



**COUNCIL OF
THE EUROPEAN UNION**

Brussels, 10 December 2008

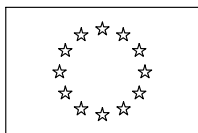
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COVER NOTE

from: The Employment Committee
to: Delegations
**Subject: Report on the 2008 Cambridge Review of the National Reform
Programmes**

Delegations will find attached the above-mentioned Report on the 2008 Cambridge Review, agreed by the Employment Committee during its meeting of 27 November 2008.



The Employment Committee

REPORT ON THE 2008 CAMBRIDGE REVIEW OF THE NATIONAL REFORM PROGRAMMES

1. Introduction

The Cambridge Review examination of the employment section of the National Reform Programmes for 2008 was carried out by the Employment Committee (EMCO) in a plenary session on 13-14 November 2008. As previously agreed by the Committee, the Review was dedicated to Member States' policy responses to the country-specific recommendations (CSR) and point to watch (PTW) endorsed by the 2008 Spring European Council, and to discussion of the flexicurity approaches designed by each Member State.

The Review took place in a moment of extreme uncertainty, after a turning point of the economic cycle and when the turmoil of the financial market started to have a negative impact on the real economy. These exceptional circumstances in which the world and EU economies are now caught up also drew attention of the Review to short-term measures being adopted by some Member States (MS) facing rising levels of unemployment. The analysis of these recent labour market developments and policy responses is however done elsewhere¹. In contrast, this Cambridge Review report focuses primarily on the structural reforms being carried in the past year² to address more medium- and longer-term challenges.

¹ See note EMCO/36/271108/EN

² The list of measures provided throughout the report is not exhaustive. It refers mainly to measures adopted in 2007/08 and mentioned during the Cambridge Review meeting. Other measures, adopted less recently, may also be of relevance to address the employed challenges discussed in the report.

In preparation of the Review, each country was invited to prepare an informal country specific fiche on its NRP and a similar fiche on another country towards which it has acted as discussant. Flexicurity overview charts and the compendium of indicators were also used as statistical support. The Commission was actively involved in the discussions by providing country-specific questions and presenting an overview of the flexicurity policies in the National Reform Programmes. A representative of the Economic Policy Committee also presented the main conclusions of the EPC thematic country review on tax and benefit systems carried in September 2008.

2. General Observations

Despite recent employment growth, overall Lisbon employment target may not be achieved

The employment rate continued to grow in Europe, from 64.5% in 2006 to 65.4% in 2007, sustained by continued economic growth. This corresponded to an increase of 3.9 million more people employed. Individuals born outside the EU and who have been resident 5 years and less in the reporting country, amounting to about 2.2% of the working age population continued to be an important contributor to employment growth (59.8% of recent immigrants are employed).

If broken down by gender, it is noticeable that more women (58.3% of women aged 15 -64 were employed in 2007 compared to 57.3% in 2006) continue to enter into the labour market, and that female labour supply continues to be one of the main drivers for higher participation rates. Youth unemployment ratios remain relatively high (6.8% of persons aged 15-24) showing that young people willing to work have more difficulties to enter into the labour market than other age groups.

High-skilled workers have continued to show higher levels of employability and their employment rate grew to 80.6% for women and 87.3% for men, while employment for low-skilled people was much lower (58.4% for men and 39.1% for women). The large gender gap for low-skilled remained stable.

Notwithstanding the overall EU employment growth, an increase of 4.6 percentage points is still needed to reach the overall Lisbon employment rate target of 70%. This would mean that around 15.7 million extra jobs or an annual employment growth rate of 2.4% would be needed till 2010 to reach the EU employment target. Not only would such growth rates undoubtedly be above past growth trends (the employment growth rate was 1.1% during the period 2000-07), but they seem even more difficult to attain taking into consideration the forecasted economic slowdown and rising unemployment rates. Indeed, in the scenario foreseen by the latest Commission's forecast³, merely 0.25 million jobs are expected to be created in 2009-2010, far below the 15.7 million jobs needed.

Key challenges in NRP remained unchanged

Pursuing the modernisation of EU labour markets is therefore more urgent than ever to enhance their resilience. To strike the right balance between the adoption of short-term measures, most necessary to mitigate the impact of the financial crisis on employment, and the pursuit of long-term measures, is essential to ensure that MS reap the benefits of reforms initiated in recent years. In this context, the European Employment Strategy and the Employment Guidelines remain useful instruments to address both short- and long-term challenges.

Although 2008 marked the beginning of a new-three year cycle with the possibility for MS to revise the National Reform Programmes' (NRP) key challenges, the accent has been placed on the continuity of the Lisbon framework with the stability of the Integrated Guidelines. Almost all MS considered that the key challenges identified in 2005 in the area of employment remain valid and are adapted to the new financial and economic circumstances. Only EE, LV, PL and IE have revised their main political priorities. The changes in the latter were particularly motivated by the rising unemployment levels induced by the slowdown in the construction sector and subsequently the financial markets turmoil. The Irish NRP has now a greater emphasis on activation and training for the unemployed.

³ http://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/publications/publication13290_en.pdf

Stronger involvement of social partners

The involvement of all relevant stakeholders, and in particular social partners, in the preparation, adoption and implementation of the NRPs continued to be enhanced this year. Discussion seminars (UK) and web-based public consultations (LU, SI, UK) have been the methods used to involve academics, independent experts, civil society and the wider public.

Social partners have been consulted mainly through tripartite consultation committees for economic and social affairs (PL, PT), via collective agreements but also via consultations in the NRP-process and written contributions annexed to the NRP (DK). Their role is particularly recognised as key to a successful implementation of flexicurity policies and some countries believe that a climate of trust (SE) with social partners is a fundamental precondition to pursue a flexicurity approach. In an increasing number of countries, agreements related to flexicurity are being negotiated. Despite the strong tradition of social dialogue, CY and EL are however examples of MS where there are some difficulties in finding agreement with social partners, and only some progress has been made.

ESF continues to support employment policies

The European Social Fund (ESF) remains instrumental in the delivery of the European Employment Strategy at national, regional and local level. The new generation of operational programmes for the period 2007-2013 were adopted taking full account of the key employment challenges in each country and in some NRPs this coherence is also more visible. The ESF co-finances both measures that modernise employment, education and training systems (modernisation of PES, curricula development, introduction of counselling services, etc) and address the needs of individuals (higher volume of investment on individualised integration pathways, support to second-chance schools for early school-leavers, in-company training).

3. National flexicurity approaches

Following the adoption of the common principles of Flexicurity and recognising that "one size does not fit all," the 2008 Spring European Council called on MS *"to implement the agreed common principles on flexicurity by implementing in their 2008 National Reform Programmes the national arrangements giving effect to those principles"*.

Within the framework of the integrated employment guidelines, national flexicurity policies were thus central to employment policies development this year. MS are adopting very different ways of putting the flexicurity principles into practice: DK continues to fine-tune its well-functioning model; some countries like MT have a clear definition of a pathway with a set of supporting measures and a timetable for implementation; others have an identified approach but are currently elaborating its implementation plans (FI, RO) or are giving it a renewed emphasis given the current economic crisis (IE); and still others have a dedicated section in the NRP to the issue (AT, SI) or a clear commitment in the programme to pursue reforms (BG, CY, LT, SK).

Although emphasis on each of the four flexicurity components varies significantly depending on the magnitude and the nature of challenges faced by each country, all MS have nevertheless addressed all four elements in their NRPs. So, FR, IT LV have put particular emphasis on contractual arrangements and AT, CZ, NL and PT mention the modernisation of social security systems as an area of reforms. But the vast majority of countries give considerable attention on comprehensive lifelong learning strategies (BE, BG, CY, EL, HU, IE, LU, MT, NL, PT, RO, SI, UK) and effective active labour market policies (DE, ES, EL, FR, LV, PL, RO, UK) indicating that upgrading skills and activation policies are essential elements to improve labour market outcomes.

4. Country specific recommendations and points-to-watch

The 2008 Spring European Council invited Member States to "*set out detailed and concrete actions addressing specific policy response to the Integrated Guidelines, country-specific recommendations and 'points to watch' in their National Reform Programmes and the subsequent annual implementation reports*". The majority of MS answered this request and dedicated a section of their report to the policy measures adopted and implementation.

4.1.1 Labour supply and activation policies

The country-specific recommendations adopted by the 2008 Spring European Council made evident the importance of raising labour supply in a significant number of countries, in order to counteract labour shortages provoked by demographic pressures (DE, DK, FI, IE, LV, MT, NL, SE) and the low levels of employment (BG, MT, RO). Low participation rates for women (EL, MT, IT) or for specific groups like migrants (FR, DE, DK, NL and SE) still characterise certain labour markets. Several countries where high employment rates have been reached are nevertheless confronted with relatively low working hours (DK, NL) or high absenteeism (DK, SE).

Active Labour Market Policies (ALMP) are increasingly used by MS to increase labour market participation. In the EU27 expenditure on supports is still higher than expenditure in regular activation measures (in 2006, 1.2% and 0.51% of GDP respectively) and the number of supports recipients (per 100 persons wanting to work) is 47.4 while only 31 people participated in regular activation measures. But the number of participants in ALMPs has increased over time showing the growing importance of these policies.

The main priority area remains the adaptation of ALMP to the needs of the target groups, particularly the most vulnerable, through the design of personalised integration pathways and tailor-made support to the unemployed and job seekers so as to guarantee higher levels of efficiency and effectiveness of the policies (BG, DE, DK, FI, LV, RO, SI, SK). Many countries have also revised the conditionality (CZ, EL, FR, IT, PT, RO, UK) of benefits to link them with participation in ALMP, and have changed the eligibility rules (BG, BE, NL, PT). Some countries (EE, EL, FR, HU) made the fusion of services responsible for financial support and active labour market measures (FR, EL, EE, SI, UK) into single "one-stop shops". In FR, a new legal framework has been introduced to precise the rights and duties both of job-seekers and public employment services: it foresees stiffer penalties for job-seekers not willing to take-up job offers but also the obligation of PES to propose job offers that are in line with the job seeker's personal project.

Furthermore, both the current economic slowdown and also long-term challenges such as globalisation, ageing and the transformation towards a low-carbon economy lead most of MS to put skills-upgrading at the forefront of their priorities, in order to ease transitions within and into the labour market. An increasing interaction between ALMP and policies to raise skills is therefore noticeable in several countries (AT, BG, DE, IE, LV, RO, SI). To this end, the employment services, key actors in the delivery of ALMP, are broadening the coverage of their services and offering training and re-training not only to unemployed but also to employed people.

Some MS (BE, DK, HU, MT, NL, RO, SE) also use tax and benefit policies to make work pay. Measures like reductions of social security contributions (BE, RO, SE), tax deductions on earned income (BG, DK, MT, SE) or introduction of earned income tax credits (NL) have been put in place. These measures are often addressed to mono-parental families (PT, UK), one earner-couple with children (IE, NL) or young people (SE).

Such measures are also popular ways to promote female participation, a continuing challenge in some countries (EL, IT, MT, HU). For example, IT gives financial incentives to employers to hire women, HU alleviates social security contributions for women re-entering the labour market after maternity leave, NL does the same for women moving from part-time to full-time work and MT has tax deductions for childcare costs. Along with tax and benefits reforms MS have continued to expand childcare and pre-school facilities (AT, BG, EL, ES, IE, IT, PL, PT), to extend parental leave (BG, EL, MT, PL, PT) and to introduce more innovative measures such as mutual parental assistance schemes (CZ).

Seeing that migrants constitute important contributors to employment growth, many countries (DK, ES, FI, IE, PT, SE) are taking measures to tap this important labour reservoir. Most actions have been aimed at promoting the integration of immigrants on national labour markets.

In some MS undeclared work is another such untapped resources. The complexity of the issue often calls for the involvement of all actors and for actions that combine both incentives to support declared work and sanctions to disincentive undeclared labour. BG, EL, HU, IT, MT and RO are tackling undeclared work by tightening controls and reinforcing the role of labour inspections. IT has also introduced the obligation of reporting a recruitment the date before the employment relationship starts and provides tax relief on overtime and productivity bonuses. .

Activation is perceived as a multi-dimensional goal requiring coordination between several actors. Partnerships have been strengthened between Public Employment Services (PES), large companies and local authorities to manage restructuring and redundancies (FI, LU, RO, SE), to promote an entrepreneurial culture and innovation (SI), to develop sustainable regional and local labour markets (BE, DE, EL, FI, SE); between PES and schools to improve matching of labour supply and demand (BG, DK); or through inter-ministerial coordination to promote the integration of migrants (IE).

But in some countries (BG, CY, LV, RO) raising the institutional capacity of PES remains a concern. Important investments have continued to be pursued to modernise and raise the quality of the services (DE, MT), to increase the geographical coverage of employment services (CY, RO), update the ICT systems (CY, EL, PL, PT), introduce career counselling and mediation services (CY, HU, SI) and strengthen the analysis and forecasting capacity (BG, RO, SI).

4.1.2 Modern employment legislation and tackling labour market segmentation

Modernising employment legislation continues to be a powerful way to introduce both more flexibility on the labour market with new forms of work and more security for people in involuntary part-time or fixed-term contracts. Overall in 2007, these types of contracts were held by 10.2% of the total employees, the same as in 2006. They have also remained more common among women than among men. The variation of involuntary part-time or fixed-term work is large across the MS with shares between 2% and 15%. Part-time work is still less common in Southern, Central and East European MS.

In 2008 CZ, EE, EL, ES, FR, PT and SI were recommended by the European Council to reduce labour market segmentation and reduce labour market rigidities created by the existing national labour laws.

In some countries new agreements have been reached with social partners to revise the existing labour codes. The reforms in EE, SI and RO focussed primarily on the introduction of new forms of work (ex: part-time work) whereas in CZ the law proposals, currently subject of public debate, aim to alter the rules of contract termination and extend the possibilities for signing fixed-term contracts with the same employee. In PT, the revision of the labour code foreseeing easier dismissal procedures has been coupled with social security reforms and ALMP aimed at reducing labour market segmentation and fight precariousness: hiring costs and social contributions associated to permanent contracts have been reduced while social contributions paid by employers related to fixed-term contracts have been increased.

In ES and FR, attention has been devoted to the implementation of measures introduced in previous years although in FR new types of employment termination ("rupture conventionnelle") and employment contract ("contrat-mission") have been also introduced.

4.1.3 Active ageing and pension reforms

Population projections show that the share of people aged 65 years and over in the total population is predicted to increase from 17.1% to 20.1% in 2020. This means old age dependency ratios will also increase from the current four persons of working age (15-64) for every person aged 65 years to a ratio of 3: 1. Employment rates for both older women and men (54 -60 years) have increased steadily since 2000 and stand now (2007) at 36.0% for women and 53.9% for men. The total gap is still slightly more than 5 pp compared with the target of 50% set for 2010 and the gender imbalance shows that more policy measures should be targeted towards women.

The European Council has recommended that AT, LU, HU and SI increase the length of working life. Generally in all countries but particularly in these four MS, older workers are recognised as a special group and as requiring comprehensive measures to facilitate their maintenance and reintegration into the labour market. Policies to keep or bring back older workers are broadly addressed by the modernisation of pensions systems and tightening conditions for early retirement, better targeted active labour market policies, the adaptation of working conditions to the specific needs of older workers, financial incentives to hire older persons and awareness campaigns.

The modernisation of pensions systems aims at raising the employment rate of older people and decreasing dependency ratios so to ensure the sustainability of public finances. Some policy measures adopted are intended to discourage and limit the access to early retirement (BE, EL, ES, FR, HU, LU); others change retirement age either by a general rise for the entire population or by equalising the retirement age for men and women (HU); on the incentive side, measures such as increasing the pension benefits if retirement is postponed (BG, EL, HU) or allowing persons to receive their pensions and continue to work beyond the retirement age are used to render active ageing an attractive economic option.

Targeted ALMP such as work placement services (HU, SI), qualifications counselling and specialised training for older workers (AT, PL) are more widespread and social contributions are reduced for employers who recruit persons above 45 years old (AT, SI). AT and SI have also put particular emphasis on improving health and work conditions and sustaining part-time work of older workers. Specific schemes to support the take-up of new forms of work like tele-working or "time-savings" scheme have also been introduced by LU.

Finally, and despite the measures adopted to support employment of older workers, the low levels of participation of this group also reflect negative stereotypes concerning the work of older people. Awareness campaigns in favour of employment of older people (AT, CY, LU, MT) or a stronger involvement of all stakeholders through inter-ministerial working groups and labour market reflexion groups (LU) are some of the actions being implemented in order to change attitudes towards active ageing.

4.1.4 Lifelong learning, education reforms and new skills needs

The 2008 Spring European Council identified the need of enhancing lifelong learning as well as upgrading and matching of skills as important strategic priorities for the majority of countries. This need to raise skills levels is particularly underpinned by the existing higher employment levels of high skilled people when compared to the low skilled and by forecasts for 2020⁴ indicating a growing demand for skilled labour and a dramatic increase of qualification requirements across most jobs.

All countries have recognized the increasing importance of life-long learning. All NRPs mention explicitly this component of flexicurity and a majority of countries have also drawn up a comprehensive framework with specific objectives, policy measures, and a commitment to systematic implementation. BG, CY, LT and SK have reported about the recent development and approval of a new Lifelong Learning Strategy while PL and RO are also expected to do so in the coming year

Despite the general consensus on the urgency to invest in skills, policy measures have not yet been translated into significantly higher levels of participation in lifelong learning. Overall participation by adults in education and training has increased from 10.5% to 10.6% for women and 8.7% to 8.8% for men. Only about 1/3 of employees participated in continuous vocational training in 2005 and there is a decrease compared to 1999. Results show that investment by enterprises in training of employees has decreased from 2.3% of total labour costs in 1999 to 1.6% in 2005. Only six MS show an increase.

A high number of NRPs establish extensive lifelong learning goals. However, in some cases the primary focus is to raise skills levels and reach better learning outcomes (UK), whilst in other cases coverage and accessibility (PT, SK, RO) is at the heart of the policy choice. To increase participation in lifelong learning, many MS aim at easing access for vulnerable groups like older people (PL), early school leavers (BG, ES, IE, PT, RO) and ethnic minorities (BE, CY, EE, RO). Others initiate language courses for migrants to help them to integrate better into the labour market (CY, EE, EL, LU).

⁴ See Cedefop, "Future skill needs in Europe: Key findings"

Improving skills-matching to labour market needs is also leading several countries (BG, EL, FI, MT, PL, SK) to raise their skill-forecasting capacity and to establish close relationship between training schemes and labour market needs. In BE, EL and LV, job descriptions and training programs are being created for each profession in conjunction with sectoral social partners, based on the required professional qualifications.

Supporting on-the-job training is a common and popular way of extending the scope of training systems. BE has introduced training vouchers and the "Train to Gain" programme is growing in UK. Some PES also concentrate more on onsite training among active measures to provide training for the unemployed at a workplace (DE, IT, SI).

Higher investments in vocational training are also frequently mentioned in the context of lifelong learning (BE, CY, EE, ES, HU, LT, PT, SI). Some other countries are currently in the process of establishing or improving their National Qualification Framework (CY, LV, CZ, PL, PT, RO) and establishing the grounds for joining the European Qualification Framework.

5. Conclusions

Most MS continued to address their key challenges in line with the European Employment Strategy and the Employment Guidelines. Apart from economic growth which marked the EU economies till 2007, the interaction between increasing labour force participation (especially of women and older workers), the change in skill and gender composition of the workforce and the greater availability of new types of contracts has facilitated employment-intensive growth.

However, even if past reforms have started to deliver results strengthening the resilience of EU labour markets, it is becoming increasingly evident that the EU target of achieving 70% of employment rate by 2010 may be out of reach. The existing gap between the current EU labour market performance and the objective of full employment is likely to be persistent with the expected economic slowdown and rising unemployment brought about by the financial crisis.

In order to address the negative impact of the financial turmoil on employment and social cohesion, it might be necessary to balance long-term measures with short-term measures aiming at preventing job losses and supporting adequate income of citizens in the coming months. This, however, should

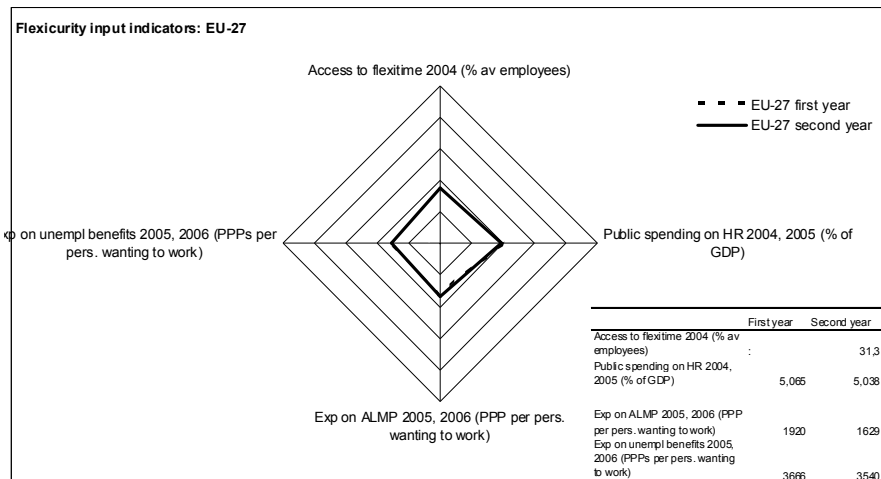
not imply a discontinuity of reforms. On the contrary, it is crucial to step-up the pace of implementation of the reform agenda to further reduce labour market rigidities, raise employability and ease transitions towards newly-created jobs. Measures intended to solve immediate problems arising from the current circumstances should be designed within the same logic as, and coherent with structural reforms.

Within the framework of the Integrated Guidelines, the flexicurity common principles and the national flexicurity approaches provide an adequate policy framework in which both short- and long-term measures can be inscribed. The prominent role of lifelong learning strategies and active labour market policies in most national flexicurity approaches mirrors the importance of upgrading the education and training levels and adapting the competences acquired to the new labour market needs.

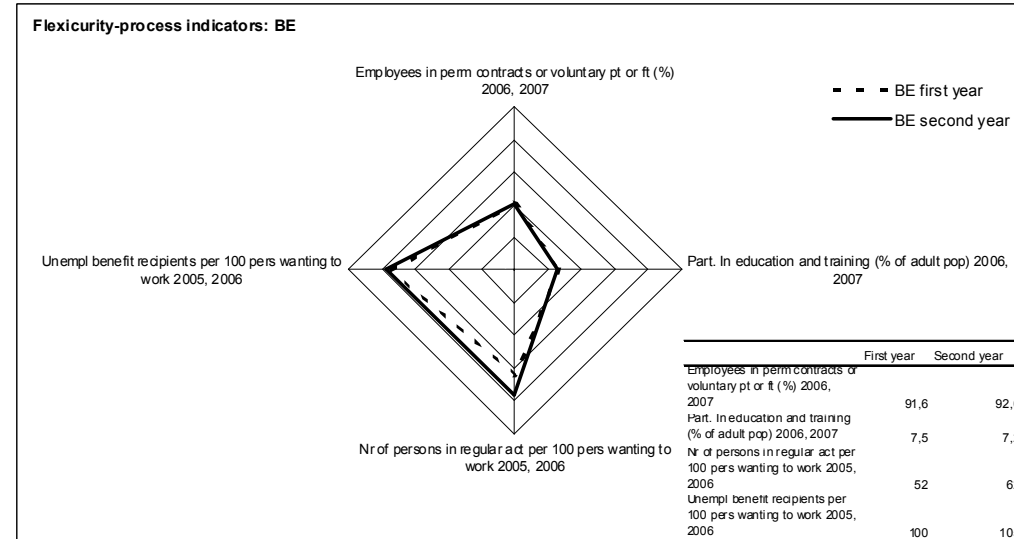
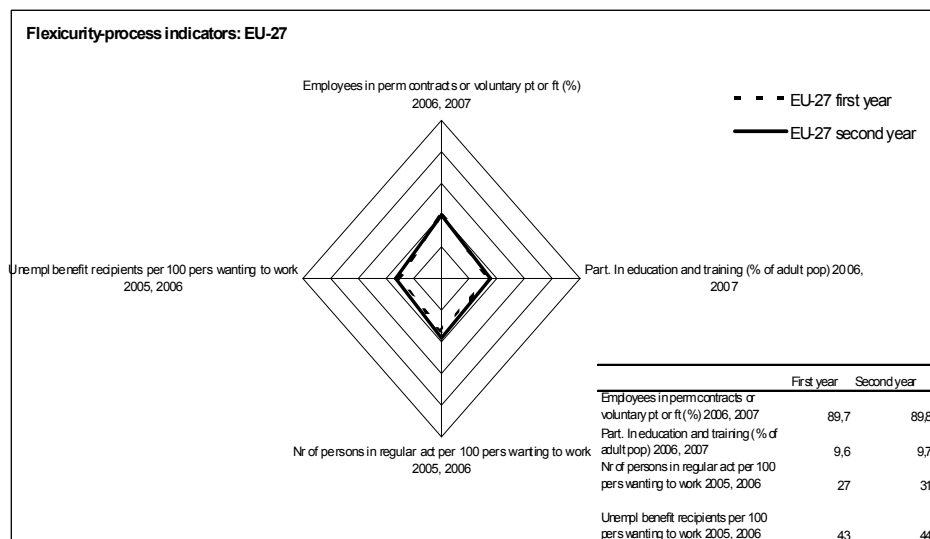
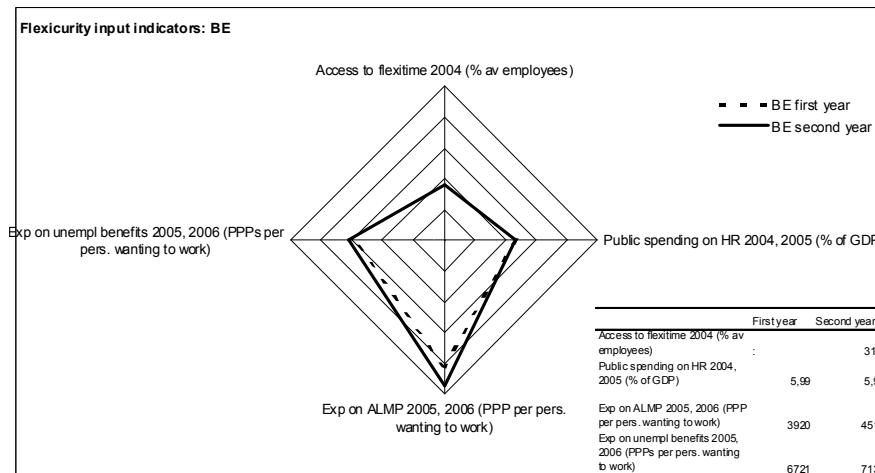
In line with 2006 Council priority to increase labour market participation and human capital, continued efforts to adapt ALMPs to the needs of the target groups, particularly the most vulnerable, and to upgrade skills to ease transitions into the labour market are therefore expected to be carried forward in 2009.

Statistical Annex

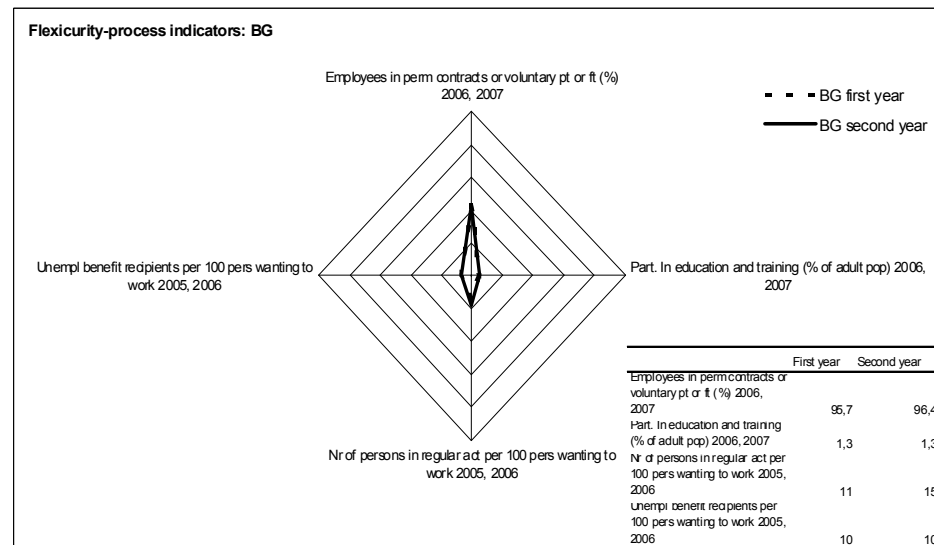
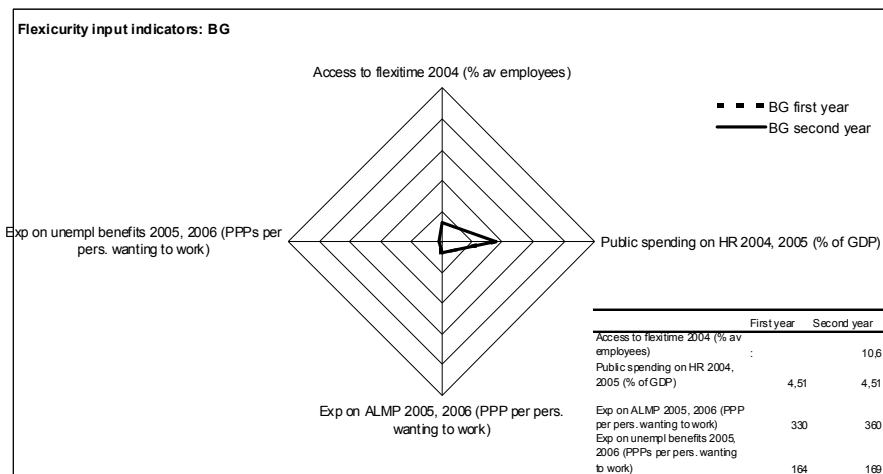
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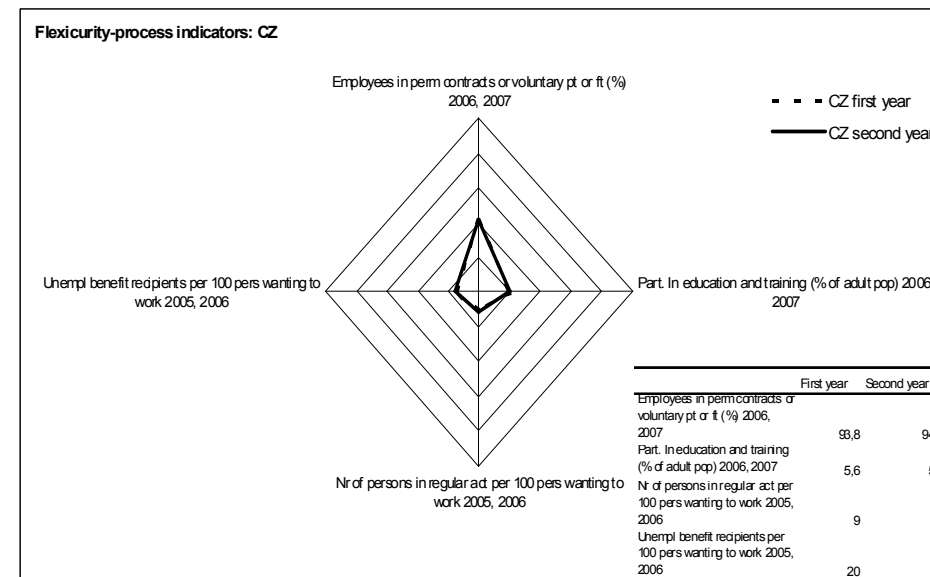
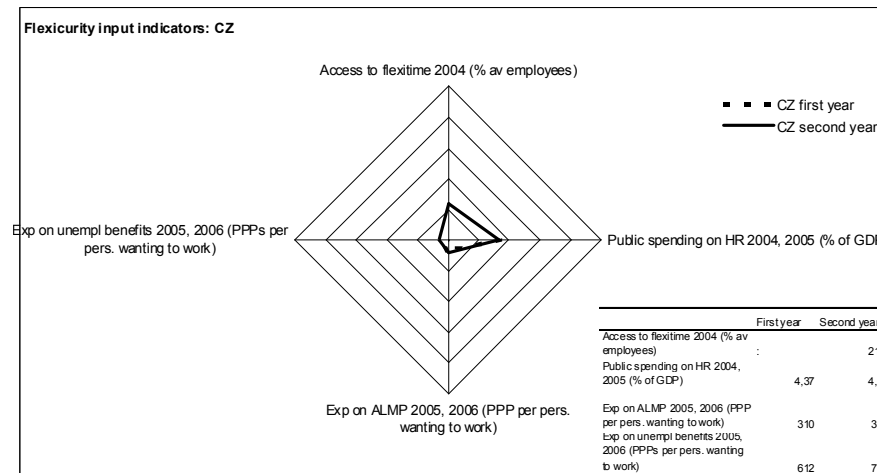
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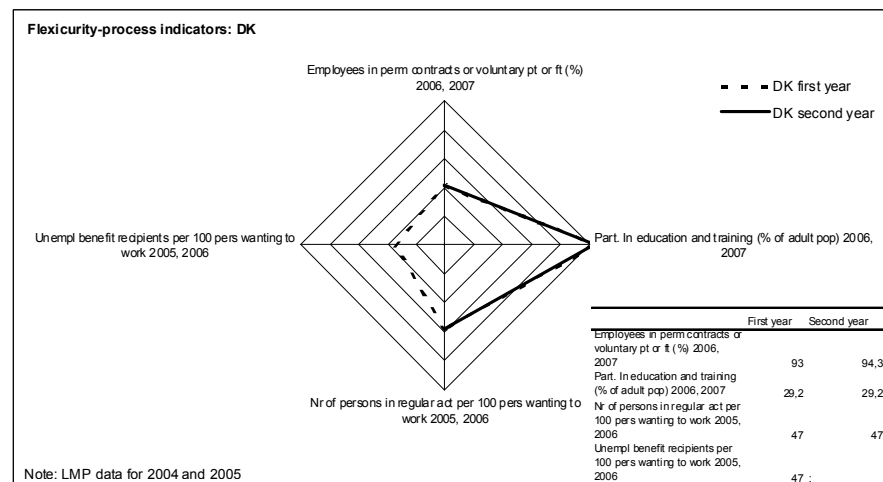
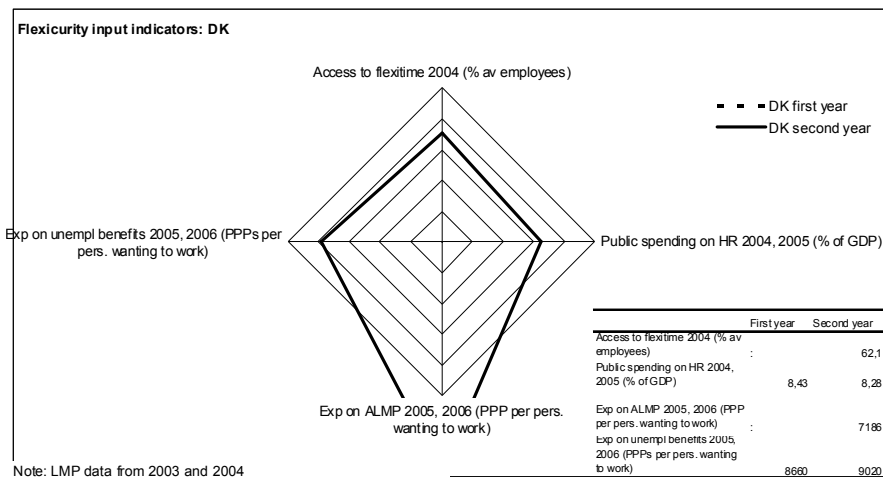
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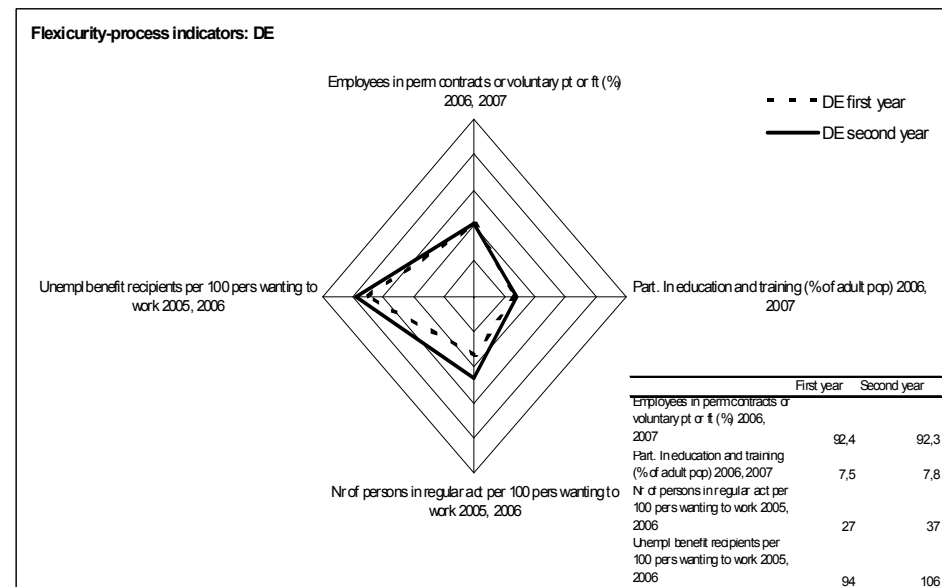
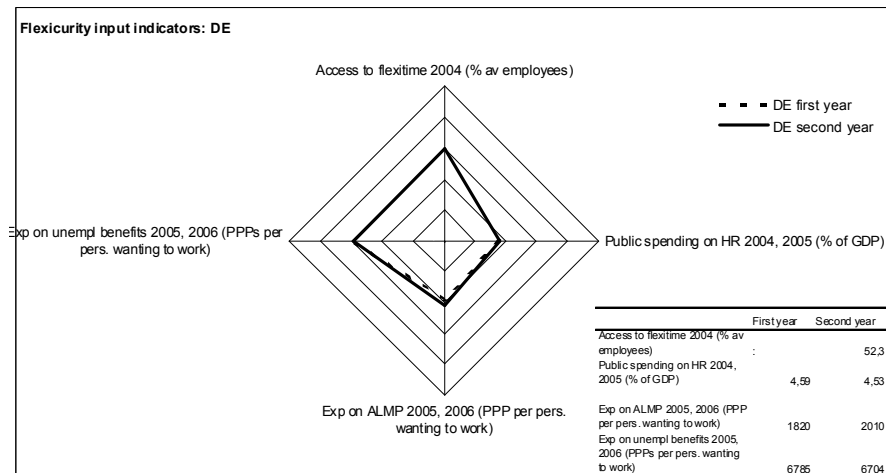
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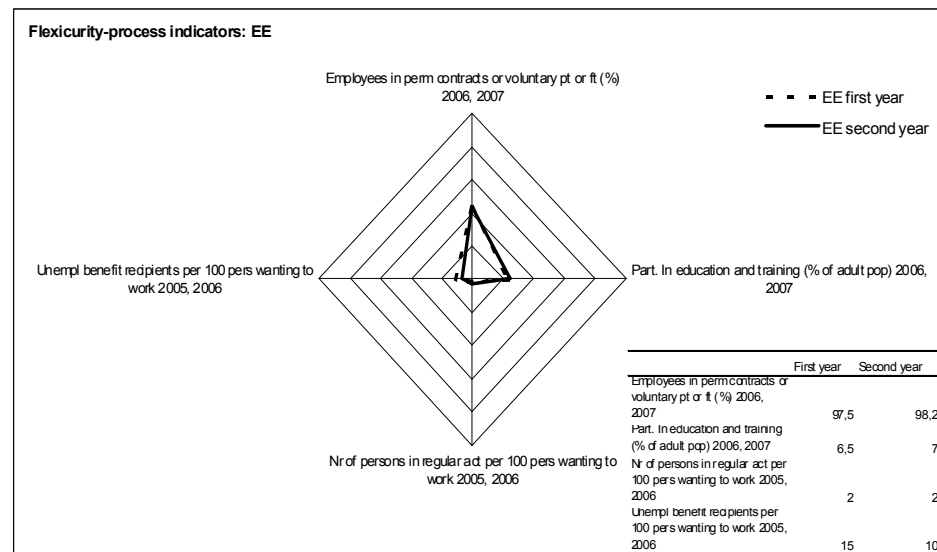
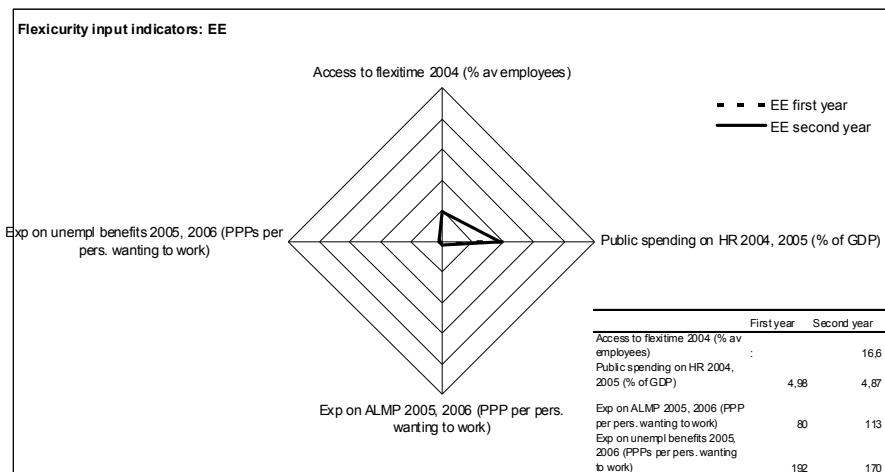
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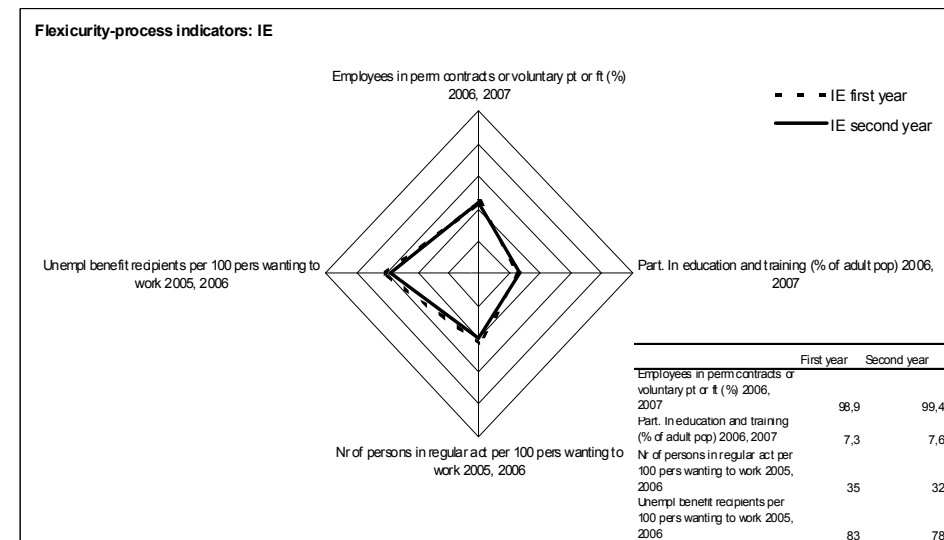
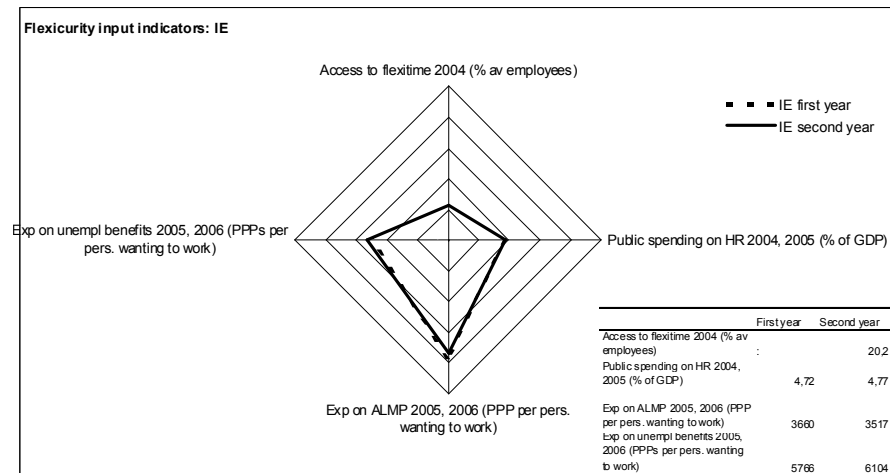
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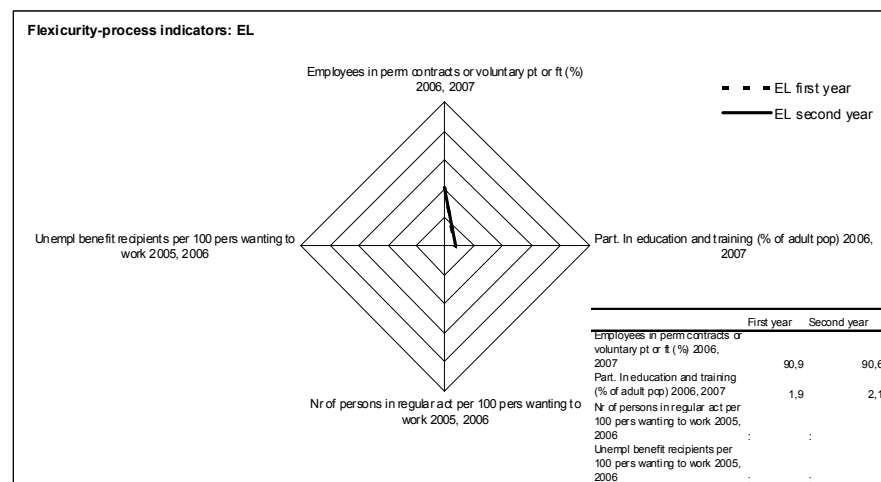
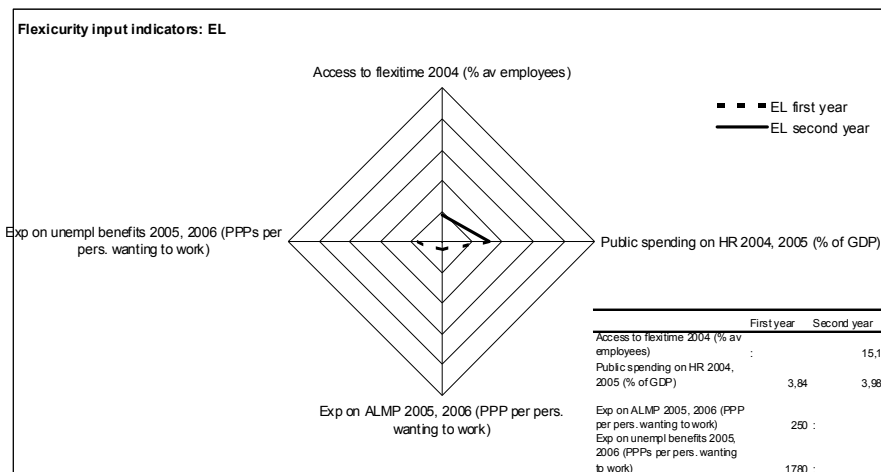
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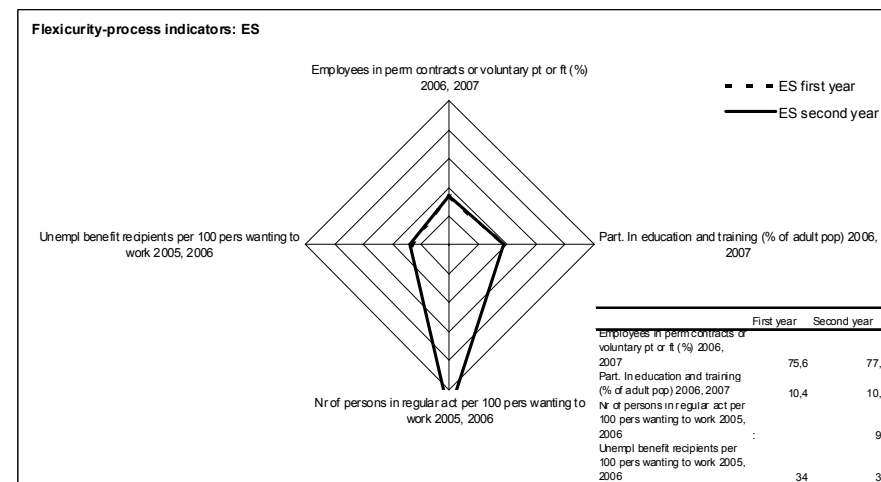
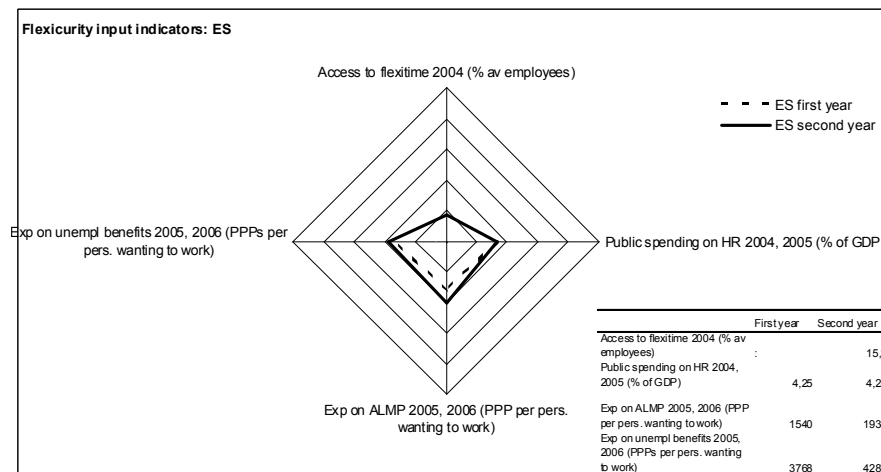
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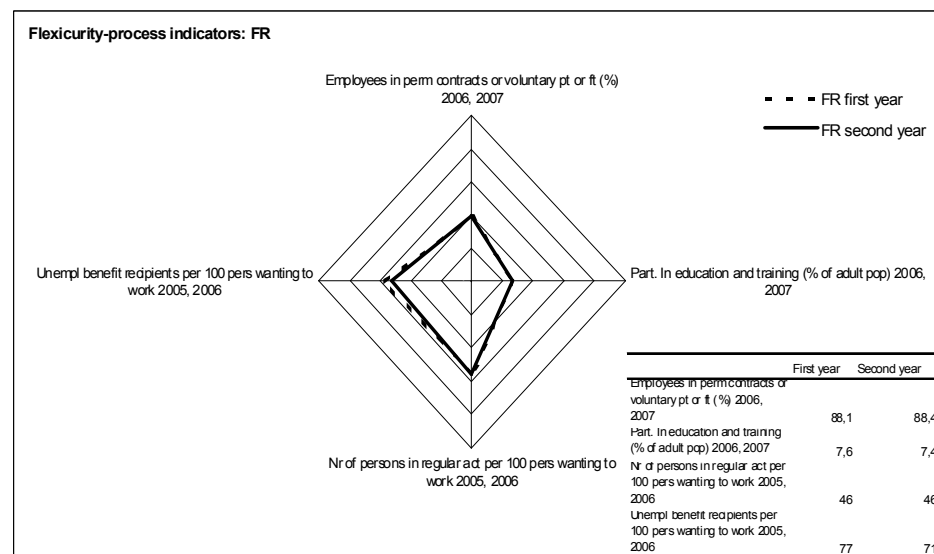
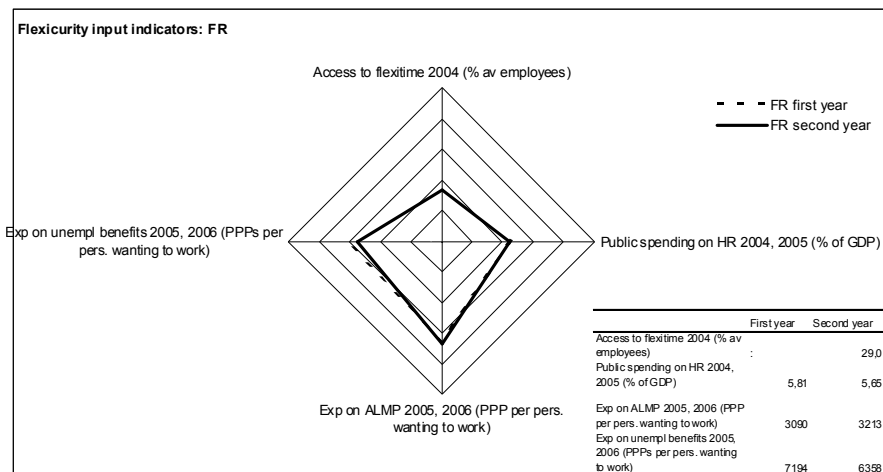
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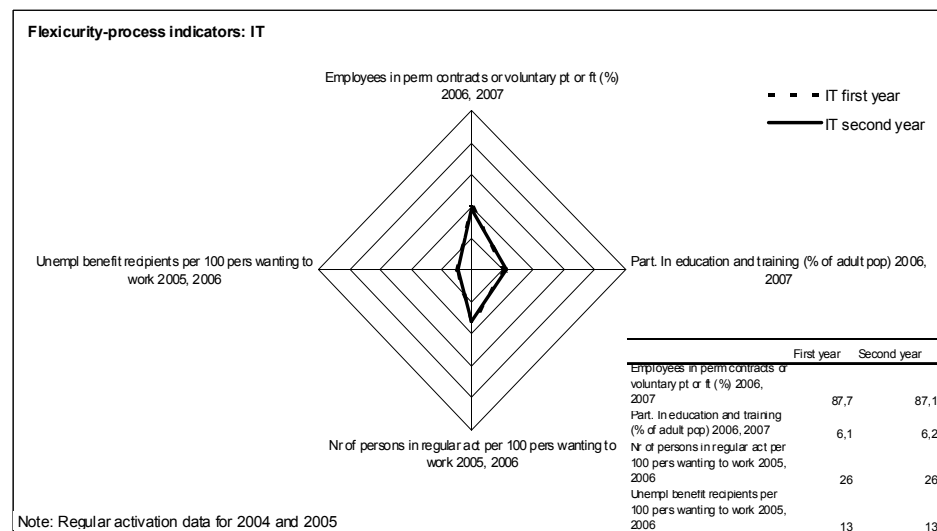
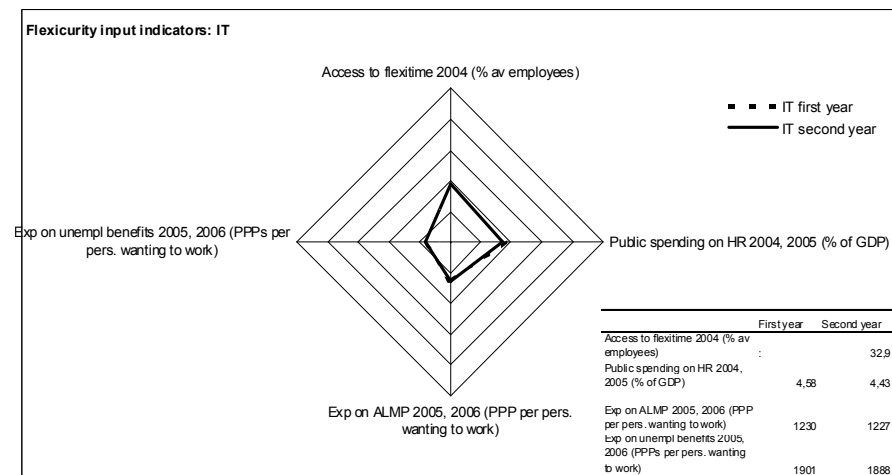
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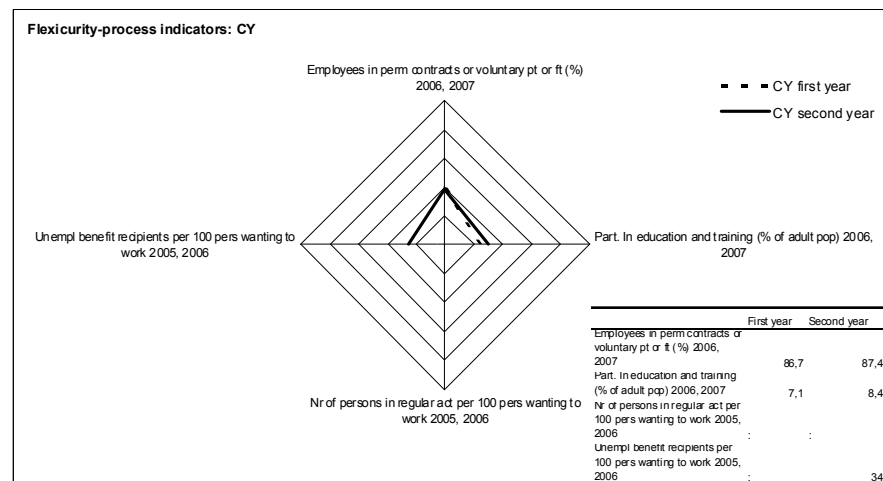
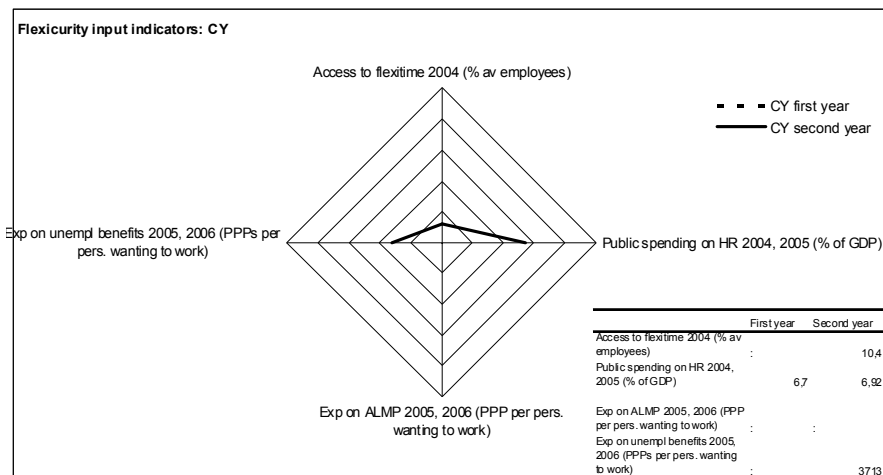
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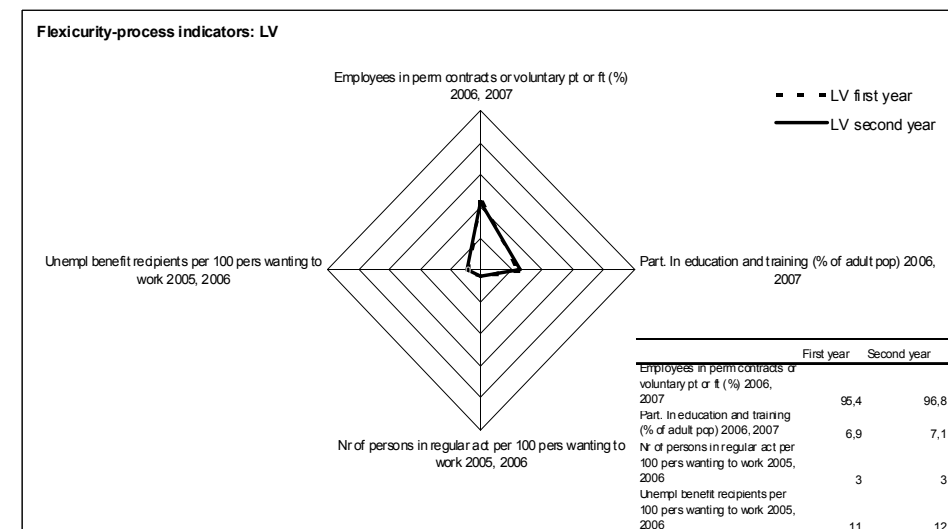
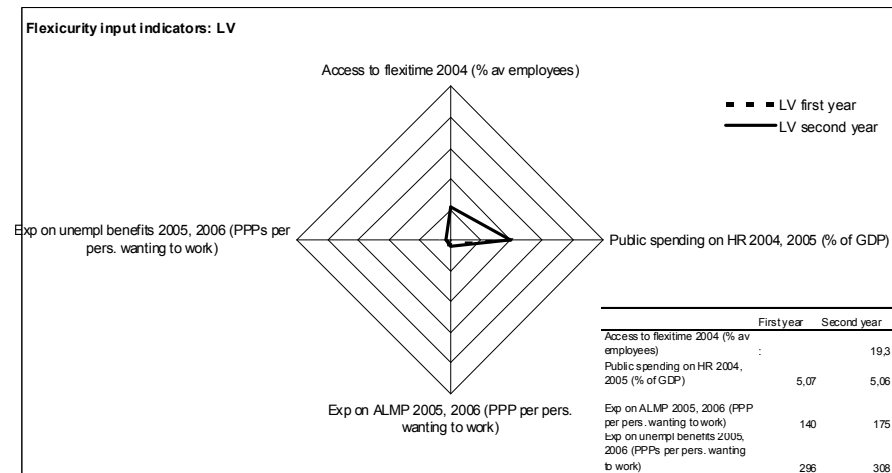
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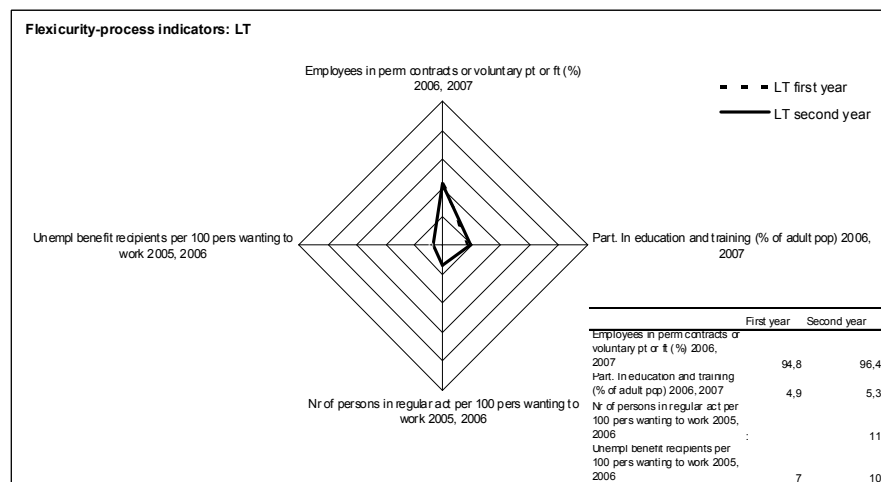
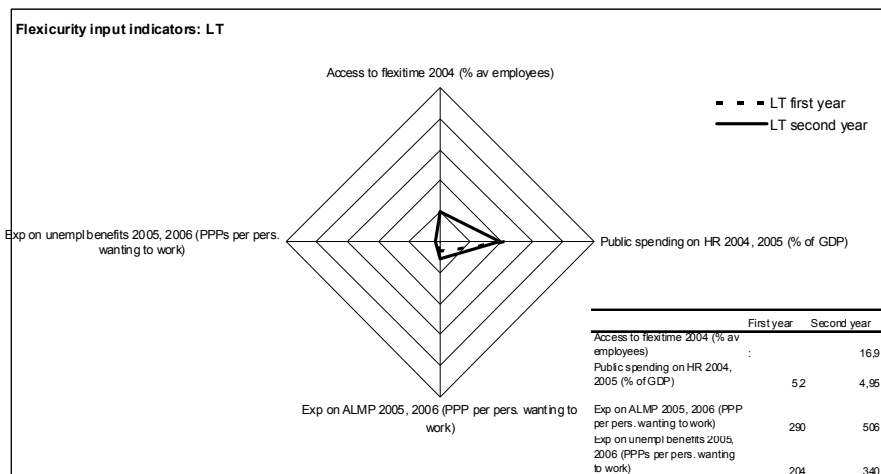
CYPRUS



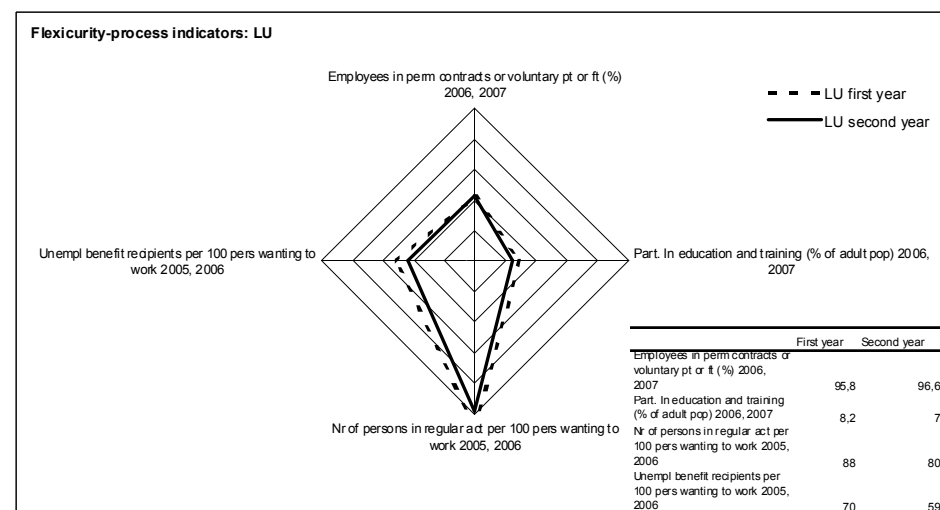
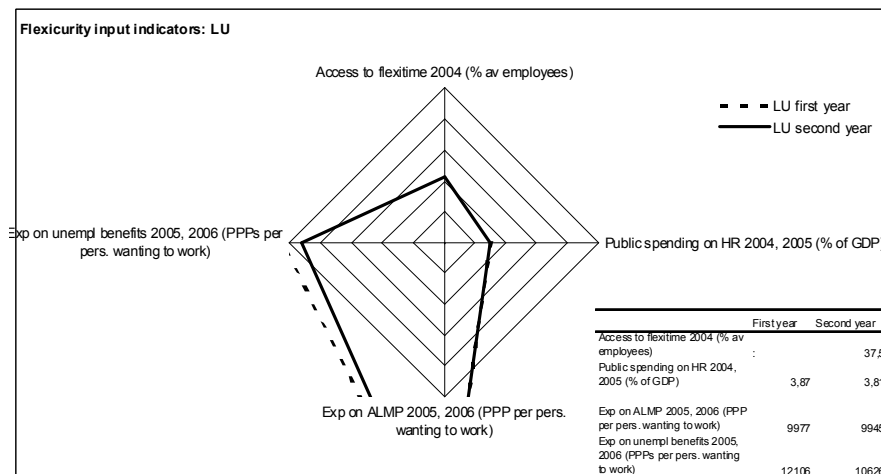
LATVIA



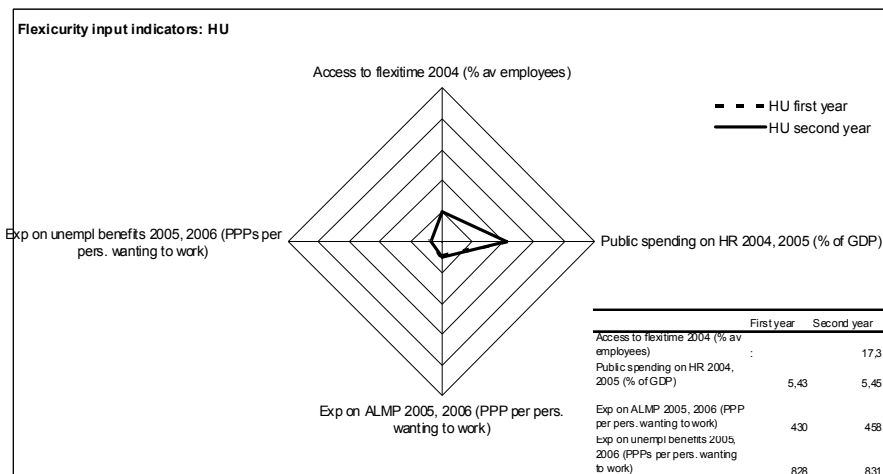
LITHUANIA



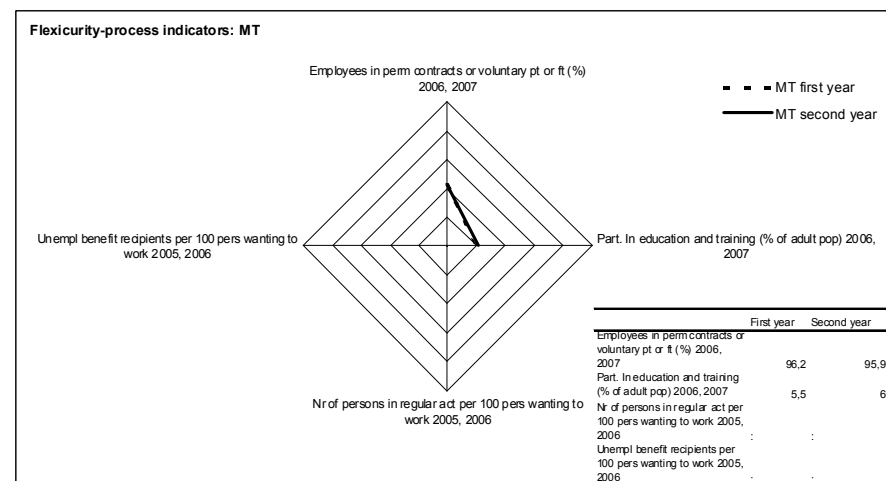
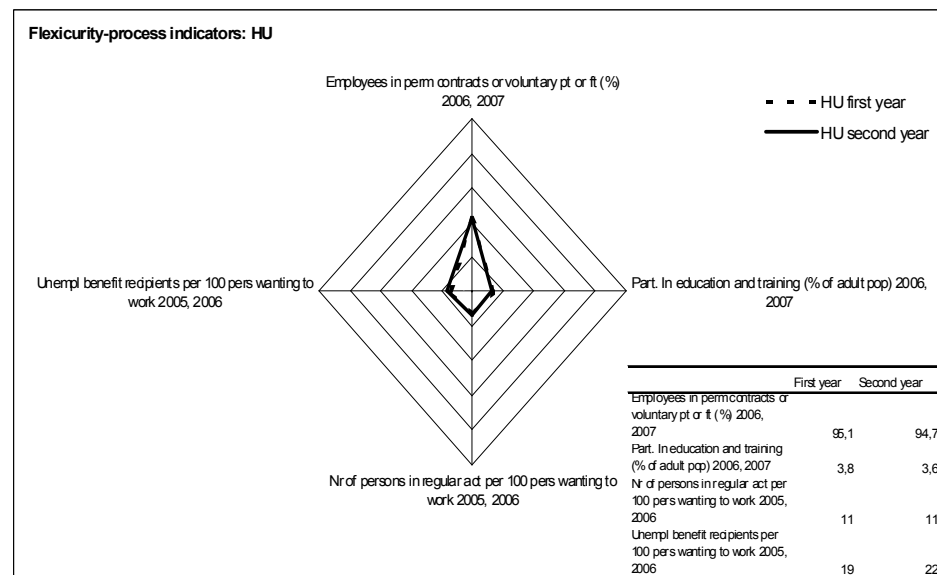
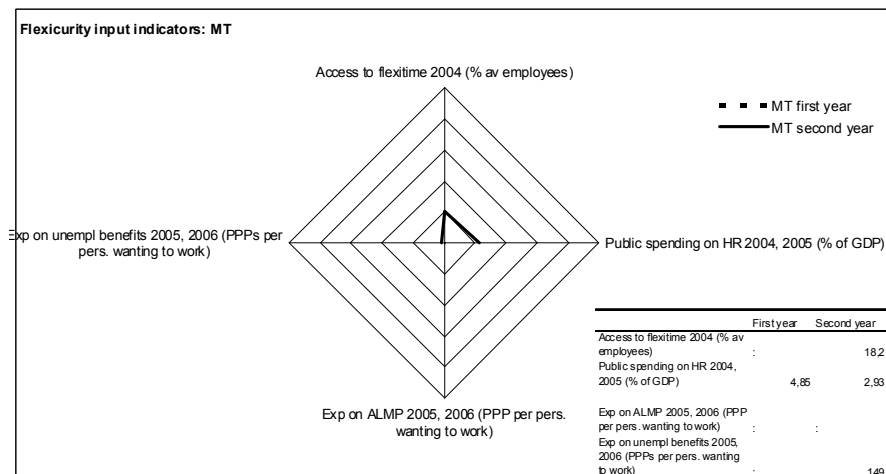
LUXEMBURG



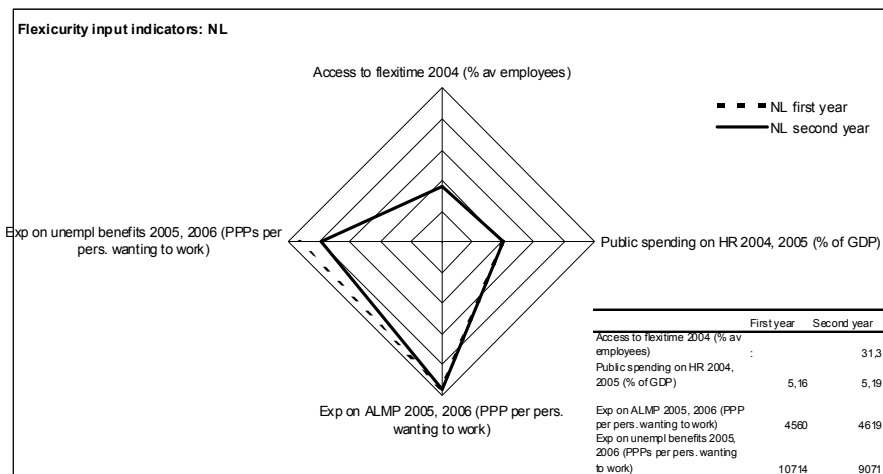
HUNGARY



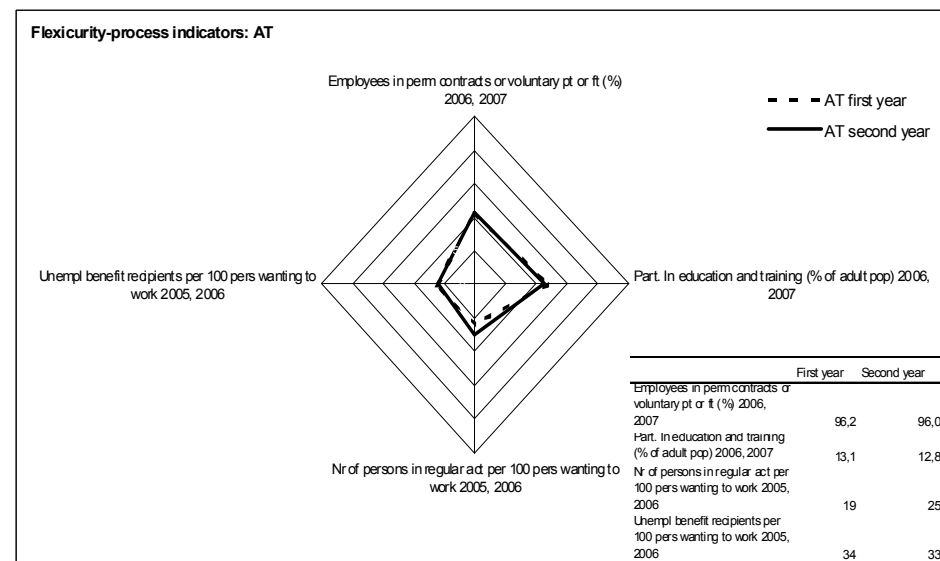
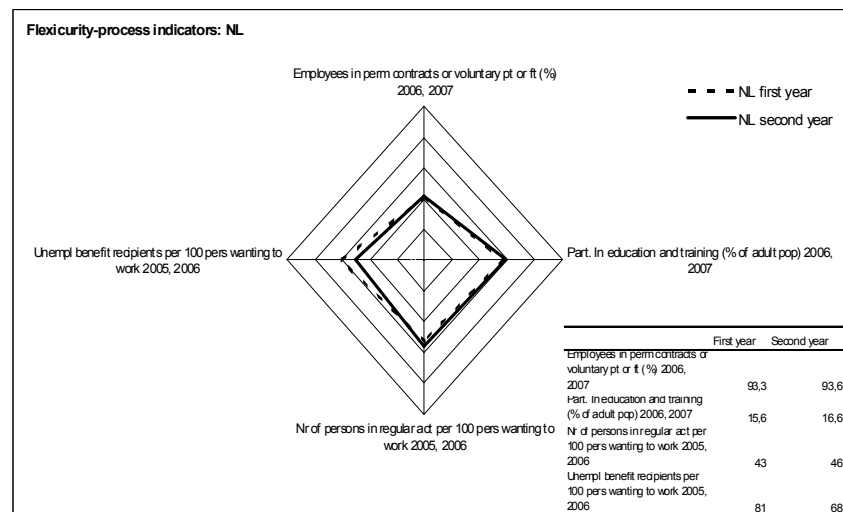
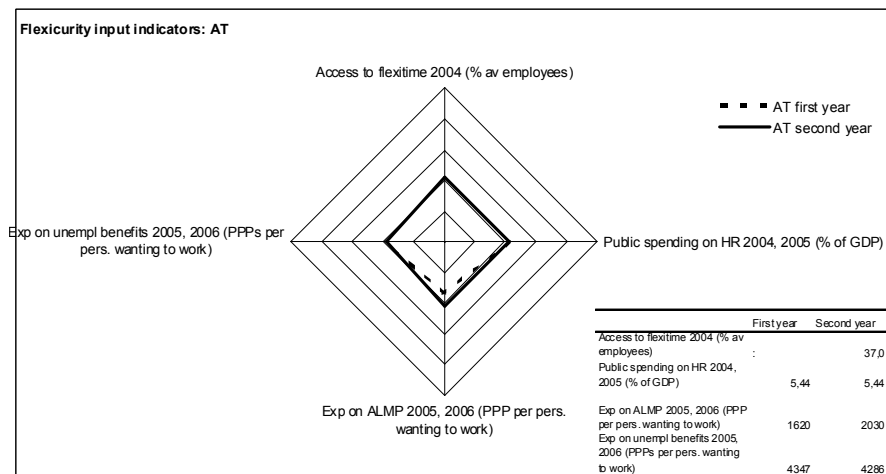
MALTA



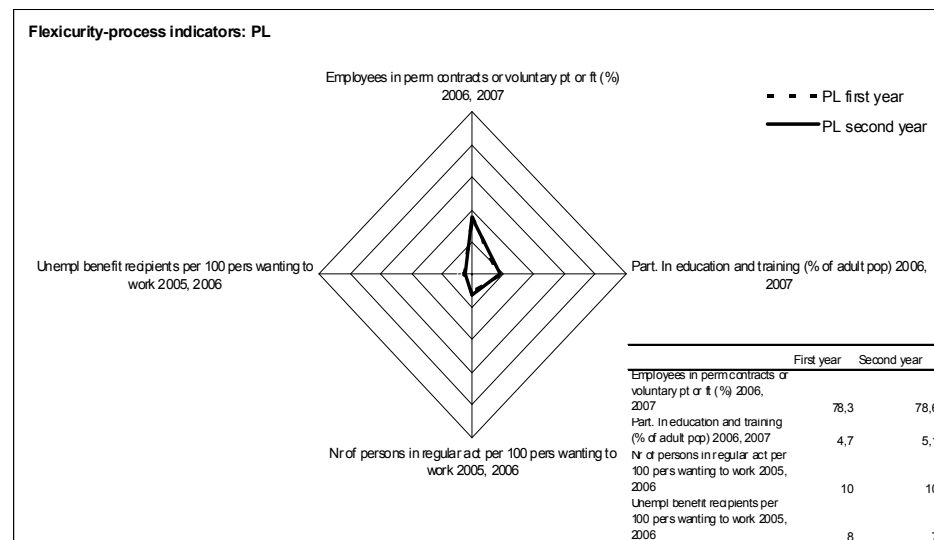
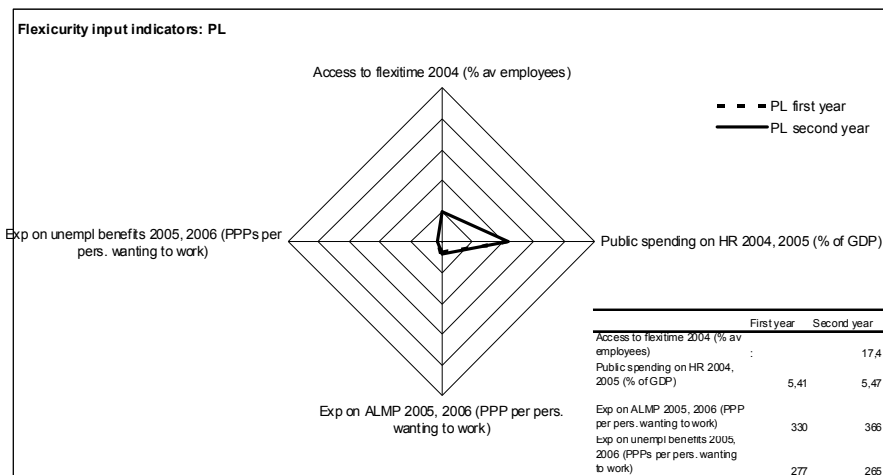
NETHERLANDS



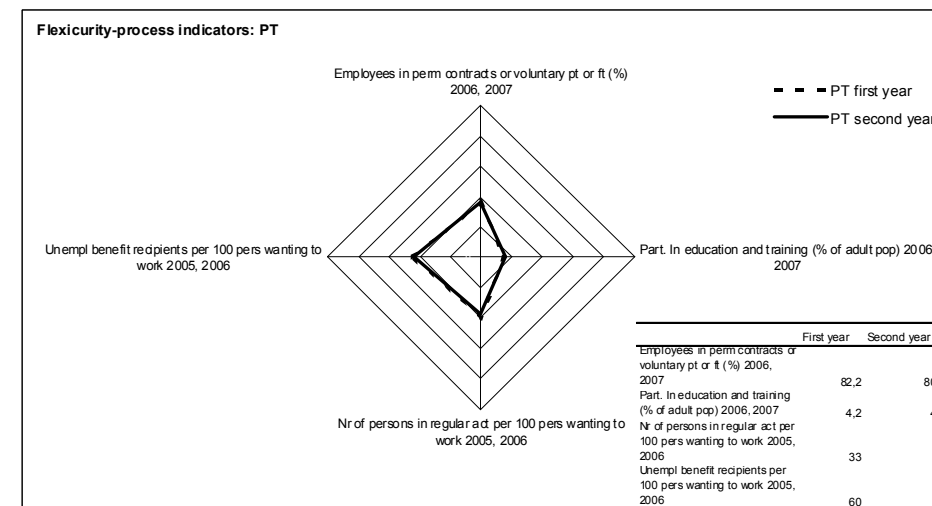
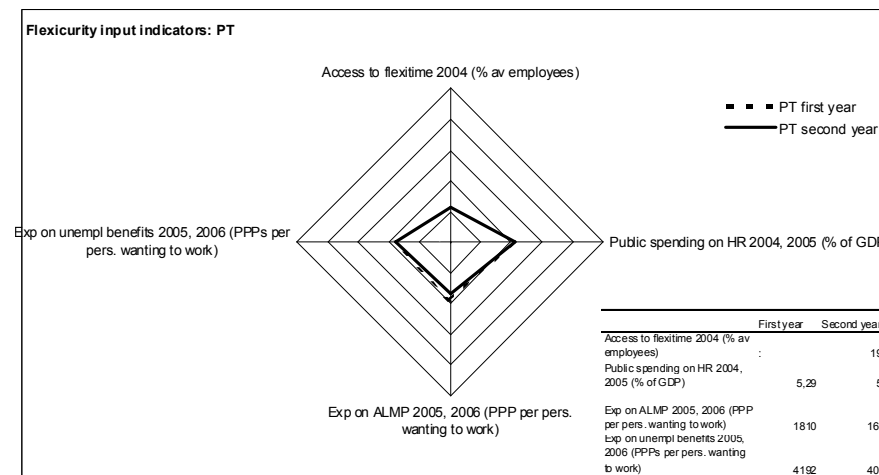
AUSTRIA



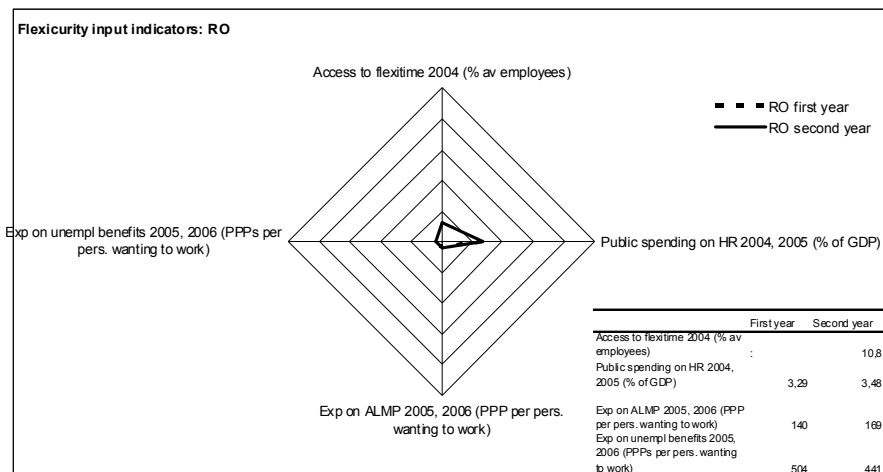
POLAND



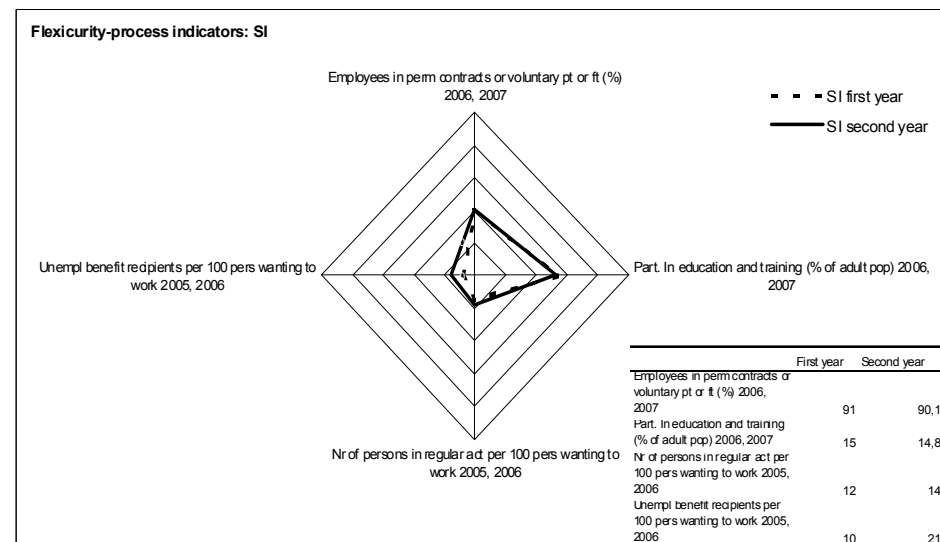
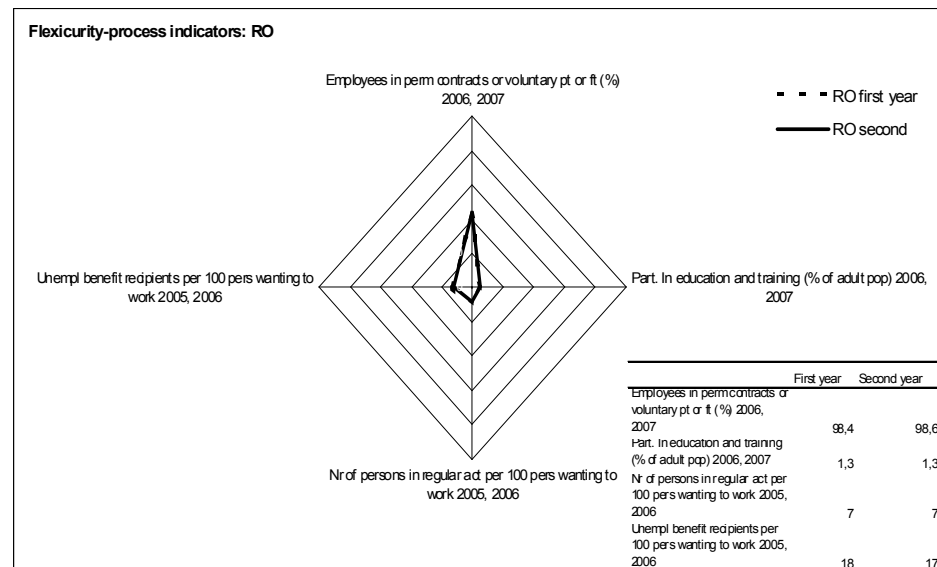
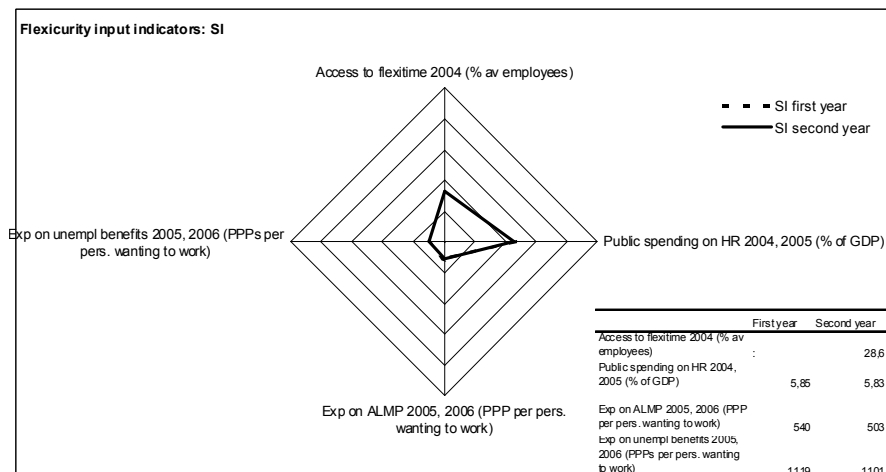
PORTUGAL



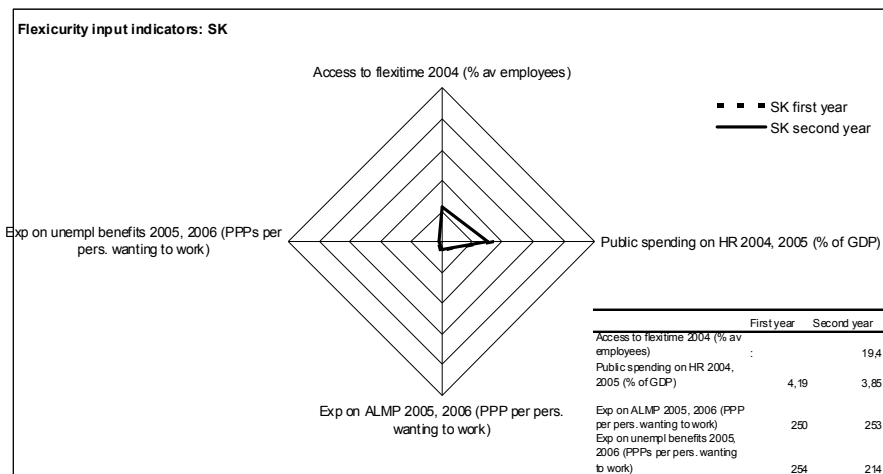
ROMANIA



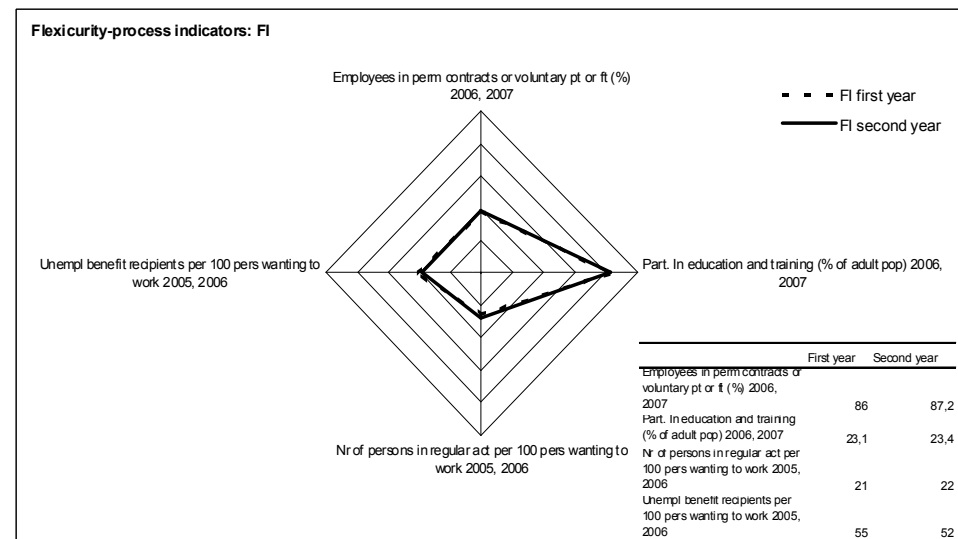
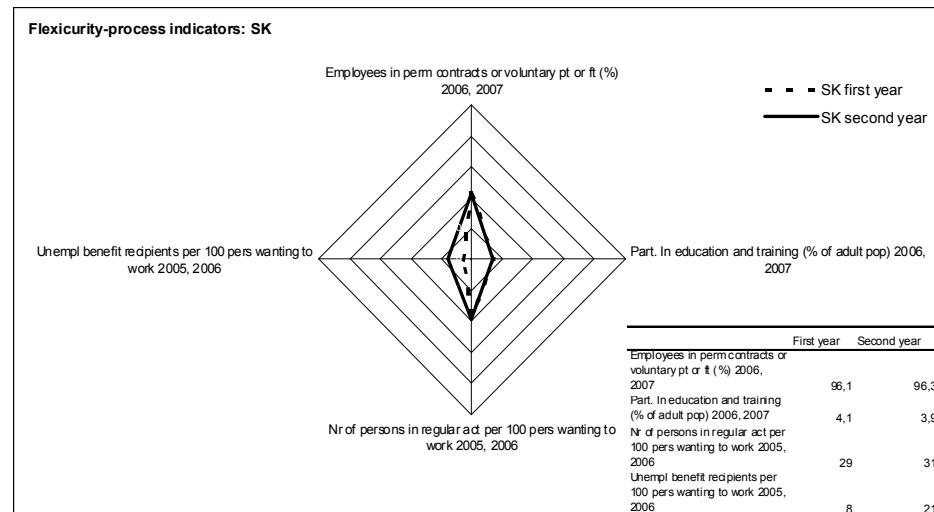
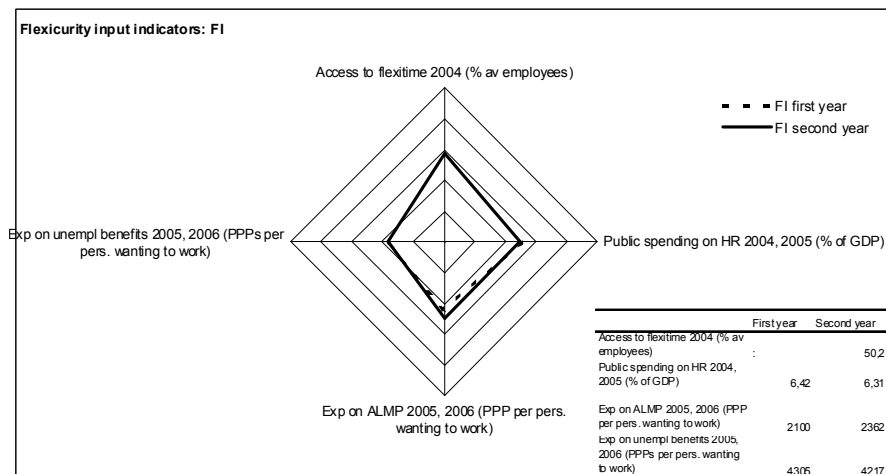
SLOVENIA



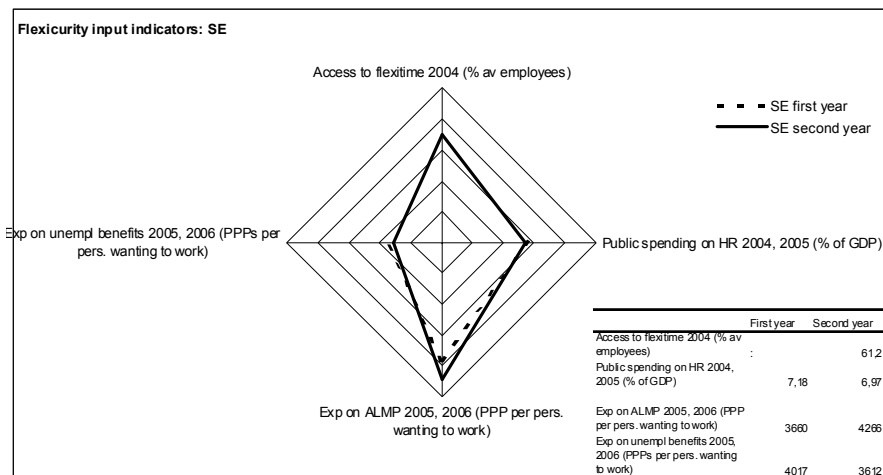
SLOVAKIA



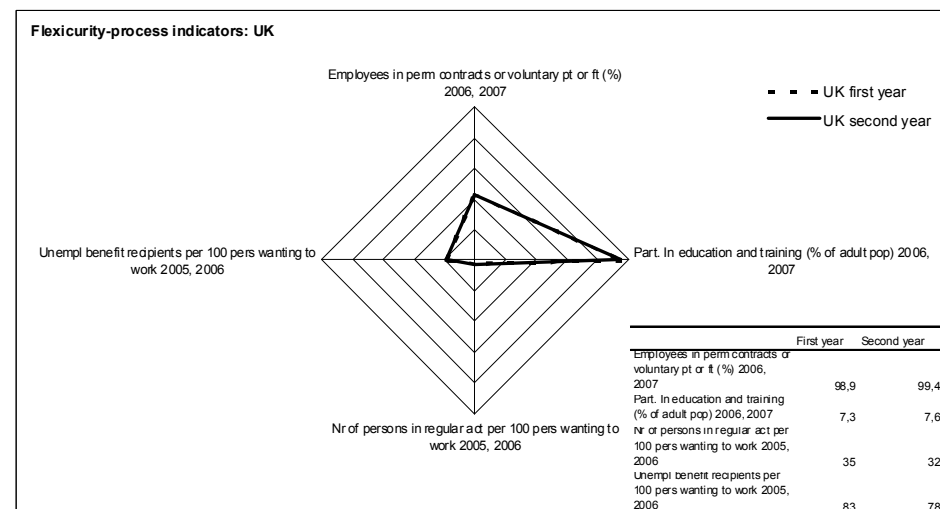
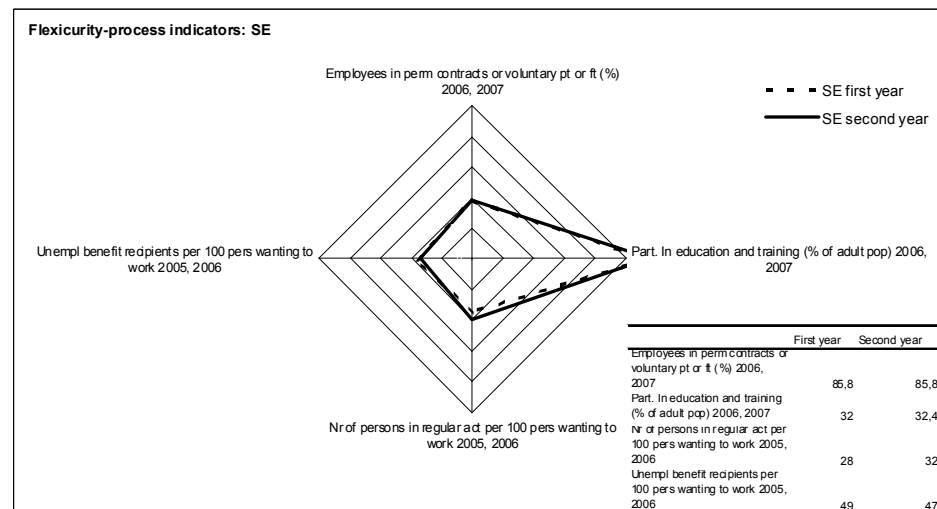
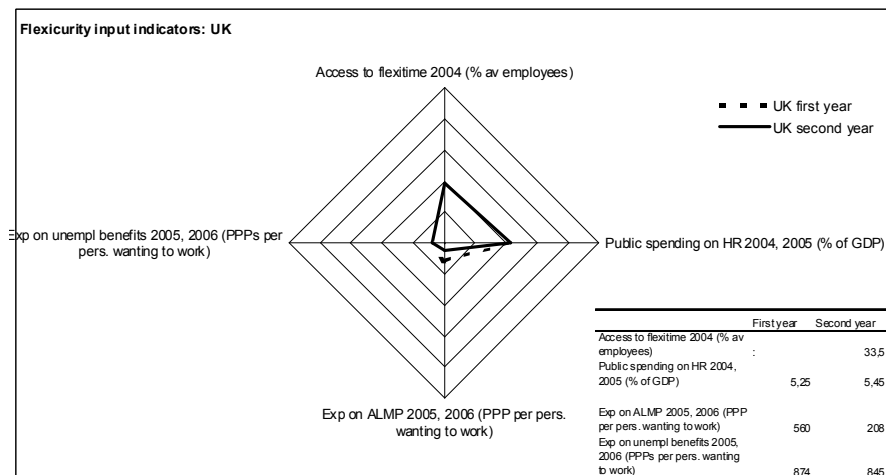
FINLAND



SWEDEN



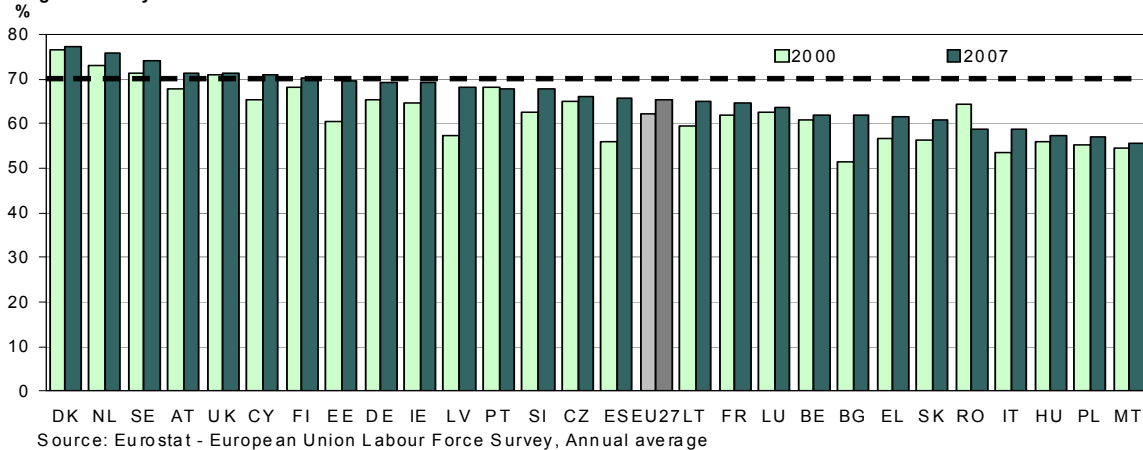
UNITED KINGDOM



Employment rates 2000 and 2007

Persons in employment in age group 15 - 64 as a share of total population in the same age group.

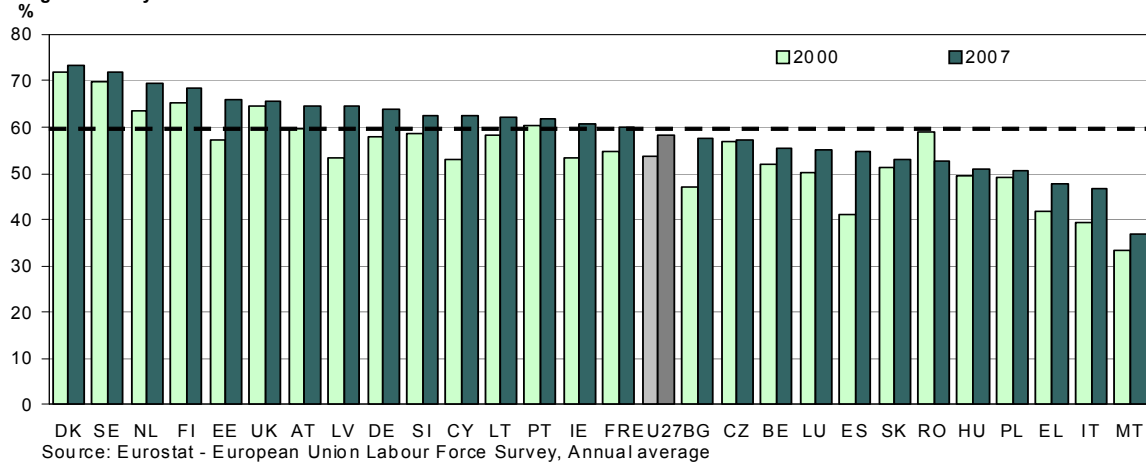
Target: 70% by 2010



Employment rates women 2000 and 2007.

Women in employment in age group 15 - 64 as a share of total women in the same age group.

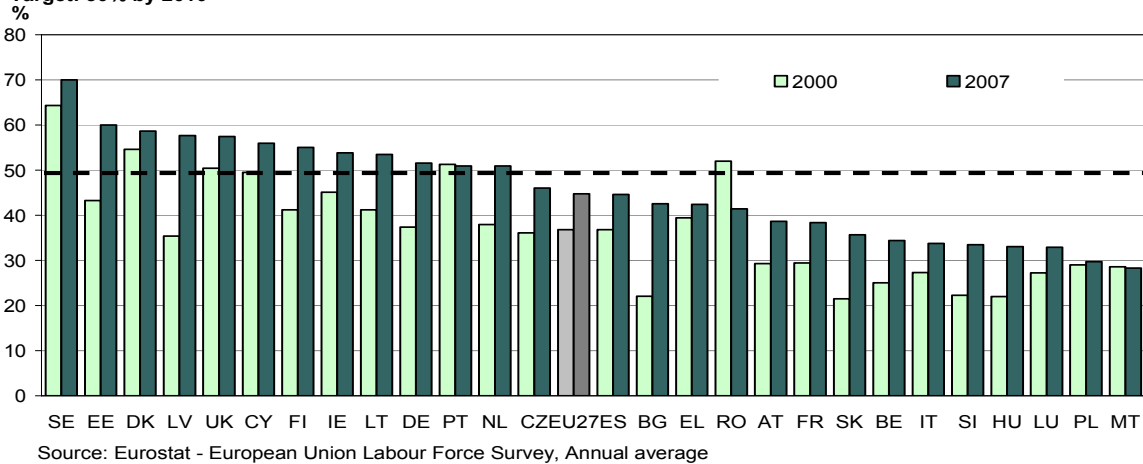
Target: 60% by 2010



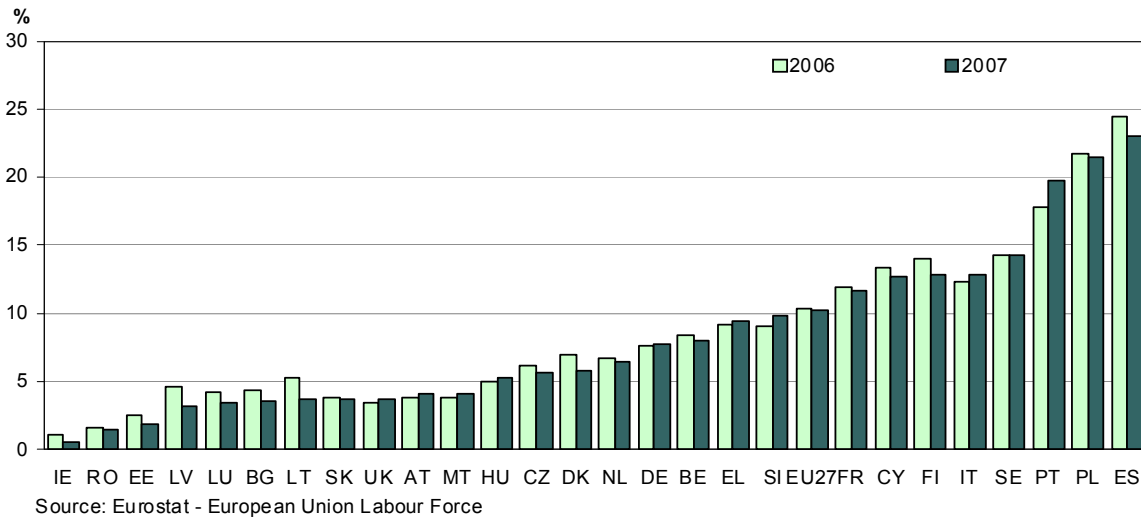
Employment rates older workers 2000 and 2007

Persons in employment in age group 55 - 64 as a share of total population in the same age group.

Target: 50% by 2010

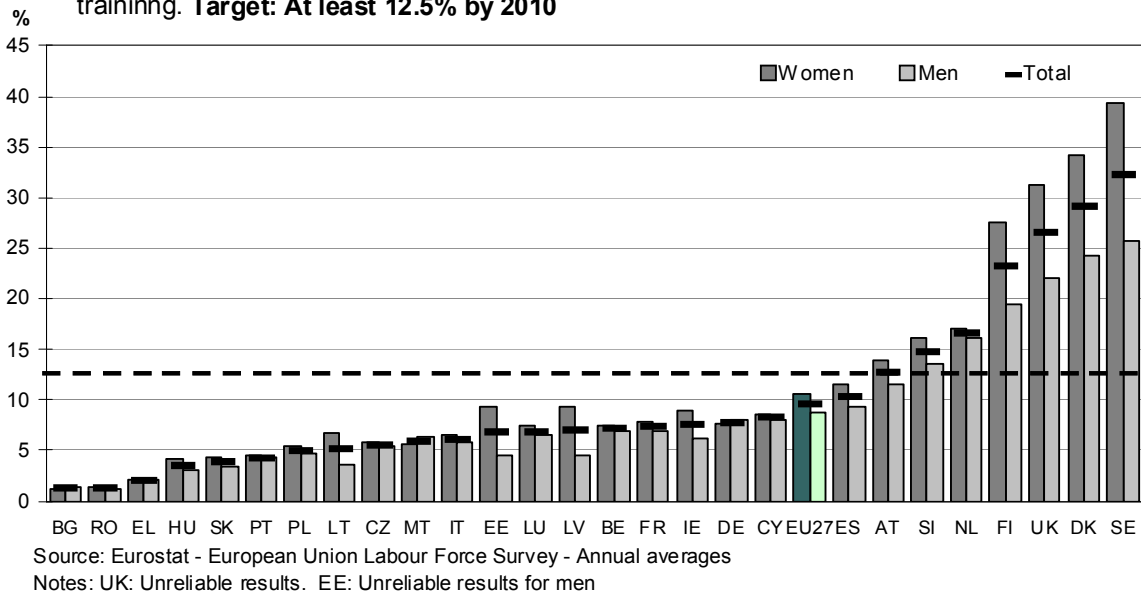


Persons working in involuntary parttime and/or fixed term contracts as % of persons in employment in 2006 and 2007



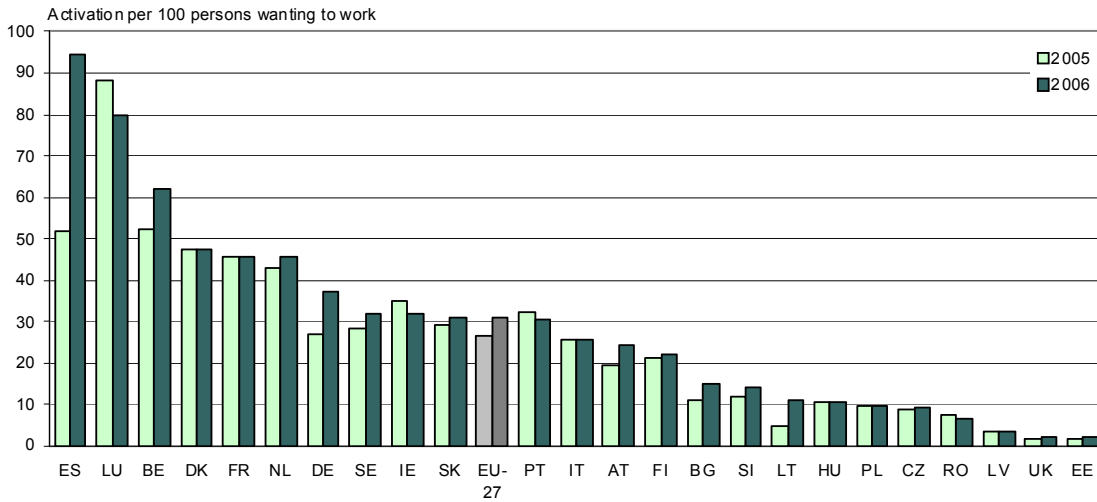
Life-long learning, 2007

Percentage of the adult population aged 25-64 participating in education and training. **Target: At least 12.5% by 2010**



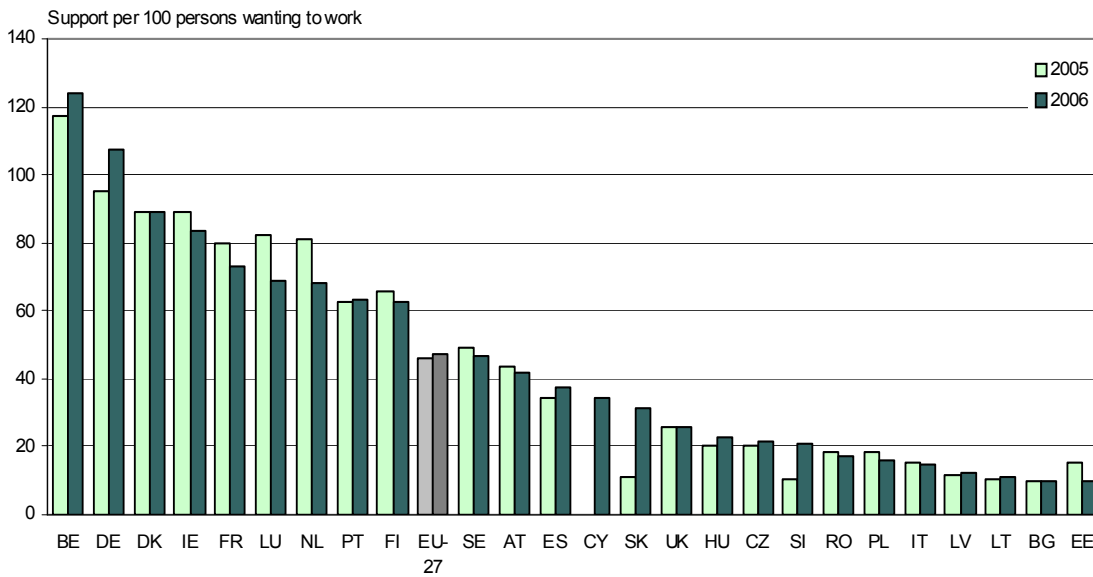
19.A2 Activation (regular), 2005 and 2006

Number of participants in LMP measures (training, retraining, work experience or other employability measure) divided by the number of persons wanting to work (LFS unemployed plus labour reserve).

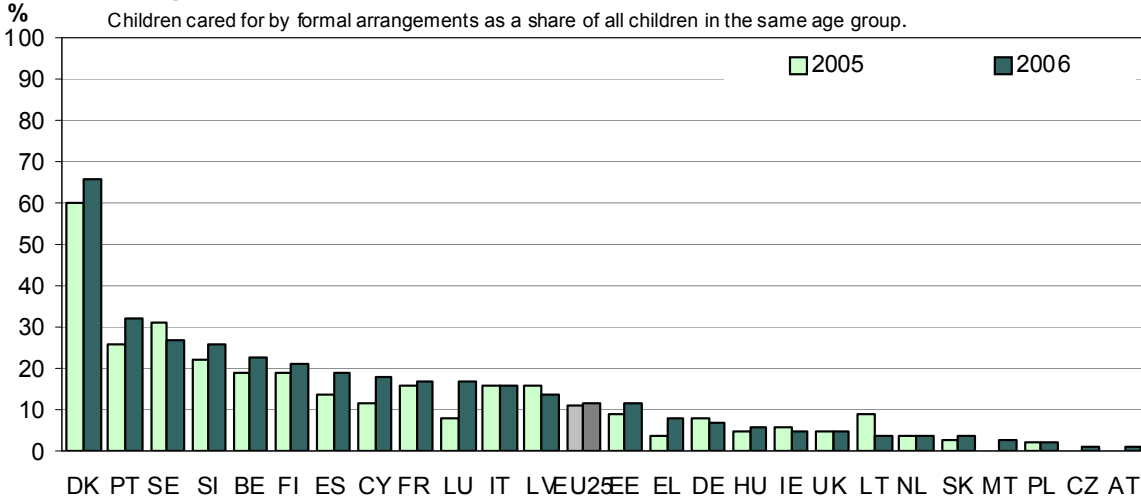


19.A2 Support (regular), 2005 and 2006

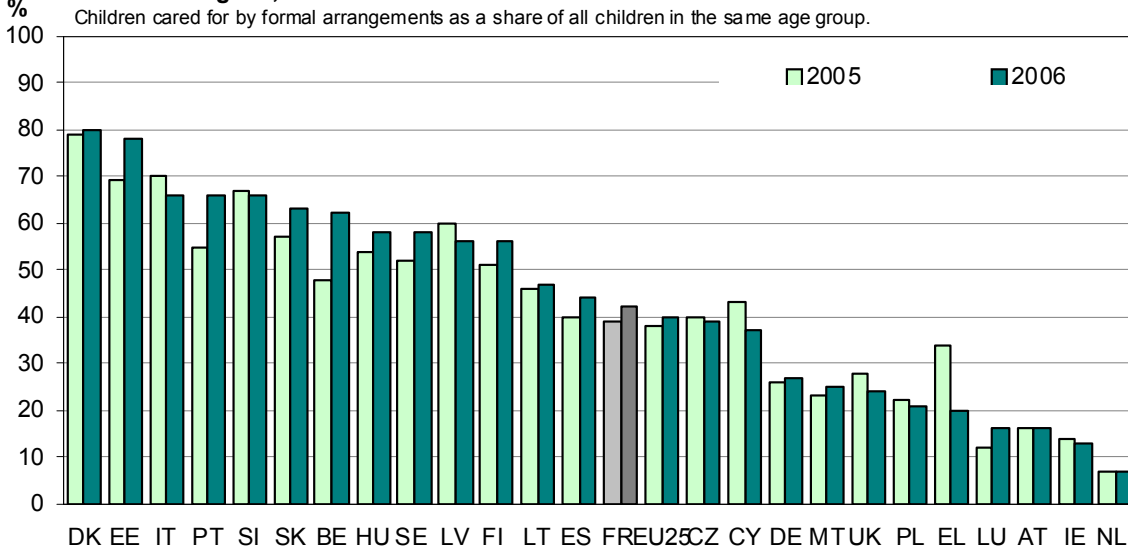
Number of recipients of supports (out-of-work income maintenance and support and early retirement) divided by the number of persons wanting to work (ILO unemployed plus the labour reserve).



Children aged 0 - 2 cared for at least 30 hours per week by formal arrangements, 2005 and 2006



Children aged 3 to comp. school age cared for at least 30 hours per week by formal arrangem., 2005 and 2006



Source: Eurostat - Statistics on Income and Living Conditions

Notes: Formal childcare refers to pre-school or equivalent, compulsory education, centre-based services outside school hours, a collective crèche or another day-care centre, including family day-care organised/controlled by a public or private structure.

Some children do not use child care since parent is taking parental leave for a younger child. Child age is calculated at the interview date, except for IE and FI where age is calculated at 31/12.

CY, LV, PT, SK: No information collected for children born between 31/12/2004 and the interview date

FR: Care performed by 'assistantes maternelles' directly paid by the parents, without organised structure between them, is not included in the table

2005, IE: For the age group 3 - comp. school, care 30 - h is underestimated due to measurement error. 2005, SK Measurement error for the age group 'mandatory school age school - 12 years' leading to high proportion of children without school hours.

2005: PT: High proportion of missing values for the age group "3 years - mandatory school age school"

BE BG CZ DK DE EE IE EL ES FR IT CY LV LT LU HU MT NL AT PL PT RO SI SK FI SE UK

Nr of months of mat./pat./parent leave with benefits replacing at least 2/3 of salary 3,5 : 7 11,5 3 12 5 4 4 4 5 4 4 12 10 : 3 4 4 4 4 4 : 12 6,5 10 16 1,5

Admission age for compulsory education 6 7 6 7 6 7 6 6 6 6 6 6 5 7 4 5 5 5 6 6 6 7 6 6 7 7 5

Notes: SK: Salary replacement is 55%; FR: Leave is 6 months from 3rd child