FAMILIES AND THE TIME SQUEEZE

AN ANALYSIS OF WORKING TIME REGIMES FROM THE PARENTS' PERSPECTIVE

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Families and the Time Squeeze. An Analysis of Working Time Regimes from the Parents’ Perspective

In reconciling family and working life, time as a resource is precious. Hence, working time regulations for all employees and those for working parents in particular impact on families’ discretion with respect to time.

The research endeavour summarized in this report investigated collective bargaining agreements in selected branches as to their contribution to the reconciliation dilemma. Germany and Sweden, which are marked by both, a strong family policy commitment and a strong trade union history, were compared in order to identify the framework conditions and policies within the context of which families choose individual life style models.

Among the different dimensions of analysis one interesting result is that family-specific clauses are almost absent from Swedish collective bargaining, as these issues are part of an extensive statutory law. Furthermore, working parents in Sweden profit substantially from the possibility to modify working time schemes that collective bargaining agreements generally offer to all employees. Contrastingly, German collective bargaining agreements contain a good deal of family-specific regulations, which partially perpetuate the spirit of conservative statutory regulations and partially offset the latter’s shortcomings in an innovative manner.
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Abstracts: English / French / German