

Working time arrangements, work-life balance and well-being – a review

ICOH-WOPS, Quebec, September 2008



NATIONAL RESEARCH CENTRE
FOR THE WORKING ENVIRONMENT

Karen Albertsen, NFA, Denmark

Asbjörn Grimsmo, WRI, Norway

Kaisa Kauppinen, FIOH, Finland

Gudbjörg Rafnsdóttir, AOSH, Iceland

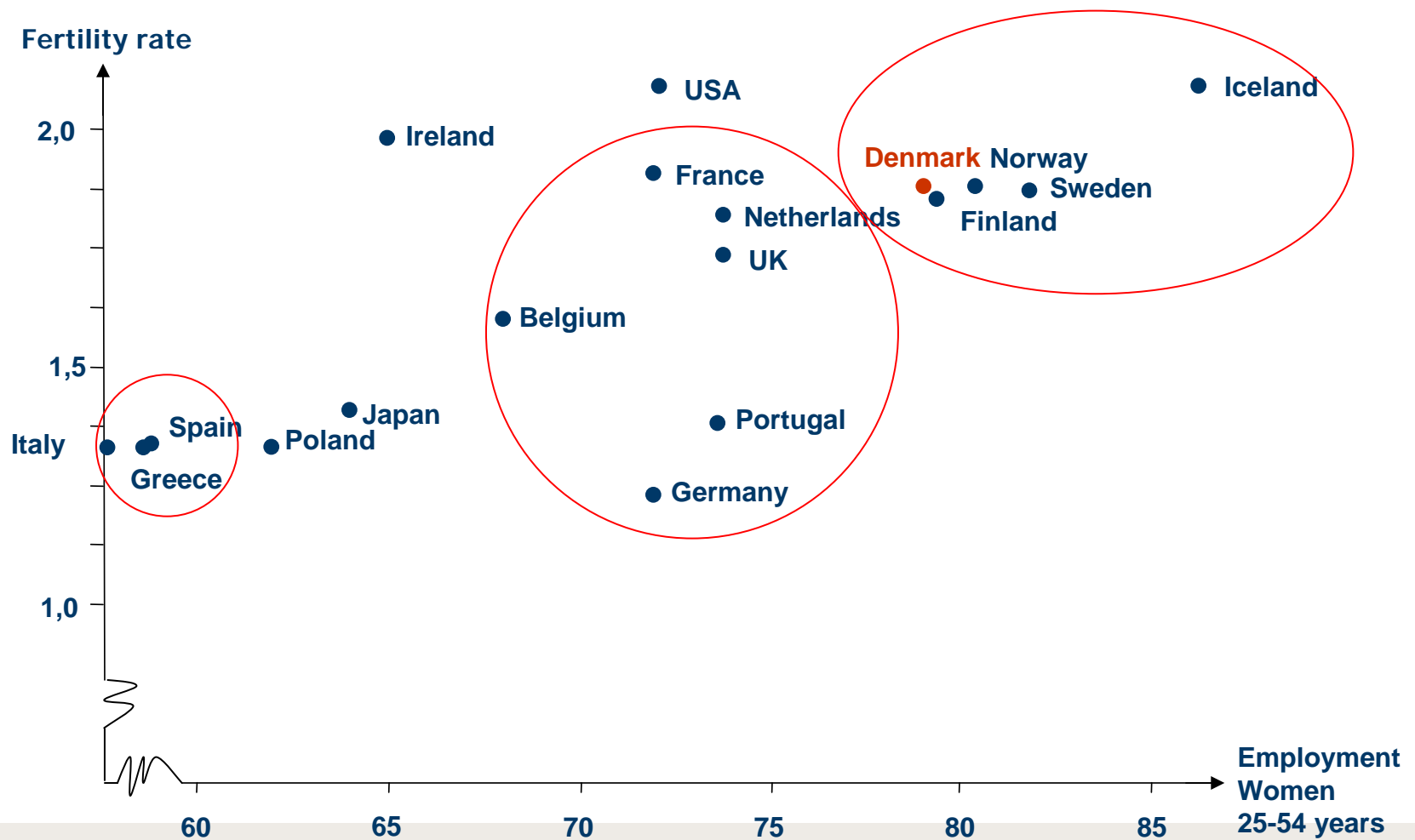
Björg Aase Sørensen, WRI, Norway

Kristinn Tómasson, AOSH, Iceland



NATIONAL RESEARCH CENTRE
FOR THE WORKING ENVIRONMENT

Fertility and work – can it be combined?



Aim of the review

- How does working hours, working overtime and irregular working hours affect work-life balance?

Material

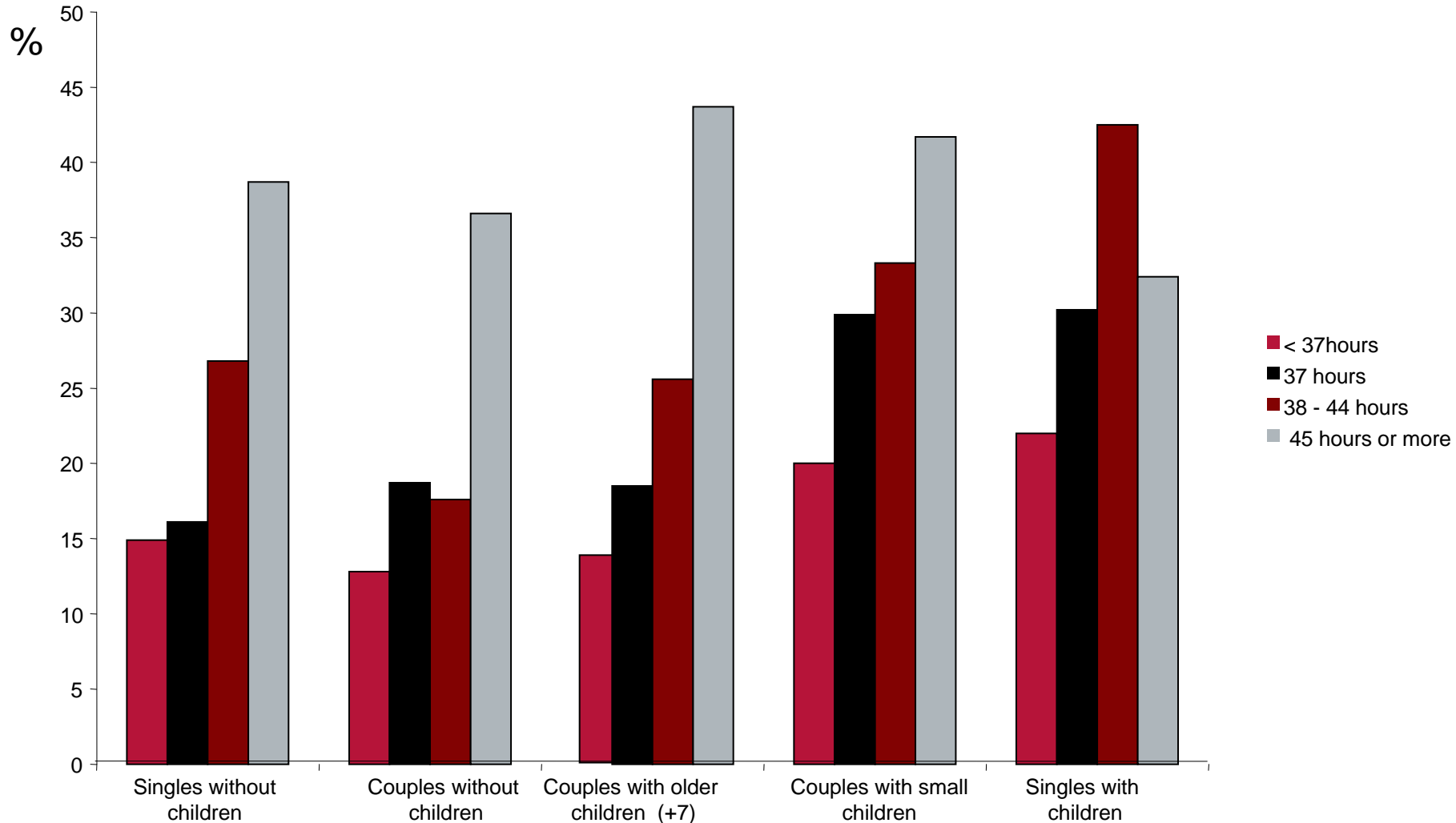
- Literature searched in large databases; PSYC-info and Pub Med
- + other relevant literature
- Results from > 85 studies

Long working hours and overtime work damage work-life balance:

- High number of working hours associated with less balance
- Overtime work associated with less balance
- Overtime work problematic for both full- and part time employed
- Fit of working hours, rewards and compensation important mediators

More conflicts with increased hours

The Second National Danish Psychosocial Work Environment Study, N=3517



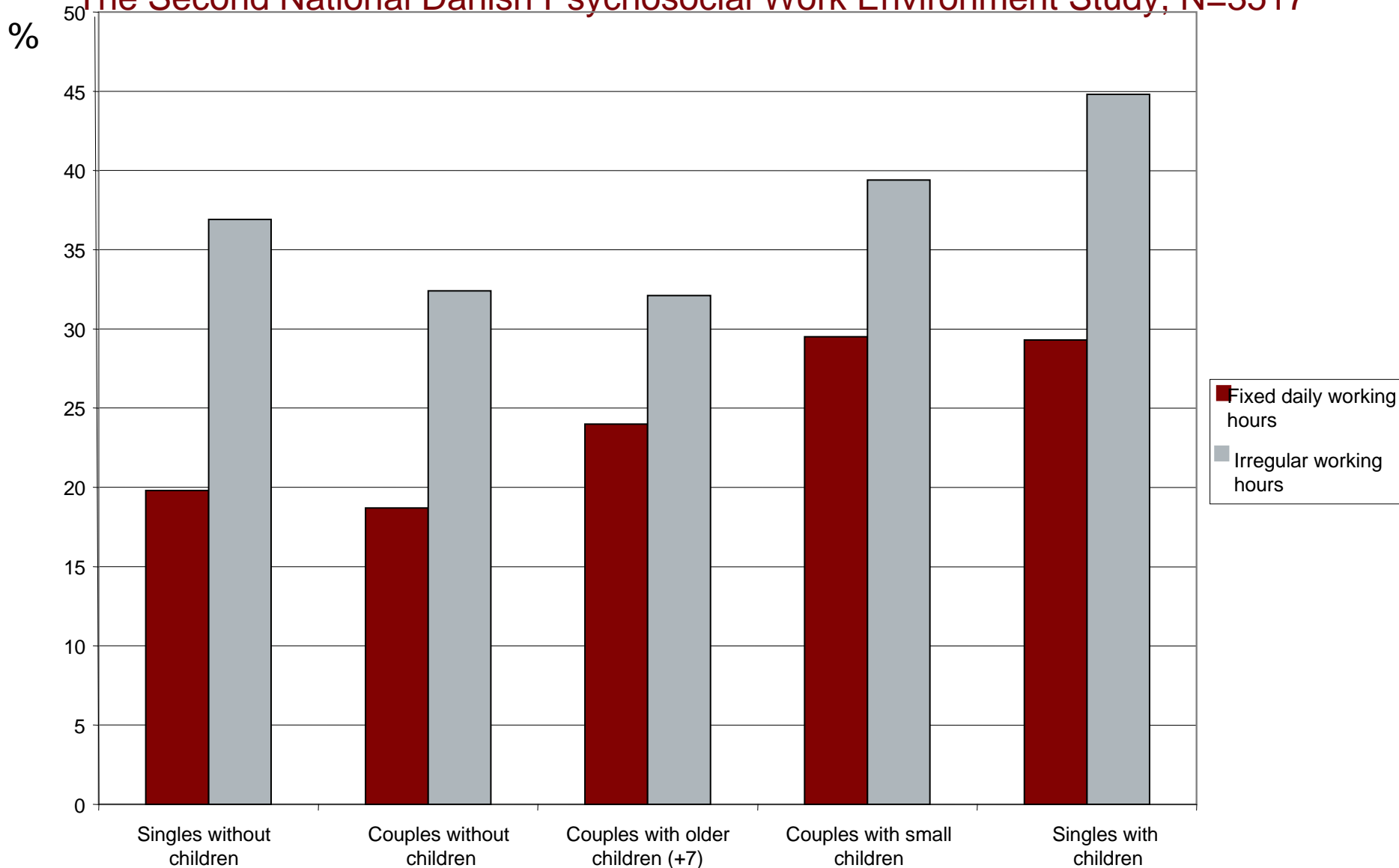
Percent who feels that work demands so much of their time that it affects private life

Work at non-standard hours damage work-life balance:

- Lower wellbeing of shift-worker's children
- Emotional and behavioural difficulties for children
- Lower marital quality and stability
- 57% increased risk for divorce after control for other factors (White and Keith 1990)

Irregular working hours – more conflicts

The Second National Danish Psychosocial Work Environment Study, N=3517



Percent who feels that work demands so much of their time that it affects private life

Influence on schedule gives better balance but results are ambiguous

- Control over working hours associated with better work-life balance
- No evidence that control moderate or mediate the effect of long or irregular hours
- In some, large and well controlled studies, no effect of influence over working hours

Need for more knowledge

- How the psychosocial work environment (beside working time) influence work-life balance
- Under which conditions influence on schedule are positive for work-life balance
- Interventions at the work-site level in order to improve work-life balance

Perspectives for practice

- Decrease work-load, working hours and work at non-standard hours
- Improve opportunities for part-time work
- Oppose a female's-trap
- Equal share of household work as well as equal share of paid work
- Increase influence over work schedules

Nordic Council of Ministeries

- Report: "Working time arrangements and social consequences - What do we know?"
- To download:
- <http://www.norden.org/pub/sk/showpub.asp?lang=6>
- Article:
- http://www.sjweh.fi/show_issue.php?sjwehsuppl