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Labour Market Flexibility in the
Danish Service Sector:
Same, same, but still different

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Draft April 2013

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***IN THE PRESENT VERSION SOME GRAPHS AND TABLES ARE NOT UPDATED.
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1. Introduction

Denmark has in the last decade been portrayed as one of the foremost real-life examples of flexicurity. In Denmark, a flexible labour market is combined with generous social security and active labour market policies – or what has become known as the “golden triangle” (OECD 2004; Ministry of Labour 1999).

One of the main features of the Danish employment system is a relatively low level of employment protection for employees with a standard contract (OECD 2004, chapter 2, Venn, 2009). The main trade-off between flexibility and security is found for regular (standard) workers who experience a short spell of unemployment in between two jobs. In this context, the unemployment benefit systems functions as a flexibility device, enhancing the mobility and risk willingness of the ordinary workforce. For those, who have problems finding a new job, the active labour market policy ideally serves to upgrade the qualifications and motivation of the individual, and enhance the possibilities for labour market reintegration (Madsen 2003, 2004, 2005, 2006).

Since the majority of the workforce is easy to dismiss, Danish companies have traditionally not resorted to employ “atypical workers”. The short story is that the ordinary workforce can be considered “temporary workers” due to the high job mobility and high job turnover rates (Bredgaard et. al 2005, 2006).

But this short story is precisely too short and imprecise. In this case study I review the relationship between Danish flexicurity and atypical employment with an emphasis on the service sector.¹ I define “atypical employment” as the major types of non-standard work deviating from the full-time open-ended employment relationship. This includes part-time employment, fixed-term employment, temp agency work and self-employment. The paper describes the incidence, development and regulation of these “atypical” employment relationships in the Danish service sector.

It is often suggested that permanent and long-time employment relationships has become a thing of the past due to rapid technological restructuring, globalisation of labour markets and new life course preferences of the workforce. The shift from job security to employment security implied by the flexicurity concept is also a reflection of this change.

However, there is not much empirical evidence to back this assumption of the “end of stable jobs”. Auer and Cazes (2003), for instance, find a surprisingly high degree of stability in employment relations over time, e.g. average job tenure has hardly changed in the period from 1992 to 2005 (Auer 2007).

In Denmark this stability in the employment relationship is also to a large degree confirmed by time-series data on the evolution of various “atypical” forms of employment relations like part-time employment, fixed-term contracts and self-employment. As an overview Figure 1 shows the prevalence of temporary employment on the Danish labour market compared to the EU, while

¹ The paper owes a lot to collaborative work with my colleagues Thomas Bredgaard, Flemming Larsen and Stine Rasmussen, cf. especially Bredgaard et al (2008).

figures 2 and 3 shows the similar statistics for part-time employment and self-employment.

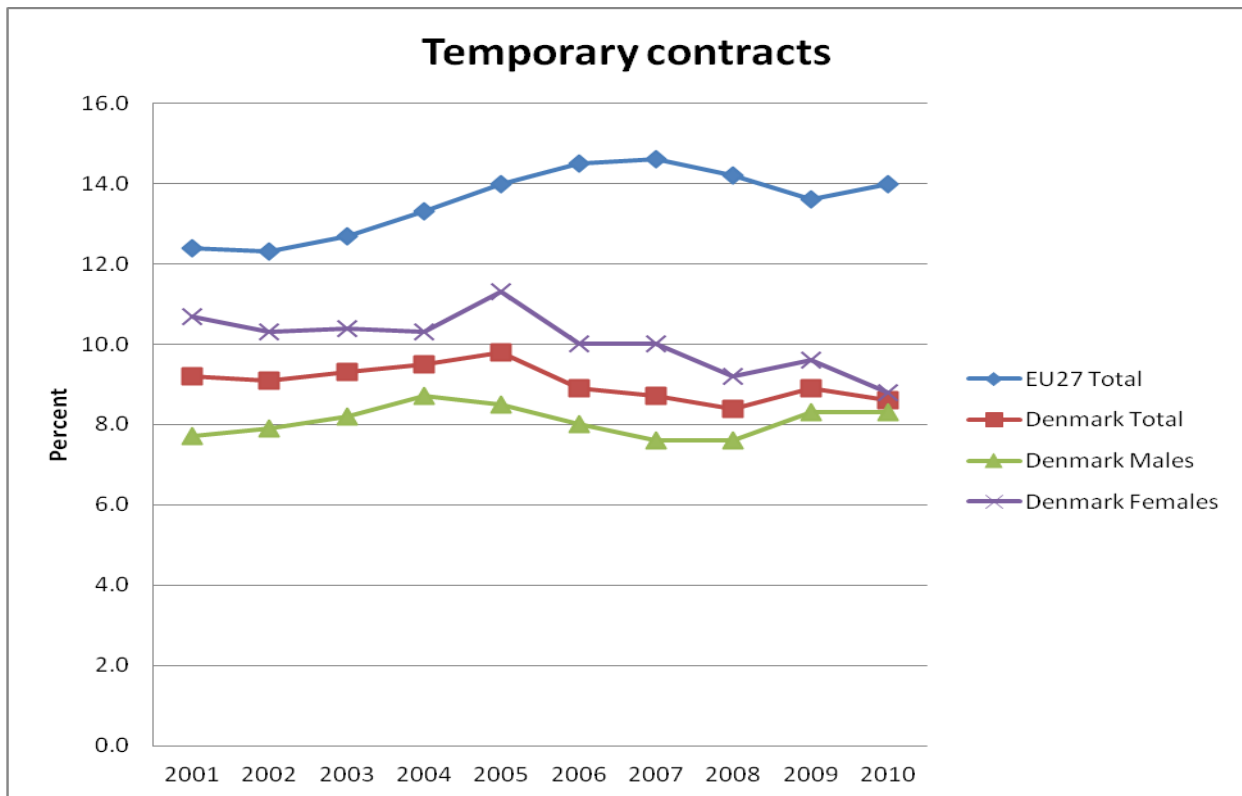


Figure 1: Fixed term contracts on the Danish labour market and in the EU27, 2001-2010. Share of total employment. Source: Eurostat, LFS.

As it is evident from figure 1, non-permanent employment is significantly less common on the Danish labour market than in the EU in general. Furthermore, while temporary employment in the EU has been on the rise during the last decade, it has been declining – albeit slowly – in Denmark since 2005. Also there has been a convergence of the shares of non-permanent employment for Danish men and women to a situation in 2010, where the shares are almost equal.

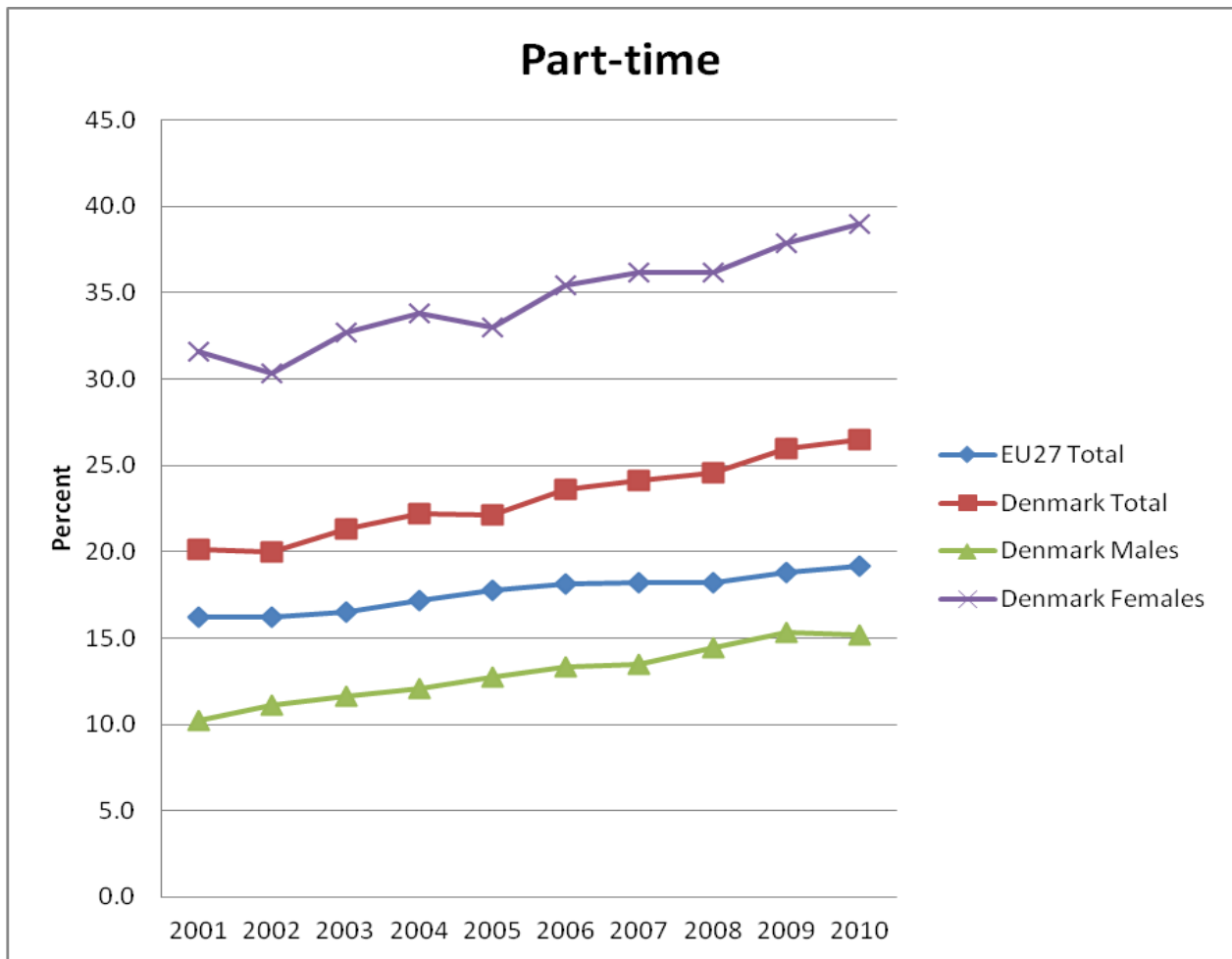


Figure 2: Part-time employment on the Danish labour market and in the EU27, 2001-2010. Share of total employment. Source: Eurostat, LFS

With respect to part-time work, the share of part-timers is about twice as high in Denmark as in the EU in general. Especially Danish women show a high prevalence of part-time work, but also Danish men tend to work part-time more often. Actually, the share of Danish men working part-time is about twice as high as for the EU. Actually, in 2010, the shares were 15.2 percent versus 8.7 percent. Also, in Denmark as in the rest of the EU, the share of part-timers has increased in the last decade. Actually, the increase in the Danish case in relative terms is somewhat larger than in the EU in general. This is especially the case, when one looks at male part-time employment, which in Denmark has increased by 50 percent over the last 10 years.

Finally Figure 3 illustrates the level and development of self-employment in EU-27 and in Denmark from 2001-2010.

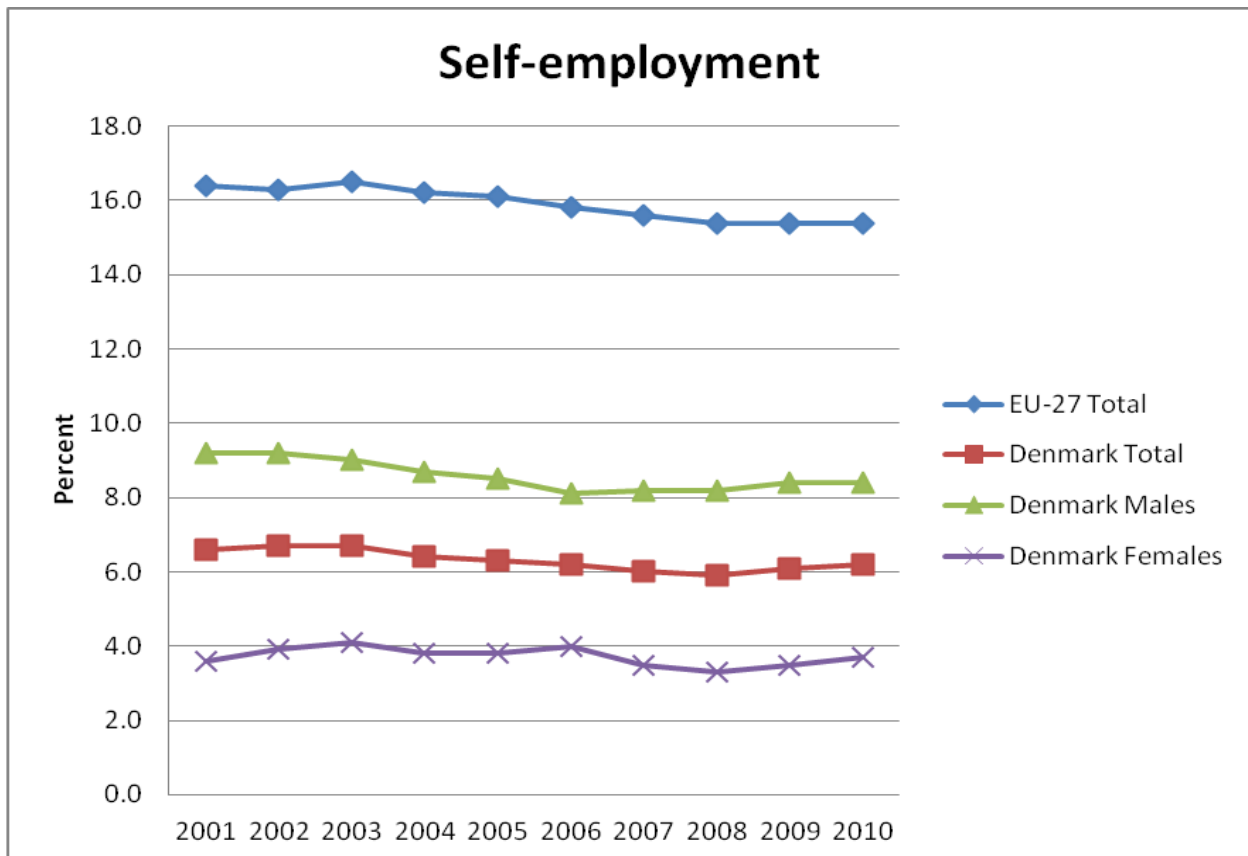


Figure 3: Self-employment on the Danish labour market and in the EU27, 2001-2010. Share of total employment. Source: Eurostat, LFS

Compared to EU-27 self-employment is rare in Denmark. Also one notes a difference in the trend in later years, where self-employment as a share of total employment has been on the rise in Denmark, while it has declined in the EU in general. With respect to sex, self-employment in Denmark is much more frequent among men than women. In section 4 these differences are explored in more detail focusing on the service sector.

Summing up the empirical development of atypical work in Denmark – and including the dimension of occupations - figure 4 shows the correlation between the overall growth in the employment of different occupations and the growth in the share of atypical work for each occupation. In this figure atypical employment is defined as the sum of temporary workers and self-employed own account workers. Part-time employees have been excluded since this category, as it is further discussed below, should not in general be conceived as atypical on the Danish labour market. One could have wished to include the group of marginal part-time workers, but this is not possible due to data restrictions.

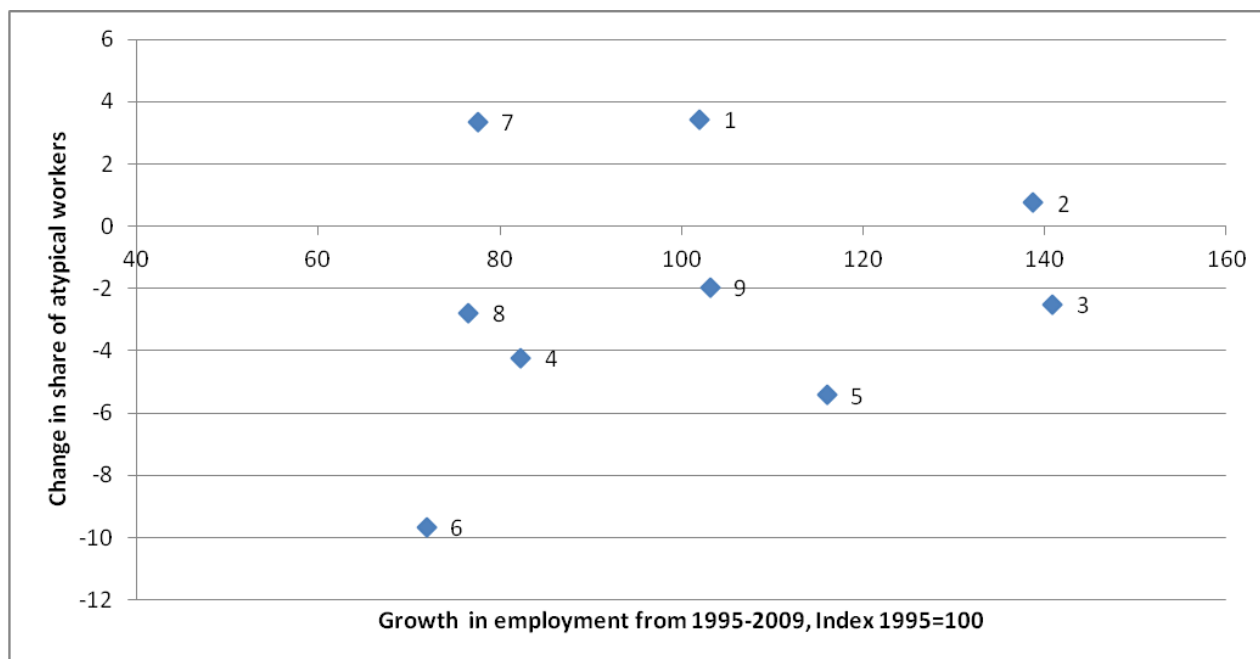


Figure 4: Growth in employment and change in share of atypical workers by occupations (ISCO-88), 1995-2009. Source: Eurostat.

There is no clear pattern in figure 4. Four professions show a decline in overall employment during the period, all of about 20 percent. Three of them also have a decline in the share of atypical workers (clerical workers (4), skilled workers in agriculture etc. (6) and plant and machine operators (8)). This could point to an increased tendency for the firms to build closer relations to core workers and, especially for agriculture, the steady mechanization in this sector, which reduces the need for seasonal workers. Only crafts (7) show the opposite development. A closer examination of the data shows that the increase started in 2005, pointing to the rising importance of migrant workers in the construction sectors. Two occupations with increasing employment show rise in the share of atypical workers. Among managers (1) atypical employment is rising, mainly due to an increase in self employed with no employees. A similar development is seen for the rapidly increasing group of professionals (2), where the number of own account self-employed has almost tripled during the period considered. Finally among the occupations with increasing employment and a declining share of atypically employment, one notes the rather steep decline for service and sales worker (5). Here the decline is mainly caused by a fall in the number of temporary employees.

Some final general observations of the role for different occupations of atypical employment in Denmark can be made from figure 5, which shows the correlation between the share of atypical employment (again defined as the sum of temporary workers and own account self-employed) and the wage dispersion in the respective occupations (again defined by ISCO-88). Wage dispersion is measured as the relation between the wage for the upper quartile and the lower quartile. Other measures of wage dispersion give similar results and have therefore not been reported here.

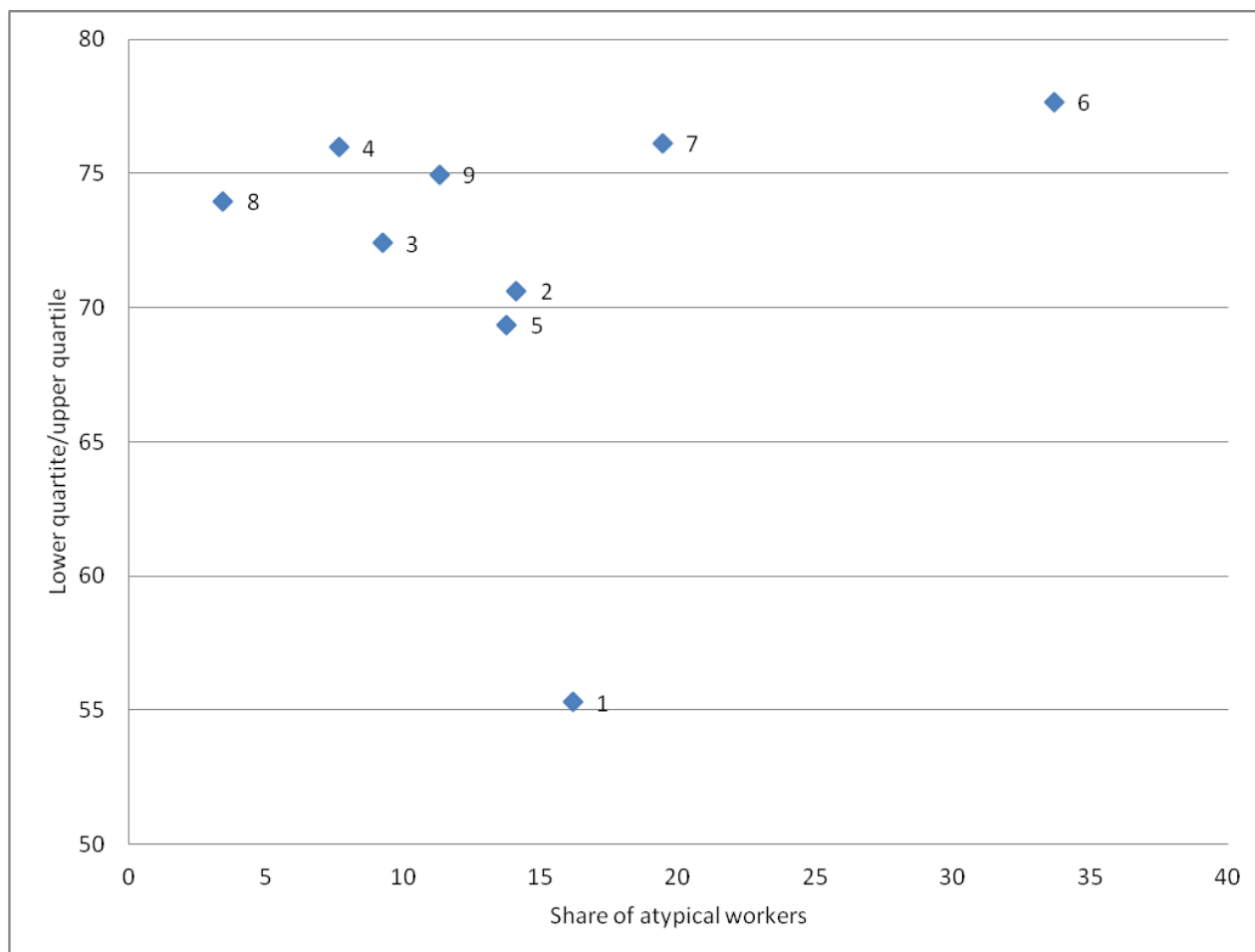


Figure 5: The share of atypical workers and the wage dispersion measured as the relation between the wage for the upper quartile and the lower quartile for different occupations (ISCO-88), 2009. Source: Compiled by the author based on data from Statistics Denmark and Eurostat.

Main impression from figure 5 is that the dispersion in wages is rather limited for all occupations in spite of different shares of atypical workers. This can be interpreted as the outcome of a highly regulated labour market, where atypical workers in general work under the same collective agreements as other workers. The only outlier is managers, where the high (and rising) share of atypical employees is also reflected in a very large wage dispersion. Given the fact that this segment of the labour market is characterized by more individual wage negotiations on a less regulated labour market, the observation is not surprising.

2. Regulation of atypical employment in Denmark²

The term “atypical employment” is a very broad label for the different forms of employment that are not consistent with the typical concept of ‘normal’, ‘regular’ or ‘standard work’, which is understood as a full-time contract on a permanent basis with a single employer (Kalleberg 2000). In that sense, atypical employment is everything that normal or regular employment is not. What is considered atypical can vary from country to country, but in general forms of employment like part-time work, fixed-term contracts, agency work and different forms of self-employment are

² This section is an update of Bredgaard et al, 2009, section 3

defined as atypical.

When atypical employment is understood as the opposite of standard employment it may also include independent contracting, home-working, telecommuting, various flexible working time arrangements, job-sharing, secondary jobs, seasonal jobs, undeclared work, family work etc. (Kalleberg 2000, p. 343-344). In this chapter I will, however, stick to the more conventional definition of “atypical” employment as only including the major kinds of non-standard work: Part-time work, fixed-term contracts, temp agency work and self-employment.

Atypical employment is often associated with worker insecurity. Compared to standard workers, “insecurity” may constitute a lesser extent of job protection (measured by employment protection legislation, EPL), social security, employment security and combination security (work-life balance). The question is therefore, whether persons in “atypical employment” enjoy the same level of protection as ordinary workers. Focus in this section is on the formal level of protection in legislation and collective agreements. The implementation of the regulation is only discussed, if there is available empirical evidence, which is not often the case.

In this context, it is also worth noting that there are different levels of regulation for the employment relationship. For instance, the European Commission regulates part-time work, fixed term contracts and temporary agency work through directives that are implemented by either law or collective agreements in the member states. In Denmark there is a special mechanism for implementing such EU directives. A practice has evolved in which the main labour market organisations transplant directives into binding collective agreements, and national labour laws are considered “subsidiary” to cover those employers and employees that are not covered by collective agreements (*erga omnes*). The long-term viability of this implementation model is, however, still uncertain (Nedergaard 2004).

The following sections review the development, incidence and regulation of various forms of “atypical” employment in the Danish case.

2.1. Fixed-term contracts

In a fixed-term contract the employer and the employee have agreed to terminate the employment relationship at a certain point in time without further notice. This time may be a certain date, by the completion of a certain task or at the return of another employee, who has been temporarily replaced (Danish Employers Association 1999, p. 204; Hasselbalch 2003).

As mentioned above (cf. figure 1) the share of employees in fixed-term contracts in Denmark has remained rather stable over time with a slight decline in recent years, while the share has actually risen in the EU over the same period. Thus, the incidence of fixed-term contracts in Denmark is rather low compared to a number of other EU countries.

The few studies that have been made on fixed-term contracts in Denmark show that women and low educated people are more likely to be in fixed-term contracts (Eriksson/Jensen 2003). Recent data from the LFS (Eurostat) show that in 2010 around half of those working in a fixed-term contract chose this form of work, because they couldn't find a permanent job. Studies have also

shown that fixed-term workers have lower wages than permanent workers. The study by Erikson and Jensen showed that permanent workers have a 6-7 percent higher wage than fixed-term employees (Eriksen/Jensen 2003, p. 13), and Vanessa Gash has shown that temporary workers are at risk of being low paid (Gash 2005).³ Erikson and Jensen's study also showed that previous work in a fixed-term contract gives higher odds of being in a fixed-term contract later on (Eriksen/Jensen 2003), which may indicate that some people are at risk of being in temporary jobs over a long period of time.

Fixed-term contracts are regulated by laws and collective agreements. Except from standard terms of notice, fixed-term workers are generally covered by the same collective agreements and by the same legislation as permanent employees (e.g. holidays, seniority, salary during sickness etc.). In a survey from 2000, it was found that 88 percent of all employees with fixed-term contracts were covered by collective agreements, 74 percent were members of unemployment insurance funds, and 70 percent were members of trade unions (Madsen/Petersen 2000, p. 74, 76).

Since 2003, all fixed-term workers are covered by the law on fixed-term contracts (*Lov om Tidsbegrænsede Ansættelser*). This law stem from an EU-directive from 1999. The main objective is to improve the quality of fixed-term contracts in all the EU-countries by ensuring that fixed-term workers have the same possibilities and rights as employees in standard contracts. This means, for instance, that fixed-term workers must be given access to continuing vocational training on the same terms and conditions as permanent employees, and that employers are obliged to inform fixed-term workers on vacant positions in the company in order for the fixed-term worker to achieve a permanent position. Another important objective of the law is to protect the fixed-term workers against employers' improper use of successive renewals. Therefore a fixed-term contract can only be renewed due to objective conditions such as maternity leave or sickness or because a longer contract is needed in order to complete the task. In some areas of the labour market (like teaching and scientific work) only two renewals can be given before the fixed-term contract terminates.

A standard indicator of the level of regulation of "atypical" employment is the OECD measure on regulation of temporary employment (Venn, 2009). The index measures the restrictions on the use of temporary employment by firms with respect to the type of work for which these contracts are allowed and their duration.

The strictness of regulation of temporary employment is at a medium level in Denmark, when compared to the other countries in the sample. The OECD reports that fixed-term contracts are allowed for specified periods of time and/or for specific tasks. They are widely used, particularly in professional services and construction. But renewal of fixed term contracts must be based on objective reasons. Generally, there is no legal limit for the maximum number of successive fixed-term contracts or the accumulated duration of such contracts, but renewal of fixed-term contracts must be based on objective reasons.⁴

³ Low pay is defined as gross hourly earnings below 60 % of the median wage (Gash 2005, p. 11).

⁴ www.oecd.org/employment/protection. Fact sheet on Denmark

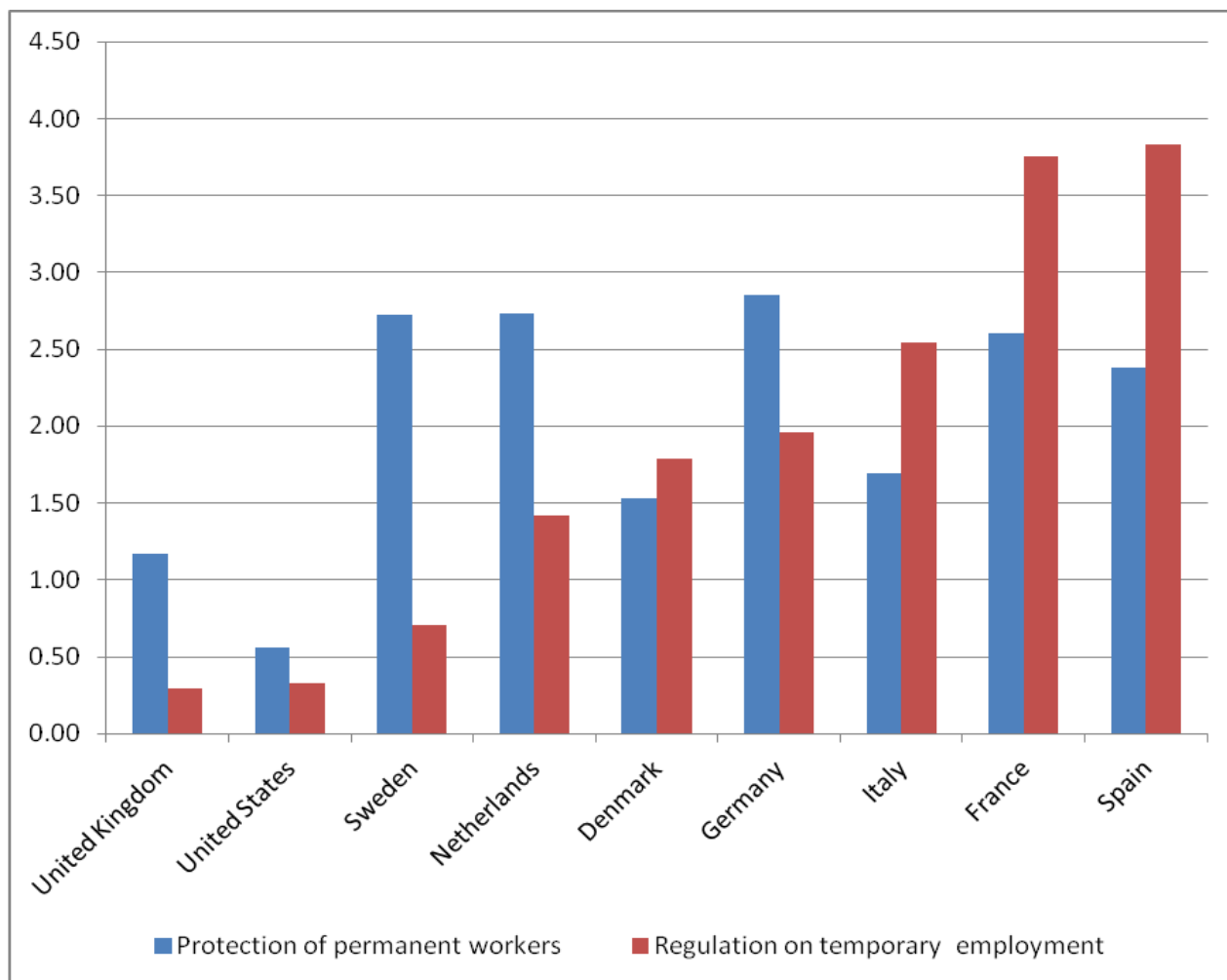


Figure 6: Protection of permanent workers and regulation on temporary employment in Denmark and eight other OECD-countries. Source: www.oecd.org/employment/protection).

It is evident from the very nature of the contract, that fixed-term workers have less job security than permanent employees. Because of this inherent job insecurity, it becomes important for the fixed-term worker to have access to the social security system if becoming unemployed. In this respect, the Danish income security system is universal, thereby not distinguishing between the rights and responsibilities of standard and non-standard workers. Uninsured unemployed receive social security benefits, while insured unemployed receive unemployment insurance benefits (UIB) from the unemployment insurance funds. The conditions for eligibility of UIB may, however, impact on fixed-term workers. To become eligible for UIB, one must be a member of an unemployment insurance fund, and have paid contributions for at least 52 weeks over a period of 3 years.

2.2. Temporary agency workers

A specific type of fixed-term contract work is temporary agency work (TAW). It differs from fixed-term contracts since the temp agency functions as liaison between the user company and the temp worker, and functions as the direct employer of the temp worker. According to Eurofound

(2006) the share of TAW of total employment in Denmark was actually the lowest in EU-15. However, in the last decade or so the share of TAWs has tripled from 0.3% (1999) to 0.9% (2006). The increase did especially occur with the economic boom after 2004, and the influx of immigrant workers due to the enlarged European Union (AERådet 2006). According to the latest figures from Statistics Denmark, the number of full-time employees by temporary work agencies was 13,800 persons in 2009, a decline from 21,500 in 2008. In 2009 this represented a meagre 0.6 percent of total employment.⁵

Table 1: The distribution of TAW by sector (measured in hours sold). Source: Databanks of Statistics Denmark. PRDST714

	2007	2008	2009	2010
Total	100	100	100	100
Computer and telecommunication personnel	1	3	3	5
Other office support personnel	15	13	12	12
Commercial and trade personnel	1	1	3	1
Industrial workers	34	24	20	29
Transport, warehousing and logistics	14	15	12	16
Hotel and restaurant personnel	3	4	7	4
Nurses	6	6	6	3
Social and health assistants	19	19	18	12
Doctors and other medical personal	5	7	10	7
Other personnel	1	7	8	9

As shown in table 1, the main sectors for TAW are manufacturing industry, transport, warehousing and logistics and finally health care. Around two third of the hours performed by TAW are in the service sector, which roughly reflects the share of the sector in total employment.

Temp agency work is not covered by the law on fixed-term contracts, or any other law, but regulated through collective agreements. This situation is probably not sustainable in the longer run. In June 2008, the Council of the European Union struck a political agreement on a common position for a directive on temporary agency work. The aim of the proposal of the Council is to ensure the principle of equal treatment. Although the Danish labour market organisations may implement the directive within their jurisdiction, supplementary laws will also be necessary to cover the remaining workforce.

Traditionally, the trade unions have opposed TAW, as well as other types of “atypical” employment, as they believed that temp workers would undermine the wage and working conditions of regular workers. Gradually, however, TAW and other types of “atypical” employment have become accepted as a lasting phenomenon in the economy, and the trade unions have instead tried to include them in the system of collective agreements and bargaining. This means

⁵ www.statistikbank.dk: ERH17

that today TAW are by and large covered by collective agreement, and temp agencies are also to a large extent members of the employer's associations (Andersen 2007, p. 71).

Andersen (2007) analyses different dimensions of security for TAW in Denmark and Holland, and finds that their wage and working conditions have been "normalised", i.e. gradually becoming equivalent to regular workers in terms of wages, pensions, holidays, sickness benefits, maternity leave etc. Due to the complex employment relationship between the user company and temp agency there are, however, still disputes about which collective agreement apply (and derived from this which pay and working conditions that apply) and challenges in extending the coverage of collective agreements to the increasing number of immigrant workers from Eastern and Central Europe (Andersen 2007).

2.3. Part-time employment

As mentioned above, Denmark has a rather high percentage of part time workers. However, in the Danish case, part-time work is rarely considered "atypical" or "precarious" work, but rather a "normal" standard type of work, albeit with a shorter working time (Madsen/Petersen 2000, p. 61).

This does not imply, however, that all part-timers are voluntary part-time workers. In 2010, 15 percent of all part-time employed in Denmark replied in the Labour force Survey that the main reason for working part-time was because they found it impossible to find a full-time job. This share of "involuntary" part-timers was however significantly below the EU-average of 26 percent. Among young persons aged 15-24 years involuntary part-time is down to 10 percent, probably reflecting that they work part-time because they are involved in education and training activities. There is moreover no clear gender difference in the share in involuntary part-timer, which in 2010 was 15 percent for men and 16 percent for women. Like in other European countries, part-time workers are more frequent in specific sectors (particularly retail, hotels and restaurant, and the public sector).

As for other categories of workers, the regulation of part-time work is a mixture of collective agreements and law. For instance, the 1997 EU directive on part-time employment was in 2001 implemented by the social partners in the private sector. Supplementary agreements have also been struck between the social partners representing various public sector employees. The main objective has been to avoid differential treatment of full-time and part-time workers, unless objectively justified.

In 2002, a new Part-time Law was passed. The law was met by some criticism from the trade unions for interfering with the traditional Danish model of voluntary collective bargaining, and out of fear that workers could be forced from full-time to part-time employment. The main intention of the part-time law was to remove the barriers laid down in collective agreements for part-time work. If there is agreement between the employer and the employee, an individual worker can change from full-time to part-time. If a worker is dismissed, due to a rejection of a request to go on part-time or due to his or her own request to change to part-time, then the employer has to pay compensation. Thus, the law does not grant employees a right to part-time work, but they have an option, if the employer agrees. The law only applies to persons already employed, not newly recruited workers. In relation to recruitment, there are still a number of limitations to part-time

employment that applies, e.g. regulation on the maximum number of part-time workers, the rule that part-time workers should not substitute full-time workers, and that part-time employment must be negotiated with the shop stewards (Danish Confederation of Trade Unions 2004). Since the law was passed in 2002, the incidence of part-time work has increased by some 7 percentage points (cf. figure 2 above).

If part-time workers become unemployed they have the same access to income protection as full-time workers. Both full-time and part-time employees can become members of an unemployment insurance fund. Part-time insurance is an option for persons working less than 30 hours per week. Membership contribution and the level of unemployment benefits are lower for part-time unemployed. Thus, benefits cannot be higher than two-thirds of the benefits for a full-time insured person. In addition, part-time insured unemployed who gain a new job with less than 30 hours a week are eligible to supplementary unemployment insurance benefits (for a period of 30 weeks within the last 104 weeks).

Thus, except from the reduced working time, part-time workers are generally covered by the same collective agreements and the same legislation as full-time employees. Also, when it comes to collective pension schemes, part-time workers are covered by the same system as full-time employees, only with proportional reductions in contributions and pensions. In summary, part-time work must be seen as an institutionalised and regulated form of employment on the Danish labour market, which in almost all respects is treated similar to regular full-time employment.

2.4. Self-employment

Self-employment is often defined as a category of workers in between regular employees and regular employers characterised by doing the work alone without hiring subordinate employees (Madsen/Petersen 2000, p. 66-67). In the literature, self-employment is often referred to as a type of “atypical” employment, which unemployed persons resort to due to lack of job opportunities on the regular labour market. In general, this does not seem to be the case in Denmark, where self-employment is to a large extent a voluntary choice.

The incidence of self-employment in Denmark is comparatively low, and has remained almost constant with a slight increase in recent years (cf. figure 3). A characteristic feature of those starting their own business is that their educational background is above average, with fewer having only a basic education and more being skilled workers or having a long-term education – the majority being men (about 75 %) (Erhvervs- og Byggestyrelsen 2006, p. 24). Self-employment is most widespread in the traditional sectors of agriculture and fishing, but also in construction and services, which has a tradition for skilled workers moving into self-employment as part of their career.

In general, self-employment is not conceived as a strategy for persons to avoid unemployment, and there are not any longer special programmes to support unemployed, who want to start their

own business.⁶ One exception is found among immigrants, where self-employment can be identified as a way of entering employment in situations, where lack of skills or discrimination hamper entering into paid work (Rezaei 2007).

In line with the universalistic character of the Danish welfare state, social security is in general not related to the kind of labour market attachment that an individual has. Self-employed are, therefore, eligible to the same types of social security (unemployment benefits, sickness benefits and leave benefits) as regular workers. In some cases, however, special rules may apply due to the particular character of the status as self-employed compared to that of a wage earner. This also goes for unemployment benefits, where self-employed and their assisting spouses voluntarily can join an unemployment insurance fund (two special funds exist for self-employed) and receive unemployment benefits in the case, when they have to close down their business.⁷ Similarly, while being eligible for public sickness benefits (including maternity and paternity benefits) after two weeks of sickness, a self-employed or an assisting spouse may voluntarily take an insurance, which allows them to draw sickness benefits from the first or the third day of illness/leave. Self-employed and their spouses in principle have the same rights to receive economic compensation in relation to childbirth as wage earners. Therefore they also have to fulfil requirements for employment (as self-employed) over the last 12 months: Over the last 12 months before applying for maternity or paternity benefits, the self-employed or assisting spouse must have been self-employed during at least 6 months with a weekly working time of at least half of normal full-time employment (at present 37 hours per week). One of the six months must be just before the leave period. There are no special provisions for temporary replacement during maternity or paternity leave.

In the Danish discourse on entrepreneurship it is often argued that the entering into self-employment is held back by a widespread “wage-earner”-culture. For this reason a number of policy-initiatives have been launched to promote the idea of self-employment among schoolchildren and students and to counsel and assist individuals, who have the ambition to start their own business. However, the situation of self-employed with respect to social security provisions is rarely a political issue. Again this is probably a reflection of the present status of their social protection, where self-employed are covered as part of the general “safety net” of Danish social protection and not as a special target group.

⁶ Early attempts to promote self-employment as a job opportunity for long-term unemployed were terminated due to lack of adequate results, the main reason being that the large majority of unemployed persons participating in the scheme did not have the qualifications needed for running a business of their own (Ploughmann/Buhl 1998).

⁷ About 70 % of the self-employed are members of an unemployment insurance fund, which is only slightly below the average for ordinary wage earners (Madsen/Petersen 2000, p. 68).

3. Atypical employment in the service sector

As in other countries, the Danish service sector is very heterogeneous – ranging from advanced consultancy agencies to low-skilled cleaning services. Annex tables A1 and A2 give an overview of the employment by sector and socio-economic status. For comparison the tables also include the primary and secondary sectors.

Table A1 in the annex illustrates the dominance of the service sector in the Danish economy. While the primary and secondary sector count for about 21 percent of total employment, the private service sector takes up 46 percent. The remaining 33 percent is public employment. However the employment shares differ considerably, when one looks at different socio-economic groups. Thus, by example, agriculture only employs 2.7 percent of all employed persons, but 18 percent of the self-employed and more than one third of the assisting spouses. On the other hand “trade and transport” is a particularly important sector for low skilled workers. Also, as shown in table A2, especially real estate, other business services and arts and entertainment stand out as having a large share of self employed.

Table 2 sums up the information presented in the previous sections by presenting an overview of the frequency of the three major forms of atypical employment in the Danish service sector. For comparison the primary and secondary sectors are also included.

Table 2: Shares of atypical employment in total employment, 2010. Percent. Source: Eurostat. Labour Force Surveys

	Temporary	Part-time	Self-employed
Total	7.7	26.3	8.8
Agriculture, forestry and fishing	6.4	18.3	43.1
Manufacturing	4.8	11.2	4.2
Construction	10.8	5.8	19.9
Wholesale and retail trade	6.9	35.2	9.6
Transportation and storage	2.9	14.9	7.6
Accommodation and food service activities	7.2	53.6	10.8
Information and communication	5.8	16.7	9.7
Financial and insurance activities		16.7	
Real estate activities		24.0	
Professional, scientific and technical activities	5.2	22.0	23.3
Administrative and support service activities	6.4	24.7	13.5
Public administration and defence	7.7	14.8	
Education	12.5	25.5	1.6
Human health and social work activities	9.9	41.2	4.1
Arts, entertainment and recreation	14.0	48.9	13.1
Other service activities	8.9	30.1	19.4
Activities of households as employers		66.7	

As illustrated in figure 7, the sectors “arts, entertainment and recreation” and “education” stand out as having the highest share of temporary employment among the service sectors. At the other end of the scale one find “transportation and storage” together with professional, scientific and technical activities.

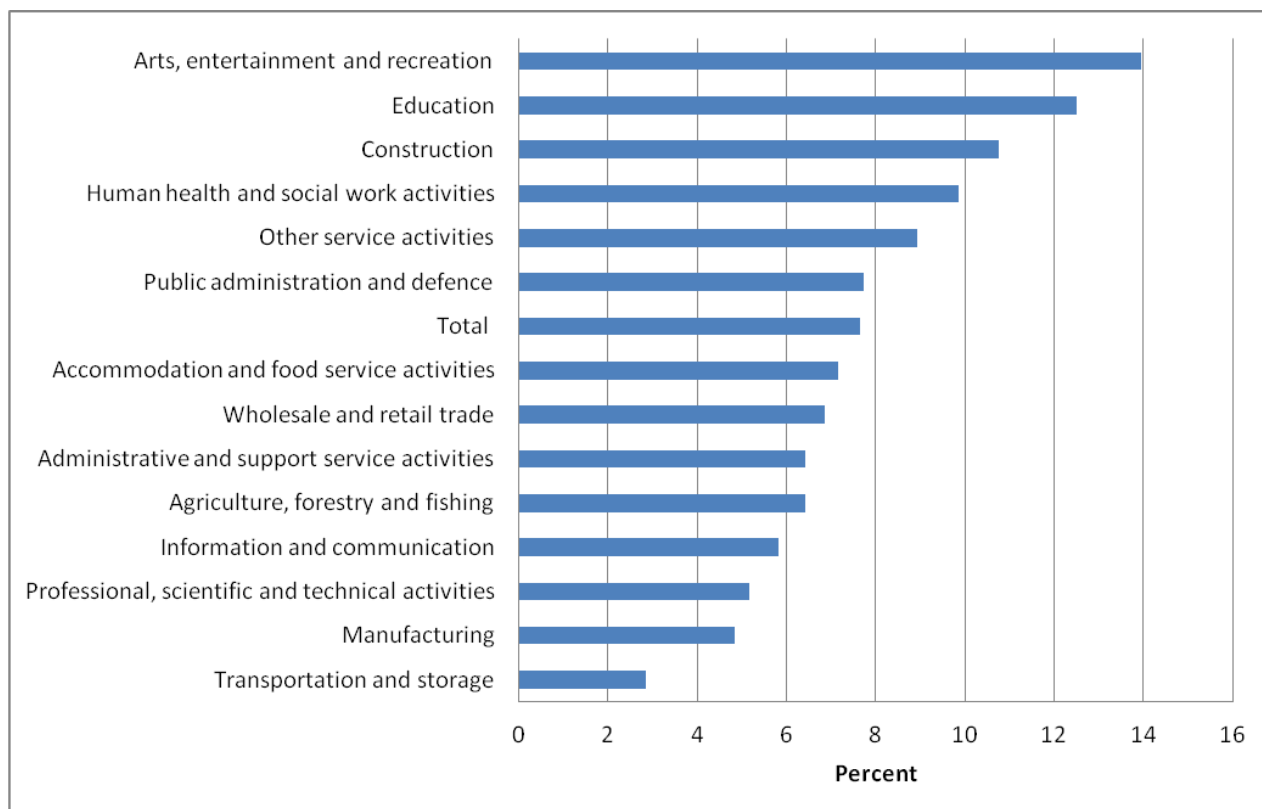


Figure 7: The share of temporary employees in total employment, 2010. Source: Eurostat. Labour Force Surveys

As illustrated in figure 8, the share of part-time employees also varies widely between sectors. Household services has, like “accommodation and food services”, a high share of part-time workers, while the opposite is the case in transportation and store” and in “public administration and defence”. To some degree there is a positive co-variation with the share of female employees.

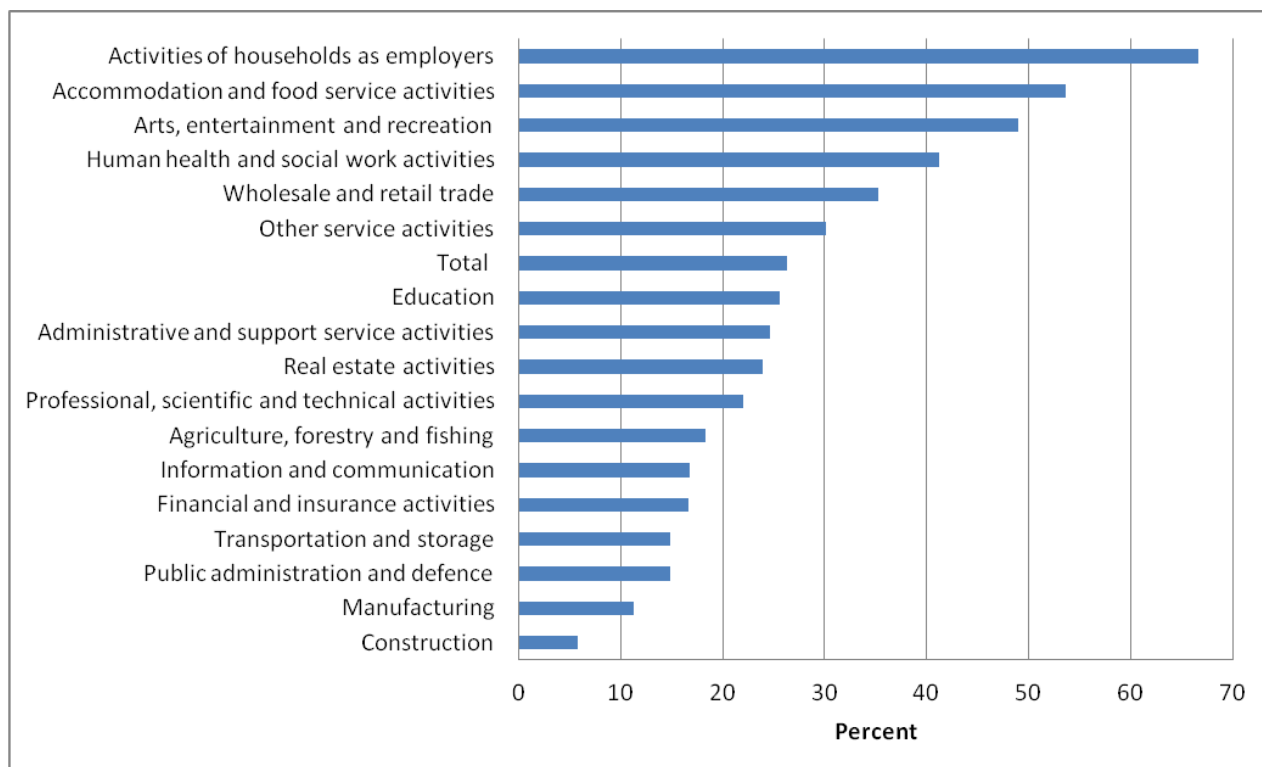


Figure 8: The share of part-time employees in total employment, 2010. Source: Eurostat. Labour Force Surveys

Finally, as shown in figure 9, the share of self-employed is very high in “professional, scientific and technical activities”, while “human health and social work activities” and “education” have few self-employed as a reflection of the dominance of public employees in these areas-.

Finally, as illustrated in figure 10, “professional, scientific and technical activities” is also characterized by a high share of self-employed without employees. The same goes for “arts, entertainment and recreation”. In both cases self-employment thus to a wide degree functions as an alternative to being employed as a wage earner. Whether this status as a “free agent” is the result of a deliberate choice or forces upon persons not being able to gain a stable employment contract with an employer cannot be assessed based on the available data.

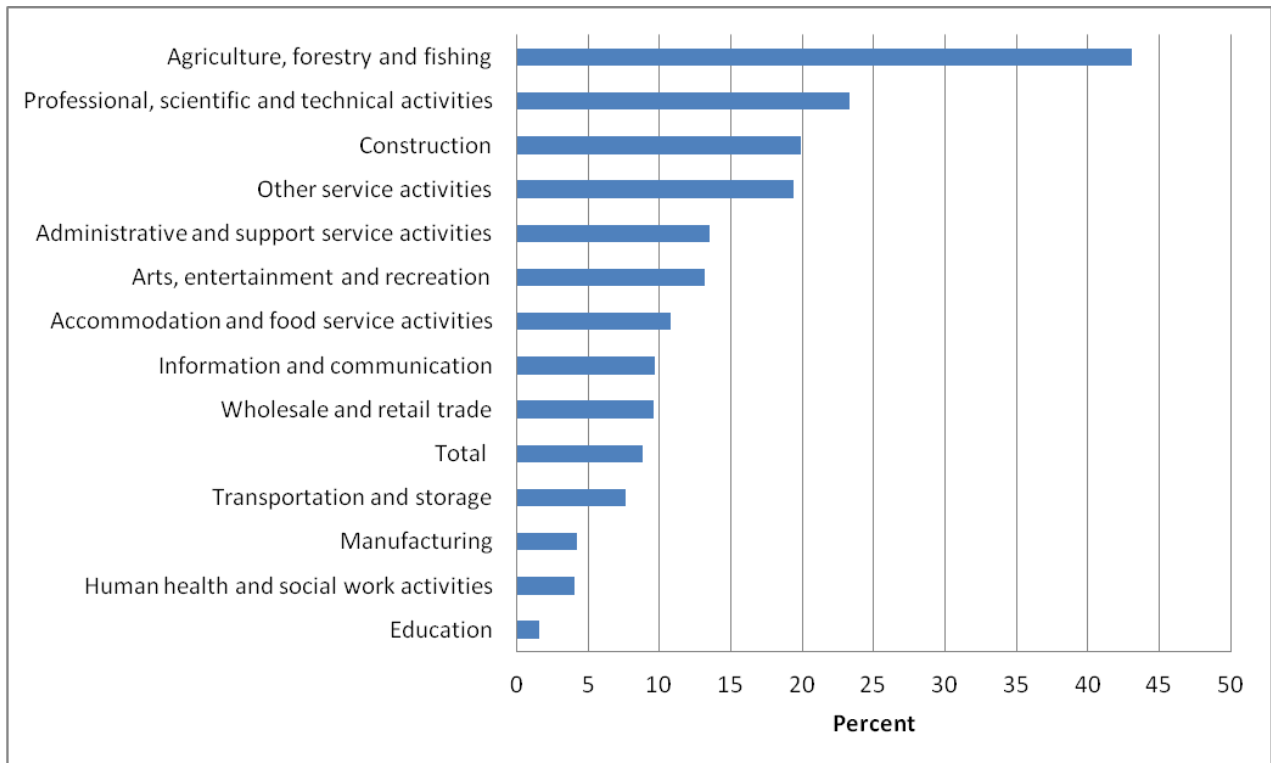


Figure 9: The share of self-employed in total employment, 2010. Source: Eurostat. Labour Force Surveys

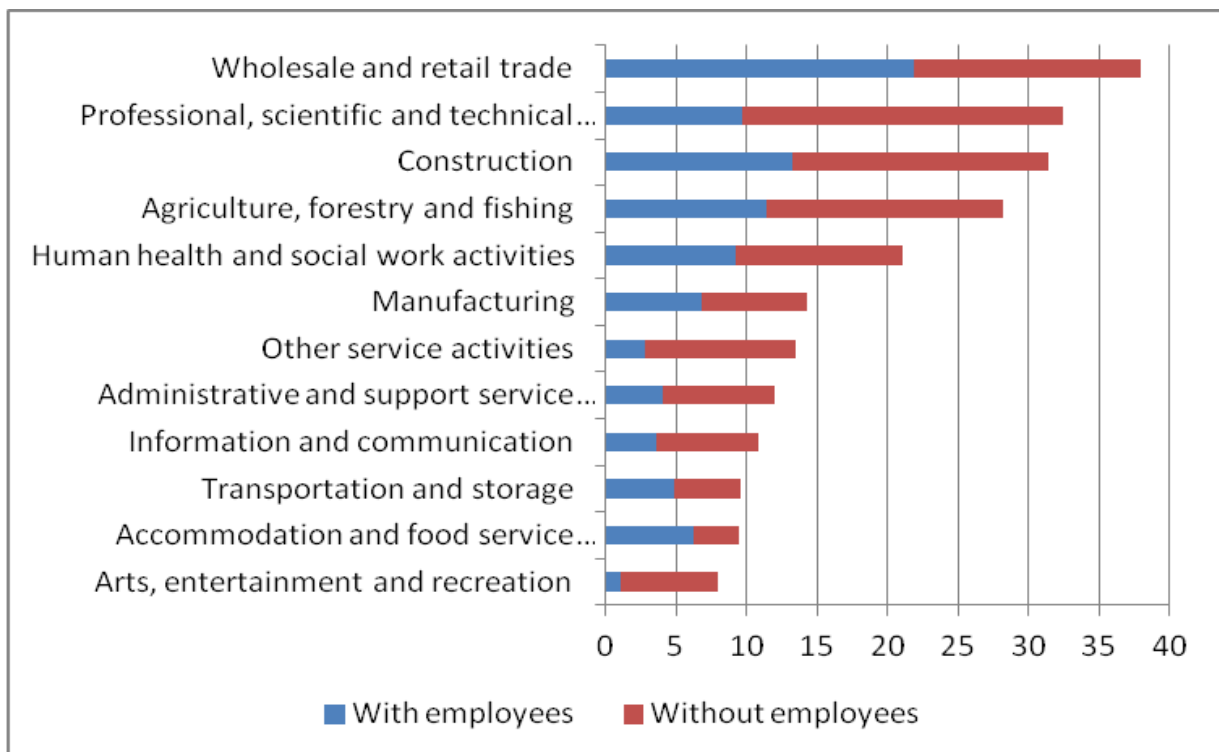


Figure 10: The total number of self-employed with and without employees, 2010. Source: Eurostat. Labour Force Surveys

4. Factors explaining atypical employment

This section takes a closer look at the factors explaining atypical employment. The data is taken from a larger recent study, which looked at labour market transitions in a Nordic context from a flexicurity perspective (Berglund et al, 2010). The study was based on the national labour force surveys and not on Eurostat's labour force surveys. This allowed for exploiting the panel structure of the national data sets and this following the changes in an individual's employment status from one year to the next. In the present context, only the results for Denmark are discussed.

The probabilities of having a specific status and of making specific transitions from one year to the next are estimated using binomial and multinomial logistic regression including, apart from a large number of individual characteristics, also the sector, where the person is employed. This therefore allows for a more complex analysis than the descriptive observations made in section 4.

Table 3 shows the probabilities for being in temporary employment at time t and for making the transitions from temporary employment to either permanent employment, unemployment or inactivity (including the status as a student).

When it comes to the chance of having the status of a temporary employee, the first column in table 3 leads to a number of observations:

- The probability is higher for women, for young persons, for singles or cohabitants and for immigrants.
- Education does not play a significant role, while the probability is lower, the higher a person is placed in the job hierarchy.
- Among the service sectors, the probability of being a temporary worker is higher in service sectors dominated by female employment. One reason could be that a high share of female employees in a sector leads to a larger number of maternity leaves and the frequent hiring of substitutes as a consequence hereof.

The second column of table 3 shows the probabilities of moving from a temporary to a permanent position. There are few significant coefficients. However, the youngest age group has a significantly lower probability of moving into permanent employment. The same goes for persons with only primary education. Furthermore, the sector of employment plays a limited role, but being employed in public administration and social and personal services seems to reduce the chance of getting a contract. This could be the outcome of a high frequency of temporary agency workers in this sector, but also reflects the large number of employees with a wage subsidy found in the public sector, while in job-training as part of an active labour market programme.

When it comes to moving from temporary employment to either unemployment or inactivity, age is again important. Young persons have a lower probability of becoming unemployed, but a higher chance of moving into inactivity, probably as full-time students. Also older workers with temporary employment have a higher probability of becoming inactive, which could be a reflection of the use of temporary employment as part of the transition to retirement. With respect to the sector of employment, the chance of moving into unemployment is lower in most of the service sectors than in the reference sector (manufacturing), but in most cases the coefficients are insignificant.

Table 3: Probability for being in temporary employment at time *t* and for making the transitions from temporary employment to either permanent employment, unemployment or inactivity (including the status as a student). Based on observations from 2001-2006.

	Determining probability of temporary employment. Odds ratios for temporary employment vs. permanent employment or self-employment at time <i>t</i> .	Odds ratios for transition from temporary employment to permanent employment vs. still in temporary employment	Odds ratios for transition from temporary employment to unemployment vs. still in temporary employment	Odds ratios for transition from temporary employment to inactivity vs. still in temporary employment
Gender (ref. man)				
Woman with children	1.23**	0.99	1.09	1.36*
Woman without children	1.23**	0.74*	1.00	1.08
Age (ref. 45-54)				
16-24	4.45**	0.65**	0.30**	1.68**
25-34	1.90**	0.91	0.67**	1.85**
35-44	1.22**	1.00	0.74*	.98
55-63	1.08	0.81	1.37	4.06**
Marital status (ref. married)				
Cohabitant	1.43**	1.15	0.79	1.32*
Single	1.76**	0.93	1.00	1.33*
National origin (ref. native)				
Other Nordic	1.30	0.88	1.43	1.03
Other European/N. American	1.98**	0.66*	0.90	1.35
Other	1.81**	1.08	1.56*	2.51**
Education (ref. tertiary)				
Primary	1.43	0.78*	1.22	1.51**
Secondary	0.93**	1.00	1.15	1.40*
Industry (ref. manufacturing)				
Agriculture	1.32*	1.09	0.58	0.88
Construction	1.67**	0.86	0.55*	0.44**
Trade etc.	1.19*	1.25	0.63*	0.63*
Transport etc.	0.93	1.03	0.71	0.62
Finance etc.	0.96	1.93	0.21*	0.35
Real estate etc.	1.19	1.09	0.80	0.86
Public administration	2.54**	0.61*	0.73	0.93
Education	3.91**	0.79	0.70	1.22
Health care	3.30**	0.92	0.53**	0.99
Social and personal services	3.68**	0.72*	1.07	0.73
Occupational category (ref. manual worker)				
Managers	0.19**	0.99		
Professionals	0.77**	0.70*	0.74	0.62*
Semi-professionals	0.62**	1.12	1.49*	0.74
Service workers	0.89*	1.11	1.53*	1.16
Working time (ref. 35+)				
1-19	0.78**	1.06	0.71	1.87**
20-29	1.39**	1.23	0.82	1.42*
30-34	1.27**	0.90	1.19	1.53**
Size of workplace (ref. 1-10)				
11-19	1.20**	0.93	0.97	0.79
20-49	1.09	1.06	0.89	0.68**
50+	0.93	0.99	0.65**	0.63**
Unemployment (by county) (ref. low)				
Medium	1.13**	0.90	1.14	0.96
High	1.27**	0.91	1.45**	1.11
Annual change in national unemployment	1.03	0.91	1.12	1.17
Nagelkerke R²	0.153	0.042	0.114	0.114
N	51506	3932	5128	5128

Source: Berglund et al (2010), table 6.1, 6.5 and 6.6

Similarly table 4 contains information about the probability for working part-time with two separate models for men and women respectively.

The main observations are not surprising. The probability for working part-time is higher for parents living with children, for singles, for the youngest age groups and for non-natives. Also service workers have a higher chance of working part-time. By sector “Trade”, “Education”, Health care” and “Social services” stand out with a higher probability of having part-time employees. The same goes for larger companies.

Table 5: *Transitions from non-employed to employment (working time categories). By labour market status one year earlier. 2000-2005, 16-63 years. Per cent*

Status T ₁	Working time T ₂				N
	Short part time	Long part time	Full time	Total	
Unemployed	8	23	69	100	2266
Inactive student	38	19	43	100	1260
Inactive other	18	30	52	100	1232
Short parttime	62	18	20	100	2748
Long parttime	4	73	23	100	8138
Full-time	1	5	94	100	36094

Source: Berglund et al (2010), table 7.3

The mobility out of part-time is illustrated in table 5. There is a strong path-dependency. About two-thirds of those working short part-time, will still be in part-time the following year. The path-dependency is even stronger for long part-time and full-time employment.

Table 4: Effects of various factors on the probability of working part-time.

	Men	Women
Children at home		
Yes	1.25**	1.43**
No (ref.)	1	1
Marital status		
Married/cohabitant (ref.)	1	1
Single	1.27**	0.82**
Age		
16-24	6.01**	2.13**
25-34	1.40**	0.75**
35-44	0.83*	0.80**
45-54 (ref.)	1	1
55-63	1.99**	1.58**
National origin		
Natives (ref.)		
Other Nordic	1.55	1.00
Other European/N. American	1.36*	0.99
Other	1.56**	1.07
Education		
Primary	1.13	1.15**
Secondary	0.73**	0.95
Tertiary (ref.)	1	1
Occupational category		
Managers	0.42**	0.46**
Professionals	0.75**	0.95
Semi-professionals	1.05	1.93**
Service workers	2.87**	3.03**
Manual workers (ref.)	1	1
Industry		
Agriculture	1.02	1.69**
Manufacturing (ref.)	1	1
Construction	0.26**	1.25
Trade. etc.	1.42**	1.67**
Transport. etc.	1.12	0.99
Finance. etc.	0.71	0.88
Real estate. etc.	1.51**	1.70**
Public administration	0.69**	0.99
Education	3.27**	2.08**
Health care	3.41**	2.55**
Social & personal services	2.75**	2.14**
Employment contract		
Permanent (ref.)	1	1
Temporary	1.57**	1.03
Self-employed	1.44**	0.94
Size of workplace		
1-10 (ref.)	1	1
11-19	0.93	1.05
20-49	0.77**	0.89**
50+	0.69**	0.71**
Unknown	2.09**	1.41**
County unemployment		
Low (ref.)	1	1
Medium	1.19**	1.00
High	1.38**	1.03
Annual change in national unemployment level	0.98	0.95*
Nagelkerke R2	0.26	0.17

Source: Berglund et al (2010), table 7.2

Table 6: Effects of various factors on transitions from part-time employment. Multinomial logistic regression. Odds ratios.

	To inactivity	To unemployment
Age		
16-24	3.42**	1.05
25-34	2.52**	1.05
35-44	1.15	1.15
45-54 (ref.)	1	1
55-63	4.29**	1.08
Marital status		
Married/cohabitant (ref.)	1	1
Single	0.99	1.23
Gender/children at home		
Female, no children	0.81*	0.92
Female/children	1.05	0.83
Male	1	1
National origin		
Natives (ref.)	1	1
Other Nordic	1.19	1.61
Other European/N. American	1.17	0.97
Other	2.02**	1.39
Education		
Primary	1.45**	1.21
Secondary	1.18	1.09
Tertiary (ref.)	1	1
Industry		
Agriculture	1.15	0.61
Manufacturing (ref.)	1	1
Construction	0.65	1.09
Trade, etc.	0.74*	0.97
Transport, etc.	0.61*	1.01
Finance, etc.	0.36*	0.63
Real estate, etc.	0.79	1.02
Public administration	0.96	0.87
Education	0.82	0.82
Health care	0.87	0.68
Social & personal services	0.81	1.00
Working time		
1-19	1.79**	1.11
20-34 (ref.)	1	1
Occupational category		
Managers	0.68	1.28
Professionals	0.52**	0.85
Semi-professionals	0.64**	0.99
Service workers	0.87	1.22
Manual workers (ref.)	1	1
Employment contract		
Permanent (ref.)	1	1
Temporary	2.53**	4.21**
Self-employed	1.11	0.48*
Size of workplace		
1-10 (ref.)	1	1
11-19	0.96	0.61**
20-49	0.98	0.78
50+	0.73**	0.53**
Not classified	1.27*	1.08
County unemployment		
Low (ref.)	1	1
Medium	1.04	1.40**
High	1.11	1.42**
Annual change in national unemployment	1.24*	1.15
Nagelkern R ²		0.14
N		12722

Source: Berglund et al (2010), table 7.5

Finally table 6 shows the probabilities of transitions out of part-time into either inactivity or unemployment. It thus allows assessing some of the aspects of part-time employment as a precarious form of employment.

With respect to the transition into inactivity, age plays an important role. Both young persons and older persons have a higher probability of becoming inactive, the former probably because they return to studying and the latter due to retirement. With respect to sector, the chance of moving into inactivity is lower for persons working in sectors with a tradition for part-time work, albeit not in education, health care and social services. Working short part-time increases the risk of moving to inactivity. The same goes for employees with a temporary contract.

When it comes to the risk of moving from part-time into unemployment, the only significant factors are the kind of contract (temporary) and the size of firm, which has a negative effect on the probability to becoming unemployed after having been working as a part-timer.

5. Four cases

Following the more general quantitative analysis in the previous sections, we now turn to a number of case studies looking at the role of and changes in atypical employment in four different occupations, which are subgroups of the more general occupations applied above. The four case studies are focused on the following occupational groups:

- Cleaning staff
- Care-workers (adult/elderly care)
- Skilled workers in the manufacturing sector
- White-collar workers in the private sector (banking and insurance)

Table 7 gives an overview of some descriptive statistics for the four groups. As stated in the note to the table, the data are not fully comparable, since the statistics for employment and hours covers all employees in the relevant sector, while the wage data is for occupational groups within each sector. However the data can give a rough indication of the respective cases.

Table 7: Some descriptive data for the four cases

	Employees, 1.000 persons	Share of women, percent	Average yearly working time, total, hours	Average yearly working time, men, hours	Average yearly working time, women, hours	Hourly wages, men, DKK	Hourly wages, women, DKK
All sectors	2522.3	49.6	1513	1607	1419	354	279
Manufacturing industry	321.9	32.0	1569	1609	1485	259	254
Banking and insurance	77.1	50.8	1465	1543	1390	461	400
Cleaning	40.2	60.9	1431	1574	1339	194	196
Social institutions etc. for adults	187.7	86.4	1409	1461	1401	209	210

Note: The data for employment/hours and for wages are not fully comparable. The former are based on sectors and the latter on occupations. The data for wages are for the following sub-groups of occupations: Manufacturing sector: Skilled metal worker; Banking and insurance: employee in economic and administrative functions; Cleaning: cleaning worker; Social institutions: Employee working with social care (outside hospitals)

Source: Databanks of Statistics Denmark

As one can see from table 7, the cases span from a very male dominated sector (manufacturing) to a female dominated sector (social institutions for adults including elderly care). Also cleaning has a majority of female employees, while “banking and insurance” employs an equal number of men and women. In all sectors the average yearly working time is larger for men as a reflection of the higher frequency of part-time among women. Finally one notes that in spite of this, the average hourly wages are about the same for men and women in all the four cases except for Banking and insurance. This reflects the highly regulated labour markets for the other three sectors, where collective agreements set equal wages irrespective of gender and working time.

In the following a more detailed discussion of the four cases can be found.

Cleaning worker

As already mentioned the cleaning sector is characterized by low wages both for men and women. There is a high frequency of part-time employees (more than half of total employment), although the tendency in recent years has been towards more full-time employment. Also the cleaning jobs in many cases play the role of entrant jobs with the employees moving to other sectors after a relatively short time, which is also reflected in a low tenure. Unfortunately the share of temporary contracts is not known. Although the majority of the employees only have a basic education, there has been a tendency towards rising levels of qualifications (Stevens & Møberg, 2007).⁸

⁸ This study only covers Northern Jutland, but there is no reason to doubt that the overall tendencies are common for the Danish cleaning sector as a whole.

An important feature of the sector is the high share of immigrant workers both from other EU-countries (e.g. Poland) and from ethnic minorities from non-Western countries. As it is often the case with sectors employing immigrant workers, there is a high share of undeclared activities not covered by official statistics and problems with respect to decent wages and working conditions (Hviid et al, 2010).

Care work for adults and elderly

This sector mainly covers public employees and has a very high share of female workers. A recent study focused on the care workers in the public sector estimated the share of female employees to be around 90 percent, although the share on men has been rising in recent years (Jensen et al, 2010:53). Also the share of part-time work is high (42 percent in 2006), but has been declining in recent years. Marginal part-time is rare.

The share of care-workers with a vocational education has increased rapidly. Thus in 1997 half of the workforce in the care sector had no relevant vocational education. In 2007, the share had declined to 35 percent (Jensen et al, 2010:10).

The wage level is rather low, but without gender differentiation as an indicator of the minor differentiation in job content and the strong role of collective agreements in wage setting.

Employment in this sector has increased steeply in recent years. At the same time one has observed a rising level of formal qualifications and care work is now dominated by employees with a vocational education ((Illeris & Plougman, 2001:15). The employee-turnover is rather high. Around 30 percent of the workforce in the sector changes their workplace every year compared to only 17 percent for the workforce as a whole. Furthermore mobility out of the sector is high. Also mobility declines with age and one observes an increasing average age for the workforce in recent years. (Hjalager et al, 2005; Møberg & Stevens, 2007).

Banking and insurance

The sector employs an equal number of men and women. However the large wage difference between men and women reported in table 7 indicates their different positions in the job-hierarchy. This is also reflected in the different educational levels for males and females in the sector. Thus based on the Databanks of Statistics Denmark, in 2010 it was 43 percent of the male workforce, who had some form of higher education. For the women the corresponding share was only 27 percent.

Part-time work is less common than in on the labour market as a whole (around 17 percent compared with 25 percent for all employees). The lower level is found both for men and women.

Mobility into and from employment is at a rather high level for the financial sector as a whole (Dansk Industri, 2012:4). This also goes for white-collar workers, where the share of employees either leaving with a specific employer or entering into a new position was between 20 and 23 percent in 2011. This can be compared to around 16 percent for all white-collar workers in the

private sector and probably reflects the size of the restructuring processes, which have characterized the financial sector since 2008.

Skilled workers in manufacturing

With a share of female employees below one-third the manufacturing in general is highly dominated by males. In line with this observation, the share of part-time employees in manufacturing is lower than average. While the average share of part-time workers is around 25 percent, the share for manufacturing is down to around 11 percent. The lower share of part-timers is found both for men and women. For men the share is about one-third of the average, while the share for women is a little more than half of the average for the whole Danish labour market.

Also the share of employees with a fixed term contract is lower than average for the Danish labour market (based on data from Eurostat's LFS). Where the overall share is almost 9 percent, the share of temporary worker in manufacturing is down to about 5 percent. The share is only a bit higher for women.

The sector is also highly organized with medium to high wages and a low gender difference in wages. Taking the metal-industry as an example, it is heavily dominated by skilled workers, which count for half of the employees, while the other half is almost evenly divided between unskilled workers and employees with a higher education.

Mobility is rather low compared to the private labour market in general (Dansk Industri, 2010:4). Thus while between 27 and 30 percent of all workers in the private sector were mobile in 2011, this was only the case for between 16 and 21 percent in manufacturing industry. Similarly lower figures are also found for white-collar workers in manufacturing.

Summing up the four cases

Table 8 sums up the information obtained from the four cases just discussed.

Table 8: An overview of the four cases

	Cleaning workers	Care workers	White-collar employees on finance and insurance	Skilled workers in manufacturing
Share of female workers	+++	+++	++	+
Educational level	+	++	+++	++
Wage level	+	++	+++	++
Wage differentiation	+	+	+++	+
Part-time workers	+++	++	+	+
Fixed term employees	?	?	+	+
Worker turnover	+++	++	+	+

Note: The different aspects of the cases are marked from + (low) to +++ (high).

The overall impression from table 8 is – not surprising – that the most precarious employment conditions are found for cleaning workers. This is reflected not only in the data in the table, but also in the observation that the cleaning sector is characterized by a high share of immigrant workers, many examples of undeclared work and semi-illegal practices by employers and by wearing working conditions.

Among the other three cases, care-workers also show indications of precarious work (part-time and high labour turnover), but on the other hand is characterized by much more regulated and homogeneous working conditions than the cleaning sector. Finally the employees in the financial sector and manufacturing sector differ in a number of respects, but in both cases have a rather low level of temporary employment, part-time employment and labour turnover. In the case of the finance and insurance sector, precariousness is more related to pay and working conditions, where the more individualized negotiations between employee and employer allows for a much larger dispersion than is the case in the manufacturing sector.

6. Conclusions

The ideal-type description of the Danish labour market emphasizes the low level employment protection also for permanent workers combined with security arrangements in the form of unemployment insurance and active labour market policy. This is the Danish “golden triangle”, which can be conceived as a distinct model of flexicurity. The low level of fixed-term employment observed on the Danish labour market can be interpreted in this context. Given easy procedures for dismissals, there are fewer incentives for employers to turn to fixed-terms contracts in order to achieve numerical flexibility for their workforce.

Another characteristic feature of the Danish labour market is the widespread regulation by collective agreements. About 73 percent of the employees in the private sector and all the employees in the public sector are covered by collective agreements (Danish Employers Association, 2011: 234). This also goes for fixed-term employees, temporary agency workers and part-time employees. In addition, EU-regulations have been introduced in recent years, which further add to the normalization of atypical employment. Furthermore, self-employed enjoy most of the rights to social protection that benefit wage-earners (including unemployment benefits and sickness benefits).

Also in a Danish context there are a number of examples of *atypical* employment in the form of fixed-term employment, part-time work, temporary agency work and self-employment. However, due to the high level of regulation and the extension of pension rights and various social benefits to atypical workers, the issue of *precarious* employment is less conspicuous in Denmark than in most other parts of Europe. In general terms atypical employment is not interpreted as a form of employment that exposes the workers to significantly larger risks on the labour market.

This being said, there are a number of separate segments of the Danish labour market, which differ with respect both to the balance between flexibility and security in general and to the prevalence of atypical employment both when measured by the traditional statistical indicators and when one looks at the more qualitative sides of employment conditions (Jensen, 2010). Furthermore, and without doubt, some of these segments may in addition be characterized as having precarious working conditions. Important examples are parts of the labour market for ethnic minorities from non-Western countries and for migrant workers from the New Member States of Eastern Europe.

One way to get a grasp of the complexity of the factors determining the prevalence of atypical employment is through statistical analysis (cf. section 3 above). With respect to being in a *temporary job*, the probability is higher for women, for young persons, for singles or cohabitants and for immigrants. Also the probability of being a temporary worker is higher in service sectors dominated by female employment. One reason could be that a high share of female employees in a sector leads to a larger number of maternity leaves and the frequent hiring of substitutes as a consequence hereof.

Based on a multivariate statistical analysis one can also see that the probability for *working part-time* is higher for parents living with children, for singles, for the youngest age groups and for non-natives. Also service workers have a higher chance of working part-time. By sector “Trade”,

“Education”, Health care” and “Social services” stands out with a higher probability of having part-time employees. The same goes for larger companies.

These general observations can be supplemented by the case studies. In the present context four cases were selected. In total they illustrate the range of employment conditions, which exist on the Danish labour market – even within the overall framework of a regulated and rather homogenous employment system. They span from the highly regulated male dominated employment in the manufacturing sector to the low-wage cleaning sector with a high share of immigrant workers.

While the Danish labour market model has been rather resistant to the effects of the crisis since 2008, there is little doubt that the model is under pressure (Madsen, 2011). When it comes to the development of atypical work one can point to the small steps towards more employment protection, which have entered into the collective agreements in the private sector since 2010. They can over time lead to stronger incentives for fixed-term employment than those found at present. Furthermore, when it comes to precarious employment, the increased openness of the Danish labour market to immigrants and migrant workers will without doubt lead to larger challenges in the sectors like construction and road transport, where these workers are often employed. Not surprisingly these issues are a major focus of Danish trade unions at present.

In spite hereof, there will in the future without doubt be less of the “same, same” and more of the “different” also on the Danish labour market.

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