

Insecure workers less likely to have access to family friendly arrangements

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New research shows that workers who fear they may lose their jobs are less likely to have access to family-friendly flexible working arrangements.

The study, from labour market expert Dr Heejung Chung at the University of Kent, is one of the first to highlight the division across Europe between the flexible arrangements available to skilled and secure staff, often termed 'insider workers', and those accessible by unskilled staff on insecure and non-permanent contracts, termed 'outsider workers'.

Dr Chung focused on women with care responsibilities who have the most demand for family friendly-friendly policies. The two types of non-statutory family-friendly arrangements considered were flexitime and taking time off during working hours for personal reasons.

Low-skilled workers and those who perceived that their jobs were more insecure were less likely to feel that they had access to non-statutory flexible working arrangements. This was because, unlike statutory arrangements, the provision of flexible arrangements can be used by employers to reward or incentivise their 'insider' workers. However, contrary to expectations, there was no significant difference between workers with open-ended contracts and temporary contracts.

She also found that there was a large variation across countries in the extent to which female carers have access to family-friendly

arrangements, with greater access in northern European countries and less in many eastern and southern European nations.

However, it is in these northern European nations with the best family-friendly working-time arrangements that the division in access between secure and skilled (insiders) workers and the insecure and unskilled (outsiders) is the greatest.

More information: Heejung Chung, Dualization and the access to occupational family-friendly working-time arrangements across Europe, *Social Policy & Administration* (2018). [DOI: 10.1111/spol.12379](https://doi.org/10.1111/spol.12379)

Provided by University of Kent

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