
European typologies of time use – the social model approach

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Starting from the fact that working time it is influenced by factors related to employment policies (especially for mothers), including those relating to extending or not of the working life and, on the other hand on social protection policies, the present paper presents typologies of working time use. Also taking into consideration the influence of social protection systems to Western European states we have defined and analyzed four types of social models: nordic social model, liberal social model, continental social model, mediterranean social model. As a conclusion of the analysis of the proposed social models we can observe that the EU states circumscribed social patterns, characterized by common general directions for time use, driven in particular by social protection systems and legislation on employment. Regarding the new Member States, both the countries joined the EU in 2004 and also Romania and Bulgaria, it appears that they have imposed their own social models and the time use, but taking items (some of them imposed by regulations) of models in EU countries with tradition.

Keywords: social models, time use, time usage patterns

Introduction

Countries and companies that make up the world are characterized by a wide diversity regarding the economic development, but also by tradition, culture, population attitude to work and individuals- as elements that make up society - use their available time according to constraints derived from social and economic situation of the country in which they live and work.

A major concern for economic science it represents the way in which the available time it is "shape up" and determinants of this process, with particular emphasis on how "patterns of time use " are changing during life, especially the time segments allocated for work (paid and unpaid) as well as for leisure or education. This interest derives mainly from the changes that occur in:

- a) education (childhood and youth) and its duration;
- b) lifetime employment and time use pattern in this period;
- c) post-active period - elements fundamental related to the transformations and radical changes registered in economic systems (production, trade, etc)
- d) demographic evolutions(life expectancy increasing, aging, etc).

According to the European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions (2007), the time use patterns in general, the work time in particular are changing substantially during life.

Typologies of working time use

Experience of European countries from the recent years highlighted the contradictory tendencies, generated one hand by factors related to employment policies (especially for mothers), including those relating to extending or not of the working life and, on the other hand on social protection policies. Regarding the work time, extremely important for economic and social development, the above mentioned paper discuss about three hypotheses of work, assimilated to the three phases of the life cycle of a person, these phases measured or analyzed in relation with the time allocated for work. These phases are:

- **Labor market entry phase** which usually is placed at the end of study period and in the first part of work life, which is estimated to be for people up to 35 years without children. In this period, the number of hours that young employees work are under the influence of several factors, most important factor being related with the characteristics of the formal educational system, especially the schooling and training period, which tends to prolong in the last period (with differences by country). The effect of this tendency may conduct to the decline in the employment rate of persons from this category and a smaller number of paid working hours.
- **The middle phase of life** (the busiest), in which the work occupy the most important place. At this phase the children appear which has to be carried out, and also appear elderly parents care situations or other life situations that differentiates the "model" of time allocation, especially between men and women. Given that this period of life the employees have childcare obligations, trends in employment and working hours can be very different. Thus, in the most prosperous countries in which mother's employment is encouraged (promoted by employment and social policy measures), the employment rates and working hours of mothers may increase. By contrast, in poorer countries, the situation may be different: either a high participation of women in the labor market whether it is actively encouraged by incentives provided by the social protection system, because of lower wages, being necessary two salaries for meet the needs of living, or poor participation of women, mainly because of constraints in the labor market (women are the first threat of unemployment) and / or their large family obligations, having bigger responsibilities for childcare and domestic activity. An important chapter of this phase of life refers to unpaid work. This problem is common in less developed European countries, especially those in transition. It is known that in these countries, especially Romania, a considerable amount of production is for "subsistence", which is associated with unpaid work to overcome the lack of employment in paid jobs and lack of cash income. Beyond this characteristic, social protection for this category of

workers it is very low, which customizes the pattern of time use in these category countries.

- **Late or final phase**, which is placed in the last part of working life before retirement age, but after that age when some of those who belong to this segment can and are willing to devote some time to work. Many European countries, especially the highly developed and with a powerful aging population, discourage the early retirement and encourage late retirement. In these countries, the trend is to reduce lower employment rates and the number of working hours. Conversely, are differences between countries regarding the use of available time by people who work beyond age. In a country where there is no social protection scheme for people who reach active age limit or part of they benefit of social protection (e.g. pensions), although theoretically individuals are out of the labor market, basically they are forced to continue in countries where such measures are lacking, the employment rates of people in this stage of life fall quickly, especially if this situation it is supported, in part, by the provisions of the pension system, with early retirement trend, more pronounced among women. Regarding the amount of unpaid work of people in this age group, it depends on several factors, in which the operation of adequate social protection for the elderly (pension and health care) and strong family relationships play an important role. Women in this age provide a substantial amount of unpaid work, mainly to support their children and for activities in their households.

In the following, we are presenting some of the most significant "models" of time to use grafted or associated with European social models. The complexity of the characteristics of a society imposed by the institutional structures and social protection systems, the rules and regulations relating to employment, social policies, etc., define a social model and time use pattern is contoured based on existing social model. In general, social protection systems, together with schemes they function, put their mark on the social model and thus on the time use at national level.

Time is an important element that must be taken into account when trying to assess individual welfare. For example short term unemployment may affect the economic welfare of an individual and its family but can not erode

its initiative to seek another job. On the other hand, long-term unemployment could cause a negative attitude towards work, which affects preoccupations and reduces the individual skills. Moreover, unemployment benefits granted for long a time can make from unemployed status an easier alternative to obtain income. In these circumstances, the time that should be allocated for work on the labor market is wasted, substituting in other forms, most often in the household or informal labor market. Thus, the personal consequences are negative (low pay, low-growing opportunities in professional plan, social dissatisfaction related to professional status, etc...), but also the national economy. Romania has serious drawbacks compared to neighboring states with a similar political situation and economic system and especially with the very developed states of the EU (Tabel 1.)

When referring to another important social protection scheme, pensions, we can see that there working to secure an income. Their available time is - in this case - reallocated mainly for reallocate the time, especially for leisure activities, active rest and voluntary social activities. Depending on the support of social protection systems to Western European states have defined four types of social models (Table 2.); work, whether it is paid or works in the household. At the opposite pole is the population of northern EU countries (Denmark, Finland and Sweden), countries characterized by strong social protection systems. Pensioners in these countries enjoy much greater freedom to:

- **Nordic social model:** Denmark Sweden, Finland
- **Liberal social model:** Ireland, Great Britain
- **Continental social model:** Austria, Belgium, France, Germany, Holland
- **Mediterranean social model:** Greece, Italy, Portugal, Spain.

To characterize patterns of time use in all European Union countries, we will take into consideration the results of a study conducted recently by the European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working, which conducted a statistical survey on the quality of life in Europe (European Quality of Life Survey) in 28 countries¹. The research included key aspects of life quality, as the country's economic situation, housing and environment,

¹ In EU member states and Turkey

employment and training, household and family structure, balance between work and private life, health and health care, subjective welfare and society quality. Based on the results, in 2007, European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions published a report focused on time use throughout life. The report examines the use of working time in terms of employment rate for the three stages / phases of life:

F1: Young age phase (15-24 years), the corresponding to the entry of population on the labor market;

F2: Peak active age phase (25-54 years), corresponding to a maximum in the use of time for work;

F3: Late phase of active life (55-64 years).

The report delimits the work time usage patterns in Western European countries, grouped in four models, the countries joined the European Union in 2004 and, separately, in Bulgaria, Romania and Turkey. We are presenting in Table 1 the main types of social models in Europe and some derived aspects – regarding the time use, particularly working time.

Table 1: General aspects regarding the time use (working) in Europe, in relation to existing social models and labor market

	F1: Young age phase (15-24 years)	F2: Peak active age phase (25-54 years)	F3: Late phase of active life (55-64 years)
Nordic model	Years of study average is high in all three Nordic countries (18 - Denmark, 19 - Finland, 20 years - Sweden), but the time allocated for education combined with paid work time is a common practice (especially in	High rates of employment, which leads to high use of working time. Policies regarding the working time are taking into consideration the reducing of working hours (in the present, the standard working	In Denmark and Sweden, retirement age is higher than most European countries (in Denmark - 65.3 years for men and 62.1 years for women), being a growth factor for the time available for work at the

	Denmark)	week is 40 hours).	national economy level.
Continental model	In Austria and the Netherlands, the young people enter into the labor market early (from 16 years in Austria. In Germany, young people use their time for work and education, the assertion being supported by high employment rate among young people (46.9%), with a relatively high proportion of young people enrolled in education (17.9%).	The average length of working week is moderate in most countries from this group. Minimum values are recorded in the Netherlands (40.6 hours) and France (40.7 hours). Characteristic to the continental European countries is the high rate of part-time employment among women (from 23% in France, 60% in the Netherlands), which increases the national fund of working time.	Potential time work it is not grabbed like in the Nordic countries. For the population of 55-64 years, occupancy rates registered the lowest levels in Europe (in Belgium, 37.8%, 18.7% for men and women) Also, retirement age is lower (58.5 years for men, 56.8 years for women)
Liberal model	In Anglo-Saxon countries, young people devote a significant part of the time available for work: youth participation in the labor market is high both in the UK (52.4%) and	Flexible labor market is very active in this segment of the population and the average working week is high (e.g., 43.7 hours in Britain, compared with	Both countries have a high participation of people in this age group in the labor market (64.6% in the UK, 64.6% in Ireland). Adding to this aspect a high average of

	Ireland (45.9%), mainly due, a relatively low average length of schooling (17 years in Ireland).	41.7 hours, the EU average). Employment part time work is widespread, especially among women (44.2% in the UK and 31.3% in Ireland).	retirement age (in Ireland, 65.2 years for men, and 66.2 years for females), factors that contributes to the fund for potential employment
Mediterranean model	There are difficulties in terms of youth entering into the labor market, even for those with a high level of education. With the exception of Portugal, the unemployment rate exceeds 20% of the population under the age of 25 years. The phenomenon affects the fund of available time for work	Countries of southern Europe are characterized by low employment rates. However, the average working week is high (44.3 hours in Greece).	Compared with the Nordic countries or in the liberal model in southern European countries, employment rates are lower for the group 55-65 years of age (42.8% in Italy for men and 18.5% for women).
EU member states from 2004	Employment among young people is very low in almost all ten countries joined the EU in 2004. The phenomenon	Countries joined the EU in 2004 are characterized by high rates of unemployment (especially Poland, Slovakia and	In Slovenia, Poland and Hungary, the employment rates are low for the population aged 55-64 years (under

	may be associated with a high unemployment for people under the age of 25 years and less to a longer period of schooling.	Latvia). Some states have relatively large periods of the working week (Czech Republic, Latvia, Poland and Slovenia). Part-time employment is insignificant in almost all ten countries.	40% even for men). At the opposite end are the Czech Republic and Estonia (58.9%).
EU member states from 2007	Both countries (Romania and Bulgaria) are characterized by lower average length of schooling (15 years). However, employment among young people is low, adversely affecting the national fund of time available for work.	In Romania, the average working week is 40.5 hours. Data for Romania show an employment rate (83.5%) below the European average. In Bulgaria, the employment rate is lower (69.3% for men).	Less than half of 55-64 people are employed in the labor market. In Romania, for example, the situation is explained by early retirement. Also an important part of the population in this age group is retired through illness

Conclusions

As can be seen from the summary presented in Table 1, the EU states circumscribed social patterns, characterized by common general directions for time use, driven in particular social protection systems and legislation on employment. Indicators on which time use models were defined, in relation with the social models and employment patterns reflect

primarily the minimum age for entry into work market, the maximum age of retiring, labor market and work programs flexibility, level of employment, etc.

Regarding the new Member States, both the countries joined the EU in 2004 and also Romania and Bulgaria, it appears that they have imposed their own social models and the time use, but taking items (some of them imposed by regulations) of models in EU countries with tradition. The reasons are related, in particular, that historical situation, social, cultural, political, economic, that the population (size and composition) in a country determines the way in which people "consume" (use) the time for work or for other activities

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