

Part-Time Work

**– Different Economic Effects for Women
and Men in the Nordic Region**

**Fact sheet from the project Part-Time Work
in the Nordic Region, 2013**

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Different Economic Effects for Women and Men in the Nordic Region

Part-time work is common in the Nordic countries, especially among women. The gender difference is similar across the Nordic region, with the exception of Finland. This is the conclusion of a new report from NIKK.

More women than men work part time in the Nordic region. The table to the right shows that the gender difference is similar in all countries except Finland. From 1995 to 2012, part-time work among women decreased in all Nordic countries except Finland. Norway has the largest proportion of women working part time; 36 per cent of all employed 25–64-year-old women worked part time in 2012. In Denmark, the share was 29 per cent, in Sweden 31 per cent, in Iceland 26 per cent and in Finland 15 per cent.

Nordic men display significantly smaller differences, and part-time work remains unusual overall. Norway has the highest rate and Iceland the lowest.

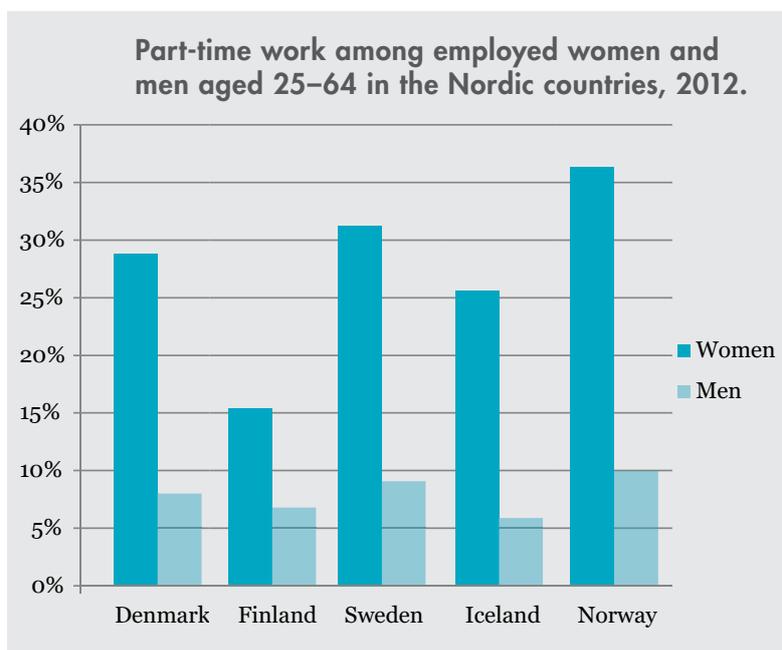
Who works part time?

The age differences between male and female part-time workers are large in the Nordic countries. The highest rate of women working part-time is found in the 25–54 age group; men tend to be either younger or older.

In all studied countries, part-time work is more common among women with less education than among women with more education. This difference is smaller among men.

Involuntary part-time work

Do people work part time by choice? The report also addresses ‘involuntary part-time work’, which occurs when a part-time worker would rather work full time. The rate of involuntary part-time work varies greatly among the Nordic countries, with Finland and Iceland having the highest rates and Denmark the lowest. When unemployment rates go up, so do the rates of involuntary part-time work. This was particularly evident



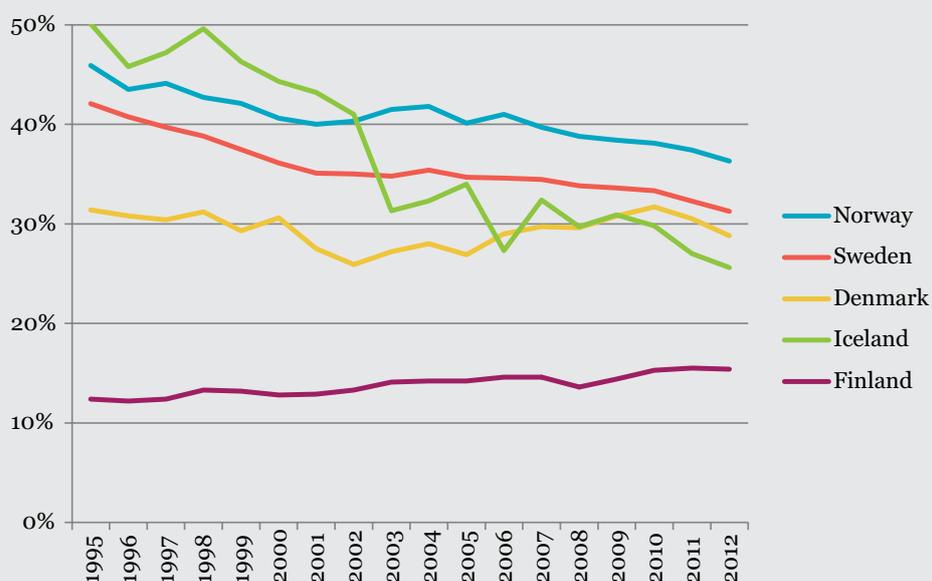
in connection with the financial crises in 2008 and the 1990s.

Reasons for working part time

Family and personal activities’ is the most frequently reported reason for working part-time among women in all Nordic countries. In 2007, 36 per cent in Iceland and 56 per cent in Denmark reported this reason. In 2012, the share ranged from 30 per cent in Norway to 48 per cent in Finland. The proportion of women who work part time because they can’t find another job is also relatively large, especially in Iceland and Denmark. An increasing share of women across the region report own illness as the main reason for working part time.

Male part-time workers are less likely than their female counterparts to report family life as a reason for working part time, except in Finland. They report illness and education more frequently, though.

Trends in part-time work among employed women aged 25–64 in the Nordic countries.



How are pensions affected?

The researchers estimated the effects of part-time work on a person's pension based on four standardised cases:

- A woman who works full-time as an assistant nurse her entire working life.
- A woman who works as an assistant nurse her entire working life, but only part-time (75 per cent) for ten years.
- A woman who works full-time as an elementary school teacher her entire working life.
- A woman who works as an elementary school teacher her entire working life, but only part-time (75 per cent) for ten years.

All four hypothetical women were born in 1975 and have two children. Researchers in each country have estimated pension levels for all four cases. See their results in the diagram on the next page. The four standardised cases

were the same in all five countries, but the salary levels and pension systems differ. The estimates in the report are based on all public sector pensions and pensions tied to occupational groups.

The results show that the difference in pensions between full- and part-time workers is small in Denmark and Norway. The reason for the small difference is that the studied part-time women still work full time for most of their working lives, which has a stronger impact in the Danish and Norwegian pension systems than the ten years of part-time work. In addition, these pension systems provide compensation for time home with children. In Denmark, there is also a built-in compensation for low incomes. However, if the women were to work part time for longer than ten years, there would be a larger effect on their pensions.

In Finland, Iceland and Sweden, the studied part-time workers can count on 4–6 per cent lower pensions than

their full-time counterparts. In these countries, there is a stronger link between pensions and the total number of hours worked before retiring.

Financial situation and attitudes

Results from previous surveys show that men generally are more satisfied with their income than women, although those who work part time tend to be less satisfied – except in Denmark.

Female part-time workers in Denmark and Sweden are more likely to be unhappy with their income. The share who describe their financial situation as difficult is particularly large among female part-time workers in Finland.

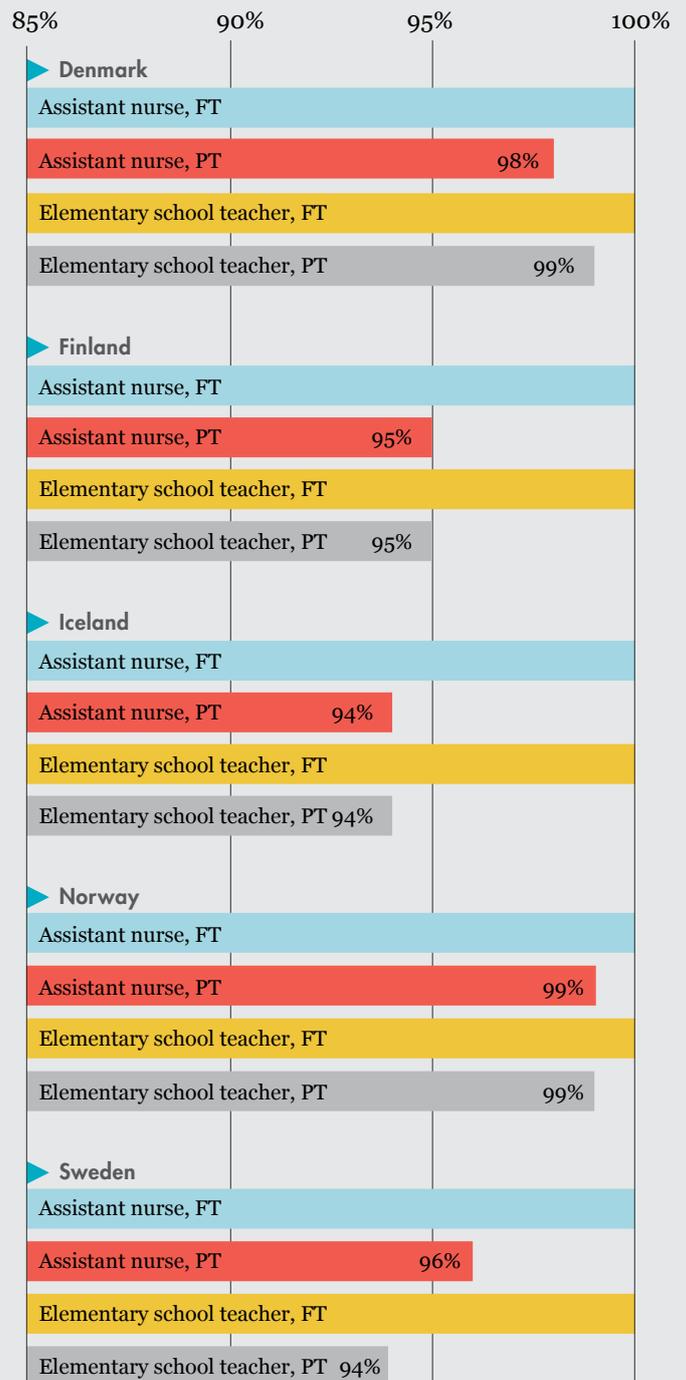
A relatively large proportion of women and men who work part time report that they have had problems managing on a lower income in the past three years.

Almost all women and men, whether they work part or full time, are happy with their jobs. However, part-time workers are more commonly dissatisfied with their work in several of the countries.

Most full- and part-time workers are also happy with their lives. Among Finnish women, slightly more part-time than full-time workers say they are dissatisfied with their lives.

In 2014, the project will assess the underlying reasons why Nordic women and men work part- and full-time to different degrees. The project will also look at efforts made in the area by labour market actors and at the political level.

Forecasted pension for the typical cases



Source: Estimations for Denmark, Ole Beier Sørensen; Finland, Suvi Ritola; Iceland, Steinunn Rógnvaldsdóttir; Norway, Fredrik Haugen; Sweden, Alma Wennemo Lanninger and Marianne Sundström

About the report

NIKK, Nordic Information on Gender, has been commissioned by the Nordic Council of Ministers to review part-time work in the Nordic countries. A first report, summarized in this fact sheet, explores how part-time work may have different

economic effects for women and men. The report, titled Part-Time Work, Gender and Economic Distribution in the Nordic Countries, was authored by Marianne Sundström, professor of labour market economics at Stockholm University, and

Alma Wennemo Lanninger, Master's student. The full report can be accessed via nikk.no.

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