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Joint ECE-Eurostat-ILO Seminar
on Measurement of the Quality of Employment
(Geneva, 3-5 May 2000)

Topic 2

**Work schedules and working time arrangements:
framework and data collection in the Labour Force Survey**

Invited paper submitted by Eurostat

Summary

1. Employers adjust since many years their manpower to the variations in the demand of their product in order to make maximum use of the capital goods and to satisfy the consumer when (s)he wants to purchase goods or services. When employers adjust their manpower, they also have to take into account the labour supply within the context of the labour market situation and regulation. Labour supply may increase when the employed person is able to reconcile work with other activities, e.g. family care, study or leisure.

2. One way to adjust the manpower is the flexibilisation of the working times. A first major distinction in working time arrangements is between those arrangements that concern the core of the workforce (part-time work, extension of the operational hours through shift work) and changes in the working time buffer. A further distinction of adjustments of the working time buffer depends on whether the changes in the number of hours are driven by the employer (overtime, short-time, annualised hours and on-call work) or by the employee (flexible hours, ability to entirely determine own work schedule). When changes in working time are driven by the employer, the employer is able to vary the hours at short notice or without wage compensation. As regards the changes in the daily working times by the employee, a further distinction can be made by the extent of control by the employee over her/his working hours (the accumulated hours can be used only to take hours off or to take days or

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weeks off).

3. Data about working time arrangements will be collected in a supplementary module of the labour force survey in 2001 in addition to the core data of the labour force survey on part-time work, and work on unsocial hours. The paper describes the classification of the working time arrangements and the reason for the selection of the variables on working time arrangements in the supplementary module.
