

Faculty of
Social Sciences

Men and Reconciliation in the Netherlands

**Men and Reconciliation of Work and Family in
Male Dominated Sectors, June 3 2016, Vienna**

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Introduction

- Men and reconciliation in a part-time work culture
 - Do Dutch fathers use part-time work as a strategy to combine paid and unpaid work?
 - Leave and flexible working: another strategy?
 - Work-life support across sectors: is there a glass wall?
 - Support in male dominated sectors compared to other sectors



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The Netherlands: Part-time work Champion

- The Working Hours Adjustment Act (2000)
 - *The right to extend or reduce working hours*
- 77% of working women work part-time compared to 26,4% of men
 - Men work part-time at the start or at the end of their career
 - Fathers work the most hours compared to other men (40,2 pw)
- Mothers with a partner work the least hours: Dominance of the one-and-a-half earner family model (54% of couples with children)
- Education/training is the main reason for men to work part-time
- The most important reason for women is care for children or other dependents.
- Reasons not to work part-time:
 - Finance, career, lack of supervisory support

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How do Dutch couples with children combine work and family life?

	2003	2009	2013
Two full-time jobs	6%	8%	8%
One-and-a-half earner	46%	56%	54%
Two part-time jobs	6%	7%	7%
One full-time earner	35%	24%	23%
One part-time earner	4%	3%	5%
No employment	4%	2%	4%

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Availability and accessibility of leave arrangements

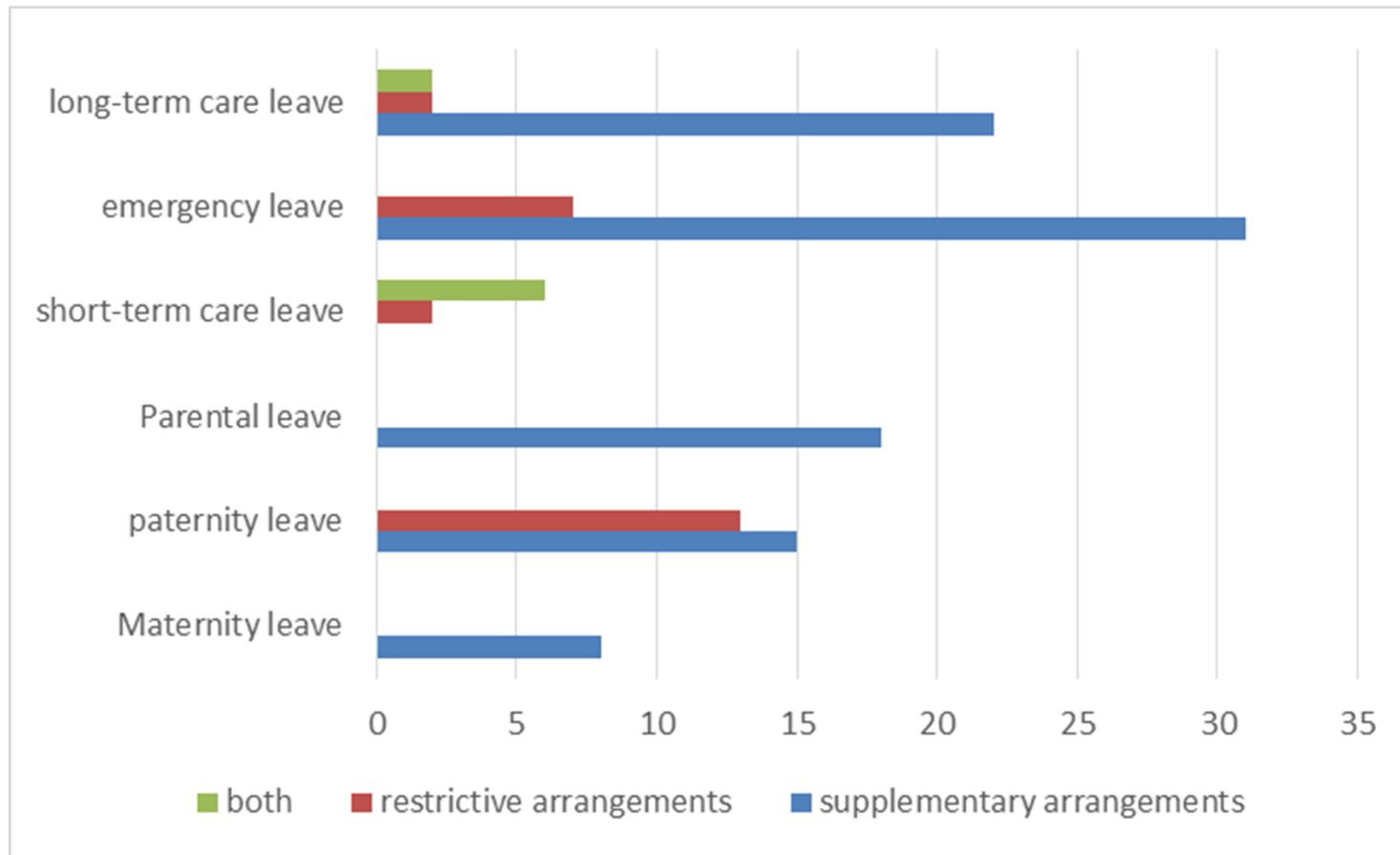
- Relatively short leaves
- Not always (fully) paid
- Conditional rights in some cases
- Individual entitlements
- Little incentives for fathers



- 26 weeks (unpaid) parental leave
- 16 weeks (paid) maternity leave
- 5 days (partly paid) paternity leave
- 4 weeks (paid) adoption leave
- 10 (partly paid) days short-term care leave
- 6 weeks (unpaid) long-term care leave

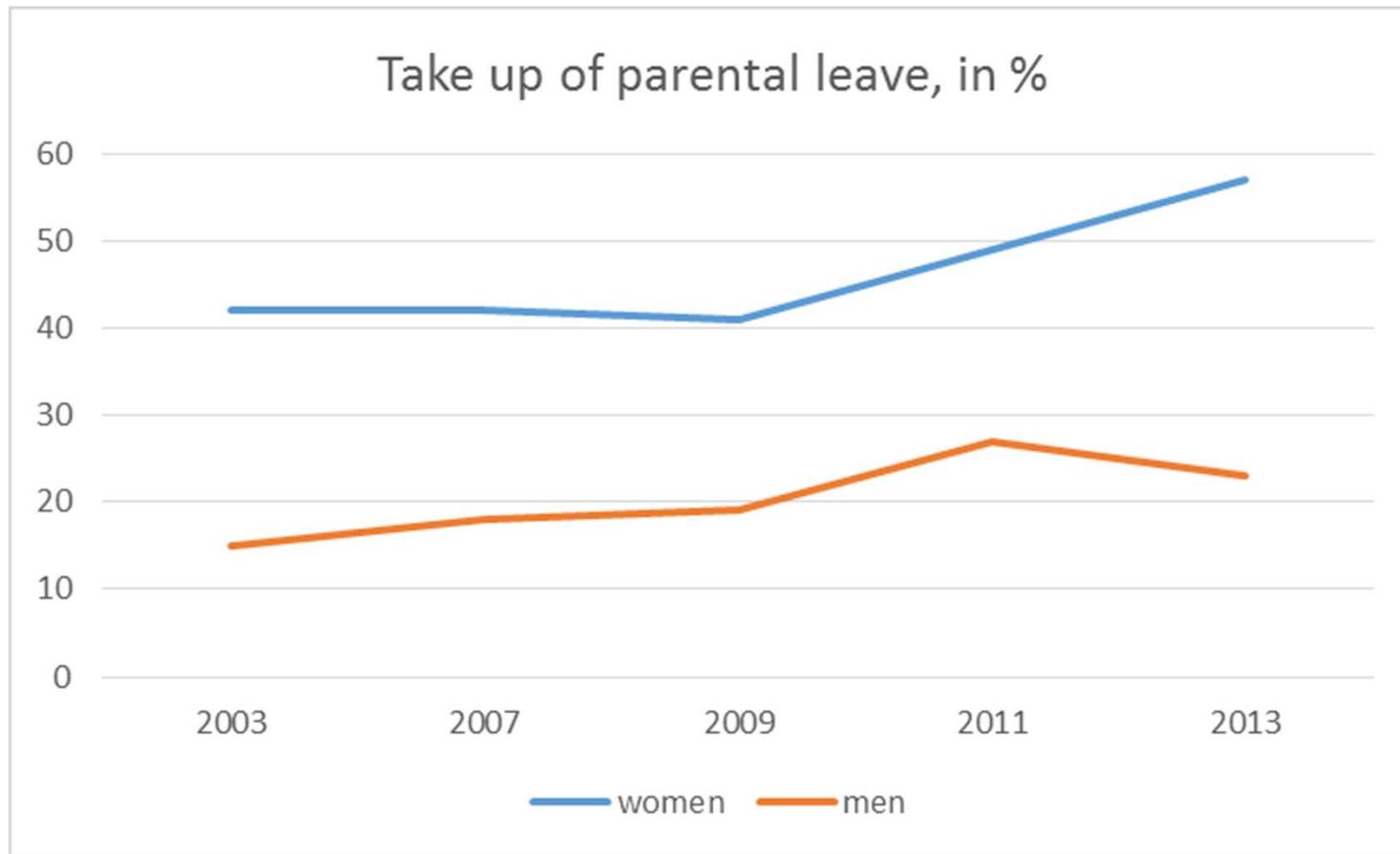
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Percentage of collective agreements offering enhanced or restrictive leave arrangements (De la Croix et al 2014)



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Use of parental leave by entitled fathers and mothers, 2003-2013



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Take up of leave

- All mothers use maternity leave and fathers take 2 days paternity leave
- Use of parental leave: 57% of women; 23% of men
 - Take up on a part-time basis (women on average 10 hours a week; men 8)
 - Take up by fathers declined somewhat since 2011
 - Take up by fathers depend on financial and career considerations and the working hours of their partners
 - In particular, high educated, full-time working mothers use parental leave.
- Short-term and long-term care leave seldom used when needed; most people use annual leave

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Flexible working time options

- Attention for flexible working time options: “New Ways of Working”
 - *Working anytime, anywhere*
- Modernizing Leave and Working Times Act (2015)
 - Integrating the Working Hours Adjustment Act and the Work and Care Act
 - **New:** right to time/spatial flexibility: working from home and flexible working hours (2017)

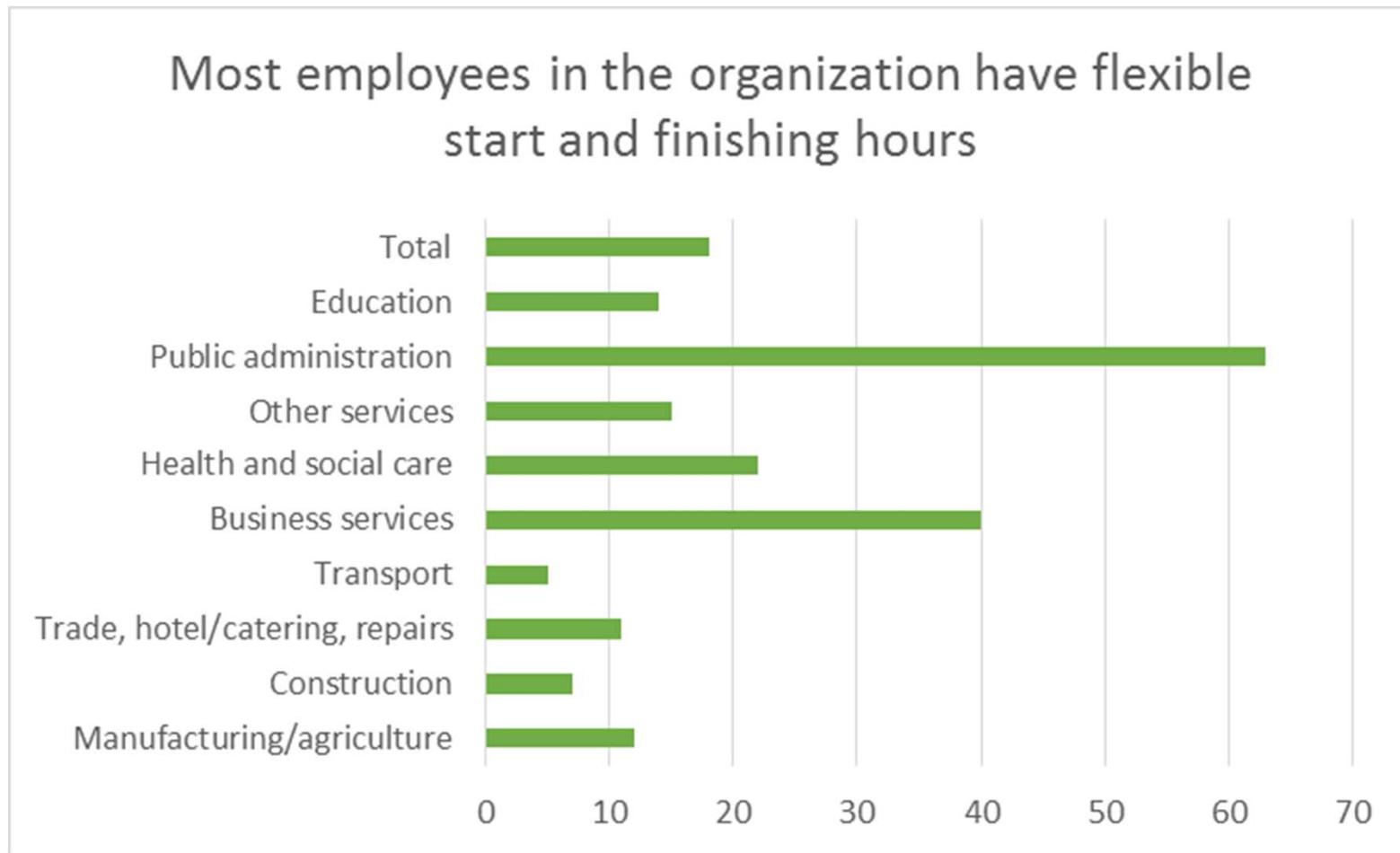
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Working time options

- **Flexible start and finishing times** allows employees to gear their working hours to family and other non-work obligations
 - Research indicates that women would like to spend more time on paid work if they are able to adjust working hours to their caring responsibilities at home and when they can work from home (4 hours per week on average)
- In 2012 40% of workers have flexible start and finishing times compared to 36% in 2002
- Men have more access to flexible hours than women do
- Access is related to the nature of work and varies across sector

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Opinion of employers on flexible working by sector, 2013



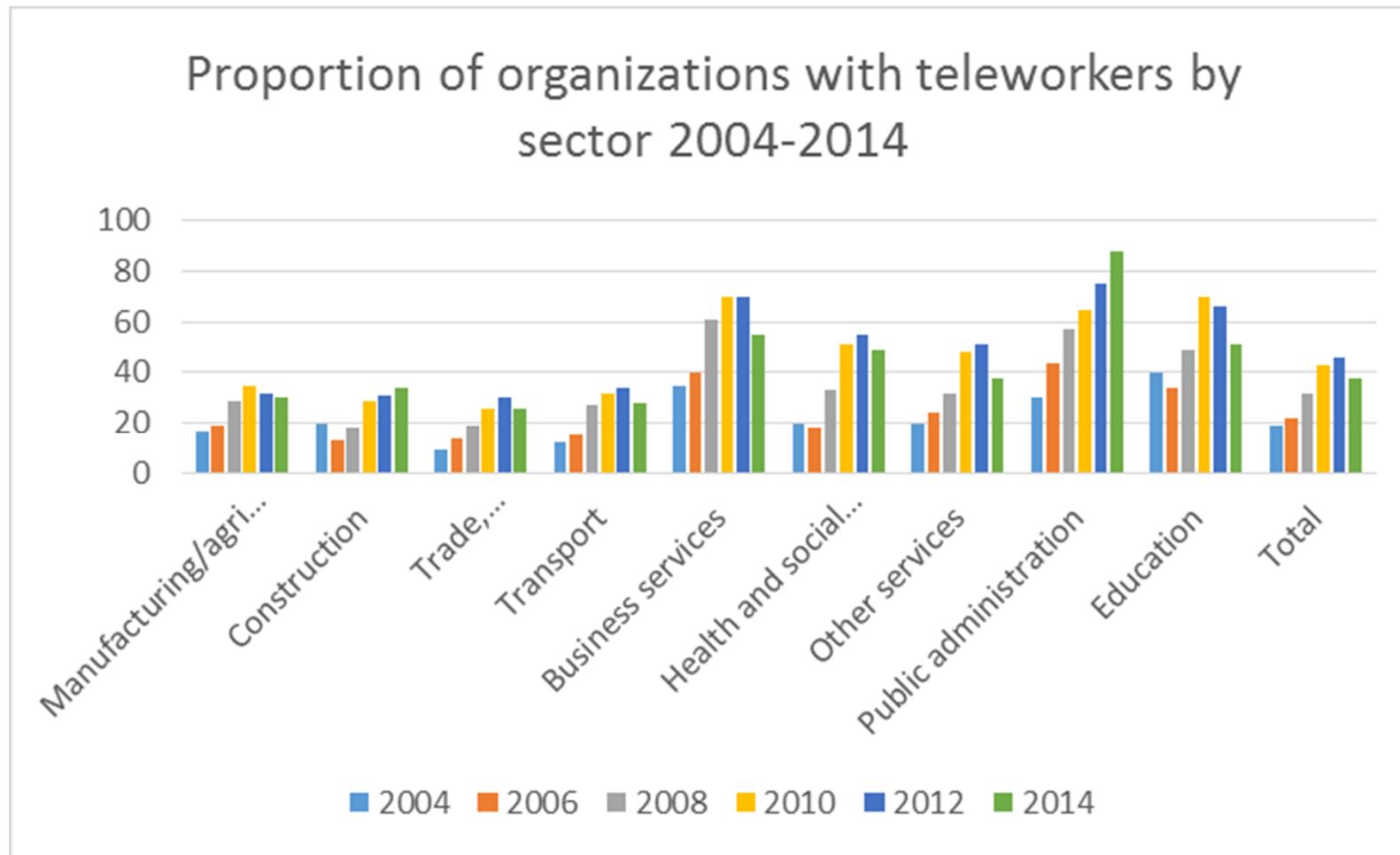
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Teleworking (working from home)

- Teleworking refers to working from home during at least part of employees' contractual working hours, usually with the support of information and communication technology
- 1/5 of workers work at least one day a week from home
- In contrast: 38% of organizations report they have one or more employees who work from home
- Men work more often from home than women do
- Having children does not increase the likelihood of teleworking
- Most important reason to work from home appears to be to finish work:
 - *So far, it is mostly the highly educated male manager or professional who works from home to finish work or to do overtime*

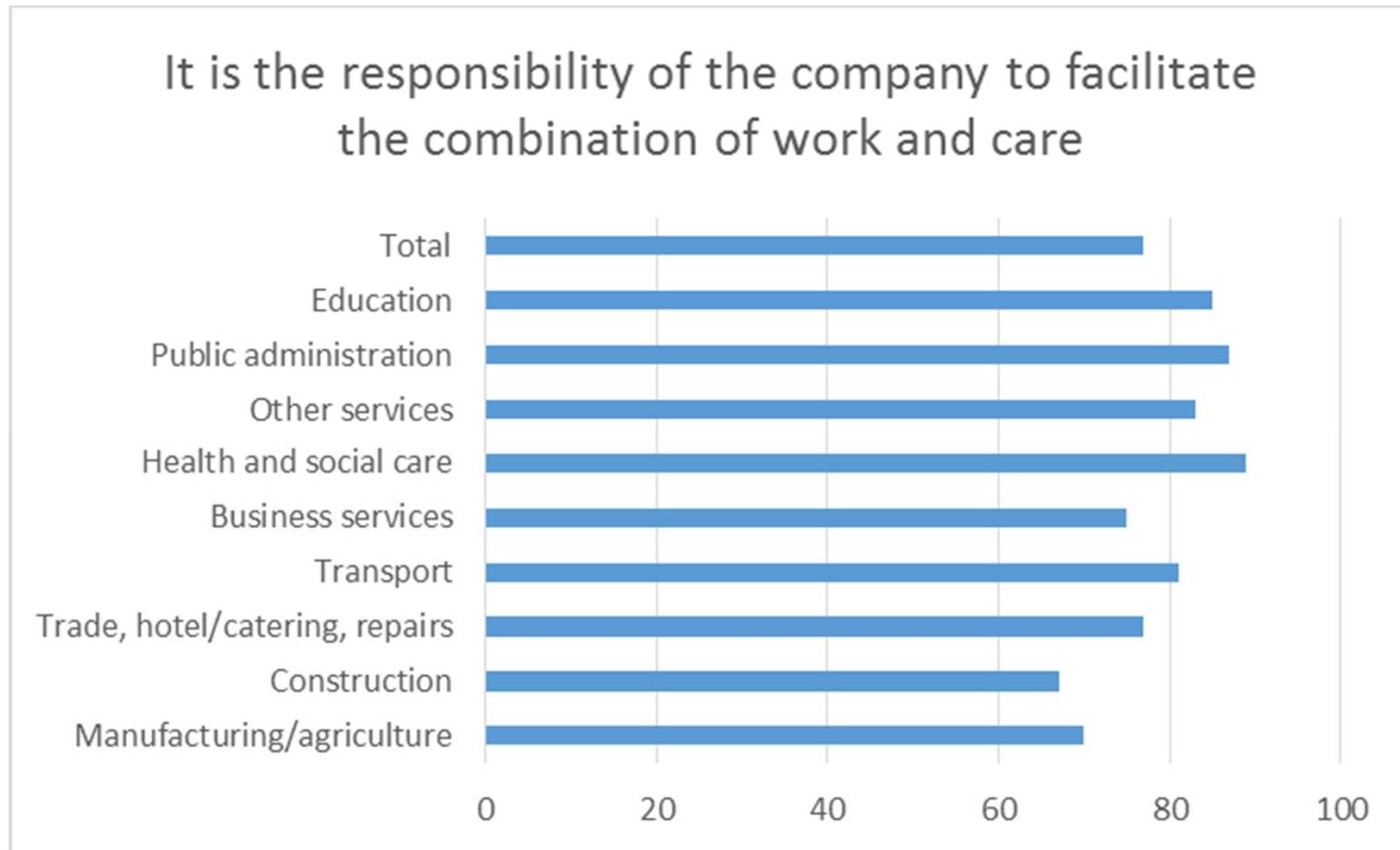
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Teleworking across sectors



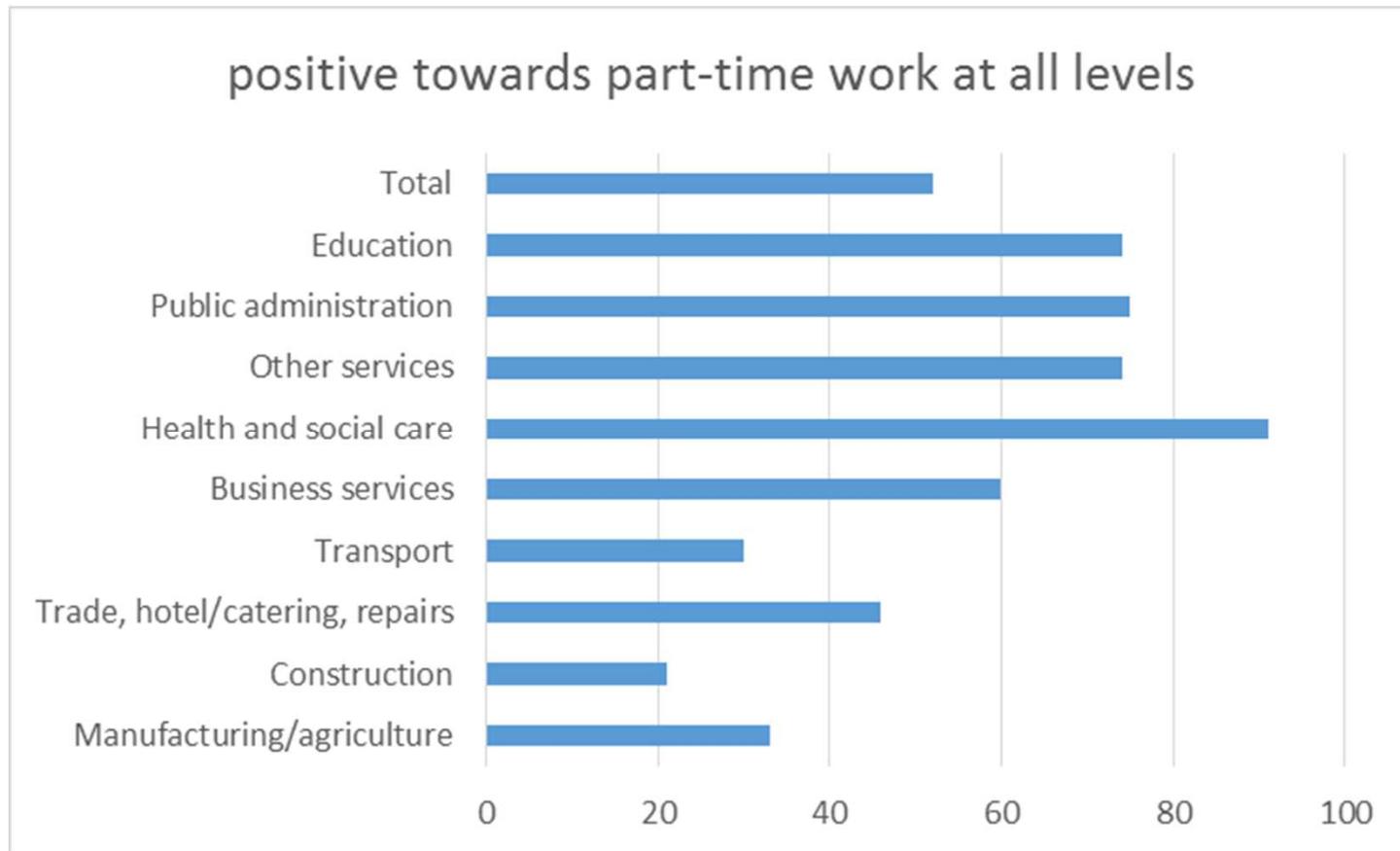
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Opinions of employers by sector, 2013 (SCP)



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Opinions of employers by sector, 2013 (SCP)



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Support for reconciliation in male dominant sectors: lagging behind?

- Less policy support
- Lower sense of entitlement
- Low level of supervisory support: prefer to have employees who are always available and who are prepared to work overtime when necessary. Work-life policy is used only as a means of retaining talented employees.
- When the standards and values within the organization conflict with utilization of work-family policies, policies are often implemented ineffectively and little use of it is made by the employees
 - Male employees fear career consequences

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Views of Dutch top executives: during the economic crisis (2011)

- Economic crisis appears to have little consequences for the prevalence of work-family policies in organizations, however, the considerations of top managers about these arrangements became more employer-led.
- More cost-awareness: through micro-managing they tried to avoid (perceived) negative consequences for the organization
 - Allow utilization but setting limits and conditions
 - For example, by regulating days that employees are absent
 - Or asking for reachability/flexibility in return
- Focus on flexible working time options in the context of New Ways of Working
- Work-family policies something for their workers, not for themselves

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Concluding: Where are we now?

- **Growing policy support for the combination of work and family life but male dominated sectors lag behind**
- **Best Practices focus on instrumental support but also need to challenge the idea of the ideal worker and standard career paths**
- **More attention and research needed to men working in male dominated sectors and how we can increase support for their WLB**