of adjustments to different labour market schemes.

3.2. Atypical Forms of Employment Originating from the Need for Flexibility

Besides the flexibilisation of the weekly working hours, flexibility can also be achieved by atypical forms of employment. In Denmark the "atypical" forms of employment primarily include two forms of employment: 1) time/task-limited employment and 2) employment through temporary work agencies and freelance work (self-employed work).

3.2.1. Time or task-limited employment

In Denmark time or task-limited employment accounts for about 10 % of total employment which is approximately the same as in most other European countries.¹¹ Surprisingly, the share of persons, working on time or task-limited contracts has not increased in Denmark the last few years.

These conclusions go for the labour force as a whole. There are no figures on this issue specifically on the service sector, but there is no reason to expect that the occurrence of time or task-limited work is significantly less in the service sector than in the product sector. For instance, the frequency of task-limited work in the public sector seems to be much higher than in the private where it is less than 5 %. Furthermore, time or task-limited work is well-known in business services and work through temporary work agencies seems most wide spread among commercial and clerical employees (HK).

The small share of employees working time or task-limited may be surprising since Denmark has very few limits on such forms of employment. A reasonable explanation for this is that Denmark has some of the most liberal dismissal rules in the western world too. Since employees can easily hire-and-fire employees they probably choose to do so instead of using time or task-limited contracts.¹²

¹⁰ Danish Federal Employer Organisation (1999), page 194.

¹¹ Danish Federal Employer Organisation (1999), page 190.

¹² Danish Federal Employer Organisation (1999), page 191.

Temporary work agencies

Actually, the temporary work agencies have expanded in Denmark since the liberalisation of the Danish Placement service in 1990. Their main focus is still on the trade and clerical sector, but they have differentiated their services heavily. Expanding activities include for instance personnel selection, and hiring out highly skilled persons for particular projects in information and communication (Csonka et al, 1997).

This might indicate that temporary work agencies are taking over an increasing part of the numeric flexibility of Danish enterprises. This tendency cannot be verified but it could be an interesting issue to enlarge upon in future work.

3.2.2. Some other tendencies of relevance

The state of outsourcing in Denmark

On a small-scale outsourcing have been going on in Denmark for a long time. But so far it has mainly included highly skilled persons in business-services and clerical employees.

However, a major debate has been going on in Denmark the last few years about the outsourcing of municipality tasks. The municipalities have a large part of the employment-heavy services such as eldercare, home help, education and hospitals (the counties). A large part of the employees in this sector are low skilled persons dealing with either cleaning etc. or care for the elderly, children or sick persons.

If the process of outsourcing (privatisation) of these welfare services spreads during the coming years the work and working forms may change profoundly in this sector.

Though the political climate seems to be moving in the direction of accepting outsourcing (privatisation) of public services only a little has happened so far.

Declining coverage of collective agreements?

Another change, which may be of some importance, is that work not covered by collective agreement seems to be growing, especially in parts of the service sector. This is said to be the case especially in the Information and Communication sector where enterprises are known to avoid any kind of collective negotiation. In this part of the service sector new forms of employment and working times are very likely to be adopted. But very little is known about what is actually going on here.

Back offices

A new, and for the present minuscule, trend is the increasing use of "Back Offices". A few Danish examples are known, where firms in India or other third world countries are used for simple but time consuming tasks, such as data entering and processing through telecommunications. However, the use of "Back Offices" in Denmark seems only to be in its infancy. This trend is not described in the Danish literature, but a few examples are publicly known where enterprises have their accounts, invoices or bookings made through back offices in Asia. The implication of this interesting though only nascent trend is that employment - especially among rather low skilled data operators etc. - will be reduced in Denmark in the longer run.

3.3. Atypical forms of employment originating from public policy schemes

Previous sections of this paper have dealt with the market driven changes in different forms of employment and working time. Here the primary impetus is the need of enterprises to gain more flexibility. The general impression of the new forms of employment and working hours which stem from this development are that they are rather few, limited and have little implication for the distribution of employment on the Danish labour market.

Besides the mechanisms of the market, political intentions and decisions may strongly affect the development of the employment in general and the prevalence of alternative forms of employment and working time. The most direct employment "instrument" is of course the decision on the size of the public sector. Through political decisions on whether to expand or contract the public sector the distribution of work is regulated immediately and directly.

However, the focus of this paper is the quality of different forms of employment and working time and not so much on the quantity of employment. Consequently, the following sections will not deal with the extent of the public sector but will primarily focus on some of the public schemes, which will presumably imply new forms of employment and working hours.

Two of these schemes relate to the intensified discussion in Denmark on senior-policy. These are the part time pension scheme and the part time early retirement scheme.

A third scheme dealing directly with the distribution of jobs is the job rotation scheme, which aims at replacing employees on training with unemployed persons.

Finally, a somewhat different scheme (the Home Service scheme) which aims specifically at creating jobs in the consumer service sector is described.

3.3.1. Senior policies

Less than ten years ago the unemployment rate in Denmark was high, as was the case in most other European countries. A large part of the elderly were considered superfluous and much was done to promote and ease their withdrawal from the labour market. However, since unemployment has fallen in Denmark since the mid-nineties the possibility of keeping the elder part of the workforce on the labour market has been discussed intensively. The focus has been on enterprises and their efforts to make elderly employees stay longer. The government has made new schemes such as "part time pension" and "part time early retirement" as means to help enterprises.

Much has been said and written the last couples of years on how enterprises may create a good and flexible senior policy. Nevertheless, the general impression is that much is said but little is done in this area. Provisions as part time jobs are ostensibly still very rare among elderly employees, and older people are still far more often unemployed than younger people.

This impression is supported when looking at the use of withdrawal schemes such as "the part time pension scheme" and "the part time early retirement scheme". Both these schemes use part time work as a measure of withdrawal.

The Danish Part-time pension scheme

In the part time pension scheme the 60 to 65 year olds (65 now being the official retirement age), get the option to lower their weekly number of hours to anywhere between 12 and 30. They then

receive pension payments as compensation, covering the difference up to normal working time (max 37 hours).

Table 5. Part time pension and employee status before commencing scheme, 1997, persons.

	Men			Women		
	Part time pension	Total employment	Part time pension as per cent of total employment	Part time pension	Total employment	Part time pension as per cent of total employment
<i>Non service</i>	2 050	575 017	0.36	511	196 030	0.26
Farming, fishing etc	1525			418		
Manufacturing etc	446			83		
Construction	79			10		
<i>Service sector</i>	1 402	871 554	0.16	461	1 013 184	0.05
Trade, finance	201			67		
Transport, post, telecom	197			28		
Social services and health	403			220		
Various services	601			146		
<i>Not specified</i>	49			3		
All	3 501	1 452 824	0.24	975	1 216 843	0.08

Source: DS: Statistiske efterretninger, Social sikring og retsvæsen 1998:9.

As shown in table 5, the scheme is not widely used. It is mostly used by farmers and other self employed, who are not entitled to the popular early retirement scheme. Almost 50 % of those using the part time pension scheme are self employed, compared to less than ten per cent of the workforce as a whole. There were 5.3 % fewer on part time pension in 1997 than in 1996, and there has been a general falling trend in recent years.

The Danish part time early retirement scheme

The part time early retirement scheme is a new provision introduced as a part of the revision of the popular early retirement scheme in 1998. The part time early retirement scheme makes it possible to work more while receiving early retirement benefits than it was possible before. The scheme is new and has not been taken into use yet.

3.3.2. Job rotation schemes in Denmark

Job rotation schemes are a rather new innovative approach to the Danish labour market policy, created by combining two previously known schemes - wage supplements and training - in a way hitherto not allowed. The core of the scheme is to educate a number of employees from an enterprise through training or education outside the firm, and at the same time take in unemployed to fill the vacancies. This can be done on a one to one basis, or one unemployed can fill in for several employees who then 'share' the time for education or training.

An important prerequisite for the success of the scheme, is the possibility to obtain various subsidies from the state and unemployment insurance. In general, the employee who is trained will receive education leave pay from the state instead of his normal salary. As this is somewhat lower than normal pay, the employer may choose to supplement the allowance, but will in general save the pay for the "regular" employee. It is also possible for the employer to keep paying the employee the normal wage. In this case the employer will receive the compensation from the state.

The unemployed "ingoing" persons in the scheme receive minimum wage. The firm taking in the unemployed is, however, entitled to a wage supplement, thus lowering the real cost of the substitute considerably.

The popularity of the job rotation scheme varies somewhat among employers. 6 % of public sector employers and 2 % of private sector firms, claimed to have been undertaking one or more job rotation projects between 1994 and 1996¹³. These numbers tend to understate the importance of the scheme, as large firms - especially in the private sector - are far more likely to arrange job rotation as are smaller firms. Of private sector firms 11% of those with more than 50 employees claim to have used job rotation, compared to less than 1% of the firms with less than ten employees.

Table 6. Development in participation in job rotation 1993-98.

	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998
<i>Number of participants</i>	4 772	17 800	29 003	36 431	19 080	26 538
Per cent employees	77.1	68.5	72.5	84.1	81.8	80.4
Per cent unemployed	21.8	31.5	27.5	15.9	18.2	19.6
Private sector						
<i>Number of participants</i>			22 524	26 439	13 413	21 348
Per cent employees			73.7	86.1	85.4	82.6
Per cent unemployed			26.3	13.9	14.6	17.4
Public sector						
<i>Number of participants</i>			6 479	9 992	5 667	5 190
Per cent employees			68.2	78.7	73.2	71.3
Per cent unemployed			31.8	21.3	26.8	28.7

Note: Due to an error in reporting from local agencies the number of participants in 1996 might be set approximately 6.000 to high. The numbers in 1994 are approximate.

Source: Unpublished data from The Ministry of Labour, Arbejdsmarkedsstyrelsen.

In general there tends to be a very high degree of satisfaction with the job rotation scheme among the firms which have participated. Both as a means of qualifying the employees and as a way of recruiting new employees among the unemployed¹⁴.

3.3.3. The Danish Home-Service Scheme

The Danish Home Service scheme was introduced in 1994 with two important aims: First, to create employment for low qualified persons and secondly, to improve conditions for families and the elderly. The idea of the scheme is to create jobs in services, mainly household tasks, which people would otherwise normally do themselves. The state pays 50 % of the home service bills. There are limitations in regard to what kind of services can be offered in the home service scheme.

According to the HomeServices Act it is possible to receive cash payments for a variety of services, including house cleaning, shopping, cooking, laundering, gardening, and walking the dog. The most popular service is house cleaning, followed by gardening and window cleaning.

The firms in the home service industry are mostly small units. That is self-employed or companies with only few employees. 70 % of the home service firms did business worth less than kr. 200.000 in 1998, and only 3 per cent had revenues of more than kr. 1.000.000. 10-12.000 jobs have been created in the home service businesses, which probably equals 4.000 full time jobs¹⁵.

As far as working hours etc. is concerned, the HomeService scheme does not seem to contribute with anything new or exiting. Though no statistics are available on this issue, interviews with experts in the area point out that employees in the HomeService enterprises typically work regular

¹³ Bach 1997, page 90

¹⁴ Bach 1997, page 95-95

¹⁵ Directorate of Industry and Business (1998)

hours which is fixed daytime work five days a week. The most striking thing about Home-Service employment is that a very large part is self-employment.

Sundbo (1997b) has a rather critical attitude towards the job creation capability of the home service scheme. The quality of the jobs in the home service industry must be regarded as belonging to the absolute bottom of the Danish Labour market, which makes it hard to recruit employees and to make them stay once recruited. Even though a substantial number of jobs have been created, the employment creating goal of the home services act has apparently not been fulfilled as intended. Not only are the vast majority of jobs part time, they also tend to be filled not with 'regular' unemployed, but with students and other persons with a need for a temporary part time job. This tendency only underlines the basic problem in creating a market for household services: Low paid and low prestige jobs in household services are not a very attractive alternative to the relatively generous Danish unemployment benefits¹⁶.

Anyhow, the HomeService scheme might still be of some interest for the project since it is a political initiative aiming directly at improving employment in the service sector. It is not known how many of these employees came directly from unemployment, but it is broadly recognised that it is a significant part. Neither the dead weight nor the displacement effects of the scheme seem to be described in the literature.

¹⁶ Sundbo (1997b) page 597

4. The Regulation of Working Hours in Denmark¹⁷

In general, two overall ways of regulating working hours in Denmark can be outlined: legislation and collective bargaining. Legislation aiming at regulating working hours can be subdivided into direct legislation affecting for example the number of weeks of holiday per year, and indirect legislation such as regulation of opening hours. As regards collective agreements, important discussions can be raised regarding the degree of coverage of these agreements on the labour market. How many employees and enterprises are directly regulated by the collective agreements, and how many are indirectly affected by them through a spillover effect? Furthermore, it is relevant to ask to what extent the rules of working hours set out by laws and collective agreements are actually implemented and followed in the labour market.

4.1. Legislation

Working hours in Denmark, when viewed in an international perspective, are only to a very limited extent regulated by legislation. There is a law (Ferieloven) setting the minimum annual number of weeks of holiday at five, and there is legislation on the minimum number of hours between two work shifts (Arbejdsmiljøloven), setting the limit at 11 hours (and thereby regulating especially night-shift work and shift work in general).

These laws are in fact the only legislation directly affecting working hours, leaving the bulk of regulating measures to the collective bargaining system. Denmark has only ratified one third of the working-hours conventions set up by the ILO, and the fact that Denmark has not even confirmed the convention of a maximum of 48 hours of work per week or ratified any conventions regarding overtime clearly indicates the importance of the role played by the collective bargaining system in the Danish labour market.

4.2. Collective Agreements

Historically, the trade unions and employers associations have played a crucial part in the structuring and regulation of the labour market, receiving their strength from the relatively high degree of organised labour and the well-structured organisation of employers interests. Today, 52 % of those employed in the private sector are organised in trade unions, and 51 % of the employers are members of an employers association.

At national level, the trade unions and employers associations are organised, respectively, into the Danish Confederation of Trade Unions (LO) and the Danish Employers Organisation (DA). LO is the largest national trade union confederation in the country and is recognised as the most representative workers organisation in both the public and the private sectors. The Danish Employers' Confederation (DA) is the central organisation of 18 employer organisations in the private labour market within industry, commerce, transport, service, and construction. At this level, all important aspects of the collective agreements such as wages, weekly working time, general overtime bonuses and reduction arrangements are negotiated.

¹⁷ This chapter draws heavily on Steen Scheuer (1997).

At the level of the enterprise, shop stewards enter into negotiation with the management about the implementation of the collective agreements. Usually, implementation takes place within the framework of the overall agreement, though from time to time this is supplemented by locally negotiated agreements which subsequently are subject to approval at national level before implementation.

Beside the union representative (shop steward) system, an institution called the Co-operation Boards, composed of equal representation from the employees and the management, and headed by the managing director, discusses and agrees on subjects such as staff, retirement, and family policies of the enterprise. The co-operation boards, as the name indicates, generally operate in an atmosphere of consensus and co-operation, a trait, which in general distinguishes the board from the shop-steward system. As a hypothesis, though, it can be argued that the shop steward system in recent years has become much less conflict-oriented, thus, like the co-operation board, assuming a more co-operative approach.

Scholars often overestimate the degree to which a collective agreement has a spill-over effect, that is an impact on enterprises and sectors not directly affected (i.e. enterprises and employees not organised in employers organisations and trade unions), and the same can be said regarding the extent to which even enterprises and sectors included in the agreements implement and follow the regulations laid down collectively. Thus, it is normally assumed that the collective agreements in Denmark in practice regulate the labour market as a whole. In light of the number of employees and employers organised in trade unions and employers associations respectively, this conclusion is a little hasty. There are indications that this thesis might prove correct, one of them being the figures showing the actual number of working hours per week. Although only 51 % of employees are covered by the collective agreement, 77 % report having a working week of 37 hours, thus complying with the collective regulations. So the conclusion must be that though not necessarily regulating the labour market as a whole, the collective agreements can be said to have a more general impact on the labour market than their strict scope would imply, at least in the area of working hours regulation.

5. Summary

The most distinctive feature of the development of the Danish service sector is the major growth of the public sector services, which took place from the mid 60's to the mid 80's. Since the Second World War employment in the private service sector in Denmark has only increased slightly, and since the 70's it has hardly increased at all. Still, employment in the production service sector has been increasing, but at the same time employment in the consumer service sector has been declining.

In Denmark new forms of employment and working time have emerged in two different ways: As a result of the striving of enterprises towards more numeric flexibility and as the result of public policy measures aiming at a new distribution of the employment in society.

The striving of enterprises towards more numeric flexibility

The need for enterprises to gain more flexibility comes through in two ways on the Danish labour market. First, it has made the weekly working hours more flexible than just ten years ago. Interesting Danish cases about flexible agreements on weekly working hours may presumably be found in the finance or in the retail sector.

Secondly, numeric flexibility on the Danish labour market is gained through a number of new forms of employment such as time and task-limited work, temporary agency and freelance work. However, these forms of employment only make up about 10 per cent of the total employment and they do not seem to have increased within recent years.

Illustrative Danish examples on time or task-limited employment, temporary work agencies or freelance work can, as expected be found in the commercial and clerical sector. The same goes for parts of the expanding business services.

The public policy measures

Some of the public policy schemes which promote new forms of employment and working hours are: Senior policy measures like: "part time pension scheme" and "part time early retirement scheme", unemployment measures like the "job rotation schemes" and finally a job creation scheme called "HomeService scheme"

In regards to the discussion of new forms of employment and working hours the job rotation scheme seems to be the most interesting, and in the commercial and clerical sector (HK) a lot of interesting job rotation projects have been carried out in the last couple of years.

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