








WP 8 (CIES-ISCTE) - Mapping work-care orientations for gender equality in private and public contexts.

Project:

WORKCARE SYNERGIES was a support action with the aim of disseminating research findings of previous EU Framework Programme projects in the field of work and care. To do this, local information and discussion events were held in Austria, the UK, Denmark, Hungary, Poland, Italy and Portugal.

Dissemination Events held in Portugal (PT Team CIES-ISCTE):

The Portuguese Team (CIES-ISCTE) organized a total of seven events in 2010 and 2011. At these events were presented selected research findings from EU Framework Programme projects related to work-care orientations for gender equality in private and public contexts and initiated their discussion in a local context.

	16-11-2010	PT	Lisbon	Project presentation session
	27-01-2011	PT	Lisbon	Workshop – Policy makers and state agencies
	10-03-2011	PT	Lisbon	Workshop - Economic Actors
	03-05-2011	PT	Lisbon	Special session for researchers and students at ISCSP - Technical University of Lisbon
	15-06-2011	PT	Lisbon	Special session in Municipality of Palmela
	30-11-2011	PT	Lisbon	Workshop - NGO
	30-11-2011	PT	Lisbon	Workshop - Social partners

Those events – supported by specific dissemination techniques and methodologies – aimed to support the current local policy debate on how to shape the work care orientations for gender equality in private and public contexts. Two main policy issues will be addressed:

1. Support of childcare services
2. Promotion of gender equality on labour market and their social acceptance.

Methodologically the dissemination was oriented by two axes:

1. Constitute an effective – yet informal - national network of interest parties on the theme, creating local synergies able to intensify and extend the public debate and point the public agenda with work-care orientations for gender equality in private and public contexts theme.
2. To avoid losing the experience and expertise of all the target groups or partners of the Portuguese network.

This implied a specific stand point. We can define this methodological standpoint in three different transmutations:

From speakers to listeners. Besides the dissemination of specific research findings, events were moments to both listen and learn from those who were our target groups. Therefore, dissemination sessions were designed in a way that all participants could share their own knowledge, expertise and experience on the theme. The events were moments of special communication and transfer of knowledge putting together different actors and interest parties: policy makers and state agencies, economic actors, social partners, and non-governmental organizations.

From holders of knowledge to a resource in service of others. Transform the WORKCARE SYNERGIES project and the specific research findings in resources for local participants. These means a transmutation: the project is objectified by those who were initially defined as target groups.

From owners to facilitators. The national network was a utility for the Portuguese team reach dissemination goals, but also a utility for those who decided to become members: producing a very easy way for establishing connections and promoting dialogue between interested parties many times set apart. A second transmutation occurs: the Portuguese team becomes a facilitator and the members of the network are equal owners (stakeholders).

The national network was constituted by three different steps: first, we invited a large number of potential participants (within the defined target groups); secondly, using a snow ball approach these first members brought new members; third, the network was always opened to new members during the project.

We produced six short videos with research findings in work-care orientations for gender equality in private and public contexts that were shown and discussed in various events (videos are available for download both at local website and in project homepage):

- Project presentation.
- Family: research findings contradicting stereotypes.
- Employment and flexibility in Europe.
- Family and childcare support policies.
- Gender equality and the labour market.
- Fertility and employment.

To better sustain the local debate and keep the network alive, and to reach a more general audience, the Portuguese team settled specific local dissemination platforms:

1. A local website. Where products of the project (working materials, power point presentations, papers, videos with translated research findings), are available for download.
2. A *facebook* page with friends: efficient mean to reach the general public at low cost and a fast way of communicating with target groups and national network members.
3. An internet blog.
4. An electronic newsletter: edited twice during the project, distributed among the network members.

Internet Links:

General information about the project, local dissemination themes, all events and their contents can be downloaded from the WORKCARESYNERGIES project homepage (www.workcaresynergies.eu).

Detailed information on events held by the Portuguese team (i.e. working materials, films, power point presentations) can be found at: www.trabalharecuidar.cies.iscte.pt

Participants:

We can organize the participants of events held in Portugal (member of the national Workcare Synergies network) in four main groups of actors:

Policy makers and state agencies: international organizations working in Portugal (International Labour Organization); national level (state agencies, ministries, parliament, political parties); regional level (municipalities).

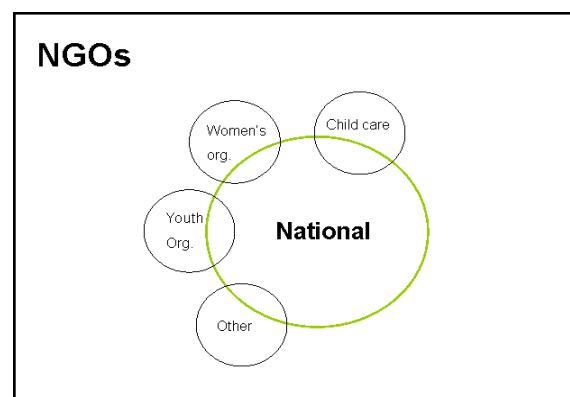
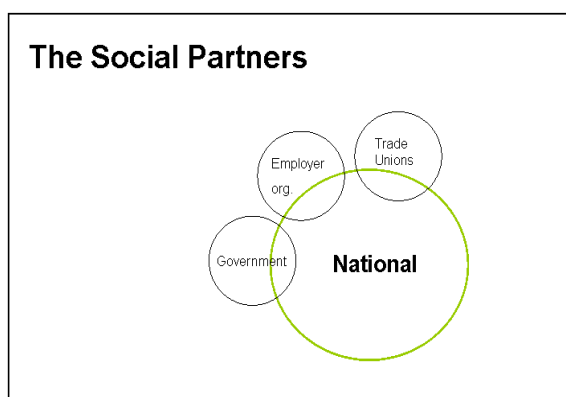
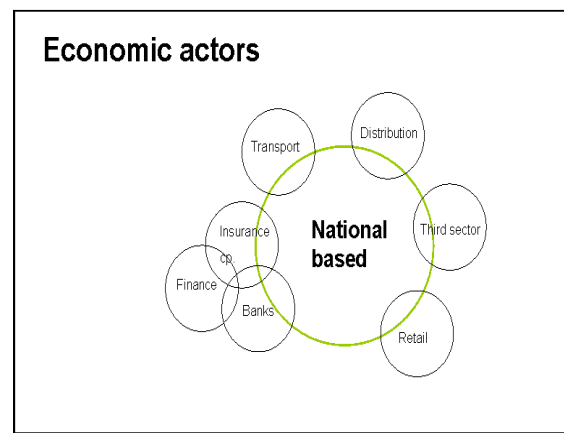
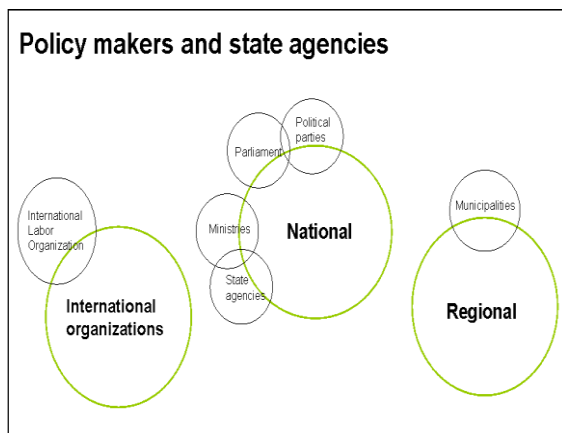
Economic actors: all with national based activity and from different economic sectors (finance, distribution, retail, transport, third sector).

Social partners: the formal members of national economic and social council (government, employer organizations, trade unions)

Non Governmental Organizations (NGO): mainly national organizations from different sectors/groups of interest (women’s organizations; youth organizations, child care, other).

Besides these four main groups of participants we must add the community of researchers in social sciences – a much more peripheral target group of dissemination.

Main groups of participants



Content of the Events:

The events had the same structure of contents. These were special sessions each one focussed with a specific group of actors. In all these dissemination events the contents were organized in five sets of data:

1. Family and childcare support policies: (a) major European trends; (b) care policies, children development and parents; (c) absence of policies: women's consequences; (d) caring in Europe: informal and women centred.
2. Quality of life in Europe between work and care: (a) workplace and the family important for high quality of life; (b) the importance of the institutional context for quality of life.
3. Fertility and employment: (a) Policies do have effects; (b) Part-time jobs don't solve the fertility problem; (c) High fertility and mother's employment.
4. Gender equality and labour market: (a) Labour market and workplaces were highly gendered.
5. Employment and flexibility: (a) flexibility and quality of employment; (b) different kinds of flexibility; (c) regulation of flexibility.

The discussions held in these dissemination events had media (video) and power point presentations support.

Three events deserve a special mention:

1. The project and its contents were discussed in a special session dedicated to researchers at ISCSF
2. The Portuguese team was invited to do a special dissemination session at the municipality of Palmela (suburban area south of Lisbon). This session was directed not only to public servants at the different services of the municipality, but also to several institutions and NGO acting in the field (social intervention).
3. Participation in a TV program specially dedicated to the theme of work and care and gender equality, giving national visibility to the project and a public media platform

for the discussion about the theme. TV program: 'Sociedade Civil' at RTP ('Civil Society' on the national TV broadcaster).

Special Themes discussed in local events:

Dissemination events held in Portugal present selected research findings from the following EU Framework Programme projects:

1. WORKCARE (2006-2009), a project on the social quality and changing relationships between work, care and welfare in Europe.
http://ec.europa.eu/research/social-sciences/projects/232_en.html;
<http://www.abdn.ac.uk/socsci/research/nec/workcare/>
2. HWF (2000-2003), a project on households, work and flexibility.
http://ec.europa.eu/research/social-sciences/projects/057_en.html;
<http://www.hwf.at>

The research findings selected and translated had in mind the main aim of workpackage 8: to promote and contribute to support the current local policy debate on work care orientations for gender equality in private and public contexts. Addressing two main policy issues:

1. Support of childcare services.
2. Promotion of gender equality on labour market and their social acceptance.

In the events we discussed with media (video) and power point presentations support the following special themes:

1. Family and childcare support policies;
2. Quality of life in Europe between work and care;
3. Fertility and employment;
4. Gender equality and labour market;
5. Employment and flexibility.

Summary of local discussion

The vibrant discussions that followed the screening of short videos and/or presentations of research results can be summarized in three different levels: (a) general level; (b) according to special themes debated; (c) intersecting those special themes with key contributions from the different participants.

General discussion level

The following main discussion points were regular and transversal to the four main groups of actors involved in the national WORKCARE SYNERGIES network:

- Not surprisingly, the current financial and economic situation (in Portugal and in Europe) colonized all the debates and discussions about work and care orientations for gender equality in private and public contexts. The not yet fully perceived economic, social, and political impacts of this financial context opened room for major uncertainties about: employment and unemployment growth; social inequalities; future of Portuguese welfare-state and policies directed to family, childcare, social security, gender equality etc.. Issues directly linked to the five special themes mentioned above.
- Local actors are interested to learn about EU research results if they help them to better evaluate decisions, support local implementation issues, prove their point or gained new – not stereotypical - knowledge about Portuguese and European reality on work and care and gender equality.
- Similarities and Differences in work-care tensions in European countries.
- Contradiction of stereotypes about family, work-care, gender equality, employment and flexibility.
- Childcare responsibilities, job and household: sharing childcare and household tasks by partners, family friendly policies and culture in organizations and companies, public policies role on gender equality in work and family.
- External childcare facilities (and after school care or full-day schools): need for extended and/or flexible schedules; need for public investment in childcare facilities with professionals; lack family friendly policies in companies providing childcare facilities for employees.

- Income differences and gender pay gaps effect on: (a) gender equality and in the quality of life of women (at the present and in the future); (b) feminization of care responsibilities; (c) shortage of women's professional career's.
- Family policy and everyday life in families as process of change.
- Discussion of research findings and on local experiences and different view points: Policy makers and state agencies; Economic actors; Social partners; Non Governmental Organizations (NGO).
- The discussions were mainly a powerful mean of knowledge communication and transfer of knowledge between different kinds stakeholders:
 - *Portuguese team* contributed with research findings from EC funded projects and other research findings (namely research projects held or ongoing in Portugal).
 - *Policy makers and state agencies* contributions for debate were: (a) information about current debates in the political forum and agenda directly connected with WP8 goals and with other participants concerns; (b) gave historical perspective about the policy schemes in Portugal focussing on the youth but successful policies in Portugal; (c) policy implementation constraints and obstacles in the field (pathways from police to action); (d) difficulties both in policy design and implementation due to lack of research support.; (e) research results as away to validate public policies and to open new perspectives; (f) uncertainty about the future policy orientations due the current financial crisis in Portugal (and in Europe); (g) the national network and the opportunity to discuss with the other participants resulted on important inputs for the debate on the political arena or for designing policies.
 - *Economic actors* (companies from different sectors of activity) reported their experiences and good practices (gender equality and family friendly policies in companies). At the same time, the research findings, the discussion both among peers (other companies) and with other participants resulted on important inputs for organization policies (human resources) on gender equality and work and care articulation.
 - *Social partners* (government, trade unions and employer organizations) and context of work and family articulation based on gender equality seems to be

possible only if all involved actors contribute: the state by financial and care support, policies and legal framework on labour market; employers with family-friendly work time arrangements regulated by legal frames produced by the state, (child)care facilities by offering work-related opening hours and flexible uptake of care.

- *Non Governmental Organizations (NGO)* found the project and the research findings disseminated and discussed of major importance for: (a) designing intervention projects directed to different target groups; (b) the products (website, videos and presentations) of the Portuguese team as fundamental tools and resources for ongoing and future intervention projects.

Special themes discussion

1. Family and childcare support policies

When there is little childcare provision it causes great strain to families. This means that women have to shoulder a double responsibility for employment and domestic care, on opposite good child care provision enables continuity of employment for men and women over time.

There is a shortage of good quality affordable child care especially for children under three years. Pre-school and school provision for children over three years is often for short hours and does not meet the needs of parents when both are in paid employment.

In the absence of affordable childcare it is generally women who take time out of the labour market to care and take on part time, insecure employment to enable caring commitments to be fulfilled. This is a result of a number of factors including: ideologies of care, normative expectations, the attitudes of employers and the gender pay gap. This has life time consequences for women's economic security and opportunities to have a career.

Informal care is the predominant form of care with negative financial and emotional strains on carers.

2. Quality of life in Europe between work and care

Work-life balance support proved to be highly relevant for the quality of life. Long working hours, work pressure and job insecurity, on the other hand, negatively influence overall life satisfaction as well as having care responsibilities. Country differences indicate that in a

country with more profound social policies and regulations regarding quality of work and life, workers appear to be more satisfied.

The quality of family life is strongly related to the quality of the family policies and their flexibility. The greater security of employment, greater is gender equality in both paid and unpaid work.

3. Fertility and employment:

Higher fertility rates in some countries are often associated with good childcare provision which enable women to fully participate in the labour market as well as raising children

The participation of women in the labour market is not a constraint to a higher fertility rate; on the contrary, it is a factor that seems to enhance it. In countries with long term high fertility rates (Nordic) – mothers of young children (until three) work full-time. After the leave of one year they get back to work.

Part-time jobs aren't a solution for mothers. In countries with an important number of mothers in part time jobs the most common situation is withdraw from the labour market (UK, Netherlands, and Switzerland).

4. Gender equality and labour market: (a) Labour market and workplaces were highly gendered.

Women gain in career opportunities they experience more time pressures and the need to find the right balance between work and family life. At the same time there is an enduring gender asymmetry in family care involvement, even in the more egalitarian Nordic countries.

In many cases the dominant organisational discourse is that men and women are treated equally and fairly. This assumes that everyday practices are gender neutral. Yet vertical and horizontal segregation is common. This is often justified on the grounds of gender stereotypes.

Working practices based on gendered assumptions undermine not only gender equity but also workplace effectiveness. Yet assumptions about gender are rarely made explicit and discussed or challenged.

Persistence of both gender pay gap across Europe (particular acute in Portugal), and gender glass ceiling across European countries.

5. Employment and flexibility: (a) flexibility and quality of employment; (b) different kinds of flexibility; (c) regulation of flexibility.

Flexibilisation is 'double edged' as it has the potential to harmonise work and family life and lead to higher quality of life, and to induce more overtime, a disturbed work-life balance and less quality of life.

Flexible work brings more opportunities for achieving a work/life balance but may also be a trap of insecure jobs without career prospects.

Flexibility should be regulated. The de-regulation of labour market protection can lead to an increase in bad forms of flexibility.

Flexible employment contracts are easily associated with job instability, often resulting in lack of protection for workers in terms of sick leave, unemployment and family care, among others.

Guaranteeing that flexibility in work is accompanied by social protection for workers and reinforcing control of employers' abuse of flexibility are two focuses of intervention recognised as essential in promoting quality of work.

Flexicurity policies often provide flexibility and security for men but only flexibility for women. This has a negative impact on women's access to employment, opportunities for support in re-entry to the labour market and economic and employment security across the life course.

Intersecting special themes with participants

O1.	Family and childcare support policies
Policy makers and state agencies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The major concern is about the persistence of the women overburden (professional career + care responsibilities). This is perceived as a key obstacle for a broader equality in gender relations both within the family and in the labour market: women's professional career's in stand by or women withdraw from labour market. This has life time consequences for women's economic security and opportunities to have a career, and for social security financial sustainability. ▪ Need to change normative gender expectations that feminize care responsibilities' by political action and policies oriented to gender equality, family and childcare.

- Lack of policies oriented towards gender equality in the family: recognition of the insufficient public childcare facilities (especially for children under 3 years old). The youth of the Portuguese welfare-state is identified as the main cause for the lack of supporting policies.
- The access of public childcare services has to be improved, and partners have to take over their share of family-related responsibilities. A good coverage of working-time related, high quality but affordable external childcare is an important factor for work-care articulation and gender equality.
- The financial and economic crisis brings new uncertainty to the future of policies oriented towards family and childcare.

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- Employer's social responsibility as a new era in the organizational discourse: human resources in companies from the different sectors of activity are deeply concerned with the promotion of social responsibility. This is directed not only to the community but mainly to employees: in order to guarantee better quality of life.
 - Work and employment is not only perceived as a source of income, and of economic stability. Companies wish to provide their employees with extra sources of quality of life, these are their policies on gender equality and family friendly:

Economic actors

- Flexible schedules to better articulate professional responsibilities and family care demands. This faces strong opposition from the trade unions.
- Child allowances for employees children during studying years,
- Childcare facilities for employees' children.
- Gender equality in work organizations: disrupting vertical segregation. This organizational policy faces obstacles . The gender equality plan for companies – an instrument and a manual of procedures
- Two contradictory trends: (a) bigger firms with more employees can easily offer flexible solutions and create gender equality and family friendly policies, smaller firms with fewer employees (and those with more traditional supervisors) find it harder; (b) sometimes smaller companies (micro dimension and familiar) seem to have more flexible structures of decision and are aware of employees living conditions, therefore are more open for negotiation for the best articulation between work and care.

Social partners	<p>Trade unions and employers organizations endorse responsibilities to the state (government): (a) the access of public childcare services has to be improved, and partners have to take over their share of family-related responsibilities; (b) legal framework for family friendly policies and gender equality is needed.</p>
	<p>Trade unions: government should promote more equal sharing of work, household and childcare tasks between the partners. This is the only way to ensure equal social inclusion, participation and security for men and women, mothers and fathers.</p>
Non Governmental Organizations (NGO)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Found research findings and the debate of major importance for designing intervention projects directed to different target groups

02.

Quality of life in Europe between work and care

Policy makers and state agencies	
Economic actors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Demanding from the state legal frameworks and other incentives to promote gender equality and family friendly policies within the organizations and companies. ▪ Gender equality and family friendly policies have costs from here derive two problems for companies: (a) how human resources can justify these kind of policies without any economic and financial indicators to support their political decision; (b) a problem of fair competitiveness in the market with companies that don't invest in these kind of internal policies (and have more reduced costs). ▪ Two contradictory trends: (a) bigger firms with more employees can easily offer flexible solutions and create gender equality and family friendly policies, smaller firms with fewer employees (and those with more traditional supervisors) find it harder; (b) sometimes smaller companies (micro dimension and familiar) seem to have more flexible structures of decision and are aware of employees living conditions, therefore are more open for negotiation for the best articulation between work and care.
Social partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Trade unions: Employers must be encouraged to introduce family friendly policies and men and women feel supported in taking their entitlement. ▪ Trade unions: Governments need to invest in supporting families to enable them to combine their responsibilities for care and ensure that men and women are able to exercise their rights to employment. ▪ Trade unions: Income disparities tend to perpetuate traditional women's overburden in Portugal: coping with work responsibilities and care demands.

Gender equality in the workplace and labour market must be progressed and in particular attention paid to measures to reduce the gender-pay gap.

Non

Governmental
Organizations
(NGO)

- Found research findings and the debate of major importance for designing intervention projects directed to different target groups

03.

Fertility and employment

Policy makers
and state
agencies

Economic actors

Social partners

Non

Governmental
Organizations
(NGO)

- Unattainable articulation between work and care responsibilities in a context of gender equality (both private and public) results in declining fertility rates - less children planned and even less realized.

04.

Gender equality and labour market

Policy makers
and state
agencies

- Income disparities tend to perpetuate traditional women's overburden in Portugal: coping with work responsibilities and care demands.

Economic actors

- Demanding from the state legal frameworks and other incentives to promote gender equality and family friendly policies within the organizations and companies.
- Gender equality and family friendly policies have costs from here derive two problems for companies: (a) how human resources can justify these kind of policies without any economic and financial indicators to support their political decision; (b) a problem of fair competitiveness in the market with companies that don't invest in these kind of internal policies (and have more reduced costs).
- Two contradictory trends: (a) bigger firms with more employees can easily offer flexible solutions and create gender equality and family friendly policies,

smaller firms with fewer employees (and those with more traditional supervisors) find it harder; (b) sometimes smaller companies (micro dimension and familiar) seem to have more flexible structures of decision and are aware of employees living conditions, therefore are more open for negotiation for the best articulation between work and care.

Social partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Workcare and gender equality in public and private contexts requires flexibility on all sides, employers and employees, and state. ▪ Trade unions: Employers must be encouraged to introduce family friendly policies and men and women feel supported in taking their entitlement. ▪ Trade unions: Governments need to invest in supporting families to enable them to combine their responsibilities for care and ensure that men and women are able to exercise their rights to employment. ▪ Trade unions: Income disparities tend to perpetuate traditional women's overburden in Portugal: coping with work responsibilities and care demands. Gender equality in the workplace and labour market must be progressed and in particular attention paid to measures to reduce the gender-pay gap.
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Non Governmental Organizations (NGO)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Gender pay gap in Portugal higher than in the rest of Europe. ▪ Income disparities tend to perpetuate traditional women's overburden in Portugal: coping with work responsibilities and care demands. ▪ Gender equality in the workplace and labour market must be progressed and in particular attention paid to measures to reduce the gender-pay gap.
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05.

Employment and flexibility

Policy makers and state agencies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Regulation of flexibility in such a way that it is not driven into the black economy (for example by reducing the number of permits and documentation needed to develop self-employment and liberalising working hours). ▪ Trade unions: regulation of flexibility so that it takes place within the scope of the official economy and complies with employment regulations; flexibility policies must ensure flexibility and security for men and women, not flexibility and security for men and flexibility without security for women.
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Economic actors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ It seems that although bigger firms with more employees can easily offer flexible solutions, smaller firms with fewer employees (and those with more traditional supervisors) find it harder to be flexible.
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Social partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Employers organizations highlight for two contradictory trends: (a) bigger firms with more employees can easily offer flexible solutions and create gender equality and family friendly policies, smaller firms with fewer employees (and those with more traditional supervisors) find it harder; (b) sometimes smaller companies (micro dimension and familiar) seem to have more flexible structures of decision and are aware of employees living conditions, therefore are more open for negotiation for the best articulation between work and care. ▪ Trade unions seemed concerned with the incidence of part-time jobs across Europe. From trade unions stance part-time jobs are not a solution in the Portuguese context due to the low wages frequent in Portugal: a part-time solution would mean an extreme risk of poverty. The research results shown that the weight of part-time jobs varies significantly across Europe, being
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mostly localized in the Netherlands, UK, Switzerland.

- Trade unions and employers organizations opinions about part-time jobs in Portugal coincide. Both reject this solution in the Portuguese context due to the low wages frequent in Portugal: a part-time solution would mean an extreme risk of poverty.
- Trade unions, employer's organizations and government: regulation of flexibility in such a way that it is not driven into the black economy (for example by reducing the number of permits and documentation needed to develop self-employment and liberalising working hours).
- Trade unions: regulation of flexibility so that it takes place within the scope of the official economy and complies with employment regulations; flexibility policies must ensure flexibility and security for men and women, not flexibility and security for men and flexibility without security for women.

Non

Governmental
Organizations
(NGO)

- Found research findings and the debate of major importance for designing intervention projects directed to different target groups