

CHILDREN – AN OCCUPATION CONSTRAINT FOR WOMEN

A survey conducted in 1998 concluded that an overwhelming majority of women with children would like to work. However, OECD statistics show that in some countries an insufficient number of mothers is able to realise this wish. Comparing the employment rate of women with two or more children with that of women without children (of ages ranging from 25 to 54), Australia, Ireland, New Zealand and Germany are countries with a gap between these groups of more than 20 percentage points. In Belgium, Sweden, Denmark, Portugal, Greece and Norway, the gap was less than five percentage points in 2000. This means that women with children in these countries are able to realise their desire to work as easily as women without children (Fig. 1).

A second indicator for the difficulties of mothers to find jobs is the percentage of part-time employees in the total working population of women with or without children. The percentage of part-time employment of women with two or more children was more than 30 percentage points higher than the percentage of part-time employment of childless mothers in the Netherlands, Great Britain, Germany and Switzerland (Fig. 2). In contrast to these countries, women with children in Denmark, Portugal, Greece, Spain, Finland and Sweden encounter conditions that allow them to assume full-time as readily as part-time employment.

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Figure 1

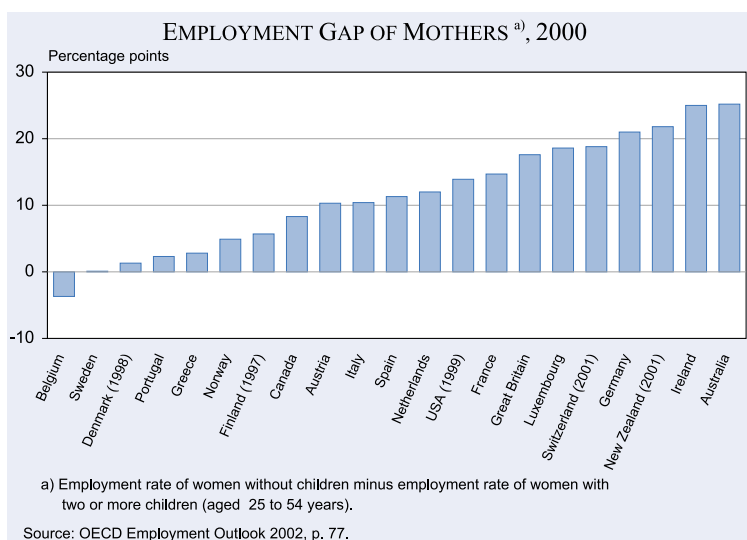


Figure 2

