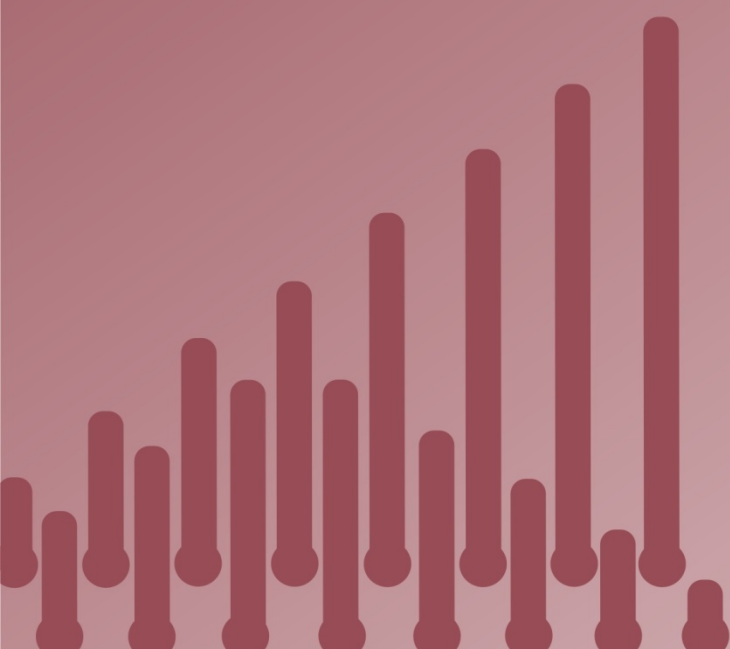


# Gender and working conditions in the UK

Helen Bewley  
NIESR

ETUI Seminar  
27 March 2012

National Institute of Economic and Social Research



# Structure of presentation

- Reasons for choice of surveys.
- Main surveys with questions on working conditions.
- Methods and response rates for a subset of surveys.
- Descriptive analysis of gender differences in working conditions in relation to:
  - Working hours.
  - Availability and use of flexible working arrangements.
  - Skills development.
  - Influence and well-being.
  - Problems at work.

# Main criteria for inclusion

- Including British, as well as UK-wide surveys (but not EU).
- Nationally-representative.
- Cover all those of working age, rather than targeted at specific subgroups of working age population e.g. exclude the English Longitudinal Study of Aging (for those aged 50 and over), the Youth Cohort Study.
- Either recent, or plans to repeat in near future.
- Data freely available to analysts.
- Include employee perspective.
- Reasonably large sample sizes.
- Questions covering different aspects of working conditions (as well as questions related to gender).

# UK working conditions surveys

- Workplace Employment Relations Survey
- Quarterly Labour Force Survey
- Work-Life Balance Survey
- Skills Survey
- Fair Treatment at Work Survey
- **British Household Panel Survey/Understanding Society** - large sample, but recent break.
- **British Social Attitudes Survey** - 3,500 respondents in total (not just employees); rotating modules.
- **European Social Survey** - 2,422 British respondents to fifth survey (2010/2011) which included rotating module on work, family and well-being.
- **European Company Survey** - 1,510 establishments in UK, 166 employee representatives.
- **European Working Conditions Survey** - covered by other presentations.

# Workplace Employment Relations Survey

- Surveys in 1980, 1984, 1990, 1998, 2004, 2011.
- Nationally representative face-to-face survey of managers responsible for personnel issues in 2,295 British workplaces with 5 or more employees (10 or more 1998; 25 or more 1980, 1984 and 1990).
- Linked paper survey of 22,451 employees in same workplaces (from 1998 onwards).
- Linked face-to-face survey of most senior union/non-union employee representatives (1984).
- Financial performance questionnaire (1,070).
- Panel (938) as well as cross-section.
- Sampling frame: Interdepartmental Business Register (reporting units) – employers registered for tax purposes.
- Response rates: X=64%; Panel=75%; E=61%; Rep=77%; F=51%.
- Data linking.
- More information at: [www.wers2004.info](http://www.wers2004.info).



# Quarterly Labour Force Survey

- Quarterly since 1992 (first survey in 1973, annual from 1984).
- Survey of around 43,000 UK private households and 40,000 employees.
- Individuals tracked for 5 quarters (some questions only asked at selected waves e.g. pay 1 and 5).
- First interview face-to-face, others telephone.
- Around one-third of responses supplied by proxy.
- Average response rate across all five waves 52%.
- Sampling frame: Postcode address file.
- Used to produce national statistics.
- More information at: <http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/guide-method/user-guidance/labour-market-statistics/index.html>

# Work-Life Balance Survey

- 2000, 2003, 2007 (employee survey actually 2006), 2011.
- Separate telephone surveys of human resources directors (1,462) and employees (2,081), British workplaces with 5+ employees.
- Cross-section.
- Response rate: M=39%; E=32%
- Sampling frame: Interdepartmental Business Register/Random digit dialling.
- 2006 employee survey to be deposited at UK Data Archive soon (employer survey already deposited).
- 2011 employee survey to be deposited in May 2012.
- Survey reports:
  - <http://www.bis.gov.uk/assets/biscore/employment-matters/docs/t/07-714x-third-work-life-balance-employee-survey-findings-revised>
  - <http://www.bis.gov.uk/assets/biscore/employment-matters/docs/t/11-1057-third-work-life-employee-survey-technical>



# Skills Survey

- 1986, 1992, 1997, 2001, 2006, 2012.
- 2006 survey first to cover UK (rather than just employees in Britain).
- Face-to-face survey, with two self-completion sections.
- 7,787 respondents to 2006 survey.
- Survey of people aged 20-65 in paid employment and living in private households.
- Cross-section.
- Response rate: 57%.
- Sampling frame: Postcode Address File
- More information available at:  
<http://www.cardiff.ac.uk/socsi/ses2012/index.html>



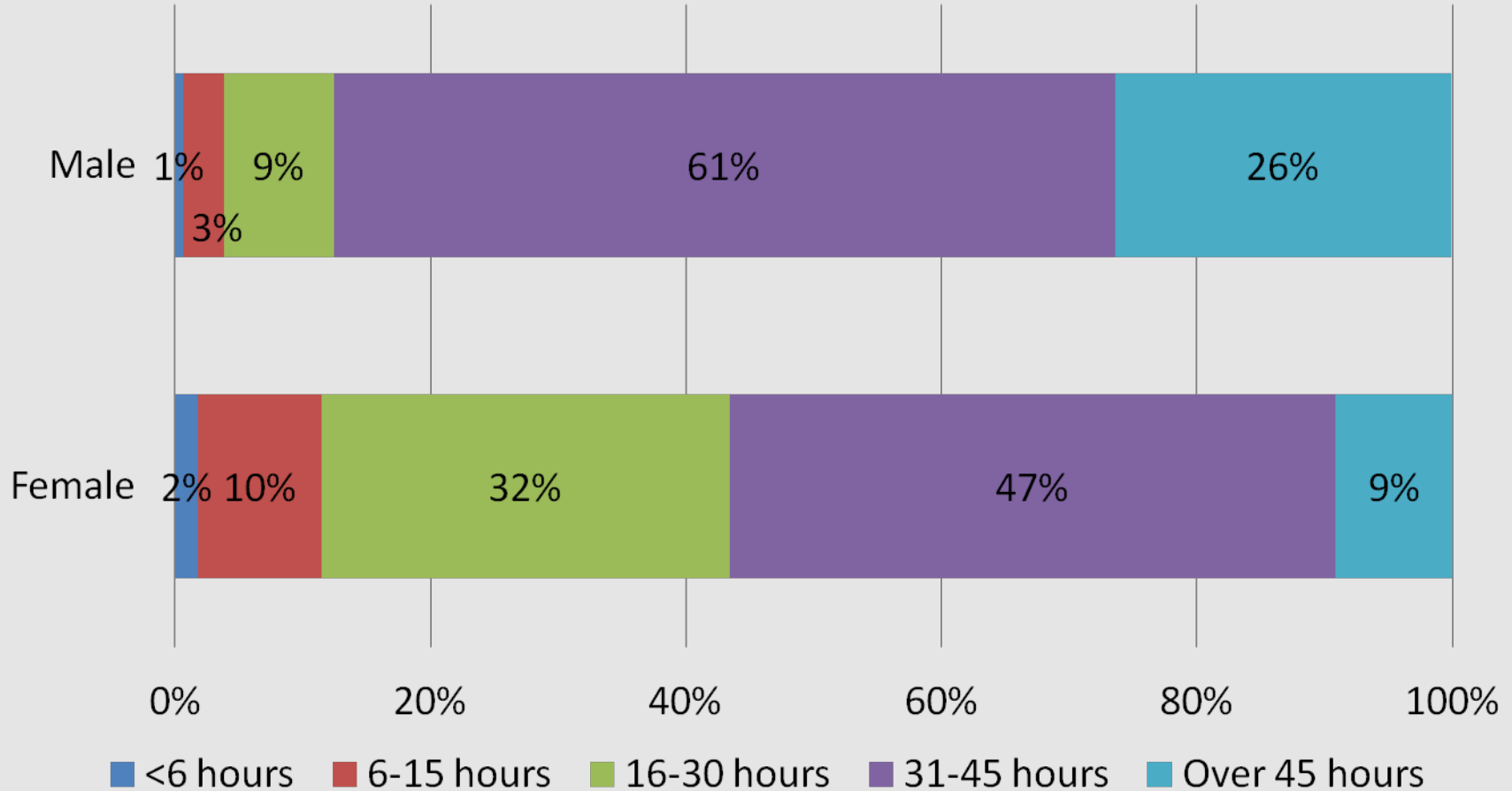
# Fair Treatment at Work Survey

- 2005, 2008.
- Nationally representative survey of 4,010 current or recent employees aged 16 or more across Britain.
- Some questions only to random sample of respondents (two of three sections).
- Face-to-face interviews, with additional paper self-completion questionnaire (completed by 2,125).
- Excluded those who had not worked in past two years.
- Cross-section.
- Response rate: 57%
- Sampling frame: Postcode Address File.
- More information available at:  
<http://www.esds.ac.uk/findingData/snDescription.asp?sn=6382>
- British Workplace Behaviour Survey 2008 has more detailed questions on the experience of ill-treatment.
  - Due to be deposited shortly.
  - More information available at:  
<http://www.cardiff.ac.uk/socsi/research/researchprojects/fevre-insight.html>

# Coverage of working conditions/gender

- Workplace Employment Relations Survey
  - All aspects of working conditions, from management, employee and workplace representative perspectives.
  - Gender of respondent; gender composition of workplace and occupations; dependent children; caring responsibilities for incapacitated adults.
- Labour Force Survey
  - Information on permanency of contract; working hours and overtime; working arrangements; paid holiday entitlement; access to childcare; pay.
- Work-Life Balance Survey
  - Detailed information on working arrangements and working hours; access to and take-up of rights in relation to maternity and paternity rights, flexible working and emergency leave.
- Skills Survey
  - Permanency of contract; full- or part-time; flexibility over start and finish times; gender composition of jobs; working alone or with others; opportunities to learn new skills and to use knowledge and skills.
- Fair Treatment at Work
  - Knowledge of employment rights; problems experienced at work.

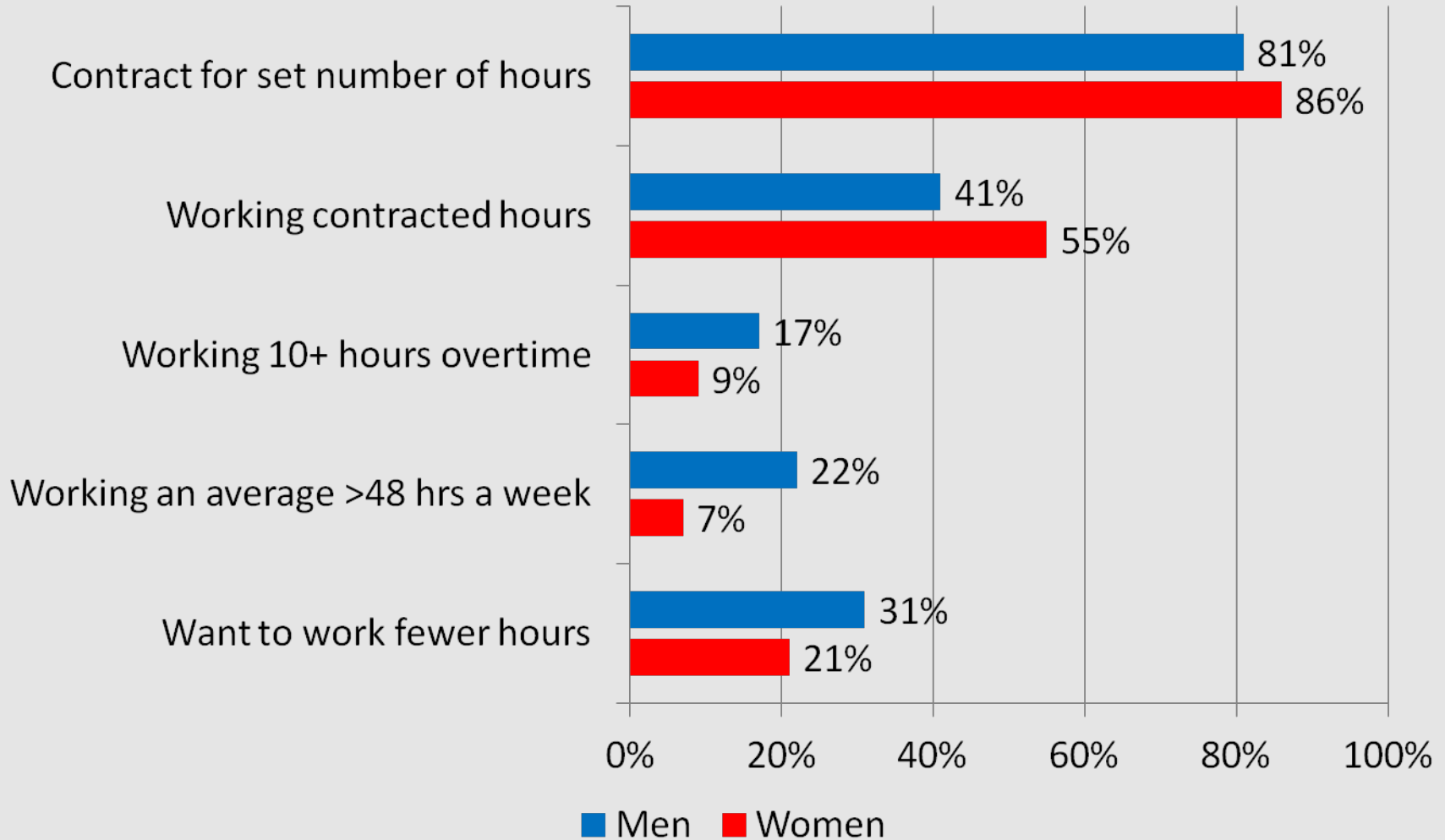
# Usual weekly hours in main job



Source: LFS Oct-Dec 2011 quarter. Including paid and unpaid overtime.

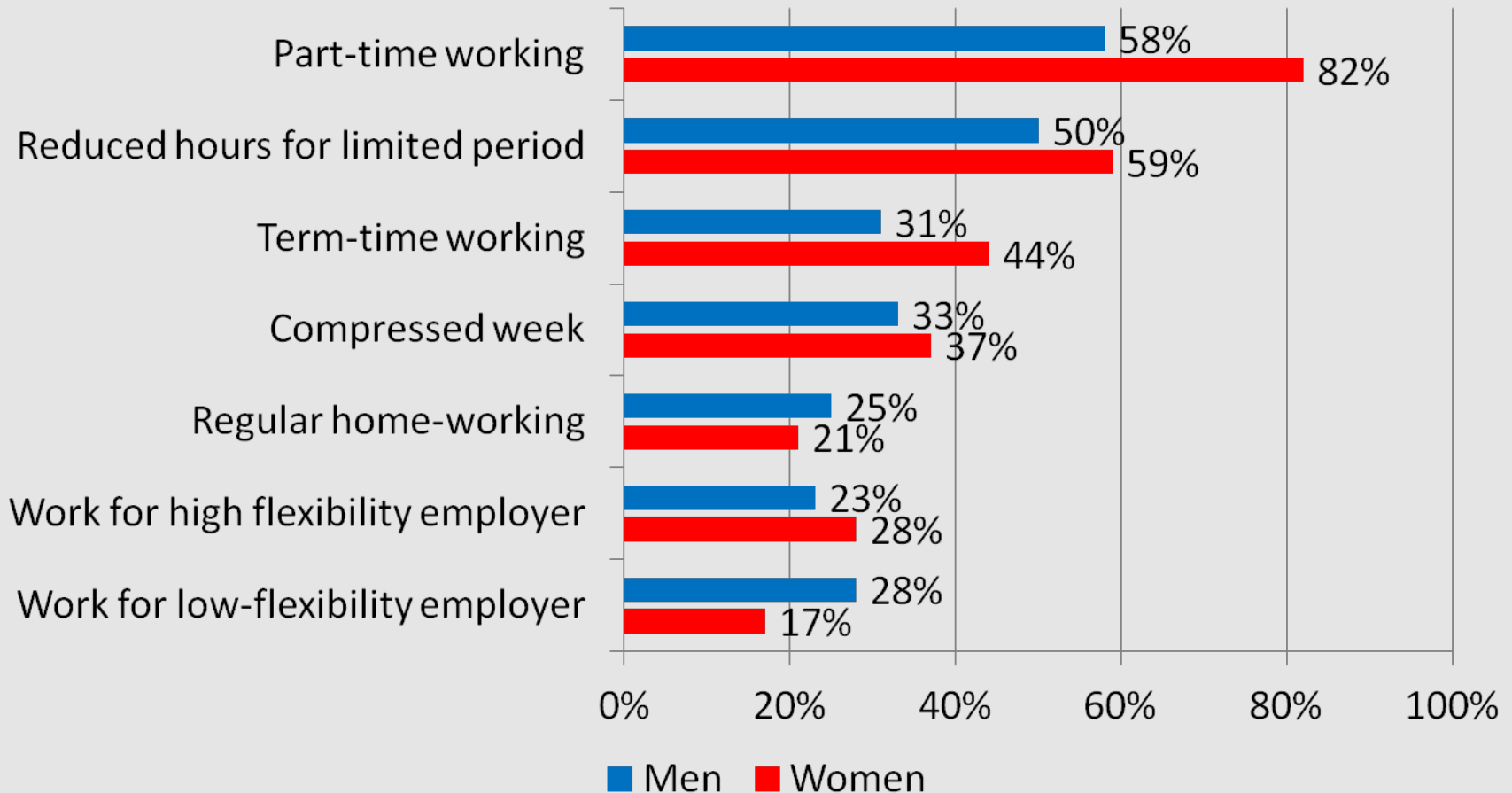


# Working hours



Source: WLB 2007 employee survey. Taken from Hooker et al. (2007).

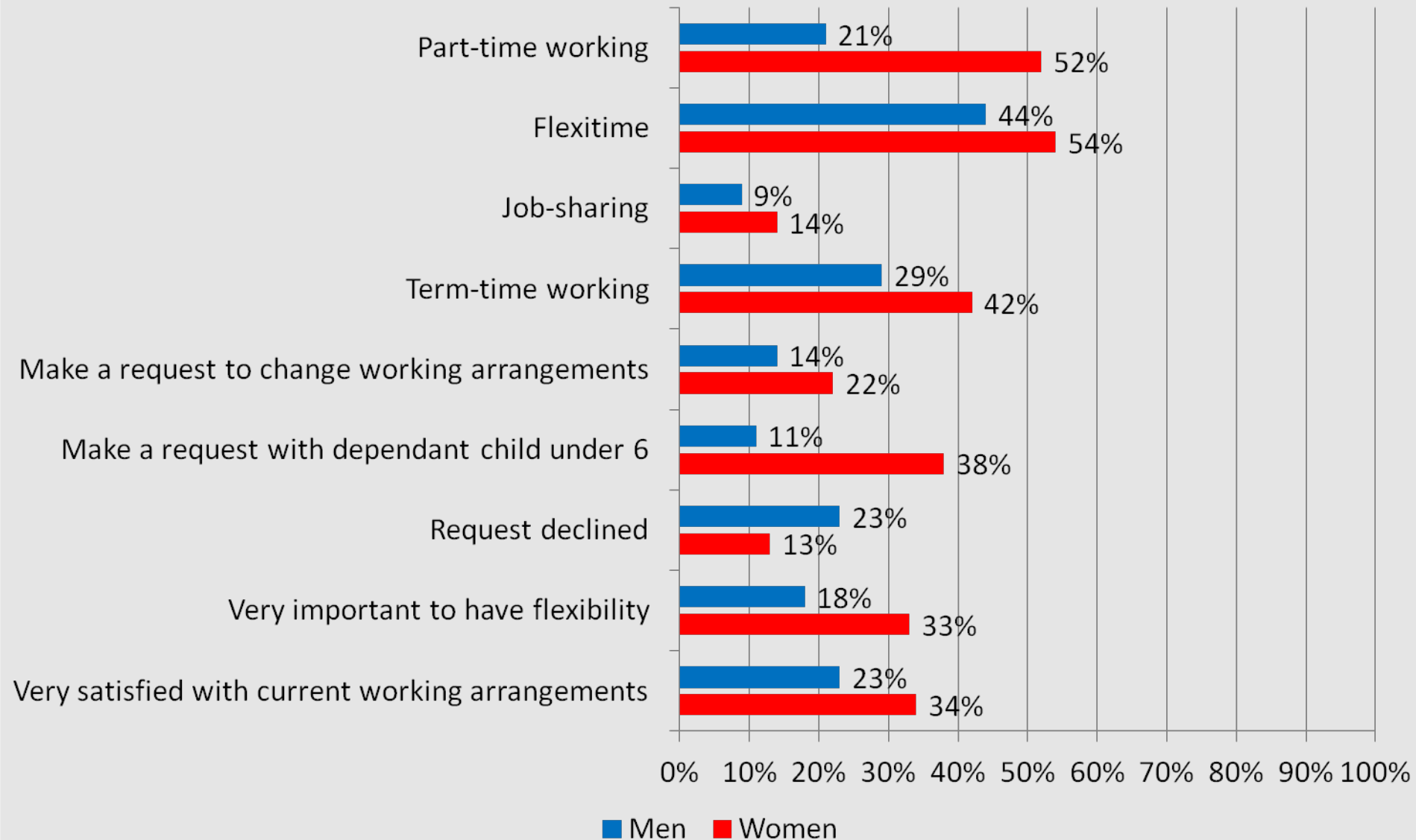
# Perceived access to flexible working arrangements



Source: WLB 2007 employee survey. Taken from Hooker et al. (2007).

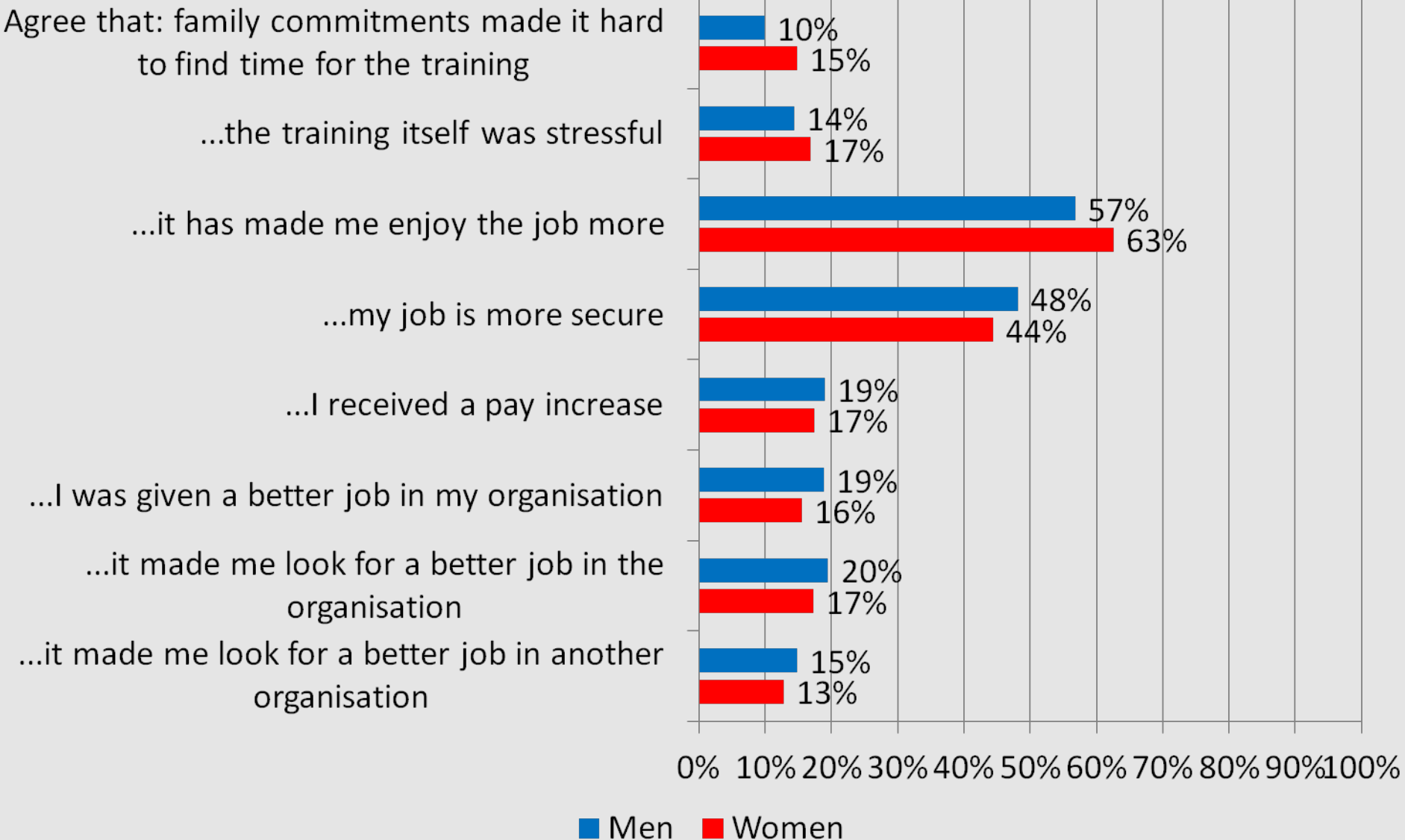


# Take-up of flexible working arrangements

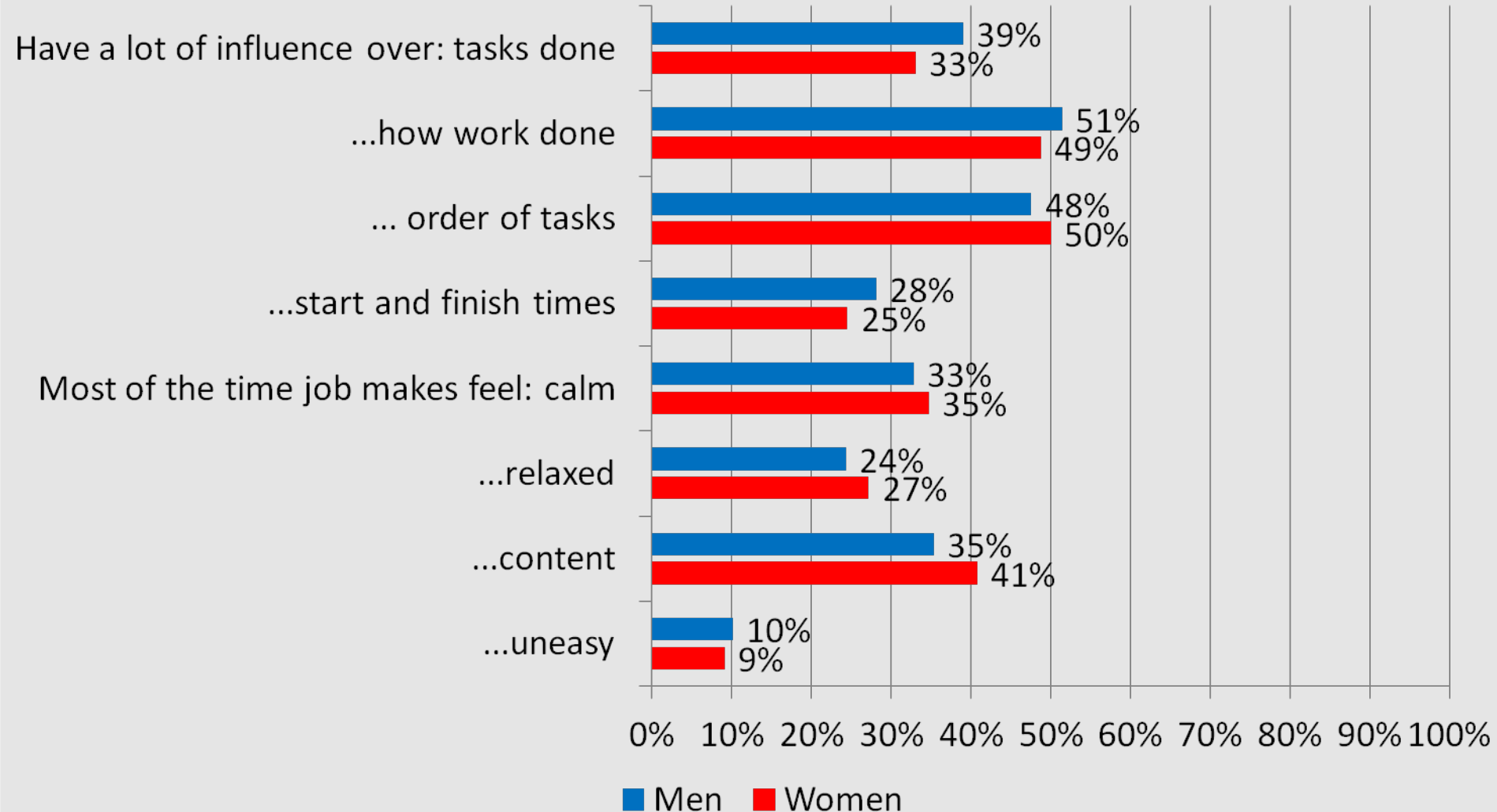


Source: WLB 2007 employee survey. Taken from Hooker et al. 2007.

# Experience of training

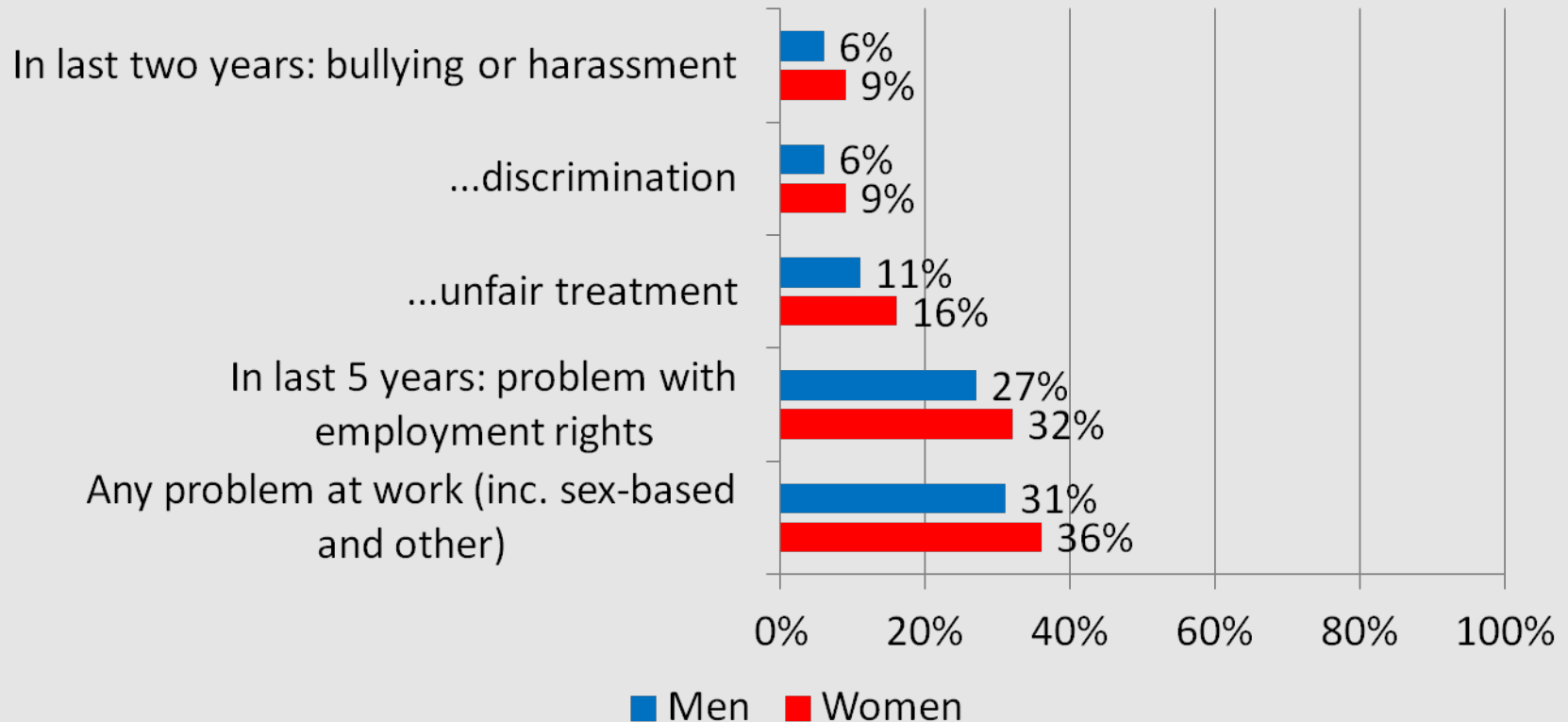


# Job influence and well-being





# Problems at work



- After controlling for other characteristics:
  - Women 73 per cent more likely to report bullying or harassment than men.
  - Evidence unfair treatment or discrimination related to pregnancy, maternity, family or caring responsibilities, rather than specifically to gender.

Source: FTW 2008. Based on Fevre et al. (2009), Tables B5.1, B7.1, B 8.1.

# Workplace Employment Relations Survey 2011

- Fieldwork in progress now.
- Data to be released end 2012.
- New questions in employee survey on:
  - Whether career progression tied to working long hours.
  - Satisfaction with opportunities to develop skills.
  - Use of flexible working arrangements.
  - Tension between commitments inside and outside of work.
  - Changes in the organisation of work resulting from recession.
  - Pay package (type of performance pay, employer contributions to pension scheme, overtime payments).
  - Religion.
  - Sexuality.
- More information at: <http://www.bis.gov.uk/policies/employment-matters/research/wers/wers2011>



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