

Changing patterns of segregation
and power relations in the workplace
Results from the WORKS project

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& Maria Stratigaki*



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1 Introduction

It is generally agreed that major upheavals are taking place in the organisation of work as corporate structures are transformed in the context of economic globalisation and rapid technological change. But how can these changes be understood? And what are the impacts on social institutions and on workers? The 'Work organisation and restructuring in the knowledge society (WORKS)' project was funded by the European Commission in 2005 under its 6th Framework Programme to investigate these questions. This ambitious research project has combined theoretical work and a detailed analysis of a wide range of statistics with in-depth case studies to analyse the forces that bring about these changes, including global value chain restructuring and the policy environment.

One of the underlying assumptions of the WORKS project is that the reorganisation of work can only be understood fully in the context of a global restructuring of value chains, entailing a simultaneous decomposition and recomposition of sectors, organisations, labour processes and skills. However, the considerable heterogeneity within Europe of skill supply, levels of employment, welfare systems, and economic sectors makes it especially difficult to disentangle the causes and effects of such processes and to isolate the primary drivers of change. Yet it is particularly important for Europe both to understand the factors that will enable firms to sustain their competitive edge, to ensure a future supply of jobs that is satisfactory both quantitatively and quality and to examine the impact of these changes on the quality of life. At the heart of this is a single issue: how are employment practices adapting to change and with what effect? If we can answer this more effectively on a Europe-wide basis we will be able to propose practical solutions to real problems.

Starting in June 2005, the WORKS consortium, involving partners from seventeen different institutes across fourteen EU member states, carried out an ambitious programme of theoretical and empirical work. These were carried out under five main pillars: 'theories and concepts', 'quantitative research', 'policy', 'qualitative research on organisations' and 'qualitative research on individuals'. The work of these pillars is summarised more fully below.

This is one of eleven thematic reports that brings together the results of all five pillars to deepen our insights into the topic of changing patterns of gender and ethnic segregation and power relations in the workplace.

The other reports will focus on the topics of: value chain restructuring in Europe in a global economy; changes in work organisation and representation at the workplace; strategies to reach flexibility in the organisation; skills and qualification policies and HRM; new career trajectories and biographies; working time, gender and work-life balance; change processes and future perspectives; changes in work in transitional economies; health, safety and the quality of working life; and employers' use of technology and the impact on organisational structure.

The material on which this report draws is summarised below.

1.1 Theories and concepts

In the first stage of its work the WORKS partners collectively carried out a review of the very large body of literature with relevance to the project's research questions, in order to map the field, formulate hypotheses to be tested in the empirical work and develop a clear conceptual framework for the research. This was no easy task. There are many lenses through which one can view the restructuring of work in a global knowledge economy. There are the lenses of different academic disciplines, for instance the sociology of work, economic geography, organisational theory, social psychology, ethnography, gender studies, industrial relations or political science. Then there are the lenses of different social perspectives, for instance those of international development agencies, of national governments in developed and developing countries, of technology providers, of statisticians, of employers, of trade unions, of educators, of civil society, of skilled professional workers who are may be beneficiaries of change, and of those groups that are potential losers. There are also differences deriving from different national research traditions, different ideological approaches and many other variables. In each of these many fields, a body of literature has grown up, trying to make sense of the changes taking place and supplying fragments of evidence. Piecing all this evidence together was a major challenge. The very disparity of the origins of this literature means that it is difficult to find a common frame of reference. Even when the same terms are used, they may be used with different meanings and the lack of commonly-agreed definitions can make the refracted pieces of evidence difficult to compare, often giving them a contradictory and anecdotal character.

Nevertheless, in its first six months, the project managed to bring together in a single report (Huws, 2006) a remarkably comprehensive overview of the available evidence, thanks to the large collective efforts of the interdisciplinary WORKS team. This evidence was carefully sifted with the aim of distilling insights that could help to produce a clear conceptual framework in order to develop hypotheses and research questions to guide the empirical research to be undertaken by the WORKS project. This programme of work was, however, highly ambitious, encompassing the aims of: improving our understanding of the major changes in work in the knowledge-based society, taking account both of global forces and of the regional diversity within Europe; investigating the evolving division of labour within and between companies and the related changes at the workplace; exploring the implications for the use of skills and knowledge, for changing gender and ethnic relations in the workplace, for flexibility and for the quality of working life; and examining the impact on occupational identities; time use and learning; as well as the impact on the social dialogue and the varieties of institutional shaping. Balancing the need to take account of these many dimensions whilst still retaining a focus on clear research questions that could be addressed feasibly within a coherent research design in a relatively short space of time was a major challenge, and we begin by presenting the methodology that was adopted to achieve this.

The first task was to achieve a division of labour that on the one hand took full advantage of the specialist subject expertise of partners whilst also recognising the diversity of national research traditions across Europe and the need to take account of the literature in

all major European languages. Once topics had been assigned to partners, in a second stage, these partners were asked to produce a list of 'key concepts' for inclusion in a glossary.¹ The purpose of the glossary was to ensure that all partners could share a common understanding and make visible any differences of interpretation or definition of key terms so that they could be discussed and agreed, in a process whereby, in its contribution to the cohesion of the whole group, the dialogue involved in producing the entries was as valuable as the end result. The next stage involved the production of draft reports covering the main concepts and the associated literature. Despite the authors' broad knowledge of their chosen topics, and the fact that each report included inputs from institutes in more than one country, it was felt that the only way to ensure that each report covered the full range of relevant European scholarship was to add a further, vital stage in the work. This involved circulating each draft report as it was completed to all the other WORKS partners, including those who had not been involved in the actual process of report-writing. In this stage, partners were asked to draw on their knowledge of the literature in their own language or national setting, as well as their specific subject knowledge, to comment on the reports, point to issues that might be regarded as contentious and add references to relevant sources. This process of peer review enriched and refined the report which was then used by all partners as an input to the development of research questions, methodologies and research instruments for the empirical research.

1.2 Quantitative research

The 'quantitative research' pillar of the WORKS project studied the changes in work in Europe on the basis of comparative analyses of data from existing organisation and individual surveys. In a first step, major European organisation surveys and individual and household surveys relevant for changes in work were mapped and benchmarked in order to assess their relevance and their strengths and weaknesses for comparative analyses on changes in work. Next, and more important for the thematic reports, the research focused on the secondary analysis of the results of the organisation and individual/household surveys. For the organisation surveys, a thematic analysis of thirteen major national and international organisation surveys, focusing on the major results with respect to the key issues of the WORKS project, resulted in an overview report 'Comparative analysis of organisation surveys in Europe' (Ramioul & Huys, 2007). The key issues addressed in this report are:

- new forms of work organisation, organisational and technological innovation and changes in work;
- changes in skills and qualification and vocational training policies at establishment level;
- work-life balance and working time arrangements. Here conclusions from EU wide research on working time arrangements and flexibility policies reveal important aspects of gender relations in the workplace;

¹ Available online on http://www.worksproject.be/Glos_and_defint.htm.

- quality of the working life as measured in organisation surveys. Here significant (although diminishing) differences in working conditions between women's and men's jobs suggest that working environments remain gendered.

For each of these issues, the most relevant conclusions from the organisation surveys were summarised, thus leading to a comprehensive overview of organisational changes in Europe based on this particular data source.

For individual surveys, three major sources of individual and household data made it possible to carry out longitudinal and EU comparative analysis on the issues relevant for the WORKS project: the Community Labour Force Survey (CLFS); the European Working Conditions Survey (EWCS) and the European Community Household Panel (ECHP). Based on these three key data sources, four different reports were published, each focusing on the EU comparative analysis and on the identification of trends with respect to key WORKS issues. The reports focused on the following issues:

- tracing employment in business functions: a sectoral and occupational approach: in this report an innovative method was used to measure changes in employment related to value chain restructuring (Geurts, Coppin & Ramioul, 2007);
- trends in work organisation and working conditions. For this report, three waves of the European Working Conditions Survey were analysed in a longitudinal and EU comparative perspective, shedding light on changes in task complexity, autonomy, working time independency, health and safety issues and working conditions (Greenan, Kalugina & Walkowiak, 2007);
- work flexibility in Europe: a sectoral and occupational description of trends in work hours, part-time work, temporary work, and self-employment was carried out based on the Community Labour Force Survey (Birindelli & Rustichelli, 2007);
- occupational change in Europe: based on longitudinal data, aspects of work satisfaction, occupational mobility and overqualification were investigated (Brynin & Longhi, 2007).

1.3 Qualitative research on organisations

The organisational case studies within the WORKS project covered a number of generic business functions that represent a wide variety of activities and labour processes in the 'knowledge society' ranging from highly-skilled 'knowledge work' to semi-skilled manual tasks. The research also aimed to focus on those business functions that feature prominently in the external restructuring of companies and thus in the restructuring of global value chains. The selected business functions were: research and development; production; logistics; customer service; and information technology.

To study the restructuring of value chains, these business functions need to be located in specific sectors. The selection of sectors reflected the emergence of global value chains in different historical stages: sectors where vertical disintegration and internationalisation is already a rather old fact, and sectors where these have developed only very recently. The sectors under study were:

The *clothing industry* is an example of an 'old' industry where restructuring of global commodity chains was already an issue in the 1970s. Recently, the integration of Central and Eastern Europe in pan-European production networks and the phasing out of the

Multi-Fibre Arrangement and the WTO Agreement on Textiles and Clothing considerably changed the trade regimes and resulted in a new wave of restructuring mainly affecting production in Southern Europe and the CEE countries. This sector also provides interesting examples of 'head and tail' companies which concentrate high-skilled work within Europe but carry out the rest elsewhere.

The *food industry* is the largest manufacturing sector in terms of employment in the EU. It was subject to major restructuring after the completion of the single market in the European Union in the early 1990's which allowed companies to replace their country-by-country organisation with a pan-European structure. In contrast with parts of the clothing industry, food production is by and large highly automated. Both industries are interesting as examples of buyer-centred value chains in which the demands of the retail trade play a pivotal role.

The *IT industry* is a growing industry that saw a major wave of restructuring during and after the boom years in the late 1990s and around 2000, partly associated with offshoring. Internationally, this has contributed to the emergence of a 'new breed of TNCs', global companies that supply services to other companies. To a large extent the IT service provider companies have grown through large outsourcing contracts that include the transfer of personnel from their public or private sector client organisations, a tendency highly relevant for the research questions of WORKS.

Public sector organisations and services of general interest are currently subject to far-reaching restructuring because of liberalisation and privatisation policies and budgetary constraints. In these sectors the lengthening of value chains through large scale outsourcing is a very recent phenomenon. The consequences for the quality of work are highly influenced by traditional differences in the regulation of work between the public and private sectors.

Each business function located in a particular sector was studied in a range of countries with diverse employment and welfare regimes (liberal, conservative, socio-democratic, etc.). This made it possible to analyse the influence of institutional frameworks on the consequences of restructuring. Overall, 58 case studies were conducted in fourteen countries. The following overview shows the distribution of case studies.

Table 1.1 Sample of case studies

	R&D/design	Production	Logistics	Customer service	IT
Textiles/clothing	BE; FR; DE; PT; IT	BE; IT; PT; HU; GR	FR; DE; NL; PT; HU		
Food		GR; BG; IT; NO; DK; UK	BE; NO; BG; GR; UK		
IT	DE; AT; UK; BE; FR; NO	DE; AT; HU; BG; SW			
Public sector administration				AT; BE; BG; HU; IT; UK; SW	BE; NL; UK; FR; DE; NO; SW; PT
Services of general interest: post and rail				DE; AT; SW; NL; GR	

For each case study, eight to ten interviews with management, key employees, and shop stewards (in the selected business functions) were conducted. The interviews were complemented by company documents and other material that made it possible to produce a comprehensive picture. Researchers in the respective countries synthesised the individual case studies from the interview data. On the basis of the individual case study reports, comprehensive comparative analyses were carried out to compose this report. The authors of the report are deeply indebted to the researchers who carried out the case studies in the various countries and to the respondents who devoted their time to our research and helped us to understand the developments in their companies and sectors. For the presentation in this report, all company names have been changed to assure anonymity.

1.4 Qualitative research on individuals

The organisational case studies were complemented by case studies designed to investigate the impacts of changes at work on individuals and their households. Thirty of these occupational case studies were achieved in fourteen countries, between June 2006 and May 2007; in total 246 in-depth individual interviews were carried out, according to common interview guidelines elaborated in May 2006.

These occupational case studies are closely related to the organisational case studies that were carried out in a selected number of business functions, during the same time span. In the WORKS project, the concept of the 'business function' lies at the core of the qualitative empirical research, since these business functions provide the most useful unit of analysis for studying value chain restructuring and changes in work. In order to study changes in work at the individual level, individual workers were selected within specific occupational groups linked to key business functions.

Six occupational groups were selected: designers in the clothing industry; researchers in information and communication technology; IT professionals in software services; production workers in food or clothing; logistics workers in food or clothing; front office employees in customer relationships in public services. In each occupational group, three to seven case studies were conducted in different countries, covering a variety of socio-economic and institutional contexts. Each case study relied on seven to nine in-depth individual interviews, including a biographical dimension.

The analysis of the interviews was structured around five themes that grouped together the WORKS research questions. These were: career trajectory, occupational identity, quality of work, knowledge and learning, and work-life balance.

Particular attention was paid to gender issues. Gender was treated as a transversal theme in the analysis of changes in work at the individual level. The principle of gender mainstreaming (*i.e.* taking systematically into account the differentiated experiences of men and women in all items of data collection and analysis), formed one of the basic guidelines for the individual interviews. Because the individuals selected for interview for the occupational case studies, were, with a few exceptions, employees of the same organisations selected for examination in the organisational case studies, and because of the transversal approach to studying gender, very similar information on gender relations within the workplace was collected in both types of case study, albeit sometimes viewed from a different angle. For this reason, this report draws equally on both types of case

study which are treated as a single pool of information from which to draw for the analysis presented below in Chapters 3 and 4.

1.5 The policy pillar

A central task in WORKS was to examine what effect policy initiatives and regulation at various levels - international, European, national, regional, sectoral and company - actually have on work-life and work experience. Especially relevant in this regard is the role of institutions in the determination, implementation and enforcement of policy. We began with the question: can we expect divergences in the ability to regulate changes in work due to restructuring according to different types of production or employment regimes, different types of industrial relations models, diverse institutional frameworks? Toward this end, all of the organisational case studies included a section on industrial relations and regulation of work. Within each company that was investigated, data was collected on the forms that worker representation took, which issues were negotiated, the role of workplace representation in restructuring (information, consultation, active intervention), the impact of European or national regulations, and the pressures on regulations and institutions due to restructuring. Additional interviews with trade union representatives and works councillors were carried out where possible.

The research agenda motivating this line of inquiry was to examine what role the institutions and actors of industrial relations play in restructuring across value chain in diverse settings and across diverse institutional contexts. A further issue is what role workers' representatives have in tempering the effects at the workplace that result from this restructuring, including the terms and conditions of employment, fragmentation and segmentation, gender equality, training and skilling, and quality of work life. Existing studies have shown that major challenges are raised for existing institutions and forms of social dialogue when dealing with current trends in restructuring and changes at work. Therefore, the case studies also investigated the impact of restructuring on the strategies or effectiveness of workers' representation and workers' voice.

2 The general WORKS approach

The conceptual framework of the WORKS project was based in a series of interlocking assumptions that framed both the research questions that were addressed and the approach adopted. These included:

1. the workplace forms a crucial locus where the individual citizen encounters global economic forces. However, the interactions between the individual and the global which take place in the workplace are neither inevitable nor uni-directional. Work organisation is shaped interactively both by structural forces and by the agency of individuals at a local level. It is therefore necessary to combine the study of institutions with that of individuals;
2. the 'knowledge society' is rooted in the 'knowledge-based economy', but there are both continuities and discontinuities with the 'old economy'. The processes which accompany technological change bring about structural changes in the economy, a complex restructuring of traditional manufacturing and service sectors, and new patterns of cross-sectoral trade in services. Thus research should not be restricted to narrowly defined 'knowledge sectors'. A key concept here is that of the elaboration of value chains, both spatially and contractually;
3. these developments are accompanied by (and in some cases enabled by) the codification of skills and knowledge leading simultaneously not only to new forms of flexible and autonomous 'knowledge work' but also to new forms of Taylorism;
4. the accompanying changes in technology and work organisation are leading to new patterns of learning, both formal and informal, resulting in a dual process of decomposition and recomposition of skills and occupational identities;
5. as well as transforming production and business processes and generating new products and services, these developments also transform consumption processes, creating new types of unpaid activity and thus impacting on domestic as well as working life. These impacts interact with the impacts of changing household structures and changing gender patterns of labour market participation;
6. the 'knowledge society' cannot be seen as a single undifferentiated global entity; rather, regional and national institutions continue to contribute to distinctive trajectories, thus rendering it necessary to carry out comparative research and develop explanatory models for differing regional development paths and to consider what this means for the European context;
7. the social impacts of changes in work affect groups differentially according to their specific social positions, gender, ethnicity, age, educational background and other social variables. Power relations in the workplace are often based on gender and ethnic differences that are constructed outside the labour market. However within the workplace these power relations strongly influence individual professional lives and opportunities as well as people's quality of life in general;

8. a complex array of drivers of change in work organisation in the knowledge society result from a number of different factors which, on the labour market demand side include the globalisation of markets, the liberalisation of trade, the development and spread of new information and communications technologies, the deregulation of labour markets, the marketisation of the public sector and policy initiatives such as the development of eGovernment. On the supply side they include changing household structures, the emergence of a tele-literate generation of workers and consumers and the appearance on the labour market of new groups.

From this approach, it follows that social variables - including gender, ethnicity and age - must be seen as integral aspects of all topics under study and cannot be isolated from them. Gender and ethnicity were therefore treated as transversal, or cross-cutting issues across the whole field of research. In the case of gender, it was possible to incorporate some analysis into both the quantitative and the qualitative research. However, because of the lack of statistical data on ethnicity in most EU member states, this issue was mainly addressed in the qualitative research.

2.1 The WORKS approach to gender

Although gender was 'mainstreamed' into the research, it was considered important not to reduce the concept to the status of 'just another social variable'. It was recognised that gender constitutes an over-arching dimension of difference which operates at all social lives, from the household to the workplace to the region to society as a whole, and which is both institutionally embedded and in a process of constant reproduction. In other words, gender was recognised as a complex variable which interacts with other social differentiators including ethnicity, age and class. Although the secondary data analysis carried out by the project included an investigation of gender differences across many variables and research instruments were designed to ensure that men and women were separately identifiable, it was acknowledged that masculinity and femininity are not simple unchanging categories.

For the purposes of carrying out qualitative research on organisational change, many existing structural theories on gender and organisation are overly simplistic, with the risk of creating a one-side focus on institutional structures and the reproduction of different forms of sex segregation, thus downplaying the importance of individual agency and making it difficult to observe change processes and analyse the differences between gender relations in differing contexts. To avoid this over-simplified approach, WORKS followed some features of the 'doing gender' approach in the design of its research methodologies, including drawing on the work of West and Zimmerman (1987) Acker (1990 & 1992), Gherardi (1994) and Connell (1987 & 1995). This approach is also helpful in making it possible to render visible the ways in which gender relations are shaped by (and shape) ethnicity and other variables, such as those created by educational, age, class or occupational differences. Particular attention was paid to trying to make visible the underlying gender patterns which are taken for granted in particular organisational, household or regional contexts, and to study forms of masculinity as well as femininity.

In carrying out comparative analysis of the ways in which gender relations vary across different social groups and institutional settings, the concept of the 'gender contract' was

considered. This concept was developed by Nordic researchers (Gunnarsson & Friberg, 1995) to describe the sex segregated division of labour – paid as well as unpaid. Aspects of power and negotiations are important elements within this concept. *Gender contracts* are expressed on different levels, at a *structural level* (local-regional-national and within organisations), at a *workplace level* and within the *family*. The gender contract is a particularly fruitful concept having been used successfully in the analysis both of quantitative and qualitative data to illuminate gender relations in Sweden (see for instance, Gunnarsson, Martin & Nordenstam, 1999) which shows very clearly that the Swedish labour market still is a very sex segregated labour market whether this is analysed according to horizontal segregation, vertical segregation, or work-time segregation. This means that gendered (as well as ethnicity-related) patterns can be seen in relation both to different *occupations* and different *sectors* in society as well as for workers occupying different positions and with different time contracts (Gunnarsson, 1998). Increasingly, comparative research has analysed segregation of the labour market, working time segregation and its relation to inequality in a number of European countries (Bettio & Villa, 1998; Rubery, Smith, Fagan & Grimshaw, 1998; Anxo & O'Reilly, 2000). A special focus has been on non-standard forms of employment supporting in many countries the integration of women in the labour market while maintaining segregation and limitations to economic independence (Instituto de la Mujer, 1998).

Using indicators of sex segregation on the labour market as well as the degree to which care for children and elderly takes place within the enlarged family, Forsberg (1998) makes visible the regional variations in gender contract in Sweden. These two dimensions of inequality and care have allowed her to distinguish three types of gender contracts. The first is the *traditional gender contract* with both market segregation and high levels of family-based care. The second is the *modernised gender contract* with low segregation and more public sector care. Finally the *non-traditional gender contract* represents a transitional form. This framework then allows the portrayal of regional type cases. She also shows that regions ranked as expansive regions with economic growths and great potentials are not necessarily regions with the most equal gender contracts. Interesting research has also been done on the link between the gender contract in the workplace and the household level (Bekkengen, 2002; Gottschall, 1999; Crompton & Birkelund, 2000). The concept of the gender contract can also be used to develop typologies of differing forms of household division of labour. The model should allow for a traditional structural analysis, making vertical, horizontal and time sex segregation visible in the organisation.

Discussions of the concept of the gender contract enriched the debates within the WORKS consortium about how to address gender issues in the case study research. However it was recognised that in order to use it systematically it would be necessary to extend the research beyond the limits of organisational case studies on the one hand and occupational case studies on the other as envisaged in the work plan. In order to gain a real insight into the specifics of the gender contract it would also have been necessary to carry out in-depth research at the level of the household and the region. These were beyond the scope of the project. However some elements of the 'gender contract' approach were retained in the development of research instruments and in the interpretation of the research results.

The analysis of these different dimensions of segregation provides extremely useful insights into the specific gender relations that exist in any particular social context, and we aimed to collect as much information as possible on this.

There have been attempts to integrate a gender dimension into research on work since the late 1960s by researchers coming from a variety of different traditions and using a variety of different approaches. Within the field of labour sociology in research using the comparative case study method (in common with other research methods, including surveys) the concept of 'gender segregation' has been the dominant approach used. This concept makes it possible to analyse the different positions of men and women within specific organisations and within the labour market more generally in relation to several different dimensions. Most usually these are defined as:

- 'horizontal segregation' (whereby men and women are employed in different sectors and occupations);
- 'vertical segregation' (whereby they are employed at different hierarchical levels);
- 'contractual segregation' (whereby women may be more/less likely than men to be employed on certain kinds of contract, e.g. temporary or on-call contracts);
- 'temporal segregation' (whereby men and women may be more/less likely to work different shifts, or are more/less likely to work part-time).

More recently, other forms of segregation have been added to this list, *e.g.*:

- 'spatial segregation' (whereby men or women are more/less likely to be employed at city-centre/head offices as opposed to suburban or rural or remote back-offices or more/less likely to work from home).

The concept of segregation can be further elaborated to take account, for instance, of ethnic differences, age differences, sexuality, differences in skill or qualification levels, *etc.*

This approach has demonstrated its usefulness over many years, especially in the analysis of quantitative data. However when applied to case study research its uses are limited. It is, of course, a prerequisite of any case study that basic information is collected on the distribution of workers by gender according to the five dimensions listed above. However this information alone cannot get one very far in understanding the 'how' and 'why' of this situation unless informants can be found who are prepared to discuss gender issues in the organisation in some depth and with some degree of detachment and offer their insights to the researcher in a capacity that could be termed 'inside observers' – something which is by no means always available. We therefore attempted to move beyond the limits of a simple 'gender segregation' approach wherever possible. Although, in an ideal situation it is possible to find a 'gender expert' within the organisation to interview, in practice it is often extremely difficult, if not impossible, to find such a person. The most usual situation is to find that the nearest thing to a 'gender expert' is someone in the HR department who, typically, simply recites the company's equal opportunities policy statement. Because sex discrimination is formally outlawed throughout the EU, interviews with HR managers or senior managers are highly unlikely to produce responses that admit to discriminatory practices and usually give the message that 'there is no problem'. Line managers and male workers will typically also give the 'official line' and say that (for instance) they make every effort to attract women to senior/technical jobs but that they simply do not receive applications from them. Such responses give the researcher very little to interpret and lead to a situation in which, if gender is discussed at

all in case study analysis, it is discussed at a level which is either very superficial or very general and adds little in-depth knowledge to our understanding of the dynamics of the structuring and restructuring of gender relations in the workplace.

In the WORKS project, the aim was to get beyond the 'head counting' that underlies this 'gender segregation' approach. The aim was to use an approach that involves seeing gender not as a fixed characteristic of individual human beings but as a relationship which is continuously being produced, challenged, reproduced and transformed by both men and women in an ongoing process which is shaped by a range of different factors many of which are in conflict, or at least tension, with each other. In other words gender is not so much 'who you are' but 'what you do'. And, importantly, this 'doing gender' or 'gendering' is something that is done both by men and by women. It can therefore be studied equally well in all-male, all-female and mixed situations. Just as a zero value may be significant in quantitative research, so an absence of women, or of men (or indeed, of other social groups, such as ethnic groups) is a significant finding, deserving of qualitative investigation.

Whereas early feminist organisational studies mostly focused on individual characteristics of women and/or organisational structures contributing to gender specific opportunity structures (cf. Kanter, 1977), the focus of some more recent research has been on 'how gender is done'. The influential approach of Joan Acker (1990 & 1992) identifies four ways by which persistent structuring along gender lines is reproduced within organisations. These four ways are 'components of the same reality, although, for purposes of description, they can be seen as analytically distinct' (Acker, 1992: 252). They serve as different points of entry to the identification of gendered practices and processes, into the ongoing flow of actions and interactions. Acker's inventory of gendered processes distinguishes between (a) the production of gender divisions through 'ordinary' procedures and decisions; b) the creation of symbols, images, and forms of consciousness that portray and give legitimacy to the divisions; (c) the multitude of interactions that occur between individuals, enacting dominance and subordination; and (d) the gendered social constructions of reality that form in the minds of individuals, for example, in terms of adequate performing in the organisation and on gender critical analyses of fundamental theoretical assumptions in organisational theory, such as power relations (e.g. Ragins & Sundstrom, 1989), hierarchy and bureaucracy (e.g. Savage & Witz, 1992), and organisational culture (e.g. Alvesson & Due Billing, 1997). This work was drawn on to develop a framework for the WORKS qualitative research.

In order to operationalise this approach within the constraints of case study research, four different levels were identified at which this process of 'gendering' may take place within an organisation. These were:

- *identity*: this refers to how people see themselves, their roles and what is ideal or typical for their occupations and those of others;
- *discourse*: this refers to the ways in which people are represented and referred to both formally (e.g. the ways in which jobs are portrayed in advertisements or described in job descriptions) and informally (e.g. the kinds of jokes that are acceptable or the kinds of social activities which take place in connection with work);
- *practice*: this refers to what actually happens in terms of everyday behaviour, work processes, etc.;

- *institution*: this refers to formal structures and procedures which may have an indirectly discriminatory effect, or the effect of channelling women and men into different positions in an organisation, a labour market or society as a whole.

It was recognised that these levels are mutually interacting and cannot always be distinguished clearly from each other. Nevertheless, they seemed to offer a useful framework for analysis that goes beyond the simple 'segregation' dimension that we hoped, if researchers were to collect, discuss and analyse information at each of these levels, could be conducive to developing a deeper understanding of gender at the workplace.

In order to facilitate this, a table was produced summarising some of the ways in which case study researchers might collect information to inform an analysis at each of these four levels within the framework of the WORKS project. This is reproduced as an appendix to this report.

In practice, constraints of time and access meant that these dimensions could not be explored as fully as would ideally have been desirable. The occupational case studies gave us some useful insights into the dimension of *identity*, and the organisational case studies made it possible to study some aspects of *practice* and of *institution*. However to investigate these systematically and in depth and to carry out a detailed investigation at the level of *discourse* would have required many hours of presence on the site carrying out observations, which was beyond the scope of the project. Nevertheless, these guidelines informed the way in which the WORKS researchers approached their case studies and produced some interesting insights which were reported in the case study reports and have contributed to this report.

2.2 The WORKS approach to ethnicity

The study of gender in the workplace has a long history in the EU, and many of the WORKS partner institutes and/or the researchers within them have been actively involved in this history for three decades and were in a position to draw on past theoretical and empirical research to illuminate their work in this project. The study of ethnicity in most EU member states has a less coherent tradition. There is little agreement on the definition of terms; neither is there a consensus on indicators or the need to collect them. The approach to the topic is coloured by the very different histories and geographies of European countries, which include different patterns of imperial history, of immigration, of the use of migrant or 'guest' workers, of patterns of seasonal employment, of the integration of nomadic peoples (such as Roma in Central and Eastern Europe or 'tinkers' in Ireland) of discrimination, of religious tolerance (or intolerance), of relationships with neighbouring states, and even of linguistic patterns. Ethnicity may be defined in terms of skin colour, religion, cultural heritage, national origin, language or citizenship. Globalisation processes are making such distinctions more, rather than less complex (Cohen, 2006) as the effects of the movement of people to jobs (migration) interact with those of the movements of jobs to people (offshoring) both spatially and culturally (Huws, 2006). Case studies of offshoring have repeatedly found that, in order for a relocation to be achieved successfully, considerable physical movement of people is necessary, including the posting of managers and training officers from 'source' regions to the 'destinations' where

work is being relocated, and bringing groups of workers from the 'destination' to the 'source' for training (Flecker & Kirschenhofer, 2002).

This means that alongside the immigrants, migrants, refugees, asylum seekers, guest workers, seasonal workers or people from former colonies or the global south to whom 'otherness' is ascribed negatively, there are also high-skilled, relatively affluent migrant workers who, whilst equally foreign, occupy very different and privileged positions in global organisations and may be viewed more positively; indeed their positions in the workforce may be considerably better than those of indigenous workers. This creates major challenges for the interpretation of such statistics as do exist on workers who do not have citizenship of the countries in which they are employed.

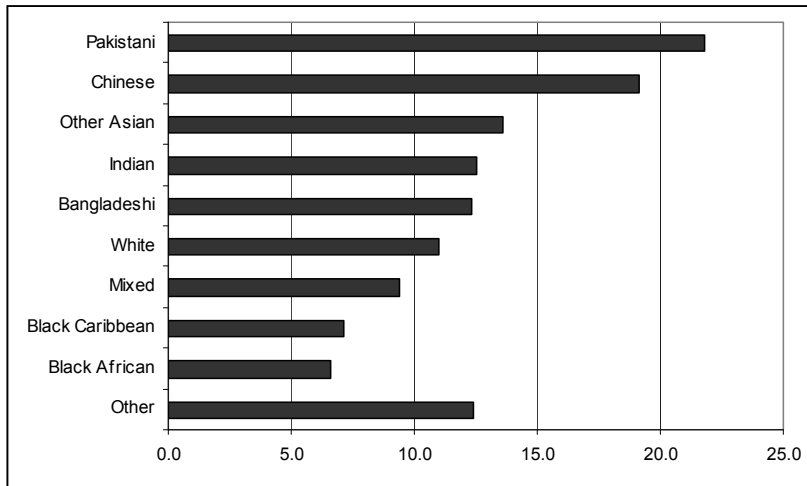
One of the few EU member states in which the national labour force survey collects detailed information on ethnicity is the UK. An analysis of these data demonstrate the dangers of drawing overly simplistic generalisations about ethnicity based on simple binary differentiation between, for instance, 'whites' and 'non-whites'. By way of illustration we reproduce here two summary graphs showing, respectively, the distribution of self-employment and of unemployment by ethnicity. As can be seen from Figure 2.1, there are high levels of self-employment among people of Pakistani, Chinese, Other Asian, Indian and Bangladeshi origin in the UK, but below-average levels among people of Black Caribbean and Black African origin, with people defined as White lying somewhere in between. But should this self-employment be interpreted as an indicator of relative privilege on the labour market or of relative deprivation? Figure 2.2 shows that unemployment is at its highest amongst Bangladeshis, suggesting that in this community self-employment may well be a reaction to unemployment and therefore an indicator of labour market disadvantage. However this does not explain why self-employment should be even higher amongst Pakistanis, Chinese and Indians whose unemployment levels are much lower than those of Bangladeshis. Neither does it explain the fact that high levels of unemployment co-exist with low levels of self-employment among Black Caribbeans and Black Africans. It is clear that such statistics cannot be interpreted without a nuanced understanding of the different histories, cultural practices and qualification structures within each of these different minority ethnic communities in the UK as well as an understanding of patterns of discrimination and exclusion within different sectors and occupational groups.

Many other examples could be selected, but these are, perhaps, sufficient to illustrate the complexity of the situation and the dangers of over-simplistic interpretation of data on ethnicity.

For such reasons, the WORKS project did not attempt to carry out any quantitative analysis of patterns of segregation and power relations in the workplace by ethnicity, but drew on the qualitative case studies for information on the ways in which these are changing in the context of value chain restructuring.

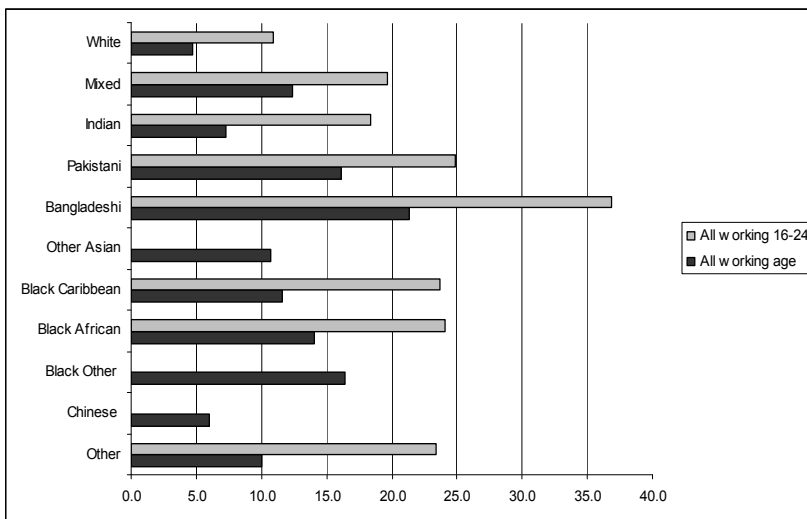
Because of the very different approaches adopted to gender and ethnicity in the project we also treat these two topics separately in this report.

Figure 2.1 Self-employment by ethnicity, UK, 2001-2002



Source: Labour Force Survey, Office of National Statistics, UK

Figure 2.2 Unemployment by ethnicity, UK, 2001-2002



Source: Labour Force Survey, Office of National Statistics, UK

3 Gender and changes in work

This section summarises the findings of the WORKS project in relation to the gender aspects of changes in work and attempts to identify significant trends in changes at work in a gender inclusive perspective. This summary is based on the literature review, quantitative and qualitative analyses as well other sources with a European scope. It aims firstly at adding to the general WORKS analysis a specific analysis of gendered power relations in the workplace and secondly at suggesting further development of research in the field of work organisation that takes into account a gender-sensitive analysis.

In this report we focus on all gender aspects of work organisation within the workplace except working time arrangements. In doing this we do not underestimate the importance of working time arrangements in gendering jobs, sectors, working conditions and quality of working life. Working time arrangements are a crucially important dimension of work organisation and in forming the quality of work-life balance. These are studied in depth in a companion report to this one (Klings, Nierling, Pedaci & Piersanti, 2009). Our focus in this report is specifically on patterns of segregation and power relations in the workplace and how these are changing in the context of value chain restructuring.

The first part of this section refers to the scientific debate about the contradictory gender effects of changes in work organisation.

The second part gathers the available data on three aspects of work organisation that are closely related to women's and men's working life and provide the gendered dimension to jobs and workplaces. These are: the horizontal and vertical gender segregation of the labour force (sectors, occupations, hierarchical levels); working conditions (degrees of autonomy, complexity and intensity); and the quality of working life (job satisfaction, overqualification and mobility).

3.1 An overview of the empirical evidence

There is a vast body of literature, both theoretical and empirical, stretching back over more than two decades, on gender and work and the ways in which patterns of segregation are reinforced or challenged. This includes studies which focus specifically on labour market restructuring (*e.g.* Rubery & Fagan, 1994; Crompton & Sanderson, 1990). Here, comparative research has analysed segregation of the labour market, working-time segregation and its relation to inequality across a range of EU States (*e.g.* Rubery *et al.*, 1998; Anxo & O'Reilly, 2000). A special focus has been on non-standard forms of employment supporting in many countries the integration of women into the labour market while failing to challenge segregation and limitations to economic independence (Instituto de la Mujer, 1998) and the gender impacts of flexibilisation strategies (*e.g.* Gunnarsson, 1998; Huws, 1996). Other studies have focused on gender and technological change in the

workplace (e.g. Huws, 1983; Cockburn, 1988; Webster, 1996; Game & Pringle, 1983; Gunnarsson & Huws, 1997; Vendramin & Valenduc, 2003). A more general analysis of gender and the knowledge economy has developed from this literature (Walby, Gottfried, Gottschall & Osawa, 2007).

There have also been comparative studies illustrating the different ways in which gender patterns are institutionally shaped across Europe (e.g. Gottschall & Bird, 2003; Lewis, 2002; Sainsbury, 1996; Lessenich & Ostner, 1998). Lenz (2007) argues that specific gendered welfare regimes are associated with different 'varieties of capitalism' (Hall & Soskice, 2001) and that co-ordinated market economies and liberal market economies have evolved distinctively different forms of gender regulation which are taking new forms in a context of globalisation. Building on her own past work (Walby *ibid.*, 1994) and that of Connell (1987), Walby *et al.* (2007: 20) develops the concept of 'varieties of gender regime' and analyses its intersection with 'varieties of capitalism', using a framework based on 'gendering, de-gendering and re-gendering' of employment practices (*ibid.*: 25ff). A close study of employment practices thus has the potential, in principle, to shed light on other aspects of institutional shaping.

3.1.1 Opportunities or risks for women in work restructuring?

The study of new forms of work organisation is a particularly fruitful field for analysing changes in gender power relations. As Holtgrewe says: 'It is on the level of work organisations that ... tensions between market-led de-regulation and flexibility on the one hand, political regulations and social norms of equality on the other are being processed, and this processing happens in a strategic way. For example, organisations implement equal opportunity policies, select among available "tools" and aims, or seek to escape or avoid such expectations and demands. Evidently, however, they are neither totally adaptive to their environment nor omnipotently rational and strategic' (Holtgrewe, 2007b: 255).

New forms of work organisation - as one main thesis of gender research - potentially offer both opportunities to challenge the gender relations embedded in traditional forms of work organisation, in particular in bureaucracy.

The backdrop for this optimism is the assumption that the structures and values underlying bureaucratic forms of work organisation negatively affect women's employment. In this optimistic view, the new forms of work organisation may mark a departure from rigid hierarchies because they value flexibility and at the same time no longer demand a lifelong commitment. Women can shape their working time and their careers to suit their own individual needs, including the demands of child care. The individualisation of career paths could thus offer a 'win-win' change. It provides employers with flexibility, while giving (female) employees a better chance to shape their own careers in their own interests. (Walby, 1990; Witz, 1992). Furthermore, the critique of bureaucratic organisations assumes that in contemporary 'flexible' organisations the less strictly defined work roles favour more porous gender roles. Therefore individuals are not so tied to their expected positions and women can re-define themselves as equal to men in the world of work. In addition, the new forms of work organisations are associated 'with the feminisation of management qualities and a growth of managerialist occupations in which women are better represented' (Hebson & Grugulis, 2004: 218).

Yet empirical studies of organisational restructuring show that these potentially opportunities have not come to fruition. 'Instead restructuring has contradictory implications for gender inequality in employment, often increasing the quantity of opportunities, rather than qualities' (Hebson & Grugulis, 2004: 218). The reduced hierarchies in new organisational forms, for example, aid women's progression into managerial positions. Women's inroads into management and professional positions continue to improve the position of some women. But as Bradley (1999) shows in her study of women and men in the North East of England women's transitions into management roles often coincide with a downgrading of these areas. Furthermore, Liff and Ward (2001) find that organisational restructuring may create greater uncertainty in the promotion prospects of women managers. An increased reliance on being part of the right networks in order to get promoted can further reduce opportunities. Liff and Ward's studies in retail banks showed that despite formal equality statements there continued to be a wide range of informal processes acting against women gaining access to senior management positions. Hebson and Grugulis (2004) summarise the following opportunities and risks of new organisational forms:

- new opportunities: influx of women managers, performance-related pay, flexible working time, customer service skills/cultures and men entering female dominated sectors;
- new risks: invisibility of male power, opening for discrimination, long hours culture, danger of stereotyping and downgrading of men's work rather than upgrading of women.

It has become evident that these developments are far from unified and not without contradiction: differences among women are mounting, risks are concentrated on low-paid female segments of work whereas for women in positions higher up in the hierarchy the picture is more contradictory. At the same time, however, the gender structure and bias of work, and with it gender inequality, has not eroded. Taking into consideration that 'unpaid labour' - or women's greater share of the domestic division of labour and the resulting 'double burden' - is a central factor in explaining the position of women in the labour market, it becomes clear that the analysis of the gender relations in new forms of work organisation needs a multiple tool analysis model. This model should allow on the one hand for a traditional structural analysis, making vertical, horizontal and time sex segregation visible both inside and outside the organisation, and on the other hand for other forms of analysis capturing the processes by which masculinities and femininities are adapted and reproduced.

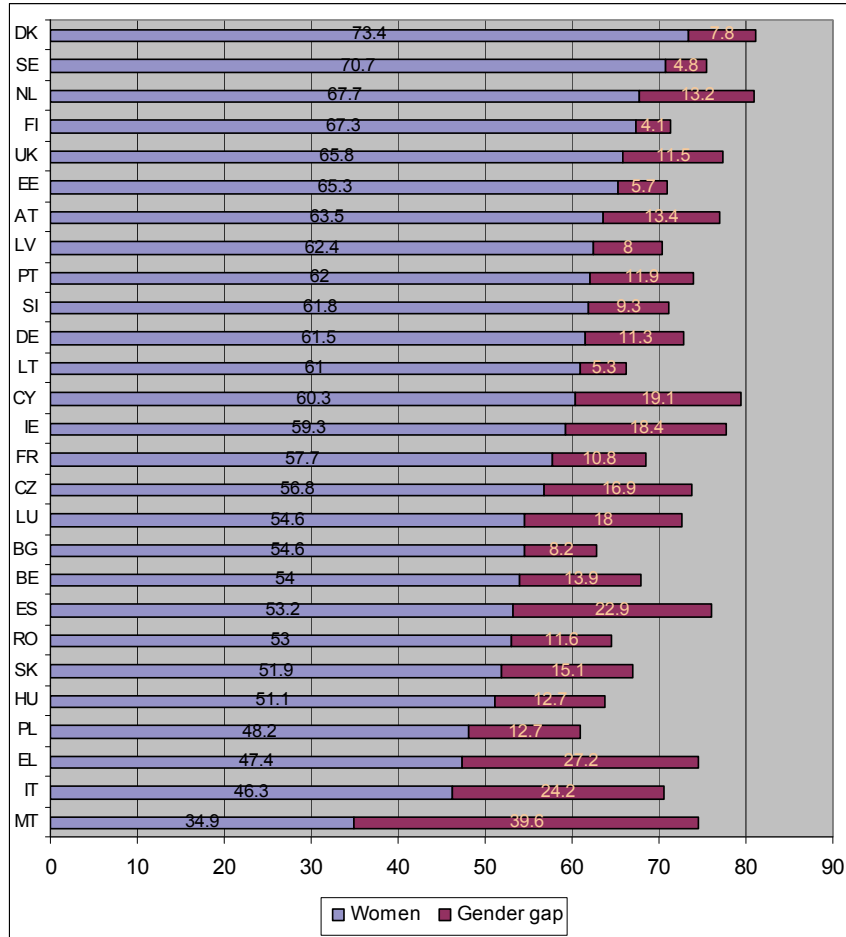
The next part of this report illustrates some trends in women's and men's jobs both in relation to their occupational and sectoral distribution and to some selected characteristics of work. It is based on quantitative data analysed in the framework of WORKS project and on recent research by the European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions.

3.1.1.1 *Horizontal and vertical segregation by sex*

The gender gap in employment rates is large across all EU countries. In 2006 the difference in employment rates between women and men was 14.5 percentage points in EU-27 and slightly higher (15.1) in EU-15. This shows a slight decrease since 2000 (17.1 and

18.7).² There is a clear geographical divide (all four countries with the smallest gap are northern countries (Finland, Sweden Lithuania, Estonia) and all four countries with largest gap are Southern (Malta, Greece, Italy and Spain).

Figure 3.1 Gender differences in the employment rate by country, 2006, EU-27



Source: European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions, 2007: 10

This illustrates the persisting differences in welfare regimes and the way that women undertake a larger part of unpaid labour and caring tasks in the South.

² Indicators for monitoring the EES Guidelines - Full reference in EWCS European Commission 2007, indicator 18.A1.

Table 3.1 Women's over- and under-representation in each occupational group, by country, EU-27 (per cent)

	Senior managers	Professionals	Technicians	Clerical workers	Service and sales workers	Agricultural and fishery workers	Skilled workers	Machine operators	Unskilled workers	All women
AT	30	-	47	64	74	58	9	12	53	46
BE	30	56	56	57	48	-	11	11	62	44
BG	54	63	52	70	70	47	32	25	32	47
CY	32	58	40	76	56	-	17	10	45	43
CZ	47	62	46	82	60	-	18	8	62	43
DE	36	46	53	73	76	55	3	13	53	45
DK	30	46	55	84	68	-	16	23	32	46
EE	50	60	59	80	83	-	23	31	40	49
EL	32	39	45	56	57	40	13	6	66	38
ES	31	42	60	67	35	-	11	12	73	39
FI	32	47	70	81	81	48	14	14	53	48
FR	32	41	56	79	50	-	17	-	49	47
HU	32	69	54	55	51	-	23	49	40	46
IE	31	59	49	68	78	16	1	18	17	42
IT	16	64	44	52	57	-	10	25	51	39
LT	33	61	83	67	-	-	29	7	60	49
LU	15	39	51	61	36	9	12	16	77	39
LV	51	73	68	81	65	51	16	20	49	49
MT	30	28	53	45	43	-	3	38	34	33
NL	47	38	64	65	60	-	19	7	53	44
PL	36	72	48	77	32	38	34	8	39	45
PT	50	68	67	77	45	-	23	28	62	46
RO	25	70	44	79	65	45	16	45	64	46
SE	31	66	58	65	51	-	10	9	63	48
SI	-	50	52	70	67	-	24	20	60	45
SK	31	56	58	77	66	-	14	25	52	45
UK	16	50	64	71	64	-	7	15	44	47

where women are more than 5 percentage points under-represented relative to their share of total employment in the country in question.

where women are more than 5 percentage points over-represented relative to their share of total employment in the country in question.

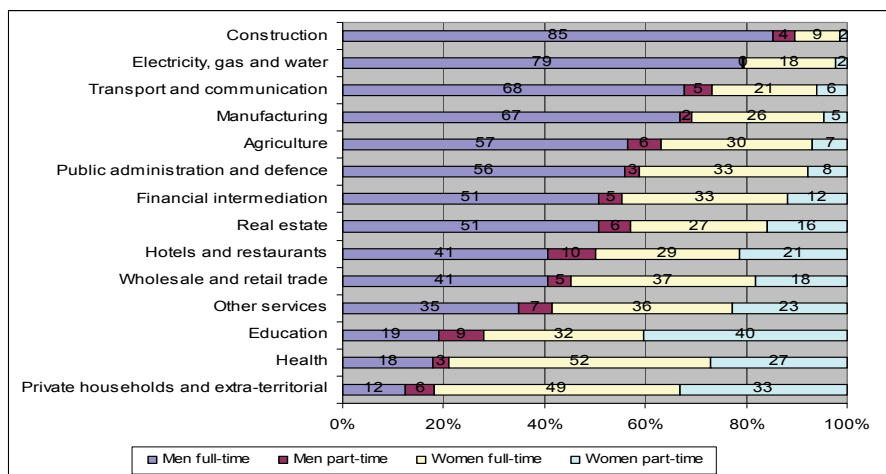
Note: '-' denotes that the total number of unweighted cases in this cell is 20 or less; therefore, estimates are too inaccurate to be useful.

Source: EWCS, 2005 (European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions, 2007: 13)

Horizontal (occupational and sectoral) segregation by sex is very important and illustrates better the gendered dimension of work organisation. The total amount of gender imbalance presented as a proportion of total employment in occupations is 24.9 in the EU-27 (European Commission 2007, indicator 18.A4). This has slightly increased since 2000 (by 2.4 *per cent*) although one would expect the opposite trend, taking into consideration public policies aiming at desegregating occupational groups. Generally speaking, women work in jobs that involve caring, nurturing and providing services for people. Men tend to monopolise senior management and manual jobs which involve using machinery or production processes considered to be physically onerous, complex or dangerous. Almost all armed forces, the majority of skilled craft workers, machine operators and senior managers and over the half of agricultural and fishery workers are men. Women hold the majority of jobs in clerical (69 *per cent*), service and sales (58 *per cent*) and technical or associate professional positions (56 *per cent*). A higher proportion of professionals and technicians in physical, mathematical and engineering science positions are male than in senior manager positions. Those in teaching, life sciences and health professions are more likely to be women. Among unskilled workers, cleaning and domestic services (ISCO 91) are female-dominated while labouring jobs (ISCO 92, 93) are male dominated.

Sectoral segregation by sex has increased even more quickly than occupational segregation in the last seven years. The total amount of gender imbalance (presented as a proportion of total employment) increased from 16.9 *per cent* (2000) to 18.1 (2006) (indicator 18.A4). In terms of sectors, men predominate in construction, where 89 *per cent* of the workforce is male, in electricity, gas and water supplies (80 *per cent*), transport and communications (73 *per cent*), manufacturing (69 *per cent*) and agriculture (63 *per cent*). Women constitute the majority of the workforce in domestic services in private households (82 *per cent*), health (79 *per cent*), education (72 *per cent*) and other community, social and personal services (59 *per cent*) and half of the workforce in hotels and restaurants.

Figure 3.2 Gender segregation by sector, EU-27 (*per cent*)



Note: 'Manufacturing' includes mining and 'agriculture' includes fishing.

Source: European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions, 2007: 14

Vertical segregation by sex is also important if we take into consideration that within the same occupation or sector there may be different 'female' and 'male' jobs as well as male-dominated organisational levels. For example, men employed full-time are more likely to be supervising ten or more subordinates. More than one in five men employed full-time (23 *per cent*) have some supervisory responsibilities, compared with 15 *per cent* of women employed full-time. This means that the majority of workforce is managed by men. Only 9 *per cent* of employed men are managed by a woman. It is more common for women to be managed by other women due to the gender segregated pattern of employment: 40 *per cent* of women employed full-time and 47 *per cent* of women employed part-time have a female manager. Female managers and supervisors are more prevalent in the lower ranks of organisational hierarchies. The more supervisory responsibilities people have, the more likely it is that their own supervisor is a man (European Foundation, 2007).

3.1.1.2 Working conditions

Among all aspects of working conditions reported in the EWCS in this report we focus on those related to the 'nature and organisation of tasks'. Analysis of these tasks reveals elements of the work content such as contact with people, monotony, autonomy, complexity, intensity, intellectual demands, personal development, *etc.* Analysis of differences between women and men reported with regard to these elements provides insights into forms of gendering in work content and task organisation. Despite important efforts to make jobs and occupations more 'mixed' through public (European and national) gender equality policies in the labour market, differences between women and men persist and shape women's and men's working lives. Although stereotypical gender roles may change in form and intensity both in the family and the labour market, inequalities in the labour market are still measurable and even increase, specifically in terms of pay, social protection and occupational health risks.

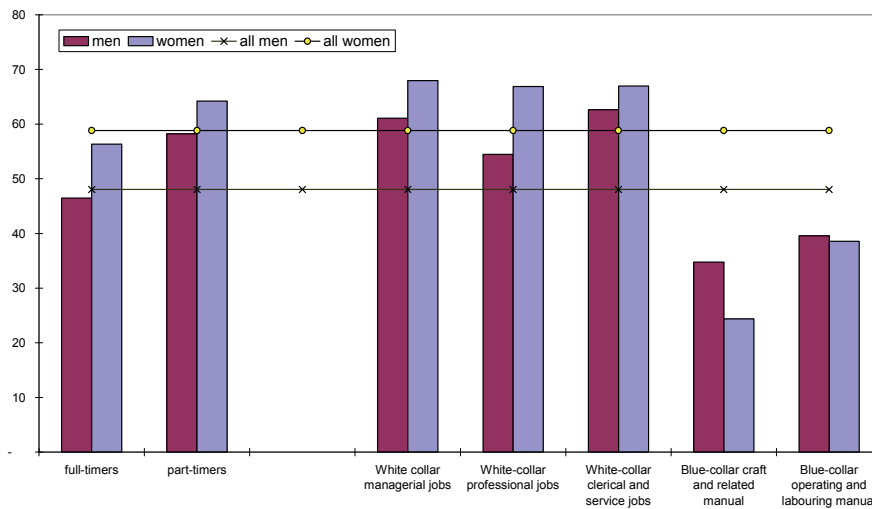
Gender differences found in some crucial characteristics of work form a picture of gendered work environments that place and treat women and men differently, even if these differences cannot all be captured by the questionnaire of the Survey of the Eurofoundation. For example, it is clear that men enjoy more supportive work environments, because slight, but indicative, differences are shown in the formal assessment of work performance (at 42 *per cent* for men *versus* 38 *per cent* for women), in discussions of work-related problems with the boss (at 60 *per cent* for men *versus* 56 *per cent* for women) and with employee representatives (at 23 *per cent* for men *versus* 20 *per cent* for women).

Table 3.2 Consultation, appraisal and support from boss, EU-27 (*per cent*)

	Men			Women			Total
	FT	PT	Total	FT	PT	Total	
Had frank discussion with boss about own work performance in past year	50	46	49	50	43	48	49
Was consulted about changes in work organisation/conditions in past year	48	45	47	47	47	47	47
Had regular formal assessment of work performance	42	36	42	40	34	38	40
Discussed work-related problems with boss in past year	61	51	60	59	51	56	58
Discussed work-related problems with employee representative in past year	23	20	23	21	18	20	21

Source: EWCS, 2005 (European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions, 2007: 23)

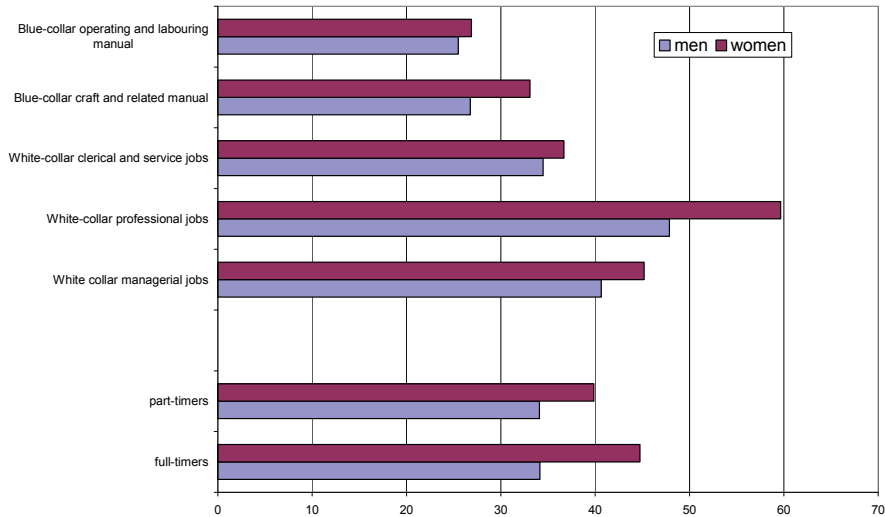
Women work more in jobs involving direct contact with people (customers, passengers, patients, pupils, *etc.*). There are significant differences even in the service sector, which is anyway dominated by women. Almost three fifths of women (59 *per cent*) spend at least half of their time dealing directly with people, compared with just under half of men (48 *per cent*). Such gender differences are reinforced across the occupational spectrum particularly among white-collar professional and managerial occupations.

Figure 3.3 Regular interaction with clients and customers, by sex, occupational category and working time status, EU-27 (*per cent*)

Source: European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions, 2007: 24

Working with people places additional emotional demands on workers. Women are more likely than men to find their work emotionally demanding. Occupational distribution reinforces these differences. Sixty *per cent* of women in professional jobs reported that their work was emotionally demanding.

Figure 3.4 Extent to which work is emotionally demanding, by sex, occupational category and working time status, EU-27 (*per cent*)



Source: European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions, 2007: 24

Autonomy is calculated by analysing responses to questions about issues like the order of the tasks, the methods of work, the speed or rate of work and when to take breaks, *etc.* Men have more autonomy than women in managerial and professional occupations. In addition men have more autonomy on choice of work patterns (when to take holidays, and apply their own ideas at work) in white-collar work. These differences are reversed among blue-collar workers. One possible explanation for this is that it results from the effects of occupational and sectoral segregation by gender, with some of the least autonomous jobs falling into traditionally male areas. The presence of large numbers of migrant workers in the male blue-collar workforce may also indicate an ethnic dimension to this finding. However further research would be required to establish that this is indeed the case. Working full-time raises the rate of the level of autonomy. Overall, women record lower levels of autonomy and work on complex tasks, with women in blue-collar jobs being particularly exposed to monotonous tasks.

Table 3.3 Task autonomy over method, pace and order of tasks, and taking of breaks, EU-27 (*per cent*)

	Men			Women		
	Little or none	Some	A lot	Little or none	Some	A lot
All	28	39	33	28	43	29
Full-time workers	28	40	32	29	42	29
Part-time workers	29	39	32	26	45	28
White-collar managerial workers	9	30	61	16	34	50
White-collar professional workers	14	45	41	19	52	29
White-collar clerical and service workers	30	43	27	31	43	26
Blue-collar craft and related manual workers	31	40	29	29	35	36
Blue-collar operating and labouring manual workers	46	35	19	42	34	24

Source: EWCS, 2005 (European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions, 2007: 27)

Opportunities for learning and problem solving are greater for men (63 *per cent*) than for women (59 *per cent*) although among part-timers women have better opportunities than men (57 *per cent* compared with 52 *per cent*). This may be related to the fact that women part-timers have better chance to have better jobs than men part-timers, because their participation in part-time work is much extended than men's. It could also reflect the very high concentration of women in service occupations, many of which are characterised by the need for frequent retraining (for instance when customer service staff have to be familiarised with new products, or clerical staff with new software packages) and which also may require the ability to solve problems in real time in interaction with service clients or customers.

Further statistical multilevel analysis of the data in the frame of the WORKS project (Greenan *et al.*, 2007: 52) demonstrated the role of the workers' sex in changes in working conditions identified by the survey. Individual characteristics including sex were selected to be checked as micro drivers for change. Despite the limitation of the analysis that understands gender only as an individual characteristic, WORKS multilevel analysis has identified some interesting differences between women and men in the field of work organisation, especially concerning the complexity of work and intensity of market constraints.

The degree of complexity of a job and the intensity of market constraints react very strongly with the personal characteristics of employees. The typical employee having the most routine job is a young woman (15-24 years old) working as an employee with a temporary contract. She does not work with a computer and does not have supervision responsibilities. She is a plant or machine operator in the manufacturing sector. The typical employee in a job with intense market constraints is a middle-aged woman (between 25 and 54 years old) working in the private sector. She is self-employed or on an unlimited contract and her job involves working with computers and hierarchical responsibilities. The most intensified jobs are concentrated in the service sector. Professionals, service workers and sales workers are the occupational groups where market constraints are the highest.

Table 3.4 Probability of having a job that involves problem solving and learning, EU-27

Positive factors	Negative factors
Working* in Denmark, the Netherlands or Sweden	Working* in Bulgaria, Cyprus, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Romania, Spain or the UK
Being** a man or a women in any white-collar occupation, or a man in a blue-collar craft occupation	Being** a woman or a man in a blue-collar labouring occupation
Working in the public sector Being an employee	Being older
Regularly experiencing interruptions Regularly working at speed Higher levels of task autonomy Multiple drivers for pace of work	Higher exposure to ergonomic risks
Working more than 20 hours a week Working time autonomy Sometimes or regularly working unsocial hours	

Source: EWCS, 2005 (European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions, 2007: 29)

In a macroeconomic view, countries where work complexity is high have important shares of service and industry sectors and a weak share of part-time workers. In countries where intensity of market constraint is high, the share of young workers is weak and the share of part-time workers is important. This means that workforce participation in highly intensified jobs is feminised which is also consistent with the individual level results.

The results of the WORKS multilevel analysis contradicts the assumption that changes in work organisation and the new career profiles may offer more opportunities for women to follow a successful professional trajectory whereas traditional forms of organisation, particularly bureaucracies where learning opportunities are weak, would have strictly defined gender roles. Data analysis showed that all things being equal women perform more routine jobs and their jobs are more highly intensified in terms of market constraints. Countries with a greater percentage of part-time employment are characterised by a lower degree of work complexity and a higher intensity of market constraints. The negative correlation of the percentage of part-time employment with the degree of job complexity indicates a possibly poor quality of job in the country (non voluntary/imposed part-time, for example) (Greenan *et al.*, 2007: 52).

Overall results on the role of individual characteristics as micro drivers for change in work demonstrate that women experience a better quality of working conditions and a weaker intensity of technical constraints. Occupational segregation of women in the service sector could explain this result. However although women are less likely to have to deal with 'industrial' constraints, it should be remembered that multilevel estimations show that they have to deal with higher market constraints and perform very routine jobs (*ibid.*, Chapter 4).

3.1.1.3 *Quality of working life*

WORKS analysis of data from the European Community Household Panel (ISER, UK) shows particularly striking gender differences in three aspects of the quality of working life: job satisfaction, overqualification and mobility.

Job satisfaction

The ECHP asked workers whether they are satisfied with different aspects of their job in terms of earnings, job security, type of work, number of hours worked, working times and work environment. The proportion of workers dissatisfied with their type of work decreased or remained stable in almost all EU countries. Workers with fixed-term contracts, casual and other type of atypical jobs are more likely to be dissatisfied than workers in permanent jobs. This strongly suggests that these conditions are the result of constraints, not of choice. Workers employed in intermediate and non-supervisory jobs seem to be likely to be dissatisfied than workers who have supervisory jobs. Model analysis where sex is one value for all workers who declare they are dissatisfied has shown that in almost all type of jobs in which a larger probability of dissatisfaction is reported, women are the majority (Brynin & Longhi, 2007: 79).

Partially contradictory results are drawn from analysis of the European Working Conditions Surveys (EWCS) of the European Foundation. In total 81 *per cent* of men and 84 *per cent* of women reported being either satisfied or very satisfied with their working conditions. Part-timers reported even higher rates of satisfaction. However, if analysis goes deeper into specific aspects of job satisfaction, important gender gaps appear. For example fewer women than men agree that they are well paid for the work done, that they are good prospects for career advancement and that they have good friends at work. (European Foundation, 2007, Table 3.5, see below). Working time arrangements figure prominently among the factors that raise the probability of being satisfied with working conditions. The most satisfied workers are those who work full-time but not more than 48 hours a week. Having some degree of working time and tasks autonomy also increases levels of job satisfaction. (European Foundation, 2007, Table 3.5, see next page).

Table 3.5 Measures of job satisfaction by sex, working time status and occupational category, EU-27 (per cent)

	Full-time workers	Part-time workers	White-collar managerial workers	White-collar professional workers	White-collar clerical and service workers	Blue-collar craft and related manual workers	Blue-collar operating and labouring manual workers	All
<i>Might lose job in next six months</i>								
Men	15	20	7	12	18	17	22	16
Women	17	14	8	12	17	20	21	16
<i>Well paid for the work done</i>								
Men	47	45	60	55	45	41	36	46
Women	40	43	49	44	43	24	33	40
<i>Good prospects for career advancement</i>								
Men	34	28	45	49	37	25	18	33
Women	31	24	36	39	30	12	11	29
<i>Feel 'at home' in organisation</i>								
Men	63	61	78	70	61	62	50	63
Women	64	65	80	69	64	60	54	65
<i>Opportunities to learn and grow</i>								
Men	54	52	69	72	55	48	32	54
Women	55	49	65	72	51	27	26	53
<i>Have very good friends at work</i>								
Men	74	67	73	73	73	72	71	73
Women	72	68	72	75	73	60	60	70

Note: Percentages represent those who responded that they either 'strongly agreed' or 'agreed' with the statement.
Source: EWCS, 2005 (European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions, 2007: 44)

Overqualification

The ECHP identifies overqualified workers by asking them if they feel so. The proportion of workers feeling overqualified for the work they are doing is rather high. It ranges from 35 *per cent* in 'Manufacturing of textiles, clothing and leather' to 57 *per cent* in 'financial intermediation'. Men are more likely than women to feel they are overqualified, although such differences are not statistically significant in all countries. Having a fixed-term contract, casual work or other non permanent job agreement, rather than a permanent job generally has a big impact on the probability of feeling overqualified (Brynin & Longhi, 2007: 89).

Mobility

In the framework of the quantitative pillar of WORKS, movements between occupations and industries were examined on the basis of data from the ECHP over a seven year period. Measuring career flexibility in this way goes beyond expected upward movement over a career. It also reveals changes in occupations that result from external pressures towards downgrading a career, as it is often the case for women. The distribution of change by gender showed that in general upward mobility is always greater than downward mobility for all men and women (except men in Italy and women in Belgium). Upward mobility is higher for men than for women in seven countries but higher for women in four. This means that career progression is not always greater for men. Most striking, though, is that downward mobility is greater for men than for women in most countries. In addition, career loss is far more likely amongst men where some sort of occupational change occurs, than it is amongst women. Men might progress higher in their chosen professions than women, but if they change it might be for negative rather than for positive reasons. This may in part reflect the concentration of men in production industries which have had above-average rates of decline in recent years, especially when compared with service industries, most of which have been expanding, where women are more likely to be employed.

3.2 Conclusions

From these selected statistical results we can draw several conclusions. Whilst there are clearly changes taking place in patterns of the distribution of men and women in the workforce, and, more broadly, in the labour force, these are not necessarily always leading in the direction of greater equality.

As the above synthesis of WORKS quantitative analysis shows, there continue to be important differences between women and men in a large number of aspects of work content and work organisation. Segregation by both sector and occupation persists and in some cases has actually increased, with women tending to work in jobs with less complexity and more intensity and subject both to greater market pressures and emotional pressures from clients and other service recipients. Women are more likely to feel dissatisfied about their work if all aspects of job satisfaction are taken into consideration and they tend to feel more overqualified, which is linked to their greater propensity to work in atypical jobs. Upward mobility is lower for women who, in exchange, are less likely to

lose their jobs. These factors are associated with greater health risks for women in several respects. These are discussed in depth in a companion volume to this one (Di Nunzio, Hohnen, Hasle, Torvatn & Øyum, 2009).

Quantitative analysis provides an important picture of gender aspects of work content and work organisation supporting a large number of theoretical analyses on gender and work organisation reviewed in WORKS. However, the picture remains incomplete if working time arrangements are not brought in. Working time interconnects the work place to the private life and is crucial in shaping the gender gaps in both fields. This too is discussed in depth in a companion volume to this (Krings *et al.*, 2009). Time allocation by women and men to employment and to unpaid work follows very different patterns that, in turn, are shaped by new trends in the labour market. Understanding the power relations between women and men, however, requires more than quantitative data that identify 'female' and 'male' jobs. Gender power relations do not involve only women and men in ways that statistics and questionnaires can easily grasp and calculate.

They involve a set of social, economic and symbolic relations that influence the way in which jobs and tasks are assigned according to specific values and qualities. In this context the formation of 'female' and 'male' jobs, occupations and practices in the workplace may be independent from the biological 'sex' of the workers in these jobs at a certain time and place. In other words, certain more or less 'mixed' jobs, occupations and business functions (in which women and men are found in similar numbers) may nevertheless still be 'gendered'. The economic and social value of jobs and occupations as well as their 'gender' may evolve along with changes in gender patterns and stereotypical tasks for women and men. To gain greater insight into these aspects, we turn next to the results from the WORKS qualitative research.

3.3 Results from the WORKS case studies: gender issues in work restructuring

As already noted in the introduction, two distinct types of case study were carried out within the WORKS project. In a first phase, *organisational* case studies were carried out, focusing on particular *business functions* within particular *sectors* within which value chain restructuring was taking place, with the aim of ensuring that these were comparable across different types of policy regimes. In a second phase, *occupational* case studies focused on particular occupational groups to found within the same business functions and sectors in order to gain an insight into how the restructuring impacted individuals, and their careers, at a personal level. This section of the report draws on both organisational and occupational case studies in an attempt to tease out the implications of the restructuring for gender relations in the workplace. As already noted in the introduction, because the majority of the interviewees interviewed for the occupational case studies were employed in the same organisations that were studied for the organisational case studies they were reporting on the same realities, albeit sometimes from a different perspective. This produced a more rounded view than would have been possible from either source alone. However it made it impossible to draw a sharp distinction between the organisational and occupational analyses reported in the respective synthesis report. Although we have drawn on both of these reports (Flecker, Holtgrewe, Schönauer, Dunkel & Meil, 2008; Valenduc, Vendramin, Krings & Nierling, 2008) to some extent, our

main source for the analysis in the ensuing section was the original case study reports themselves, with organisational and occupational case studies being treated as a single pool of information on gender relations in the restructuring cases that were observed.

The impacts on other aspects of gender relations are dealt with in other companion reports to this. For instance the impacts on working time and work-life balance are discussed in Krings *et al.* (2009) and the gendered impacts on career trajectories are discussed in Valenduc, Vendramin, Pedaci and Piersanti (2009).

The WORKS organisational case studies focused on the design, production and logistics functions in the clothing industry, the production and logistics functions in the food and beverage industry, the R&D and production functions in the software industry and the IT support and customer service functions in the public sector (Flecker *et al.*, 2008).

The WORKS occupational case studies focused on contrasting occupational groups that were directly involved in the value chain restructuring studies in the organisational case studies. These were: designers in the clothing industry, R&D workers in the software industry, IT professionals providing software services, production workers in the clothing and food industries, logistics workers in the clothing and food industries and IT support and customer service workers in the public sector (Valenduc *et al.*, 2008).

3.3.1 The clothing industry

In general, the workforce in the clothing industry is strongly differentiated across different business functions, with the largest group of workers – machinists involved in the production of clothing – overwhelmingly dominated by women and a more complex gender division of labour across other functions. Because it is the production function which has been most likely to be outsourced outside the EU in the waves of restructuring that have taken place over recent decades, the employment left in Europe exhibits this more complex gender division of labour.

Across the organisational case studies in general it could be said that between two thirds and 90 *per cent* of workers are women, with technical functions and some warehouse work covered by men who are also overrepresented in management functions. However, women are also found in management and highly-skilled positions. Although most workers are on regular contracts, as from the beginnings of a clothing ‘industry’ or proto-industry (Phizacklea, 1990), some companies also outsource work to homeworkers or very small businesses (Flecker & Holtgrewe, 2008: 15). In one Italian case study, Green S.p.a, for instance, although the main company investigated did not outsource work in this way, its subsidiaries did. Here, there is more non-standard work in the retail subsidiary, and it is possible that other branded producers’ moves into retail will increase the proportion of part-time and short part-time work in line with the practices in the retail sector (Pedaci, 2007a). These atypical workers are the most vulnerable and have the poorest working conditions and the most precarious contractual situations (Hale & Wills, 2005).

Strongly differentiated in terms of status, the occupation of dress designer is also mainly feminine, but more mixed (about 75 *per cent* of women, according to Halloran, 2007). The interviews however reveal some indicators of gender segmentation within the occupation.

The WORKS project report on occupational case studies (Valenduc *et al.*, 2008) established the following pattern:

In France, luxury firms employ more men while distribution-oriented firms employ more women. According to a French male designer, there is a division in luxury fashion between male creative directors who only work with men, and female ones who only work with women. In the former category, according to this informant, there are a large number of gay men, suggesting that this an occupation which is 'gendered' in quite a complex way, with its 'masculine' parts typed in ways that relate them not to broad masculine stereotypes but to particular sub-sets of masculinity. On the other hand, in distribution-oriented companies (high street fashion), a majority of designers are women (ratio 1/6), and, traditionally, at this level, women's clothes are designed by women (Muchnik, 2007a).

In Portugal, traditionally a man working in fashion was not well seen by his family and friends (perhaps related to the stereotype of homosexuality also referred to in France). However, the image of designers is changing positively. Men play an important part in the textile design (an area traditionally more related to women) because of the recent orientation of textile design towards technical design and other technological areas (materials, processes, *etc.*). This suggests that as design processes become more technical they start to lose their feminine sex typing (Vasconcelos da Silva, Woll & Paulos, 2007). The need for technical knowledge can, however, cut both ways, also opening up new opportunities for women who have the appropriate training. In the Portuguese case, a female production worker reported that her special knowledge had given her importance despite her gender and age:

'I am a woman and I am much younger than most of the workers in my department. Even so I have been in charge of the stamping department for three years now. I think this happened because I know how to work with all machines, I have a specific degree and I know what is needed to manage people in stamping, what is the essential aspect. A few years ago it wouldn't have been possible to have a woman in charge of a stamping department, a confection maybe, but not a stamping department. Now what the employers want is good production at the agreed time and care less about the gender and the age. The mentalities are changing.' (cited in Vasconcelos da Silva, Woll & Moniz, 2007: 7).

In Germany, a high proportion of designers are female; design studies are mainly followed by women (with the proportion of women over 90 *per cent*). The design teams in the WORKS case studies were mixed; however the proportion of women was higher. Yet although mainly female, dress designers present several features of traditional male biographies. Like some other 'knowledge occupations' in order to succeed in this creative field, women have to 'make like a man' (Krings, 2006) foregrounding their career requirements and giving a secondary importance to the requirements of home and family. One of the strongest trends in this industry is an overall acceleration of business activities and workflows. Across the industry, the traditional pattern of seasonal collections has dissolved, and collections are continuously modified and updated. Thus fashion markets change faster, and retailers and distributors demand increasingly rapid responses (Flecker & Holtgrewe, 2008). This trend seems likely to exacerbate the pressures on workers, reinforcing the need to adopt a 'male' attitude to work and lifestyle in order to survive in the industry.

As one German interviewee from *Menswearco* put it, 'Generally, speed of production, work hours and stress have increased', pointing out that it is impossible to combine a job as designer and career with family planning: 'The designers I know that are of my age are all not married. Mostly they are women, and the women who have got a child don't work anymore, none of them...' (Bechmann, Krings & Nierling, 2007: 15). Design thus tends to increasingly become a full-time-plus occupation, and 'Flexibility means that we sit and discuss also at night', as a Portuguese fashion designer puts it (Woll, Vasconcelos da Silva & Moniz, 2007: 12).

Looking more broadly at the clothing industry workforce we find that restructuring has brought some new opportunities for a minority of women (although not for all; in many cases, of course, it was women machinists who lost their jobs when work was outsourced outside the EU). In one German clothing company, for instance, it was mainly women who were employed in the logistics section. Traditionally, a lot of women were working in sewing. When the production was outsourced, these women were switched to quality control, which is linked to the business function of logistics. It is mainly women who work across different sections of the storage. The few men working there perform the 'hard jobs' such as unloading the lorries. It is also mainly women who carry out most of the other functions connected with manufacturing, such as sewing and ironing. In the words of the head of quality management, this represents 'a traditional understanding of roles... which has developed historically. I mean, in this branch a lot of women are working anyway. Especially clothing, fabrication of clothing, if you look at all the sewing work, there are barely any men. In the ironing, there you have a few men standing and that's all, but that is here like in all other countries.' (head of quality management: 1,381-1,386). This female majority, however, is confined to the lower levels of the company. At the management board level in this company only men are employed (Nierling, Bechmann & Krings, 2007: 8).

This company also exhibits a highly gendered approach to flexible working patterns. Women wanting to return to their former jobs are able to organise their working time freely after consulting the firm. This type of flexibility was introduced in 2006 and had developed positively up to the time of our interviews. Another model of working time flexibility is used to manage high peaks in the incoming goods department. This so-called 'housewife shift' (head of logistic: 1,592) makes it possible to begin later and work shifts. These flexible working models are valid only for women and the traditional gender division of labour evidenced by these patterns is openly acknowledged in the way that they are referred to within the company (Nierling, Bechmann & Krings, 2007).

A French case study demonstrates a similar picture. Among the 172 workers at the main site, there are 125 women and 47 men, while the 150 workers of the French subsidiary are all women. So men represent less than 15 *per cent* of the workers in France. The logistics and industrial functions employ a majority of women, few of whom are graduates. Management responsibilities are performed by women: the manager of the storehouse is a woman, and that of stores stock is also a woman. In the French subsidiary, among the 150 workers, 93 are operatives and 57 are executives. At the main office, among the 172 workers, there are only 27 executives. The remainder is divided as follows: three first-line supervisors, fifteen technicians, 83 employees and 44 production operatives. Here too, restructuring had brought new pressures of work, including requirements

for multi-tasking and additional workload resulting from the failure to replace retired workers (Muchnik, 2007b: 12).

A Benelux case study was unusual in that, when it had transferred most of the production work outside the EU, the company had retrained and upgraded former production machinists to carry out the role of making prototypes. The prototype department had expanded in the restructuring from 16 to 69 workers, all of whom were women. In all, of the 300 blue-collar workers at the Benelux site, 282 were women, whilst women also formed the majority of white-collar staff (86 out of 116) (De Bruyn & Ramioul, 2007a: 9).

In an Italian case, the proportion of women, at 90 *per cent* of the workforce, was even higher. Here, the impact of restructuring had been felt in a reduction in the size of the workforce (already down from 1,900 to 1,215 and still falling). The male workers were concentrated in the key occupations of warehousemen and workers in charge of loading and unloading goods for delivery. The gender division of labour in the company was described by a trade union representative in the following words: 'This enterprise was originally a female-only employer. Women continue to be in every division often carrying out duties that are not strictly feminine, in the logistics division, for example, and are often division heads or officials. Thus, women have not been prevented from making a career, but the higher we go up in the decision-making hierarchy the more absent they are' (Pedaci, 2007a: 8).

A second Italian case involves a small company with 105 direct employees, of whom 95 are women. The few men that are on the payroll mostly work as mechanics in charge of maintenance. Here the number of workers is stable and has remained unchanged over the years. The way work is organised impacts significantly on its quality. These impacts on the quality of work are another consequence of value chain restructuring. Working hours are often very long, taking up most of the workers' day. Longer hours have a huge impact on women, especially those with small children. Working hours are hardly regulated. Changes or redistribution of working hours are decided by management in an arbitrary way. In other words, workers hardly have any say as far as working hours are concerned. These worsening conditions are attributed by trade union representatives to the absence of a strong trade union presence and action: 'When we meet female workers from this company they tell us about the difficult conditions they have to bear, and how they've been unable to have a say on working hours, on flexibility and on numerous other issues' (Pedaci, 2007b: 8).

Generally, we can observe a strong gender-related division of tasks in different forms in all the case studies involving production work in clothing manufacture. As the findings from Portugal show, this division of tasks has further consequences on wages. Although women and men perform the same tasks, 'the work categories men belong to (machine specialist; stamp specialist; store workers) have extra wage supplements known as "risk subsidies" that women's categories (seamstress; embroiderers) don't have' (Vasconcelos da Silva, Woll & Moniz, 2007: 10).

The gendered character of career profiles and trajectories becomes evident in two aspects. First, the often strongly gendered allocation of working tasks within the organisation may create disadvantages for women *e.g.* due to the loss of special payments or career possibilities. Second, the household division of tasks is still oriented towards the male breadwinner model (Nierling & Krings, 2007). This can cause disadvantages in the

career trajectories of women, because career advancement is related to work experience which is gained over years.

It should be pointed out, however, that production work in the clothing industry concerns an occupational group which may be in decline across Europe. Changes on global markets have a direct influence on the work and life reality of production workers. The production function is located at the very bottom end of the global value chains and seems to be most likely to be outsourced and offshored. Jobs in production are therefore characterised by a high level of insecurity in employment. This has consequences for workers both individually and collectively. The feeling that their jobs are unstable is very present in this occupational group, even though most of the workers interviewed had not personally experienced phases of unemployment or frequent job changes. The high dependency of the firms on global economic conditions was therefore reflected on the shop floor. This precariousness was reflected in a reduced power of unions, leading to the acceptance of worse working conditions. Under such circumstances, the prospects of trade unions taking up demands for equality of pay or opportunity, or other issues that might help to reduce gender inequalities in the workplace seem increasingly remote.

3.4 The food and beverage industries

The WORKS case studies in the food and beverage industries focused on the production and logistics functions.

Even given restructuring and modernisation and in some cases a considerable degree of automation, food and drink production remains quite traditionally organised in terms of gender relations. The processing and maintenance areas are the more highly-skilled areas, often where men are employed, and the production and packaging areas are the less skilled areas where women and unskilled men (for physically demanding work) are employed. The case studies show that there is pronounced segregation according to gender in most companies. Women dominate the more monotonous jobs, *e.g.* on production lines, while all technical and more advanced tasks and higher management positions are occupied by men. For example, beer production in Bulgaria (Beer AD) (Stoeva, 2007) shows that women are mainly employed in units of bottling, packaging and customer service, while men dominate the production of beer. Stoeva adds that 'actually women dominate at middle level management. Most of the shift and quality managers in the production are ... women'. At Meat Inc. in Denmark, women are less represented in slaughterhouses, because the whole trade is historically considered to be a male profession and the macabre character of the work is thought, by the management, to be less appealing to women. Additionally, work at slaughterhouses is still strenuous and considered hard manual labour, so women are mostly found in departments such as packaging (Gorm Hansen, 2007).

In the Greek case concerning the production of peas, women are concentrated in the more monotonous jobs, *e.g.* on the production line, while all technicians and crane operators are men. This has negative consequences for 'women's' income, given that technical and management jobs are better paid. In this company, traditionally an annually non-negotiated bonus is paid to all staff, which for line workers (mainly women) amounts to nearly 5 *per cent*, but is quite a bit higher for technical staff and management (dominated by men) (Gavroglou, 2007: 9). The Italian case, ND, also shows this form of gender distri-

bution, which seems to be typical throughout the agrifood sector. The factory workforce is made up mostly of women, while men are mainly employed as mechanics or in the area of maintenance. Pedaci explains that ‘in this case the over-representation of women in the factory (...) derives from the fact that factory work foresees a fixed-term contract for a limited number of days in the year. It is for this reason that this job profile is typically considered as female legacy’ (Pedaci, 2007c: 4).

3.4.1 Production work

The work organisation in food production remains quite traditional and low-skilled. In most of the cases, however, it was emphasised that, despite its designation as low-skilled, the work does often require considerable experience to be carried out effectively. However, the work is often very monotonous and repetitive. A traditional division of labour exists between processing and production/packaging departments with the former having higher levels of skill and higher levels of status (Nierling & Krings, 2007).

In the Bulgarian brewery case Beer AD, the plant operates 24 hours a day in 8-hour shifts, even on weekends. There has been a decrease in manual functions due to a technological modernisation that occurred following privatisation. Some manual work remains in bottling and the packing of speciality boxes. Women tend to work in areas with low physical intensity, which includes filtration and the task of shift manager. There are eighty people employed in bottling and thirty in other production operations. In summer, which is a peak period, seasonal workers are employed and there is no vacation time. The seasonal workers are recruited from the nearby Roma population. It is generally difficult to attract workers to the brewery, which is regarded as offering unpleasant and poorly paid work (Kirov, 2007).

There has been an intensification of work experienced in all operations: set up, repair and hygiene – also, an increase in quality control. During peak periods, management also demands extra work on weekends and the workers are sometimes told at the last minute on Friday. Work intensification is in part linked to an increase in customer demands. This intensification clearly put strains on work life balance of the workers; however no policies were in place to address this (Stoeva, 2007).

The UK brewery case represented a group of production and logistics workers who saw themselves as part of a local labour aristocracy, overwhelmingly male and with a strong trade union tradition which, however, was in the process of being eroded. The work culture was strongly masculine, emphasising manual strength and solidarity, rooted in a strong regional identity. There was considerable suspicion among shop floor workers of the (foreign) owners of the company and the new management practices being introduced (Dahlmann, 2007a).

In general it can be said that there remains a traditional division of labour in food production, and job tasks are still highly gendered. The career profiles of production workers depend strongly on the type of work or even the industries concerned. Slaughterhouse work, for instance, is a traditional male occupation, which is still highly visible in the division of work. As a result of these (male dominated) career paths, becoming a manager is still very unlikely for women. Furthermore the working tasks within production work are highly gendered, *e.g.* packing and cleaning are clearly considered to be female tasks. The Greek case study (Gavroglou, 2007) describes a situation in which women only perform

manual work and are excluded from all technical qualified work processes and therefore have lower career possibilities.

Furthermore, in this occupational group a traditional division of labour regarding household tasks and a traditional concept of the family seem to be prevalent. This influences the career trajectories, as it is mostly women who reduce their working time in order to make time for household tasks. This interruption of the career can influence career advances within the company negatively. Most of the female production workers interviewed were married and had children. In their relationships, they carried the main responsibility for household tasks as well as for child care in addition to their work in the company (Nierling & Krings, 2007). In the attempt to combine both tasks, they suffered especially from fixed working schedules which often do not allow flexibility in working time on the part of the workers. Moreover the new flexibility demands coming from their employers made it even more difficult to combine work and family demands. All the case studies give evidence that women still carry the main responsibilities for domestic tasks. That is even the case in 'emancipated' countries like Denmark or Norway. They thus carry the major burden of combining the spheres of work and life. They feel responsible for the sphere of household work and the production work. Women are still often regarded as giving less to their careers than men, because of the responsibility for household tasks which lies in the domain of 'the girls' (cited in Gorm Hansen, 2007: 16).

Because of the gendered task distribution in production work, women rarely seem to have possibilities for further advancement in the company, because they normally perform production tasks which require and allow less formal qualification. As illustrated in the Danish case, there exist no formal selection criteria for upgraded job positions, however 'women and non-Danish slaughterhouse workers are rarely members of the new "upskilled" group' (Gorm Hansen, 2007: 14). Nevertheless, new opportunities for women may arise as a result of changes in working tasks. In the Danish slaughterhouses, special slaughtering skills become less important in the work process, so that the 'traditional "white male" occupational identity' erodes (Gorm Hansen, 2007: 15).

Gender relations in these occupational groups are still very traditional, although women have worked in the production sector over many years. Female work in production was often a historical necessity because of the generally low-wage levels in this sector which required two incomes to meet the financial needs of the household.

The Danish case gives evidence of the consequences of the highly gendered division of tasks. In the slaughterhouse a 'very masculinist, at times downright sexist' (Gorm Hansen, 2007: 13) working culture was prevalent. Women only stay in certain departments if they join in the tone, otherwise they move to another department after a short while. Furthermore, women suffer more from the physical demands of the manual tasks and are injured more quickly. The working conditions are aligned to the needs of male production workers; women have to adapt to these requirements or otherwise leave the company or the department. However this kind of discrimination seems to be exclusively related to the specific male working culture of the slaughterhouse.

3.4.2 Logistics work

In one of the Benelux cases and the Bulgarian case, the logistics sector was reported as strongly male-dominated in terms of the overall numerical makeup of the workforce. The

same was also true for office employees, which have a high proportion of males, too. In Bulgaria 'women occupy positions of invoice preparation officers and storekeepers and they represent less than 20 *per cent* of the total personnel employed in logistics' (Kirov, 2007: 8). Logistical tasks seem to be regarded as traditional male occupations, probably due to the fact that, in the past, heavy manual work was an integral part of warehouse work. Some female workers were found working in Bulgarian warehouses during the day but they are typically not allowed to do shift work, with few exception.

Nevertheless, women seem to achieve management positions 'by exception': in one Benelux case and in Bulgaria, there was a woman in a management position in the logistics department. In the other Benelux case study there 'gendered' career profiles and trajectories were not reported. 'In general, the interviewees did not mention a significant difference in career profiles or trajectories which are related to gender issues. We only got some anecdotal "evidence" of gender differences in career profiles' (De Bruyn & Ramioul, 2007b: 7). In Bulgaria, Kirov (2007) identified an interesting feature of the new (post-restructuring) working environment that had implications for equality of opportunity between men and women. Because of changing skill requirements, the need to take English language courses has arisen, at least in one case study company. These courses are offered by the company and but rarely taken by female employees because of their family and household needs. This disadvantages these women in comparison with their male colleagues. Another factor is long maternity leaves which are taken by female employees. Thus, further training as a precondition for the development of career profiles is usually restricted to male employees (Meil & Schönauer, 2008).

Gender differences in skills requirements and development are difficult to assess. In both Benelux cases, no noticeable differences by gender were reported. However the Bulgarian case gives some evidence that women see their obligations as the main care taker for their families as a barrier to participation in learning opportunities. In the words of one respondent: 'I wanted to learn more but I had neither the financial possibility, nor the time. I have no possibility to go to study after work, it was a minus for me but the circumstances were such. I envy people that know the English language perfectly.' (Kirov, 2007: 15).

The Bulgarian case study report also notes an increase in social segmentation as a result of changing skill requirement in the work profile. One example of this is the use of women from ethnic minority groups to carry out some of the least well rewarded tasks. The author of this case study interprets this as a development towards increasing horizontal and vertical gender segmentation in the logistics occupational group (Kirov, 2007: 8). However it is not clear to what extent this results from the historical shift accompanying privatisation within these companies and to what extent it arises from more general trends in value chain restructuring.

It is clear, however, that in this case the shift towards privatisation has led to an increasing intensification of work on all organisational levels. The intensification is described as a speeding-up process, leading to an increase in working time as well as additional shifts and changing demands on skill requirements. Particularly on the management level the employees are working under overload conditions, as several quotations show: '... the manager of the store is saying that it is a period when he is at home about 22:00 in the evening. Another employee with managerial functions is saying that he

is staying often 15-16 hours and sometimes is coming into work also during weekends to see that everything is OK' (Kirov, 2007: 14).

In analysing this case, the Bulgarian team concluded that the evidence supports the 'hypothesis that the restructuring contributes to a gender unequal approach of working conditions' (Kirov, 2007: 14). After the shift towards privatisation some women left the company because it was no longer possible for them to harmonise work and family needs. Because of the lack of family-friendly policies in the companies there is neither an incentive for men to take on tasks in the household, nor for women to upgrade their skills. In the UK brewing case, no such shift was evident because women had not been present in such jobs in the first place (Dahlmann, 2007b).

One of the Benelux cases also illustrates very clearly a male-dominated occupational group, with working conditions are based on the 'traditional' division of labour. 'Most of the respondents are breadwinners with non-working or part-time working partners at home. The male domination in this occupation seems based on households in which women are predominantly responsible for the household tasks. To some extent, this must be ascribed to tradition and the 'technical' image of the logistics occupation' (Bannink, Trommel & Hoogenboom, 2007a: 13). Working time seems to be the crucial aspect in harmonising work and family needs. According to the authors, one employer refused the wish of a male employee to work part-time. This was interpreted as offering evidence of the 'male dominated culture in logistics' (Bannink *et al.*, 2007a: 13). In the UK brewery case study, too, as in production work, the culture was a traditionally male one, with an emphasis on physical strength and masculine forms of bonding at work. Here trade union membership appeared to be seen as an expression of this male work-based solidarity (Dahlmann, 2007b).

There are two aspects of working conditions which have been described as hindering equal access to work for men and women. These are: firstly, the intensification of work (Bulgaria) and secondly, the lack of (temporal) flexibility (Benelux). These are factors which particularly limit the opportunities for female employees to maintain employment. In both cases logistics is described as a branch with a 'male working culture' (Bannink *et al.*, 2007a: 13).

According to Kirov, in Bulgaria the combination of work and life is seen as the responsibility of women, while men seem to be strongly focused on their occupation. 'For men there is an understanding that work should be a priority' (Kirov, 2007: 17). A Benelux logistics manager insisted that there were no gender differences regarding work-life balance in his workplace. However this can be traced back to the fact that the sector is considered as 'strongly male dominated'. The logistics managers here, as in the UK, are the main breadwinners, 'who have non-working or part-time working partners at home. This implies that the sex segregation of the occupation is mirrored at home' (Bannink *et al.*, 2007a: 17).

We can conclude that in this branch, historically dominated by men, restructuring has not fundamentally changed this situation, although a downgrading of some skills has mainly affected women. In Bulgaria, the changes have led to increasing vertical segregation (managers: men, clerical positions: women) as well as horizontal segregation. However it is not clear to what extent these are generalisable trends that can be attributed to value chain restructuring and to what extent they are specific to the transition from a state-owned enterprise to a private one.

3.4.3 The software industry

The WORKS case studies focused on two business functions within the software industry: research and development (R&D) and software production. Women were significantly underrepresented here at high levels of qualification. Thus women in the organisations tended to be involved in administrative or secretarial tasks, or in the case of the Austrian labs (Holtgrewe, 2007a), be introduced into the organisation when non-IT personnel were hired to do liaison work, marketing or consulting. There were some women in research and development positions in software, many newly hired and just entering the labour market. Also, specialities outside the core of computer science tended to bring more women into software research and development. In the UK (Gosper, 2007), although 25 *per cent* of the workforce was female, there was segregation in the research and development specialties between men and women. Transdisciplinary research agendas thus may open certain fields of IT to women if they are represented in the disciplines involved, while a research organisation's specialisation in the more male-dominated areas is likely to reproduce a male-dominated 'hacker culture' (Rasmussen & Håpnes, 1991). In general, the industry exhibits considerable gender segregation (Holtgrewe & Meil, 2007a).

3.4.4 R &D work

R&D work, as a form of traditionally technology-based work, has been a male dominated occupational group in many countries. This was reflected in the WORKS sample where women were underrepresented in all four case studies (Holtgrewe & Meil, 2007b). In Norway this reflects the national situation, where statistics show that there are few women taking a degree in software engineering. In 2000 only 16.2 *per cent* of those applying for the highest engineering degree in Norway were women (Anthun, 2007: 8). Even when organisations consciously seek to recruit women they find it difficult to identify suitably qualified candidates. The women who do enter this field find themselves at a disadvantage compared with men; for a woman 'it has been a struggle to obtain equal pay for men and women in the same position. When she started working as a manager she earned 80 *per cent* of what a male manager did - for the same type of job' (Anthun, 2007: 8).

The Austrian case study reports a wage gap between IT development in the science sector and the IT industry. For men, this gap is often an incentive to leave research units in search of higher salaries (in keeping with their roles as breadwinners), whereas for women, the inherent interest of the work, combined with other factors such as flexible working times *etc.* may offer more incentives to stay on (Holtgrewe, 2007a: 8).

Because of the shift from research towards a market orientation as well as the trend towards global organisations, more and more women are working in the parts of the field that demand transdisciplinary skills and competences. 'Women tend to enter jobs with IT research labs through other paths: geo-informatics and geography have more women graduates, and consequently Lab2's specialisation in that field leads to more women researchers' (Holtgrewe, 2007a: 7ff).

From the perspective of career profiles, entry into the occupation does not seem to be overtly 'gendered'. Both formal qualifications and skill requirements are defined by the job profile and are required from both men and women. On the face of it, therefore, the

under-representation of women is something of a puzzle. Partly for this reason, a considerable amount of research has been carried out from a gender-based perspective on why computer sciences as an academic discipline fails to attract female students (Winker, 2002). As the case studies show, the introduction of 'social and communicative aspects' has already led to an increase of the female proportion in this occupational group. '... both the increasing importance of general skills in sales and marketing and the location of IT research in the contextualised areas of computer science such as geo-informatics, human computer interaction, *etc.* opens the field up for people holding degrees in geography, psychology, linguistics, *etc.* who are more likely to be women' (Holtgrewe, 2007a: 17).

The UK case study *UK Lab* (Gosper, 2007) had the highest share of women working in skilled research tasks, due also to the fact that linguistics was an important subject in the research. Interestingly, though, this was also a case study in which the prospects for career development were fairly low. A manager interviewed expressed the view that R&D workers were only really creative whilst they remained relatively young. Whilst in Japan, the company offered its employees a job for life, by enabling them to move laterally into senior positions in other parts of the company once they had passed the most productive phase, in the UK, where job protection was relatively low, they were expected to leave the company and make career opportunities for themselves elsewhere once they had passed their peak of productivity (Gosper, 2007).

An additional explanation of the low female participation rates was the low representation of women in IT technical fields, which increases in the more transdisciplinary subjects such as computer linguistics or geoinformatics. In Austria there had been an explicit policy attempt to rectify the underrepresentation of women by trying to get more women to study computer science and enter this profession, but this initiative had little consequence in the labs. Even given the low representation of women at the companies, respondents did not see any difference in the treatment of women researchers at the companies or in the work that was assigned among the R&D staff (Holtgrewe & Meil, 2007a).

How has this situation changed with restructuring? Generally one can say that the restructuring process did not lead to a decrease in opportunities for skill acquisition or development. However, it did lead to a shift in the types of skills that employees are expected to possess. For some employees, it improved their access to skill and broadened it in the direction of project management and marketing skills. Young workers generally experience a large learning effect in these small companies. Lack of access to formal qualifications, the highly specialised work, and the flat hierarchies can lead to stagnation in skill acquisition for older workers, as evidenced in the German case (Holtgrewe & Meil, 2007a). The change in skill requirements does, however, seem to have opened up some opportunities in this field for women who are regarded as stronger in 'soft' skills (such as communicating with customers) than in 'hard' technical skills. Another dimension of restructuring with the potential to impact negatively on people with domestic responsibilities such as child care or elder care is an increasing requirement for spatial mobility. Spatial mobility in IT R&D is limited and our cases do not draw on a global labour market. Mostly, R&D units are located close to the universities they collaborate with or originate from. The Norwegians actually defended their existing location in the face of their mother company's attempt to consolidate research spatially. Employees there said that Norwegian hackers who wanted careers in the US were already there, while they

themselves enjoyed occasional face to face meetings and travel. Austria's *IT Research Labs* are surprisingly regional, and researchers express a very limited interest in international careers, although some foreigners had been hired as senior researchers. New mobility needs are found in *UK Labs* and *Comtel*. *UK Labs*, recognising the need for face to face contact for collaboration, tried to avoid cross-site collaborations wherever possible. However specialisation and the distribution of research often made this unavoidable. There were some exchanges of researchers for up to six months with Japan which both sides found improved mutual understanding and collaboration. These would have been extremely difficult, if not impossible, where employees had responsibility for childcare. With *Comtel*, the centralisation in Paris had brought some mobility needs that are mostly viewed unfavourably. Promotion in the organisation at some point in time is expected to require a move to the capital and even when located remotely, project managers may be expected to travel to Paris for two to three days a week (Holtgrewe & Meil, 2007a).

3.4.5 Software production professionals

Lower down the hierarchy in the software industry, we found some national differences in gender relations among software professionals. Men predominated in all countries but this was highest in Belgium and Portugal, at 90 *per cent*, and somewhat lower elsewhere. Gender issues are not only to be found in the accounts of female interviewees, but also in understanding how the male interviewees talk about women. It is necessary to go beyond the gender-blind discourse, which is dominant in ICT occupations.

Two types of managerial discourses were encountered in the case studies. The first of these was a gender-neutral discourse. Here, informants said that there was no gender discrimination in recruitment or in the first steps of the career (but a glass ceiling later on); that there were equal opportunities for pay; equal access to training, but not enough women enough on this labour market. Such responses were received in the German, Hungarian and Swedish cases and partly also in the UK cases. The second was a gender-biased discourse. Here, respondents said that working as a software professional requires a total involvement in work, and women can only carry it out if they have no family duties or when the children are grown up; women are more convenient for customer-oriented tasks, rather than for technical tasks, because of their better communication skills (Belgian and Dutch cases). Both discourses obviously reproduce gender stereotypes (Valenduc, 2007). As the Bulgarian report commented, 'respondents prefer to indicate causes related to the nature of work; they do not perceive - or perhaps are not interested in - socially constructed gender relations' (Stoilova, 2007).

Specific career trajectories for women were mentioned. In Belgium, women often enter the ICT occupations with a first non-ICT degree and a complementary degree or vocational training in ICT. Such a profile is wider than pure ICT graduation, and gives them an advantage in more customer-oriented tasks. In Bulgaria, women frequently start their career as teachers (in mathematics or physics), but they are disappointed and return to their original choice of ICT, after some years teaching; they have however accumulated some pedagogical experience, now very useful in the software industry. Only the Swedish case study report mentions that men and women are equally welcome in very technical careers. The Bulgarian and Swedish case study reports point out that occupational iden-

tity has a greater importance than gender identity in this particular occupational group, mainly among the young professionals (Valenduc *et al.*, 2008).

Concerning salaries, the case studies confirm results from other research: women are disadvantaged by systems of individual negotiation of wages and non-wage benefits. Formal systems of wage setting are more fair and transparent, and less sensitive to the individual ability to bargain with a manager.

According to several case study reports, there is an implicit or explicit gender segregation of roles: women are supposed to be more skilled in functional analysis than in programming, more likely to enter customer relationships functions, but less available for exclusive involvement in their work. Men are better at human-machine interfaces, and women better at human-human interfaces. Almost all interviewees (at least among those who agreed to talk seriously about gender) report such stereotypes, but none thought that women have to find their niche in a technological area locked by men.

Other gender disparities are pointed out in the reports. The pressure to self-train disadvantages women, as they have generally less free time to devote to professional activities. This problem does not come from women, but from the employers who force workers to train themselves during their leisure time. This pressure is lower in some countries, such as Germany and Sweden.

Training opportunities and skills development seem better for women in larger companies, which often have in place a more structured training system. Big companies also need a more balanced mix of IT skills and non-IT skills, which is favourable to women (Valenduc *et al.*, 2009).

One Belgian case exhibited the most overt discrimination against women. Here, the management explicitly expressed the view that women are not suited to the company because 'total involvement' and high levels of overtime are requested from employees and it is assumed that this is not possible for women, because of their family and domestic obligations. Managers used two arguments to justify the situation: firstly, there are fewer women qualified in IT on the labour market; secondly, that the organisation needs people who can be totally involved in the company, even in case of overtime, which does not seem to be the case for most of female workers because of the higher family or domestic obligations they use to have. According to one manager, the only women who have high responsibilities in IT companies are those without familial responsibilities (without children or with autonomous children). No woman is represented in the managing staff. Women, where they exist, are analysts or developers. Restructuring has not influenced these patterns: women are blocked because managers think that a woman with responsibilities will not work overtime during nights and weekends; indeed, one interviewee confessed that 'one of my managers says that a woman must to go home early to care for her children and will take day off if one of her children is sick' (Vandenbussche, Devos & Valenduc, 2007).

In the Portuguese case, the explanation given by management was that it was difficult to find women with adequate qualifications that enabled them to enter the high-tech field. While there are major differences between the cases in relation to female employment, the changes caused by outsourcing generally seem to be detrimental to women: more pressures for flexibility in the Swedish case, weaker equal opportunities and diversity policies in the UK case, less part-time work and increasing problems in reconciling employment

with care duties in the Dutch case, and some wage discrimination because of differences between men's and women's formal education in the Norwegian case (Valenduc, 2007).

One UK occupational case study concerned a situation where restructuring had a very negative impact for women in the IT sector: recent rounds of redundancies and a lack of new opportunities in the local labour market were seen as very threatening by one single mother who was interviewed. This IT application officer explained that she has to look after her two children and recounted stories from colleagues who were made redundant in 2002 and had encountered major difficulties in securing similar employment in the area. The next big town was about an hour drive away, and changing her daily routine to that extent would be difficult. In addition, she has the opportunity to work part-time which she believed was increasingly rare in the IT industry. However, the culture at the IT service provider was described as very hostile to flexible working and showing consideration for family responsibilities. This IT application officer felt she had to put in a lot of effort to fulfil the demands on her and on occasion experienced immense clashes with child care and work commitments, for example, being available for meetings or having to bring in her children to the office on a Saturday. One worker who asked to be work partly from home in order to achieve a better work-life balance was told by the line manager that, when the request was passed to senior management the response was 'if the job can be done from home it can be done from India' (Dahlmann, 2007c).

All the workers interviewed in this organisation were of the opinion that the equal opportunities policies, which had included rights to flexible working and access to training for career development when they were employees of the local government had been eroded in the transfer to private sector employment. Requests to attend training courses were not approved under the new regime, which involved a third transfer (whereby a US-based company had taken over the British company which had formerly held the outsourcing contract, which had in turn taken over the contract from another global company) (Dahlmann, 2007c). A UK organisational case study concerning another outsourcing of IT services from the public sector did not exhibit quite such extreme disregard for gender equality, perhaps because in this case the trade union had taken industrial action in order to protect the wages and conditions of the workers involved in the transfer. However even here, the workers felt that in their new employment there was a much greater pressure to work long hours, which made it increasingly difficult to combine child care with employment. Furthermore, it was made clear to them by their new employer (a global IT service supplier) that if they wanted to advance their careers in the company this would require a willingness to consider relocation to other sites around the world (Dahlmann, 2007d). Several respondents had actively chosen to work in the public sector precisely because they thought it had a more woman-friendly culture, with better working conditions than in the private sector. They had, they said, chosen to sacrifice higher salaries and opportunities for career development in favour of a better work-life balance and a chance to remain living in the same community. Once they transferred to a private company, they found themselves in a culture that was 'lean and mean' with pressure to work longer hours and to seek promotion through mobility within a global company (Dahlmann, 2007d). For workers with family commitments, this clearly constitutes a barrier to promotion. It also contributes, more generally to a reinforcement of a masculine culture and acts as a deterrent to women wishing to joining this occupational group.

A Dutch case study points out that the highly demanding conditions imposed on the employees are ipso facto extended to their partners; in this case all male employees lived with women working only part-time or not active on the labour market. This case leads to question to what extent the male-dominating culture of software developers is extended from the professional sphere to the private sphere (Bannink, Trommel & Hoogenboom, 2007b).

Gender issues showed marked international differences between the Scandinavian and the continental European countries. This relates to the proportion of women among the IT workers and gender-discrimination practices. In the Belgian case, for example, management does not want to employ women, because these are seen as not being able to provide for 'total involvement' and to work extensive overtime. Generally, outsourcing seems to be detrimental to women even in the Scandinavian and UK cases, where more gender equality might be expected. One reason for this is that public sector organisations are more likely to have equal opportunity policies. Others are increased pressures for flexibility and bigger problems in reconciling employment with care duties (Valenduc, 2007).

The mobility of IT workers and the posting of workers with customer companies is a contested issue and one with clear gender implications. Because working in other organisations is very unpopular with workers, some employers try to negotiate with their clients to reduce posting periods. On the other hand, opportunities for occupational mobility emerge through the transfer to a large IT service provider, because of the internal labour market in these companies. Interestingly, it turned out in the case studies that workers were not interested in these new opportunities, because they were not relevant to their life plans. In the case of a transfer of workers it is not so obvious which union and which employer actually negotiate the terms and conditions: it can be the union and the management of either the old or the new employer company. In general, mobility requirements put workers under stress. IT service provider companies therefore negotiate with their clients to reduce the amount of time their workers need to spend on the client's premises. Nevertheless, these are often lengthy periods of several months or even years. In contrast, workers who were taken over by an IT service provider but have kept on working in the same offices at the clients' are not inclined to move away, because they are locally embedded. In the case of public sector organisations this can be assumed to be even more so than in private companies, because the workers had made their choice to work for the public administration, *e.g.* a local government body, because they wanted to serve the community and to have a secure job (Holtgrewe & Meil, 2007b). The unpopularity of mobile working among both sexes suggests that it is an over-simplification to regard work-life balance issues as concerning only women. It is clear from these results that men too actively seek the opportunity to spend their leisure time with family and friends in the localities where they live and are unhappy to see social life subordinated to the demands of work.

We must conclude that the effects of restructuring on gender relations in the workplace are contradictory. On the one hand, restructuring entails a broadening of skills towards communication, team management and project management (which might be seen as advantaging women). On the other, the technical skills require continuous updating and especially self training that increases time pressure (which might be seen as disadvantaging women). More broadly, the lengthening of working hours, increase in pressure to

respond to customer demand and requirements for mobility are detrimental to equality of opportunity and to achieving a good work-life balance for men and women. Furthermore, when restructuring involves a transfer of employees from the public sector (where historically there has been a trade-off between good working conditions, security and favourable work-life balance on the one hand, against lower salaries, and in some cases more restricted opportunities for advancement, on the other) to the private sector, this has resulted in a clear loss of historically hard-won gains for women workers in the form of family-friendly flexible working practices, generous benefits packages and access to training.

In restructuring involving outsourcing there also appears to be shift to a more macho and competitive 'lean and mean' work culture which is unattractive for women and acts as a deterrent to entering a field which is already strongly typed as 'techie' and masculine.

3.4.6 Front office employees providing services to the public

The WORKS case studies encompassed a range of different public service functions, provided both face to face and from call centres, ranging from railway services to postal services to local government services. Not surprisingly, these diverse cases revealed considerable variety in the patterns of gender balance. This reflects the fact that the customer service function in the public sector has evolved in different ways from different occupational contexts. In some cases, for instance in the Austrian, British, Hungarian and Swedish case studies, women are the majority of employees, reflecting the fact that many of these jobs had evolved from clerical occupations, a type of work that has traditionally been typed as feminine. At the opposite extreme, in the German case, the work had evolved from a formerly all-male activity in the railways. The sample was more balanced in the Benelux and Italian cases. In the German case, the restructuring of the railway companies had increased the proportion of women to about 20 *per cent* of the workforce.

In terms of vertical segregation too, the patterns are mixed. In the German case women are becoming more numerous in middle management, although the highest management level is male. Although women form the majority of call centre personnel in Austria, they are underrepresented in supervisory and management positions. Only the British report mentions a gender-balanced staff in managerial positions. This is partly because the case study involved local government, which has since the 1970s been a field of employment that has pioneered equal opportunities policies and consciously made an effort to attract women. The glass ceiling is prevalent in most other cases.

The situation relating to equal opportunities policies is not uniform. The Austrian, Benelux, British and German reports mention several employers' initiatives in the area of family-friendly policies, which mainly concerns arrangements for working parents. In the UK case, the customer service staff interviewed said they felt that they were working in an organisation where women have a lot of influence and where equality is taken seriously and valued. However, the Austrian report a situation where call centre work, predominantly done by women, was being downgraded. This occupational group clearly shows a gender bias in the tendency to create new, but less qualified and less qualifying jobs. These new low-paid jobs are dominated by women (Muchnik & Valenduc, 2007).

Several case studies underline a strong gender segregation between technical skills and service skills, which is the most visible in the case of railway workers, and to a lesser extent among call centre employees (Valenduc *et al.*, 2009).

The customer service function presents an interesting contrast to that of IT services, discussed in the previous section, in that (with the exception of some traditionally 'male-typed' sectors, such as railways) it has traditionally been dominated by women. Perhaps as a result of this, in some cases it exemplifies those service functions which, at least in Western Europe, developed a form of mutual adaptation between employers and workers whereby employers offered jobs which enabled women to enter the workforce whilst retaining their family responsibilities, for instance in part-time employment, whilst women were prepared to accept such 'secondary' positions in the workforce but paid a price for the flexibility they offered in the form of reduced promotion and training opportunities and lower wages. In other words, whilst offering women the possibility to combine household responsibilities with paid employment, they offered employers a flexible and compliant workforce. As such, they offer a strong contrast to the types of jobs found in IT service which are typically held by male breadwinners, and in which the historical 'deal' between employers and workers involves the workers being prepared to out in long hours and prioritise employment over domestic responsibilities in exchange for higher wages and better promotion prospects.

This pattern is very visible in our case studies in which customer service is disproportionately dominated by women in white-collar positions, compared to other business functions. For example in the organisations which underwent outsourcing of telephone service (like the DVLA in Italy or Citylife in Austria), 60 per cent to 70 per cent of call-centre agents are women. This gender composition has not changed as a result of restructuring. Because of the fact that customer service is generally dominated by women, it makes no difference whether it is organised in-house or outsourced. The same pattern is found in the Swedish example where in-house call centres were set up and which also has a 90 per cent proportion of women among agents. Comparably low wages, flexible working hours and communication work in customer services are characteristics of traditionally female-dominated sectors, which is also true of most customer-service occupations (Dunkel & Schönauer, 2008). At the National Employment Agency (NEA) in Bulgaria, about 70 per cent to 90 per cent of staff are women. Jeleva notes that 'men are those who tend to leave the structures more often' and she cites an interviewee who believes that women are better able to cope with the stresses of customer service work than men: 'We often talk to each other as colleagues that it's difficult for men to take all the pressure, the heavy workload and work as performers. Besides, the remuneration is not that attractive. This is why, they do not really remain with us. That's the main reason.' (Jeleva, 2007: 14). However even though women make up the majority of customer-service employees, their superiors and managers are more often men than women (Dunkel & Schönauer, 2008). Occupational interviews revealed that many of these women workers had rather low career aspirations, seeing the job as a way to earn a living whilst giving primary attention to some other aspect of life, such as child care. In the UK, for instance, the majority of the call centre workers interviewed had previously been in dead-end clerical jobs. They saw call centre work as more interesting than this but expressed little desire to progress into management; their priorities were to be able to organise work flexibly around family demands and, significantly, the only aspect of the restructuring about which they

expressed strongly negative views was the requirement to sometimes work at weekends, and the curtailment of summer holidays, which they saw as interfering with their family lives (Dahlmann, 2007e).

Partial exceptions to this rule are postal and railway services which have historically formed parts of sectors which are strongly male-dominated. Looking at restructuring of Post services, employment structures at traditional state departments appear to be somewhat different. At the Austrian Post, for example, only 30 *per cent* of the staff are women. In the case of the newly founded post partners, the situation is very varied. 'Inasmuch as it concerns grocery and retail outlets', Hermann and Schönauer (2007: 7) assume, that there exists 'an above average ratio of women'. The case of German Railways also shows that the restructuring (founding of subsidiaries for certain services) causes an increase in the number of female employees, which also changed the culture of the enterprise, both outwardly and inwardly. In the whole concern there are about 20 *per cent* of female employees. But there are considerable variations according to the subsidiary company and area of work. 'While the men continue to dominate in the technical vocations, women have expanded strongly into the service orientated sectors', explains Dunkel (2007: 7). It seems to be the case here that, in loosening the affiliation to the traditional sectoral structure, the introduction of outsourcing is accompanied by a feminisation of the workforce. This outsourcing is also accompanied by a general loosening and flexibilisation of labour contracts (Dunkel & Schönauer, 2008). Feminisation is therefore closely linked with precarisation in these cases.

The historical accommodation between employers and workers in many service occupations has meant that in the past working conditions in these occupations have been rather favourable to working mothers (family leaves, children-compatible working time schedules, specific financial provisions, *etc.*). This has been particularly the case in the public sector, which, in many countries, has prided itself on its good industrial relations and in pioneering equal opportunities policies. However, restructuring can put some pressure on these conditions, leading to some dissatisfaction, mainly due to variable and extended working time schedules. In the Benelux (Devos & Valenduc, 2007) and Swedish cases (Tengblad, 2007; Tengblad & Sternälv, 2007a), working hours compatible with child care are important factors in decisions women take about their career. Many have also had a number of career breaks taking care of small children. The same feature is underlined by the British report: 'The reason for wanting to work in the public sector definitely ties in with them being mothers with children, looking for flexibility in their work but also a sense of security which they believed their employer could give them. (...) Interestingly, all the women interviewed were married, with a husband taking on the main "breadwinner" role. What they ask from their employment is that it should enable them to give priority to their traditional gender role and not create undue conflicts in their lives.' (Dahlmann, Gosper & Kirk, 2007: 11).

In the Italian case, women find it difficult to advance their careers within the organisation. The lack of a fair division of labour within the family and increased responsibilities, especially when there are small children, leads to an interruption in their trajectories or asking for a part-time job. Moreover, those who have additional duties, like family and household, have no time or interest in any further training outside the job: this is also a limit to career advancement for women. The question of career breaks to take care of

small children leads the company to choose men or young women with no family for permanent and stable contracts (Piersanti, 2007).

The 'feminine' character of customer service work is not just linked to its contractual status and historical situation as a source of 'flexible' employment that is available to women with family responsibilities. It also requires skills which are traditionally sex typed. 'To work as a call centre operator', in the words of one Italian female respondent, 'you don't need to have specific or professional qualifications, because the work carried out by a call-centre operator is linked to experience, practice and knowledge acquired over time' (Piersanti, 2007: 13). The Hungarian report attributes the dominance of women among employees to the fact that the job requires competence-based skills such as empathy, coping with stress, *etc.*, which are identified as feminine characteristics (Makó, Csizmadia & Illéssy, 2007).

However these skill requirements undergo change as a result of the increasing use of ICTs, which not only helps to standardise processes and to monitor them (and in this way control the workers' performance), but also constitutes common knowledge that front-line workers can use in their transactions with the customers. They therefore play a double role in both simplifying and facilitating the work processes (Dunkel & Schönauer, 2007). The Dutch case study is a nice example of these ambivalent consequences (cf. Kerst & Holtgrewe, 2003) of restructuring information services through outsourcing and establishing call centres: 'Two contrasting tendencies have been observed. On the one hand much effort is put in technologies that 'automate' the communicative aspects of transactions. That is, in the area of simple inbound-activities, deskilling is a relevant trend, as scripts increasingly determine the actions of the agent while informal conversation with clients is pushed to a minimum. On the other hand, CSN [note: insourced call centre provider] is quite active in raising quality standards and developing new and more complex contact work. These activities involve a process of up-skilling in different directions. First, due to increased activity in the area of marketing, cross- and up-selling, agents have to improve their commercial skills. Second, the demand for high-level communicative skills is rising, as agents are expected to develop into 'advisors' who explore and understand the life-world of their clients and pro-actively inform them on a wide range of topics. Third, this change also implies that interactive IT skills become more relevant.' (Trommel, Bannink & Hoogenboom, 2007: 18).

In general, however, according to our respondents: 'Informal skills falling under the umbrella of "customer service" and good communication skills are more important than technical skills or formal qualifications. The job (...) also represents that traditionally female attributes, *i.e.* looking after customers and being caring towards customers.' (Dahlmann *et al.*, 2007: 20).

The Swedish case underlines a difference between women's and men's perception of work. For women, the focus is more set on the customer service side, while men define themselves as salesmen and see a career in sales. Women do not perceive their career as advancing through training and promotion. Service tasks are interesting and stimulating in themselves, not for getting promotion (Tengblad, 2007: 9).

We can conclude more generally from these cases that the work culture typically remains that of the sector that the workers belong to: post, railway, regional administration and municipal administration have distinct work cultures which are slow to change. However, recently recruited front office employees do not share the culture of the former

organisation and they identify themselves more as service workers than as workers of the organisation. This is often associated with the tacit skills of women (Dunkel & Schönauer, 2008).

The development of a separate customer service culture is in its infancy, but appears to be emerging quickly and is likely to develop further if these services become more generic in the future and are outsourced to specialist customer service companies. Whether this will reduce gender inequality is, however, debatable. If a feminisation of the culture is associated with a reduction in employment protection and deteriorating pay and working conditions then it could simply represent a new twist in a very old pattern of gender segregation.

We can conclude that the gender impacts of restructuring for this group of workers are contradictory. Whilst the general growth of customer service and the more commercial attitudes to service delivery that have accompanied privatisation and public service reform have created an increased need for the sorts of communication skills and 'emotional work' that are traditionally typed as feminine and have thus opened up new employment opportunities for women, there is also evidence that this process has resulted in some downgrading of these new jobs. They must, however, be compared with what these workers did before. In the UK case, for instance, most of the women customer service workers had previously held low-level clerical posts. These workers generally experienced the transformation of these posts into call centre jobs dealing with a wider range of information as a positive development, giving them greater access to skill development and greater job satisfaction than before the restructuring. There were also examples, as in Germany, where the restructuring had opened up management opportunities for women in a field previously closed to them.

3.5 Conclusions

We must conclude that the gender impacts of work restructuring are highly contradictory. Whilst on the one hand there are major disruptions to the existing organisation of work, and with it of occupational identities, skill requirements and working practices which, in turn, bring disruptions to traditional patterns of gendered power relations within the workplace, on the other hand we see many of the older patterns of segregation re-emerging in new forms.

These patterns are not, however, universal. On the contrary they appear to be shaped by a range of different demographic, geographical and other variables producing distinctively different trends and outcomes in different occupational, sectoral and regional groupings. Here, we identify three distinctive groups of occupations on which our case study results shed new light. Although they do not, of course, encompass the entirety of men's and women's employment, they do illustrate three of the most important types of employment setting.

3.5.1 High-skilled occupations - individual performance beyond occupational work culture?

One of the trends that seems to be emerging is that, at least in knowledge-based occupations (exemplified in our case studies by fashion designers and IT workers) daily life is

dominated by working life. A 'gender-blind' approach requires women, in effect, to adopt the traditionally male labour model, although this is rarely a matter of reflection and is generally seen as the only possible way of life (Krings, 2006). Within these fields, even when women have broken into what is essentially masculine terrain, there remain subtle differences in the roles that are open to them. In clothing design, for instance, women are more likely to work in the retail sector, whilst men dominate the more prestigious haute couture field. In IT too, women are more likely to find a niche in the least technical fields: in R&D applications that involve non-technical knowledge, such as linguistics, and in software development in roles that require communication skills. To the extent that they are gaining entry to these knowledge occupations, women seem to be benefiting from a trend towards an increasing focus on commercial relationships and the need for communication with customers.

It is clear that, especially in knowledge-based occupations, gender relations are in motion. Work has the potential to provide fulfilment, identity, autonomy and a possibility to choose one's own biographical framework. In principle, the emerging service culture can counterbalance traditional features of the male work culture in ICT-related workplaces. However these opportunities must be set against other trends. In particular, it seems likely that women may pay a high price in terms of the need to adopt a male breadwinner model of labour market behaviour and in accepting high levels of stress.

The trend towards individualisation of contracts associated with some of these developments is generally speaking negative for women, who benefit more from having their wages and conditions negotiated transparently through collective agreements.

Flexible working practices are not common in these fields but, where they are, it appears that employers' flexibility policies have not opened up new opportunities for balancing work and private life for women or men. On the contrary, the flexibility they offer has been to the benefit of the employer, and has created extra demands for workers by making it more difficult for them to plan their time. These issues are explored more fully in companion volumes to this (Flecker *et al.*, 2009; Krings *et al.*, 2009).

3.5.2 Service work – flexible adaptation

Our second category concerns the field of employment which over recent decades has been the fastest-growing source of new jobs for women: white-collar service work. This was exemplified in our case studies by customer service work in the public sector but is also visible playing a support role in some of the other business functions, for instance in logistics, where the clerical functions are typically carried out by women. In many countries, patterns of work in clerical and service functions have been shaped historically by a mutual process of adaptation between employers and employees. Under this unspoken 'deal' employers have benefited from access to a ready pool of compliant, locally-based workers who do not typically demand career development, high wages or long-term security in return for offering working hours that enable paid employment to be fitted around the demands of family life. In many cases, especially in the public sector and the banking sector where trade unions have been strong, this 'deal' has in practice been significantly modified to provide increased security and improved facilities from which both men and women have benefited, but in general, compared with other groups of employees, these workers have constituted a typical 'secondary' workforce, dominated by

women, with high levels of part-time working and use of various forms of contractual flexibility.

In many ways, the effects of restructuring on this group of workers can be seen as an accentuation of existing patterns. Where restructuring has taken the form of a redrawing of the job descriptions of a traditionally male workforce (typified in our cases by the railways and postal services) then a strong feminisation has taken place. With this feminisation has come a growth in precarious contractual forms.

Where the restructuring has involved a 'callcenterisation' of functions previously carried out by clerical workers, then the feminisation trend is not so strong, since a majority of the jobs were already held by women. Depending on what the previous requirements of the job may have been, this change may be regarded as an upskilling or a downskilling, with ICTs playing an ambivalent role both in contributing to the intensification and standardisation of work and increasing the degree to which it is monitored on the one hand, and in enabling a wider range of skills to be deployed and of knowledge to be accessed on the other. Whilst in the UK this development was experienced as introducing greater variety and job satisfaction into the work, in other countries it was experienced more negatively. However the increase in standardisation and monitoring and the need to be available to respond to customers has, paradoxically, in many cases reduced the possibilities for time flexibility in the organisation of work from the perspective of the worker (even while it has opened up new opportunities for numerical flexibility from the perspective of the employer). Thus the very features that have traditionally made this form of work particularly attractive for women with children appear to be in the process of becoming eroded.

Whilst it is clear that the rapid development of this field of employment is creating new opportunities on the labour market for many women, there was little evidence from our research that it is providing a career route for women into the male-dominated heartlands of the economy. On the contrary, it seems to confirm their existence as an essential part of the workforce but one which is continuously being reconstituted as having a secondary place within it, in terms of security, in terms of levels of remuneration and in terms of the ability to exercise power.

3.5.3 Low-skilled occupations – the same old story?

In low-skilled occupations, such as production work in the food and clothing industry and low-skilled tasks in logistics, we find that restructuring is associated with very traditional patterns of gender segregation with women, especially women from ethnic minority groups, typically assigned to the most precarious contracts and the lowest paid work. Interestingly, this work is generally at or near the bottom of the value chain. When restructuring takes place further up the value chain (as in the Benelux clothing company that was investigated) then this may lead to an upskilling of the tasks of women workers (in this case skilled machinists). However this was not accompanied, to our knowledge, by any improvement in the conditions of the women workers in the factories outside the EU further down the chain to which the more routine work was outsourced.

The occupational case studies concerning these groups also revealed the existence of very traditional patterns of gender relations in the home, with women seeing it as their role to take on the bulk of the household responsibilities in addition to their paid work.

4 Ethnicity

4.1 Introduction

As noted in Chapter 2, the approach to ethnicity in the WORKS project was very different from the approach to gender. Because, due to an absence of relevant definitions, indicators and data, it was not possible to address this question in the quantitative research of the project, it was only possible to study ethnicity on the basis of the case studies.

Because of the lack of clear definitions of ethnicity, the complexity of ethnic relations, and the strong national differences in the history of the inter-relationships of differing ethnic groups, the research questions that were developed were designed to be as broad and open-ended as possible, in order to allow the researchers in each national context to bring their own broad understandings of ethnicity to the research process and make visible any effects which had not been foreseen in advance.

In particular, researchers were encouraged to take account of two factors that constitute dimensions of ethnicity. The first of these was the relative positions of different ethnic minority groups within the national labour force, however these groups are defined (as migrant workers, immigrants from former colonies, religious, cultural or linguistic minorities, or ethnic groups disadvantaged in some other way in the national context). There is, of course, a large body of existing literature on the ways in which disadvantaged ethnic groups are typically relegated to the least protected positions in the labour market (*e.g.* Balibar & Wallerstein, 1991). It was of direct interest to the WORKS project to examine whether current patterns of work restructuring may be reinforcing or, alternatively, challenging these historical patterns.

The second factor was the relative positions of different national groups in the international settings of global corporate cultures. In the context of global value chain restructuring, workers are brought together, often for the first time, with counterparts in other parts of the world, either through migration (for instance when managers or technical specialists from other countries are introduced to offices which have formerly been staffed entirely by nationals), or through the need for training, remote management or day-to-day communication in offshoring situations. The evidence from previous research is that such relationships are fraught with communications difficulties (Huws & Flecker, 2004) and sometimes characterised by out-and-out racism (Mirchandani, 2006). These patterns of communication may be shaped by historical relations between countries, for instance the relationships between European countries and their former colonies, or the relationships between neighbouring countries that have in the past had hostile relations.

Taking these factors into account, a series of research questions was developed which were used in the interpretation and analysis of the case study material. These were:

- Is there any evidence that ethnic segregation is increasing or decreasing and if so how – vertically, horizontally, contractually, or in terms of different patterns of working time?
- What occupational roles and hierarchical positions do workers from ethnic minority groups hold in the case study company by occupation and sector?
- Are there particular organisational strategies for making use of migrant workers or workers from disadvantaged groups? Do these involve high-skilled workers (*e.g.* software developers) or low-skilled workers (*e.g.* manual workers)? What is their employment status (*e.g.* are they on fixed-term contracts)?
- What other variables are important in determining access to good working conditions in the case study organisations (*e.g.* age, speaking foreign languages)?
- How are workplace cultures changing and how does this impact on ethnicity at the workplace?
- How do workers from different ethnic groups perceive their working conditions, relations and social dialogue at work?
- What are the links between ethnicity and other indicators (*e.g.* gender, location of work, or the temporal–spatial demands of working)?
- How can organisational culture and policies be characterised. How important/valued are diversity policies and what are the key changes following from restructuring? Have policy frameworks improved or worsened? What company practices are emerging to support integration?
- What are the national variations? *E.g.* does the ‘Americanisation’ of corporate culture represent an advance for ethnic minorities in some countries even if it is does not in others? In other words, what is the relationship between global forces on the one hand and national traditions on the other? What is the situation in New Member States?
- Is there evidence of new patterns of ‘colonialism’ in the relationship between companies based in different Member States and their subsidiaries or suppliers in other countries?

In most of the case studies, ethnic minorities were significant in their absence. Whilst representing an important research finding in its own right, this meant that very few people were interviewed who were not white nationals. This made it difficult to answer all of these questions in depth. Nevertheless, some interesting findings emerged, which are grouped together here under two main headings: ethnic minorities and migrant workers as a peripheral workforce; and ethnic and cultural differences in globalised companies. In each case we focus on a particular sector that illustrates the changing dynamics most clearly. In the first case, this is the food and beverages sector; in the second, the IT sector.

4.2 Ethnic minorities and migrant workers as a peripheral workforce – the food and beverage sector

A number of the case studies showed a clear pattern whereby the restructuring of work was used to introduce ethnic minority and migrant workers into the workforce on inferior terms and conditions to ‘core’ workers. This was generally part of a double process whereby on the one hand jobs were casualised and on the other these jobs were increas-

ingly filled by workers from ethnic minorities or by migrant workers. In some cases, the jobs were actually moved abroad in order to take advantage of this type of peripheral workforce. These patterns were, in turn, strongly shaped by particular national patterns of ethnicity. The food and beverage industry is one in which these patterns are particularly visible, both in logistics and in production.

In Bulgaria, the national context is one of a strong historical pattern of ethnic segmentation of the workforce. The main minorities in Bulgaria are the Turks (10 *per cent*), the Roma (about 5 *per cent*) and the Bulgarian Muslims (Pomaks). There are no precise data about the situation of ethnic minorities in the overall employment in the country. However even without such direct data it is possible to conclude that some occupations are 'less attractive' than others. The grounds for this conclusion spring from ethnic minorities' education composition (for instance, 1996 data reveal that 20.2 *per cent* of the Bulgarians, and only 2 *per cent* of the Turks and 0.9 *per cent* of the Roma, hold a university degree), as well as from ethnic minorities' concentration in less developed regions or in 'poverty pockets' in well-developed regions (UNDP, 2001a: 31). A number of reports emphasise that unemployment levels are much higher within minorities (most of all among the Roma, and to a lesser degree among the Turks). These inequalities in ethnic terms nurture some researchers' assumptions for the appearance of an ethnic stratification process (Tilkidjiev, 1998).

Traditionally minorities have lower educational qualifications, hence they are more often found within the socially weak groups. Although Article 8 of the Labour Code provides for the equal rights of ethnic groups, a survey conducted in early 1993 shows that the picture of unemployment across the different groups is strongly differentiated, at 12 *per cent* among Bulgarian Christians, 17.5 *per cent* among Turks, 19 *per cent* among Bulgarian Muslims and 36 *per cent* among Roma (UNDP, 2001b: 66). Minority groups are primarily employed in the agricultural sector and processing industry.³

One of the Bulgarian case studies concerned a brewery that had been privatised and acquired by a foreign company. The resulting organisational culture represented a 'collision' between a 'Western' and a post-socialist organisational culture (Stoeva, 2007). In the logistics function, there was a strong presence of Roma minority workers. The simple manual simple tasks were not even carried out by direct employees but by employees of an external company on inferior contractual conditions. Most of these were women, of Roma origin and with very low qualification status. By using these workers, the company assured functional flexibility together with the hiring of seasonal employees in summer. However, at the same time these practices restricted the opportunities for career development for employees with lower education. Even among the permanent staff, there was evidence of segmentation, both by gender and by ethnicity. About one fifth of the permanent jobs in logistics are occupied by women. Men prevail in the management functions as well as in the population of electric truck drivers. However there are few cases of women employed to drive electric trucks, but in a depot of the company in another city in Bulgaria. Although there are women at middle level management positions, most of them are concentrated in low-qualified jobs. A large share of the seasonal workers and women as well, belong to the Roma minority.

³ Information supplied by Svetla Stoeva, email correspondence, 2007.

The employees in logistics are working on open-ended labour contracts. Only the seasonal workers - mostly Roma - hired during the high season, are working on a temporal (contractual fixed) base or are part of a sub-contracting company - those companies provide an interim workforce, mainly low-qualified and from the Roma community.

The situation of these workers is illustrated by one Roma woman interviewed in the WORKS research. She was employed in the logistics department through a sub-contracting company. She had previously worked as a cleaner in a meat production company that had closed some years ago.

There is a contrast between the position of direct employees and that of workers employed by the subcontractor. Those in first category are employed on a regular contract with the factory, those in the second are selected and employed mainly by the subcontractor firm. The first group has full social security rights (maternity leave, free days when the child is ill, *etc.*). The second category does not have this type of security; they take the risks of the irregularity and fluctuations in the work operations. They come and leave, working for a small periods of time. This group consists of Roma women. For the first category the problem is to be hired, to avoid discrimination in the selection procedure. Once hired, they can rely on the trade union to secure their social rights. For the second group the work is highly insecure - they incorporate several types of exclusion.

The restructuring impacts these groups in different ways. First, there is a group of low-qualified (overwhelmingly Roma) persons who are outside the company and come back only as employees of a subcontracting company with an ethnic character. According to the representative of the subcontracting company, 'these people are almost illiterate'. For these representatives of the Roma population in the city, highly precarious work on a daily contract within the subcontracting company is the only way to have any kind of stable job. In the words of the company representative: 'there is such unemployment. They [Roma] are not accepted by employers - first, they do not have any qualification and second, they're illiterate. And employers chose their employees. It is not as it used to be. In the communist period they were forced to work, even with police enforcement. Nowadays there is no work for them. Most of the people come to my home. If you come in the evening you will see, every 15-20 minutes there is a woman coming and starting to cry - "my husband is in prison, my child is being operated on, take me to work".' (Stoeva, 2007).

Interestingly, the subcontracting company was itself managed by a Roma who had previously been a low-qualified employee of the same brewery who had lost his job in a previous restructuring after which he had undergone a long period of employment. He regarded himself as the victim of serious injustice and spoke bitterly of his experiences: 'It was the heaviest blow in my life. Three years before retirement I had the length of service but not the age, I was sixty years old and I was fired. [When the company was taken over] they changed all the management and a lot of people who worked here. It was not deserved. I gave so much to this plant. I have been always at work on holidays. Very often I even used to work on New Year's Eve.'

In the production function such ethnic segregation was less pronounced, though still visible. The Roma minority has some presence within the production department, however these employees are mostly concentrated in only one of the production activities - the only one which is still manually performed - the bottling. In other words, the Roma

representatives are concentrated in the activity that does not require any education and technical experience. This is also the activity in which the wages are lowest.

Actually most of the employees of Roma origin are seasonal workers. This was not a result of a special HR policy in the company. More likely, the lack of other candidates for the occupation in the bottling lines forced the management in the brewery to hire temporary and seasonal workers during the summer months when picking takes place. It is interesting to note that the problem of how to solve the shortage of employees willing to work in the bottling activity came, not from the international management, but from the Bulgarian managers, who drew some experience from the socialist past, when during the 1980s the brewery has had the same problem and had resolved it by using prisoners and Roma workers in order to fill the vacant positions.

It was suggested by some informants that the existence of Roma in these jobs caused others to avoid them: 'No one wants to work where there is a presence of lots of Romas'.

Due to the fact that Roma minority representatives work in temporary and seasonal activities that do not require any educational and technical requirements (and are therefore not given any training), it is obvious that these employees have almost no chances for career development (Stoeva, 2007).

The UK case study in the brewing industry forms an interesting contrast with the Bulgarian one. Although the situation (whereby a local brewer had been taken over by a global company) and the production and logistics processes were very similar, here the workforce had a very different character, consisting almost exclusively of white male workers who formed part of what might have been termed a local 'labour aristocracy', many of whom had a long family history of working for the same company. These workers formed a strongly homogenous group which appeared to have entirely excluded people from different ethnic backgrounds. It also had a strongly macho culture and excluded women. It is possible that this situation will change in the future, but at the time of our case study the restructuring was very recent and not yet complete so there was not sufficient evidence to assert this with any certainty (Dahlmann, 2007a).

The Danish case concerned a large exporter of pork which has undergone a major restructuring, including centralisation of production in a new and large plant, the closure of six smaller companies and the outsourcing of some of the deboning activities to Germany.

Here, most slaughterhouse workers were of indigenous Danish ethnicity. However the WORKS interviewees included two refugees, one of Kosovan origin and one of Sri Lankan origin, both of whom were male. According to the shop steward it was not possible to interview female workers with non-Scandinavian ethnic backgrounds, since none of them had the Danish language skills to be interviewed without an interpreter. Both of these refugees were happy to keep working there, but only one of them was planning to enter into an apprenticeship to become a skilled worker and have more variation on the job. When asked if he would one day become a manager, he shook his head and says: 'I can aim to be a skilled worker then no more, I don't think any further than that, it is very hard for a foreigner to get big jobs here, competition is hard, because the slaughterhouses have fired a lot of people, I don't have the opportunity because I am a foreigner' (Gorm Hansen, 2007).

For non-Danish workers, the slaughterhouse is one of the few workplaces where language skills are not a big problem, and, relative to other jobs with low demands for

language skills or formal education, the pay is a lot better. Pay is the main argument for choosing this line of work. The trade of slaughterers is traditionally a male profession and has also for many years been conceived as a white profession, and although workers with non-Danish background will soon outnumber Danish workers, the multi-cultural workplace is still a rather new phenomenon. This is seen in the very low level of skilled workers with non-Danish backgrounds. All managers in the company were still ethnic Danes at the time of our research, but recently the first non-Danish worker had been selected for training as a manager.

The ethnic and cultural diversity of the group makes it difficult to form a homogenous collective. It is common for the departments (especially the day shift with a majority of Danish workers) to divide into groups according to their nationalities when taking breaks. The relegation of most ethnic minority workers to the less popular night shift represents another aspect of segregation on the grounds of ethnicity. Some of the Danish workers interviewed said they felt that most non-Danish workers do not want to integrate themselves socially and just want to make money and go home. The two interviewees from non-EU countries on the other hand said that they felt well received in the slaughterhouse and did not complain about isolation or racism.

The size and diversity issues in the new plant did not only impair the collective feelings of workers but also their capacity to act as a group in case of conflict and disagreement with management. Language barriers to the possibility of forming collective resistance and social ties were returning themes throughout the interviews.

‘There are no conflicts because departments have grown so big, 120 people can’t agree to stop working and sit down (...) They (management) can enforce a new piece rate more easily than before; you can’t explain to people with a non-Danish background what they are really accepting, it is difficult enough for us (native Danes) to understand, so people who don’t speak Danish can’t possibly take a stand on whether a new calculation of the price rate is any good at all.’ (Gorm Hansen, 2007).

This development towards less conflict and weakening of the workers collective is seen by workers not only to be the effect of restructuring but also an impact of the company’s need to keep up with international competition. It was therefore blamed on globalisation, not on the multi-cultural nature of the workforce.

‘The HR department keeps saying, that it is the value-based management program that should take credit for the fact that people no longer strike, but I think it is rather the threat of closing the slaughterhouse hanging over people’s heads that does it’ (Gorm Hansen, 2007).

The fact that the company can easily close down smaller departments or move cutting and deboning tasks out of the country is something the workers are constantly reminded of, both through the media but especially due to the company’s training course: ‘understanding the whole’ where, as part of a programme of value-based management, workers are informed about the company and its place in international competition with the idea that this will help them to understand the pressures of global competition. This makes workers acutely aware of how the global market demands efficiency, reliability and cooperativeness from its workers in order to secure the existence of the company. This has put a brake on the willingness to take action of a group previously renowned for its militancy.

'A few years ago it didn't take much to get us to strike, now we have instead become really good at negotiating. We know that things are sent to Germany and Poland already and if we don't control our expenses, as for example strikes, then the work will disappear. That's what they tell us all the time (...) Globalisation does not go away, and there is lots of work to do still, we can see that negotiation is the way to go now, we never got anything out of all the strikes anyway, except to go home unpaid.' (Gorm Hansen, 2007).

Whereas the non-Danish workers interviewed were happy about the general atmosphere in the workplace, some of the native Danish interviewees had a hard time coping with the new cultural diversity. They all claimed that this had nothing to do with racism, but was a consequence of language barriers and cultural differences that cannot be dealt with when management keeps recruiting new workers from abroad. Non-Danish workers have the same formal terms and conditions as native Danish workers and are almost always members of the union; there is very little use of short term contracts, except in the holiday periods. However they are much more likely to work the least attractive shifts.

Due to changes in work organisation (involving automation and Taylorisation) the work done in production has a very low-knowledge intensity; it is possible to work in production even for workers that do not speak Danish or are semi-illiterate. Some foreign workers, especially women, still don't speak or write Danish. Where this was no problem only a few years ago, the demand for schooling is increasing. This is not only due to the increasing diversity of the workplace and the general policy of the company to show corporate social responsibility, but also to the widespread use of computers and written material. Due to automation and electronic logistics systems, reading and writing skills are becoming important, just as qualifications in working and adjusting machines are becoming an intrinsic part of slaughterhouse work.

This has inspired the company to search for and train new workers among social and ethnic segments not traditionally working in slaughterhouses. For example, a large proportion of slaughterhouse workers now have non-Danish ethnic backgrounds. This was unthinkable only ten years ago, because the occupation and culture was traditionally considered 'white'. The next step for the new department in central Denmark is to recruit workers from Germany and Poland. At the time of our research, this initiative was well underway, and in the southern part of Denmark, the number of German workers was increasing rapidly. Workers in the new plant were thus spread out over a larger geographical area, only about one third of them were local, and over twenty nationalities were working together, with more Polish workers on the way. As a consequence, the group of workers was rapidly becoming less homogenous in terms of social and ethnic backgrounds. The company has tried to accommodate this by working actively for the integration of non-Danish ethnic groups by offering special training programs and mentoring for new workers with non-Danish backgrounds.

In Denmark, none of the workforce are employed on a casual basis (on temporary or fixed-term contracts). However the use of non-permanent contracts is widespread in the deboning work that is outsourced to Germany. These non-permanent employees are mainly migrant workers from Poland, rather than ethnic Germans (Gorm Hansen, 2007).

Another case study that sheds light on changing ethnic relations in the workplace is a Greek pea producer. Here, the production of peas is now carried out in two plants, an older plant in Greece and a new one in Bulgaria. There is a strong ethnic dimension at the plant in Bulgaria with a high prevalence of unskilled workers who are predominantly

Roma, from nearby villages, while the few technicians and managerial personnel are ethnic Bulgarian. The 35 permanent workers were selected from a larger number of seasonal workers who work during harvesting, and acquire indefinite duration contracts after a probationary period of six months. There are more seasonal workers in Bulgaria than in the mother plant in Greece; in part this is due to the company's reluctance to recruit permanent workers from among the seasonal workers whose work ethic is not considered satisfactory.

On the Greek sit, there is a high and unusual (by Greek standards) level of mutual loyalty between workers and management, the result of a long tradition of paternalism since the founding of the company in 1969. This is not the case for the newer Bulgarian plant whereas wages are also much lower (Linardos, 2007).

Here, as in the Danish case, we see a double level of ethnic division: first the work is outsourced or relocated to another country; then, the company takes advantage of the use of ethnic minority workers as a flexible source of cheap labour, whilst maintaining reasonably high standards of wages and working conditions for the core workforce in the mother country.

Another case concerns an Italian producer of frozen food and fresh vegetables. The case includes an insourcing of production of vegetables (Pedaci, 2007c).

In this company the great majority of the low-skilled production workers come from African countries, especially from Senegal, Burkina Faso, Morocco, and Tunisia. The interviews with managers at the company did not reveal any differences in the strategies for dealing with the different (ethnic) segments of the workforce. Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) male workers are mainly warehousemen and porters. BME workers are often more available than workers of Italian origin; they are often more willing to agree to requests of the managers concerning overtime, changes in the various dimensions of the working time, changes in the tasks. Trade union membership and participation is lower among BME workers. It seems they have a less conflictual approach to the workplace, maybe because they are all first-generation immigrants who have had few opportunities to integrate socially with the Italian workplace culture and traditions of industrial conflict.

This has an important impact on the solidarity amongst workers and the sense of belonging to a common group. BME workers are not explicitly discriminated against or isolated, but a part of the Italian workforce looks at them with some suspicion. In many cases there is explicit prejudice: a lot of Italian workers think that BME workers have lower skills, competences, capacities and abilities; that their work is of a lower standard than that of Italian workers. This affects their behaviour.

The concentration of BME workers in these occupational categories also affects their contractual status. The majority of the workforce (83 *per cent* of the total and over 95 *per cent* of all women workers) are on fixed-term contracts. However white-collar workers, maintenance experts and mechanics (who are more likely to be male and of Italian origin) are hired with an open-ended contract.

Foreign workers (especially non-EU workers) also find it more difficult to advance within the company. This means that foreign workers find it very hard for to ensure career continuity (Pedaci, 2007c).

We can conclude that in the case of low-skilled jobs in production and logistics, the restructuring of work has produced an acceleration of trends to use workers from historically subordinated ethnic groups or immigrant workers as a highly flexible secondary

workforce with fewer rights and less security than the native workers who are more likely to be employed in skilled 'core' jobs with greater protection and better career development potential. Sometimes, as in Italy, this development of a two-tiered workforce can be seen as arising within the country where a company is based. In other cases, it is implemented 'at arms length', for instance when the Danish company makes use of lower levels of employment protection in Germany to employ immigrant workers there on fixed-term contracts, or when the global brewery company or the Greek pea processing company make use of ethnic minority workers in Bulgaria to carry out the most menial tasks under the most precarious conditions.

4.3 Ethnic and cultural differences in globalised companies

In many of the WORKS case studies, across all sectors, examples were to be found of communications difficulties between top management in global companies and local management in a different country. For instance in all the case studies in the brewing industry, in Bulgaria, the UK and Benelux, interviewees expressed the view that the foreign parent company did not fully appreciate the local circumstances. This was especially visible in Bulgaria, where there had been a double shift in the local culture, from a state-owned enterprise to a private one and from a local management culture to an international one. The restructuring process in the company was now entirely subjected to the multinationals' international policy standards. However this imposition of 'Western-type' standards of organisation and work upon a post-socialist company has several outcomes. In the first place, there could be observed an interesting bilateral process of troubles concerning the adaptation and the implementation process. On the one hand, the international management experienced (and still does) difficulties with the adaptation of its policies to the local national realities (*e.g.* labour market, legislation, *etc.*). On the other hand, the Bulgarian management in the researched brewery experienced difficulties in communication with the management levels in the world zone to which they were assigned (headquartered in Moscow), which they were expected to carry out virtually (online) and in the English language. Although the Western management tried to solve the problem of the language barrier by providing training, this was not enough to overcome these barriers. In fact, language difficulties appeared to be only one part of the communication problem. The use of on-line communications (via emails, online conferences, *etc.*) among the managers in the brewery (as well as with managers from Western Europe and the Zone) replaced the former face-to-face interaction. This innovation however, diminished the opportunities for direct contact. There was a clear desire for face-to-face communication, recognised by all the employees interviewed for the case study. The fact that the employees cannot fully adapt to the new organisational culture reveals a process of depersonalisation among managers as well as between managers and blue-collar workers.

The existence of certain hybrid combinations of new (Western) company policy and a heritage from the socialist culture can be seen in the evidences of patronage, personal networking and dual standards, which could be found in the brewery even during and after the restructuring process. The transfer of new organisational models and culture, 'the "Western" mentality - working through the whole day, going home, having dinner and in the morning back to work', leave almost no free space for family life. This was

accompanied by a decrease in the sense of unity at work, exemplified in such aspects of work culture as practices for joint celebrations – which had been much more widespread among the staff before the privatisation. Generally, there was a common feeling of alienation from colleagues in the same department and a loss of community affiliation. In addition the posters and slogans around the brewery, promoting the company culture and policy, were coloured in red, which subliminally recalled certain memories from the socialist past to the employees.

Yet, the process of restructuring had also brought about some positive organisational change, with an increase in retention rates among young, ambitious and trained specialists for whom the new global culture seemed to open up new opportunities (Stoeva, 2007).

Despite such evidence from other sectors, we will focus in the rest of this section on the IT sector which, perhaps because of its already highly developed global division of labour, provided the richest material from amongst the WORKS case studies on the experiences of negotiating cultural and ethnic differences within global companies.

The IT sector

Most of the R&D cases studied by WORKS in the IT sector lacked an international dimension. Interviewees tended to be native and mainly worked in their own country. The R&D IT sector is for high-qualified workers and posts tend to be filled by native national workers; however there were some cases where the internationalisation of work represented an issue for case study companies.

UK lab is one of three research units of a Japanese multinational technology company which has been located close to a university centre of expertise in its field. This case is an interesting case of restructuring, particularly in relation to the geographical and functional (re)distribution of work within the business function and the implications for workers who are working increasingly as part of global virtual teams. The case demonstrates that while global virtual teamworking has many positive aspects including job enrichment, increased efficiency and benefits gained from harnessing the best attributes of different working styles or expertise, there are also complications due to cultural, language and temporal differences. Despite the varied forms of communication employed by the virtual teams it was evident that face to face communication was irreplaceable, and this was a key limitation to the effectiveness of virtual teamworking. As one project leader explained: 'But still we find that physical presence is irreplaceable. We can do as much as we can, use what we have, email, the conference calls and everything. And we see each other quite often. I think they visit us twice a year. We visit them twice a year. So we meet quite often ... Even with that, I find sometimes there is an issue that still can't be resolved if we don't see each other face to face.' (Gosper, 2007).

The case also highlights the impact of institutional shaping on career trajectories as it compares the experience of UK and Japanese workers in the same role within the same company. Japanese R&D staff were expected to join the company as young recruits and remain in the company for life, transferring from R&D after 10 to 15 years to take up senior positions in the business unit. The staff in the UK, however, have no such progression route and were expected to circulate between competitor companies every few years when terms and conditions became less favourable or to seek promotion in what was a relatively flat hierarchy with limited promotion prospects. Because we were unable to

carry out interviews in Japan, it is unclear to what extent it was a conscious strategy on the part of the parent company to take advantage of the looser company-employee ties in the UK. It is doubtful that this was a main motive in selecting a UK location, since there were also obvious advantages in locating near a university that is a world centre of excellence in this particular field (Gosper, 2007).

The Austrian case involved a specialist IT research laboratory that mainly employed Austrian nationals. However some foreign experts were employed in senior researcher positions as specialists in their respective fields (German, Dutch, US) and there was one Indian marketing specialist who had a highly reflexive view on Austrian management practices. This Indian interviewee, based on her experience in a range of Austrian companies, has some interesting comments on the Austrian working culture and what she perceives as a lack of managerial professionalism: 'In continental Europe, they have the master-and-pupil principle, and it works this way. It means the poor master has to constantly prove himself with his skill and his capabilities, many people think this way, but it's humanly impossible, especially nowadays, where there are so many specialists. And the pupil is dependent on the master in his development, his advancement on the job. Also problem-solving, that's all on the social level, and it's like this on the management level too, that they don't implement management tools. The tools are there, appraisal interviews and everything, but the actual use is within the master-pupil [relationship].' (Holtgrewe, 2007a).

The senior, foreign nationals are on average older than the junior researchers, and in different stages of their careers which have been more international from the start.

Recruitment for starting positions happens from the respective university in the neighbourhood, and graduates are still mostly Austrian, plus a few Eastern/South-Eastern Europeans with Austrian computer science degrees - not in the case study units but in the larger organisation. The Austrian researchers interviewed did not have international careers in mind - they thought about changing jobs, industry positions in the region (or their home region), to earn more, start families and build houses. This gap between the junior and senior people might be explained by the 'up or out' character of research careers, and then senior people either have 'local' or 'cosmopolitan' careers. However, cultural diversity is apparently not much of an issue in the organisation, it seems mostly overlaid by a shared IT professionalism or expert culture (Holtgrewe, 2007a).

The Norwegian R&D case involved a takeover of a national company by a foreign multinational and demonstrated a strong resistance by Norwegian workers to being internationalised or working in a more diverse environment. When the unit was taken over by a large international IT company that wanted to close down the local unit and move the staff to the USA, the unit resisted, because they wanted to continue to live and work in the existing location. The new parent company conceded, incorporating this unit as an engineering/product group within the company, but leaving it where it was.

This unit is a very homogeneous unit in all respects. All workers are Norwegian native nationals ('Caucasian'). The 35 workers are almost all male, the exceptions being the receptionist, the HR manager and, in 2006, the first female software engineer. The workers are in their late 20s to early 40s, the majority of them are educated as software engineers at the Norwegian University of Science and technology. The oldest workers were also frequently members of the same social club at the university, the software development shop, a society for engineering students doing software development work in their leisure

time. While the university does have non-Norwegian students the majority are Norwegians and the students society would strengthen the tendency to recruit (male) Norwegians.

Despite this internal homogeneity, the unit staff cannot afford to exercise any particular bias against non-Norwegians or non-whites since they work in a transnational company with an Indian, a Taiwan Chinese and an American Chinese as their closest superiors. However, they are not doing anything to change the situation locally. They continue to recruit from the same university and lack any strategies and measures for recruiting outside their current pool (Torvatn, Anthun & Dahl-Jørgensen, 2007).

Moving from the more specialised and highly-skilled R&D function in the software industry to the more widespread function of software production, strongly internationalised work cultures are very common.

A German case study, Business-Software, involved a software company with more than 40,000 employees worldwide, and over 14,000 in Germany. The company has research centres, service and development sites and field services locations all over the world. Major parts of production are located in Germany, USA and India; further production sites are in China, Canada, Hungary, Bulgaria, Japan, France and Israel. Research centres are located in Germany, USA, UK, France, Canada, Australia, Switzerland, and South Africa. The company is also targeting the emerging markets of Brazil, Russia, India and China. As might be expected, this company has a very internationalised company culture. There are foreign employees working in software development throughout the company due to two factors: mobility within the (international) company and the company's competition in an international 'war for talent'. Another dimension of cultural complexity is added by the fact that teams are often not limited to one location, for instance the superior of one of our German interview partners was located in the United States.

Diversity management is an issue at the company, and this is perceived as mainly an issue relating to communication and different work cultures. In order to create a global division of labour, the reorganisation of a German medium-sized company to transform it into a global corporation has created challenges across the whole organisation and the needs for individual qualifications and professional skills have changed profoundly. Therefore, communication skills, spatial and temporal flexibility, language tasks as well as cultural knowledge, became extremely important and have to be organised internally.

'Well, the most important is on the one hand the specialisation and the internationalisation ... the specialisation of the single persons, the distribution of the topics on different locations, let's say all over the world. Here the extremely increasing need for communication and the need for communication by phone, videoconferences, whereas phone and mail are the most used media (director product manager).' (Krings, Bechmann & Nierling, 2007).

As a result of the international division of work flows, the English language became the most important language across the company. Within the IT sector, skills in English language has always been an important aspect of the qualification. However, since the restructuring process, English has become the basic language for nearly all communication. The same development can be identified for communication skills or 'social skills', as these aspects are described in the managerial literature. The increasing demand for communication in order to co-operate and to organise the workflows includes language skills

but also open-mindedness, the capacity for intercultural communication as well as the subjective willingness to enter in those processes.

Because the result-oriented and project-oriented work organisation is based on trust-flexitime, these changes are widely accepted as following on from the logic of the work processes. Learning how to work in 'virtual teams' seems to be one of the priorities of the training programmes. Trainees are taught to work with 'videoconferences, calls, maps' (human resource manager) and to assess the most economical form of communication in any given case. They are also evaluated on their ability to work in an international environment, where technical knowledge has to be combined with communication skills (Krings *et al.*, 2007).

A Bulgarian case study concerns a company with offices located in two Bulgarian cities and in South-Eastern Asia and with its corporate headquarter in Switzerland. The composition of power relations is divided in the following way: the strategic development of the company is supervised and managed by the Swiss headquarters, while the executive management and main part of actual work are located in the company's development centre in Sofia. Some subsidiary tasks are carried out in Asia. The restructuring in the management structure along these lines led to the introduction of the 'open communication' principle in the company and a new customer-centric culture. Functional restructuring thus made possible the diversification of the company's activities to three countries on two continents. The open communication principle and the flat hierarchy is recognised by the Bulgarian employees as being of high value. Mixed teams of different nationalities are spread out across the different locations. However in the offices of the firm in Bulgaria there is only one employee of different origin - an Australian, who is the CEO. There is, however, a considerable need for day-to-day interaction between the Bulgarians and Asians. Both need also to communicate regularly with the headquarter in Switzerland which is providing the strategic management.

Because the Asian office had only been set up very recently at the time of our interviews, and we were unable to carry out any interviews there, it was difficult to discern whether the new arrangements were creating any conflicts and tensions among the employees. Up to that point, the interaction between Bulgaria and Asia was still limited (or at least underdeveloped), because in most case the Asian employees were doing small 'pieces' of work on specific tasks. There were fewer cases when the Asian engineers were set up in small semi-autonomous project teams, in order to complete tasks that formed part of bigger projects. Yet, as part of the implementation of a new customer-centric culture, the need for interaction was expected to grow, requiring increasing everyday communication between the employees at the different locations. In addition, the new organisational changes in the companies, organised around the implementation of the 'partner position' and flat corporate hierarchy, would demand a strong partnership among the mixed teams and a 'reciprocity of logical arguments'.

The joint teamwork between Bulgarian and Asian employees is virtually based - performed via email, instant messaging and VoIP software (ICQ, MSN Messenger, Yahoo Messenger, Skype). Although the interaction among the teams was still new and 'under construction', the process of turning the customer into an integral part of distributed work was already being shown to require intensive communication at all levels of the organisational structure and on everyday basis. This means that the intensification of the distributed work is expected to increase.

The case study also revealed an important aspect in the process of spatial decentralisation in relation to the distributed work. That is the unwillingness for long-term travel among Bulgarian employees. The reasons given for this reluctance were not related to personal life but to the business: a need to maintain close relations with the client. Much of the work involved very close collaboration with clients, which, it was argued, would be jeopardised if the employee is abroad for a long period of time.

When managers from this company were questioned about their recruitment strategies, they insisted that this was not based on gender or ethnic preferences and it is rather a question of chance what candidate (man or woman) will take certain positions.

A foreigner working in Bulgaria mentioned 'global experience' as an important criterion, meaning the ability to work in different parts of the world for a period of time longer than six months. In his view this type of expertise is rare among software engineers in Bulgaria. The need to gain international experience was also mentioned by a senior developer and project manager as an important reason for him to move for a period of six months to the Asian office. In his view it would be impossible to progress any further within the company without such experience. The challenge in this case is to move abroad, working for the same organisation, but in the outsourced branch in Asia. Here the locally constructed occupational identity has the potential to develop towards the attainment of a global expertise oriented to the needs of the restructuring of the global value chain. This respondent had worked abroad - in London - before. He had returned to Bulgaria because he missed his friends and the way of life in the home country. At that time his identity could be seen as locally shaped. Now he feels that his career development depends on an even more extreme geographical move, albeit for only six months (Galev, 2007).

A Swedish software company also gives an interesting example of the cultural shifts involved in the process of becoming an international company. This company is a newly merged organisation between a Swedish and an American based company with a focus on the product development, organisation and production of Swedish based products. The Swedish workplace is itself dominated by Swedish natives but there is a strong ethnic dimension to the division of labour because of the company's offshoring practices. At least four (ethnic or national) cultures that influence the corporate processes and relations in the organisation can be identified. Cultural clashes can be seen in different management styles between the Swedish and American parts. Another aspect was a move from India to the Philippines that was made partly on cultural grounds. This was a decision partly based on the experiences of the American part of the company where the work culture of the Philippines was seen as closer to American culture than that of India. It can be argued that cultural open-mindedness was an important competence not only for those involved in the offshoring projects but also in relation to being successful in the Swedish-US merger.

One effect of the offshoring first to India and then further on to Manila was a change in the beginning of the working day in order to enable direct communication. There is only a one- or two-hour overlap (early in the morning, in Swedish time) between normal working hours there and in Manila. There is a similar situation in relation to communication with the USA, but in this case the overlap is a few hours in the evening. This has led to a need for more flexibility over the day and an extension of the hours in which the Swedish office is open for business.

Over time the need for direct telephone communication has diminished and has been replaced by a greater use of email as a communication tool, which in its turn has a tendency to slow down the process, sometimes by up to 24 hours.

The merger has also led to a somewhat changed process in that project management has become much more time-focused. Earlier, every step in the process had to take its time. The new US style project management style is more focused on time-to-market and any improvement or adjustment will be done along the way. The most important organisational aspect of the merger has been the introduction of a new and more hierarchical managerial style based on solely economic and market-related targets and a more formalised HR system. From a more informal and 'Scandinavian' and networked-based work and decision making a top down style has been introduced, replacing the former system under which decisions could be reached horizontally by agreement between different departments. In the new system decisions have to be made on the top joint level. This is especially evident in economic, administrative and HR matters. A more clear focus on market and economy, often with a short horizon, has also been introduced. Economy sets the space for action. Low profitability in the short run (quarterly monitoring) leads immediately to action and demands for cost reduction.

In the product development department just over 200 persons are employed (on shore). In India about 150 people are employed at the sub-contractors. They are being cut down in favour of recruiting new company employees in Manila. This also means that there are more cut-backs in the Swedish organisation, not just through offshoring but also due to the rationalisation potential of the merger. A sense that their jobs are increasingly precarious combined with an increased standardisation and intensification of work has created considerable anxiety in the Swedish workforce. However it is felt that this situation is not recognised by the American management (Tengblad & Sternälv, 2007b).

This sense of a growing alienation among workers who feel that a 'foreign' value system is being imposed on them, so evident in this Swedish case study, is echoed in a UK case study (Dahlmann, 2007d) involving the transfer of personnel from the public sector to a global IT company. The workers interviewed here included some who had been transferred to two different global companies headquartered in continental Europe and some who had been transferred to a UK company that had subsequently been bought up by a US global IT company. In all cases, there was a feeling that they had been moved from an environment in which there was a commitment to a public service ethic to one that was dominated by commercial imperatives. Although these workers had in principle considerable opportunities for career advancement within these global companies, like the Norwegian R&D workers (Torvatn *et al.*, 2007), they did not wish to exercise them, preferring to continue living and working in the same location.

In one of the UK companies, workers felt so precarious that they were thinking of leaving the industry. An account maintenance manager said that she believes that the application support role will not be around any longer and will go offshore soon. As a result, she feels she wants 'to get out' and find new employment elsewhere, again ideally in the public sector. 'I am less tempted to stay in IT because it got too cut-throat and has become a risky industry.'

Similar views were expressed by a software developer: 'I thought it was a job for life. I liked IT and that is why I got a job as an IT support technician with *City Council*, I progressed and now everything has changed and IT is not a job for life anymore' (*Prof's IT*

software developer). A project manager described his situation with his new outsourced employer in the following words: 'I do my work, I don't slack but you have to look for meaning outside. I walk out and switch off. It is hard to get recognition here; you don't get credit for your work so that is why I can't be bothered. If I lose this job I'll go find another one somewhere else, I am not bothered. I have other things going on.'

The situation of working for a private company was repeatedly contrasted with the very different values of a global organisation. One female respondent described herself as: 'not ambitious, as never wanting to go into management which is not an attitude that is liked in [the new company]. They want young, hungry [people] trying to get up the ladder.'

Managers did not accommodate themselves to this 'public service mentality' but expressed the view that it is perfectly possible for former *City Council* IT staff to develop within *Prof* (the global company which now employs them) if they are flexible but also admit that 'if they want to develop a career with PROF outside *City Council* they have to develop more skills'. The essential skills *Prof* is looking for are more inter-personal skills. The desired skills include such things as being a 'self-starter', an 'enthusiast', having a 'focus on results and a "can-do" approach to tasks' and an 'ability to take ownership'. However the way our interviewees regarded their skills and work does not necessarily fit in with this notion of a potentially flexible assignment consultant working on an international level. For both the younger and older workers living locally is important; they like where they are and do not have any ambitions to have a fast-tracked 'career', especially not on an international level. There is also an absence of real drive for demonstrating good performance to achieve promotions (Dahlmann, 2007c).

There is acknowledgment that working for *Prof* offers new opportunities but interviewees tend to be satisfied with the way things are: they like their job, like the working environment but are not driven to succeed in performance to make more money. Interviewees called it the 'public service mentality' - work that is aiming to benefit the community but is not about personal profits. Added to the general commitment to the local community in this particular case was a strong allegiance to the region, which was in Wales with its own language. Respondents recognised that moving away from Wales would involve losing the right for their children to be educated in their native language.

Interviewees at another UK case study company explained that they also understood the potential benefits of having been outsourced from the public to the private sector in principle but also felt ambivalent about the value of this new opportunity: being part of the public sector, they feel, meant a more rigid progression structure within the respective *City Council*, a post needed to become available then only was there opportunity to move on whereas new global employers promote on merit, performance measures, and personal development plans which clash with the public service mentality of doing good and thinking about the community (Dahlmann, 2007d).

In these two UK cases (Dahlmann, 2007c & d), as part of restructuring, local promotion opportunities had actually been reduced. Local employee management is absent in the two IT multinationals as management is now taking place remotely in the form of visits by line and other managers. This creates a feeling of being cut off from head office and interviewees feel little appreciation. It also creates a sense that the natural promotion ladder has been withdrawn. Progressing does not mean a simple upgrading, as before, but involves a preparedness to move to another region or even another country. Before the outsourcing, at the *City Councils*, everyone was present on the same site: the head of

unit, the chief executive and all grades below them. Now that there is remote management and staff are spread over several working sites, UK interviewees do not feel supported and would prefer to work for another employer.

This change has drastically impacted on their evaluation of their career paths: where before the transfer there was a great deal of satisfaction and stability, now the reverse is the case; people feel undervalued, have less access to training, and feel threatened by further restructuring and redundancies. Most do not think they will be working in the same job in five years time (*ibid.*).

We can conclude that, at least for this group of employees, being part of a global company has brought major conflicts between their ties to the local community on the one hand and the pursuit of a career on the other. Despite the lauded possibilities of ICTs to render place immaterial and enable work to be moved seamlessly around the globe, the reality seems to be that moving into a management position involves being prepared to tear up one's roots. Except for a lucky few (like the high-skilled Norwegian R&D staff) refusing to move involves accepting a lower-level position and one, furthermore, which becomes increasingly precariousness in a context in which outsourcing contracts are short-term in nature and global sourcing is practiced by the employer.

5 Conclusions and policy recommendations

It is clear from this research that major upheavals are taking place in the world of work across a range of different sectors, business functions and occupations. What is less clear, however, is whether, in this great reshuffling of jobs and job descriptions, the old rigidities that divided 'men's' jobs from 'women's' and 'white' jobs from those filled by migrants are breaking down and thus creating new opportunities for gender and ethnic integration in the workplace.

In the dual process of destruction and creation of skills and jobs that accompanies restructuring, there are both winners and losers and, whilst some positions become more precarious, or disappear altogether, others are created with attractive prospects. The question is, to what extent these outcomes are emerging in a way that is gender neutral, or colour-blind, and to what extent old patterns of segregation are being reinforced, or recreated in new forms.

The evidence from this research, as already noted, is highly contradictory, and warns us against easy generalisations. We have focused particularly in this report, as in the research on which it draws, on three main groups of workers each of which can be seen to have been affected differently by restructuring. Since we cannot discern universal and unambiguous trends across all these groups, it seems likely that it will be equally difficult to determine 'one size fits all' policy initiatives that will serve to address the issues raised, so we will now look separately at each group, in an attempt to tease out the main trends and identify the questions raised for policy-makers by these developments.

5.1 High-skilled knowledge workers

Our first group comprises high-skilled knowledge workers. This is a group often identified as 'winners' in the development of a global knowledge economy and many policy initiatives have been developed not only to increase their numbers in general, by encouraging the spread of appropriate educational qualifications, but also, in particular, to encourage women, and in some cases also members of disadvantaged ethnic groups, to acquire these skills, whilst encouraging employers to develop policies to recruit them.

From the evidence of our research, some of the changes taking place in these fields have indeed served to open up new opportunities for women, making it easier for them to enter these fields. In particular, the increasingly customer-driven nature of knowledge-based occupations has increased the need for language and communications skills, whilst the development of new fields of research which require a combination of technical skill with other bodies of knowledge or expertise has also served to broaden the skill requirements beyond the traditional 'techie' profiles so often stereotyped as masculine. Work cultures are changing in knowledge-based creative occupations, with more and more

individual commitment towards work and a greater demand for the non-technical skills often typed as 'feminine'. In principle, this demand for new tasks, qualifications and skills empowers employees to gain substantial independence from traditional gender roles. The commitment towards the job changes the attitude of women towards discrimination. Through empowerment of women, inequality seems to diminish and becomes less explicit and women appear to have more autonomy in designing their individual careers.

New requirements for managing international teams in large corporations, together with a need to communicate with clients from diverse national backgrounds have also undoubtedly created new career paths for people from a broader range of ethnic backgrounds than in the past, at least in global companies. Globalisation, in other words, appears to create a demand for diversity in the workforce.

These new and increasingly diverse, corporate cultures therefore appear to be creating genuinely new opportunities for many people who have the right combinations of skills and competences to take advantage of them. However what they offer with one hand they may snatch away with the other. The price paid for survival in such a culture may be high, involving a willingness to work long hours (sometimes dictated by the needs of employers or customers in a different global time zone), to be prepared to be highly mobile, to speak and work in a global language and to adjust to a competitive, 'lean and mean' working atmosphere which may be very different from traditional regional norms. Some of these requirements put direct barriers in the way of people who wish to combine work with responsibilities to their families or local communities and might be regarded as indirectly discriminatory against women. In order to survive in such an environment, both women and men have, to all intents and purposes, to behave like 'supermen': they have to conform to a traditionally masculine lifestyle model in which the demands of work take supremacy over all other aspects of life, be they familial or social.

Because employment tends to be organised in a manner that involves individualised competition between workers for relatively scarce positions, this is a field which, in many ways, is most easily addressed by 'traditional' gender and race equality policies, based as they are on the liberal principles of 'equality of opportunity' and 'equal treatment'. The historical equal opportunities agenda, adopted at an EU level as well as a national level and, in many cases, also at the level of sectoral or company-level collective agreements, is highly relevant here. This includes policies to ensure equal pay, outlaw discrimination, penalise sexual or racial harassment and encourage a system in which advancement is based on ability, unaffected by other demographic variables. In general, this agenda also includes a recognition that special attempts should be made to redress the effects of past discrimination, including positive action policies to favour women or people from black and minority ethnic groups and policies to confront the 'glass ceiling' which still excludes them from senior jobs. At the company level, diversity management policies are also highly relevant here.

Ironically, however, although these occupations are most appropriate *par excellence* for applying EU and liberal gender equality policy, they also constitute one of the most difficult fields for actually applying the 'generalised' types of public policies promoted by EU and national bodies. This is because contracts are typically made at the individual level (often secretly) and high competition hinders collective action and representation by group of workers. Only individual cases can usually be brought forward and this means that any worker who uses the law risks her or his reputation and even employment

capacity by doing so. This creates extreme disincentives for workers wishing to claim their rights. One example of this is the law on sexual harassment (Directive 2002/73) currently in endorsement in EU member states.

When it is so difficult to counter even discrimination which is, in principle, illegal, it is even more difficult to challenge the general basis of workplace culture, which may be explicitly or implicitly racist or sexist, let alone to challenge the 'corporate global male way of life' which involves a loosening of ties and shedding of responsibilities to family and community and, in some cases, a complete sacrifice of parenthood. This contradiction presents a major challenge to policy-makers.

Another area in which policy intervention may be relevant for this group of workers is in the provision of training. The widening of skills, including the demand for more managerial, language, communications and other non-technical skills, offers new jobs opportunities in knowledge-intensive occupations and the more widely these are offered, the greater and more diverse will be the pool of talent on which employers can draw for filling these positions.

5.2 Service occupations

Many parts of the service sector can be regarded as having evolved historically precisely in order to meet the needs of a society in which only a small minority of women are willing and able to make the personal sacrifices involved in entering the knowledge-based occupations described above. Part-time 'flexible' employment in services has, at least since the 1960s in Western Europe, provided the opportunity for large numbers of women to earn an income whilst also taking responsibility for the maintenance and reproduction of the workforce and the care of those excluded from it.

Many traditional individually-based 'equal opportunities' and 'equal treatment' policies have had relatively little to offer to these women workers. They do not have the problem of exclusion from the workforce in their fields; on the contrary, they tend to be over-represented within them; neither do they have the problem of unequal pay: on the contrary, the entire workforce is typically rather poorly paid, but equally so. Because training is usually directly related to the needs of the job, they are typically offered access to this, too, on an equal basis, although women may be less likely to be offered training for promotion than men.

This is not to say, however, that service workers have not benefited from public policies designed to reduce discrimination over the years. Especially in the public sector, where many of our case studies were set, service workers have in the past been covered by collective agreements which have aimed to improve work-life balance, for instance by the provision of a range of different agreements providing flexible working hours, paid time off for maternity, paternity or parental leave. In some cases they have benefited from employer-provided child care provision, special agreements allowing working hours that fit in with school timetables, job-sharing and other such agreements. More importantly, they have collectively benefited from European directives providing for equal treatment for part-time workers, enabling part-time workers to benefit proportionally from the same pension and social security benefits and the same access to training as their colleagues working full-time.

It is dangerous to over-generalise and there have, of course, been many exceptions, as well as strong variations between age cohorts, countries, regions, sectors and business functions. However we can cautiously propose that by and large, this is, in other words, a group that has tended to benefit in the past from collectively, rather than individually, negotiated conditions and from policies that recognise the 'dual burden' of responsibilities for work and domestic life carried by women who have opted for a traditional 'housewife' role rather than sought to compete with men as 'breadwinners' in their own right. In doing so, it has provided employment not only for many women but also for some men who have chosen a lifestyle that allows them to prioritise family, cultural or social values over economic achievement. Because these jobs typically involve educational qualifications, communications skills and IT skills, access to them by members of ethnic minority groups tends to vary between these groups, and between different national environments, according to the extent to which members of these groups have access to the appropriate education and training, and the extent to which overt discrimination persists. In the UK, for instance, public service workers tend to have a diverse ethnic profile, but this is less so in some other national contexts.

The impact of restructuring on these occupations has, in many cases, resulted in an erosion of the collective agreements which have made them relatively attractive and secure, if not especially well-paid, options in the past. As the work becomes more spatially dispersed and, in many cases, is outsourced to private sector employers, it typically becomes more precarious and some of the 'flexible' accommodations between work and private life that were negotiated in the past are lost. There is some evidence that the service workforce is fragmenting, with new forms of polarisation developing between new groups of (relatively) protected 'insiders' and new groups of 'outsiders'. Some of the new peripheral workforce are drawn from segments of the population that were historically not included in secure collective agreements, a diverse group including students, single parents and immigrants. However their inclusion in the least secure of the jobs in this sector does not necessarily equate with genuine equality of opportunity.

What role can public policy play in minimising the negative impacts of restructuring and maximising those that are positive? One clear strand continues the tradition of promoting services and policies that improve work-life balance. This includes the provision of public child care facilities, improving statutory rights to maternity, paternity and parental leave and encouraging employers to develop 'family friendly' policies. However it is important that such strategies are targeted at men as well as women if they are to be successful in achieving desegregation. There may even be a case, in some instances, for positive discrimination in favour of men. The aim, in other words, should be to increase flexibility and choice rather than to confirm women in a secondary role (thereby confirming the whole female-dominated sector as a secondary one). The whole sector could usefully be upgraded, by reducing precarity and fixed-term contracts, to bring it up to standards more closely comparable with those in 'male dominated' sectors.

Another strand involves looking critically at the ways in which collective agreements are currently protected when public services are outsourced. The Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) Directive (No. 2001/23 EC) undoubtedly provides some welcome protections. However our case studies uncovered a number of situations where its applicability was not clear, for instance when workers were 'seconded' by their existing employer to a new public-private partnership, and where workers were transferred

under short-term contracts which were subsequently renewed with a different outsourced supplier. When workers are transferred from several different employers to the same global outsourcing company, each inheriting their original terms and conditions of employment and now sitting alongside each other with the same new employer but on different terms and conditions of employment, it is unclear how equal opportunities laws can be applied under different national systems.

There is also a role for training policy in ensuring that access to the skills required to perform well in service employment are available equally, regardless of gender, colour, creed or national origins.

5.3 Production work

Our final category concerns manual work in production. Here we found not only the most extreme examples of a 'traditional' housewife-breadwinner social division of labour outside the workplace but also the most extreme examples of gender and ethnic segregation within it. From the evidence of these cases, the factory, or warehouse, floor is the place where the equal opportunities policies of the last four decades have had the least impact.

This is not to say that change has not taken place in these occupational groups. On the contrary, it is clear that restructuring has had a major impact on skills, job quality and working conditions. However the impact of this restructuring seems to have been, in general, to create new polarisations within the workforce, improving some jobs whilst rendering many others more standardised and precarious, and, in some cases, exporting them altogether from Europe to other parts of the globe where wages are lower. With some notable exceptions, in this reorganisation, women, and especially women from ethnic minority backgrounds, seem to have ended up in the most precarious and least protected positions, and these positions seem, in general, to be those nearest the bottom of the value chain.

Again, we must ask the question what role public policy can play in mitigating these negative impacts.

A general upgrading or adaptation of skills in this sector to bring them into line with the new market requirements could be combined with efforts to reduce both gender and ethnic segregation, producing a generally more diverse working environment. EU policies that oppose discrimination on the basis of ethnic origin and race (Directives 2000/43) are useful here, although they are limited in being based on an 'individual' approach by workers.

However here, in contrast with the other two groups discussed, the evidence seems to point away from policies directed at individual emancipation or at improving the collectively-negotiated practices of particular employers or sectors (although, of course, these still have an important role to play and should not be abandoned) towards policies which operate at a more general societal level.

It is beyond the scope of this report to list these comprehensively, but they include: establishing statutory minimum standards (including inspection and enforcement procedures) to ensure adequate wages, working conditions and safety standards to ensure that hard manual work is safe and properly rewarded, regardless of the gender and ethnicity of those who carry it out; policies to ensure that immigrants, asylum-seekers, refugees and members of vulnerable ethnic minorities are not discriminated against in the education

system or the labour market; penalties for employers who breach these regulations; public education programmes designed to minimise sexual and racial discrimination; and the provision of public facilities for child care and other services which reduce the private burden of care and make it easier for men and women to share their caring responsibilities.

Finally, public authorities can take a lead in initiating a broad public debate about the future of local employment in a global economy, in order to identify the appropriate training and employment strategies and which groups might be 'winners' or 'losers' as a result of restructuring. Public consultation with representatives of these groups can then contribute to the development of plans which link restructuring with the opening up of new opportunities, and the establishment of alternative options, for all groups, regardless of gender or ethnicity.

Appendix Gender research in WORKS case studies

Level	Methods	Indicators/questions
Identity	Interviews (occupational case studies)	<p>How important is your work in your life? (Is it what defines your identity or do you see yourself mainly as something else – e.g. parent/student/artist?)</p> <p>Who were your role models?</p> <p>What is your idea of a typical worker in your job/occupation?</p> <p>Do you see yourself as a typical worker?</p> <p>Do you see yourself as a rebel/pioneer?</p> <p>What do your parents/partners/children think of the job you do? (Were you encouraged to adopt this career? Would you encourage your children to follow you into this type of work?)</p> <p>What do your work colleagues think of the job you do?</p> <p>Do you feel the need to prove your masculinity/femininity in the workplace?</p> <p>What kinds of conflict do you experience at work? (With managers? With colleagues? With subordinates? With customers?)</p> <p>What kinds of conflicts do you experience outside the workplace because of your work (e.g. demands from children or partners for more attention)?</p> <p>If you could relive your life, what would you have done differently?</p>
Discourses	<p>Observation</p> <p>Secondary analysis of advertisements and other documents</p> <p>Group interviews</p>	<p>How are particular occupational groups portrayed in company advertising or literature (e.g. men used to advertise technical services, smiling women used to advertise customer services, etc.)?</p> <p>What wording is used in job advertisements?</p> <p>How are offices decorated? What pictures are on the walls?</p> <p>How do people address each other in casual encounters or formal meetings?</p> <p>Who interrupts whom in meetings?</p> <p>What kinds of joke are made? (not just obvious examples of sexist/racist/homophobic humour but also teasing, flirtatiousness, mockery, sarcastic references to equal opportunities policy, etc.)</p> <p>What are the dress codes?</p>

Level	Methods	Indicators/questions
Practices	<p>Interviews (organisational case studies)</p> <p>Observation</p> <p>Analysis of workflow diagrams, quality assurance protocols, training materials, <i>etc.</i></p>	<p>Detailed analysis of work processes and division of labour – who does what? How has this changed? How do people progress from one activity to another? What encouragement is given to do this?</p> <p>How family-friendly is the culture (<i>e.g.</i> how would a manager react if someone calls in to say they can't come in to work because of a family emergency? How acceptable would it be to bring a child into work because the school is closed?)?</p> <p>What is the attitude to men who behave like 'new men' (<i>e.g.</i> leaving work early to pick up kids)?</p> <p>What social activities are organised in the workplace, formally and informally, and who is involved (<i>e.g.</i> away days, 'team building' activities, Christmas parties, sporting events, birthdays)? How do people socialise outside the workplace and who participates?</p>
Institutions	<p>Interviews (organisational case studies)</p> <p>Secondary analysis of documentation (<i>e.g.</i> staff handbooks, organisational procedures, <i>etc.</i>)</p> <p>Interviews with key experts outside the organisation</p>	<p>Are there general rules that could be said to discriminate indirectly – <i>e.g.</i> requirements to accept postings to branches in other regions/countries in order to be promoted; requirements to work full-time in senior jobs; requirements to be available during the night or at the weekend; regulations that make it difficult to take a career break <i>etc.</i>? Here it may be necessary to take account of rules that are established outside the organisation being studied, <i>e.g.</i> sectoral, regional or national regulations or requirements laid down by a parent or customer company.</p>

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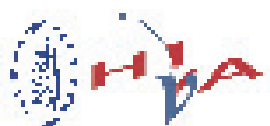
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- The restructuring of employment in the context of technological change and globalisation is bringing about major changes in the division of labour in Europe. In the past, this division of labour has been strongly segregated both by gender and by ethnicity, horizontally, vertically and across other dimensions, such as location and contract type.

Are these changes bringing about progress towards greater equality or are they perpetuating the old divisions, albeit in different forms? Drawing on European statistics as well as eighty-eight in-depth case studies in thirteen EU countries, this report concludes that the picture is complex, with large differences between sectors and business functions and jobs with different skill levels.

In low-skilled manual work, there is evidence that the gender division of labour still conforms to a 'housewife-breadwinner' model, with minority ethnic groups occupying the most precarious positions in the workforce. In high-skilled 'knowledge work' women are making progress towards equality, but in order to do so have to adopt a 'male' lifestyle.

Globalisation is changing patterns of ethnic segregation in international companies.



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