

The Social Consequences of Insecure Jobs

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Abstract Forms of insecure employment have been increasing all over Europe in recent decades. These developments have been welcomed by those who argued that these types of flexible employment would not only foster employment but could also help women, in particular, to positively combine work and family life. This vision was questioned by others who argued that flexible employment could have negative consequences for both occupational prospects and private and family life since it is often associated with greater insecurity and poorer working conditions. Relatively little research has been dedicated to the “social consequences” of insecure employment and its specific implications for work-life reconciliation issues. This paper contributes to this topic by linking research that addresses work-life conflict to the wider body of work dealing with job insecurity. It investigates the consequences of certain employment contracts on private and family life, taking into account information on current family life, future family plans and general well-being. It provides a series of test relating to the extent to which negative consequences in these areas might be attributable to the type of employment contract and how these vary between European countries. Analysis using ESS data from 2004 for western European countries confirms that insecure employment is accompanied by more problematic “social and family” situations. These negative consequences are partly shaped by the specific context provided by the country in question.

Keywords Employment instability · Temporary jobs · Work and family conflict · Work-family conciliation

A more complete version of the paper is available here:
http://portale.unitn.it/bpmapp-upload/download/fstore/7f0000016c9f2f72_789144_11e8cf589ef_2fa9/SocialConsequences_of_InsecureJobs.pdf.

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