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# International work-family policies

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# Outline

- Country comparisons of different work–family measures
- Discussion of work–family policies in an international context
- Australian employees' use of working arrangements to provide care (ABS SEARS)



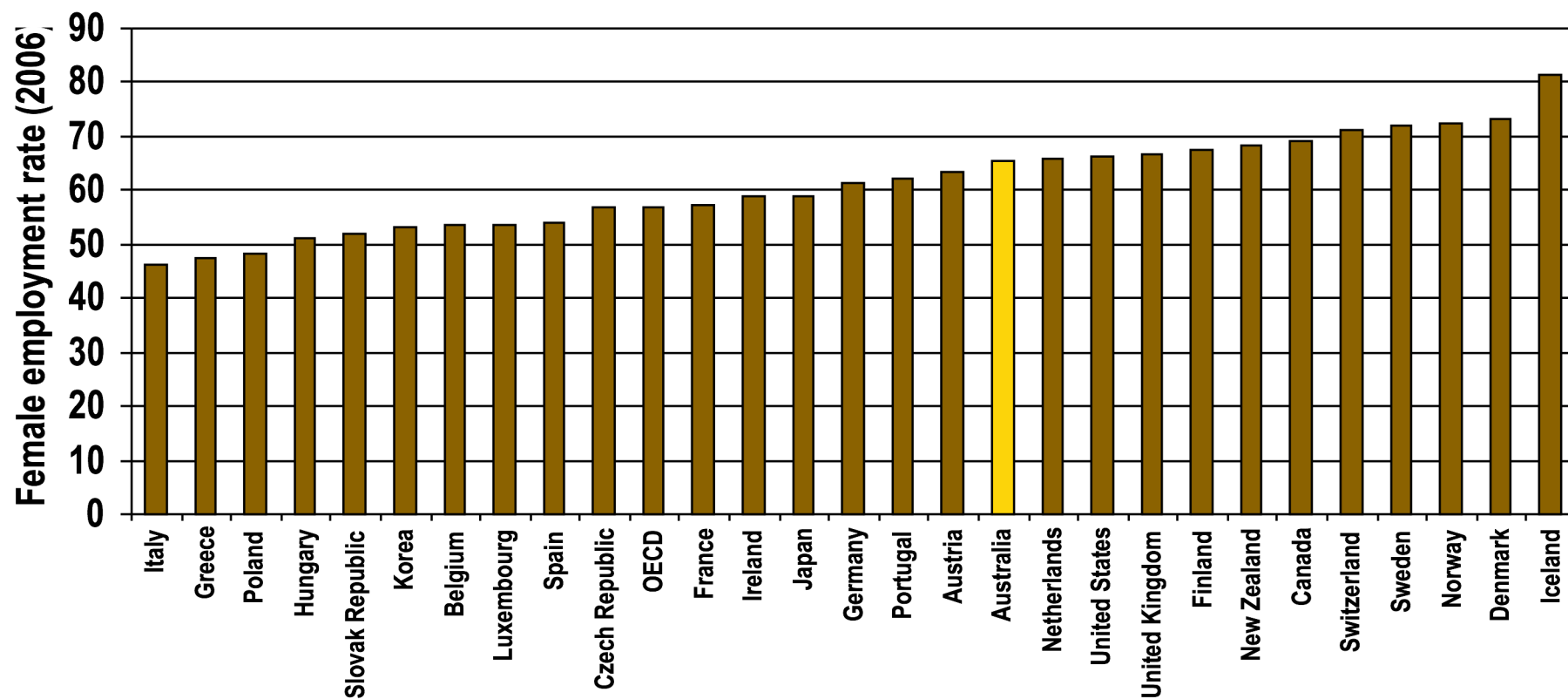
# International comparisons



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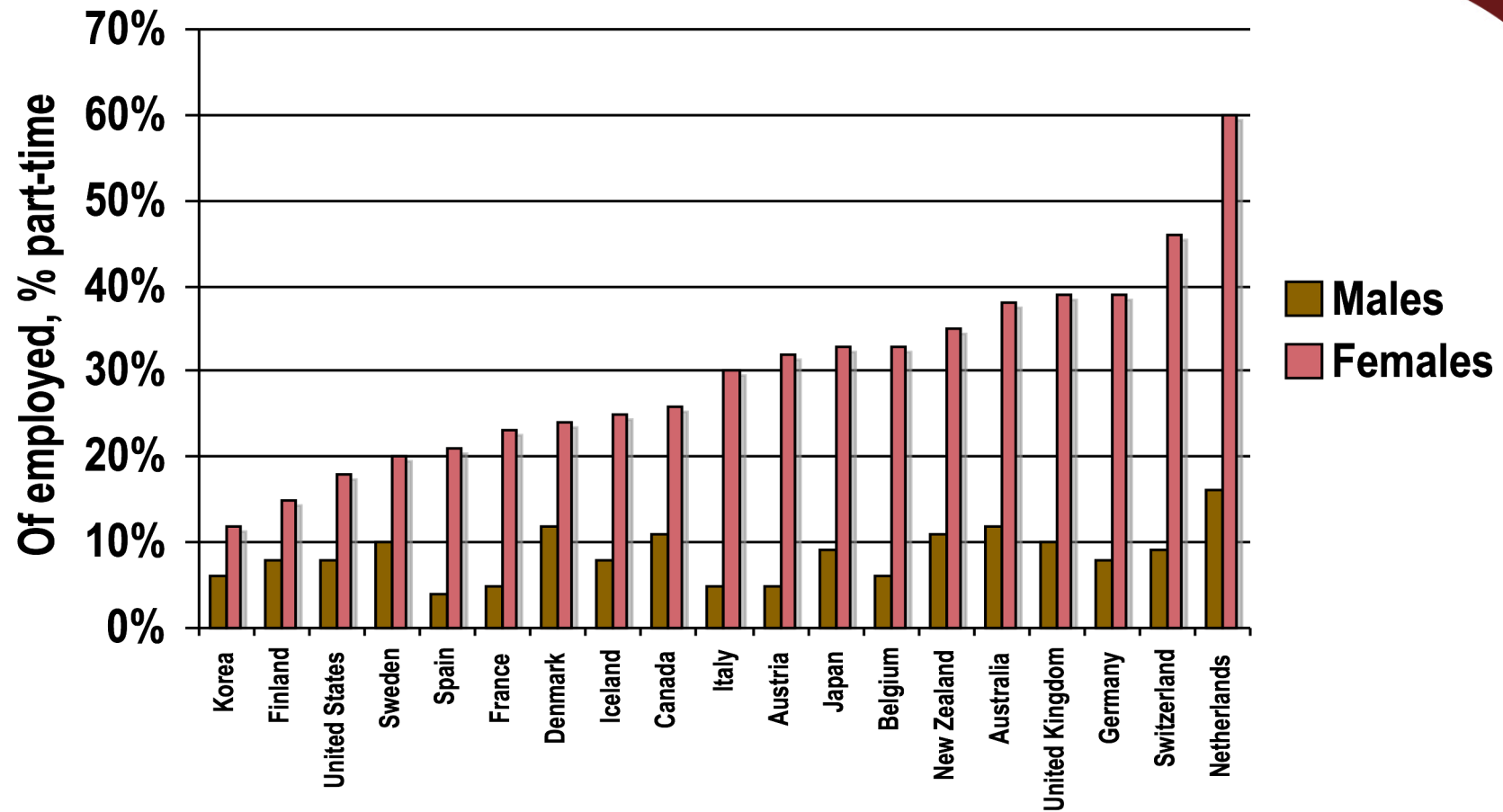
# Female employment, 2006



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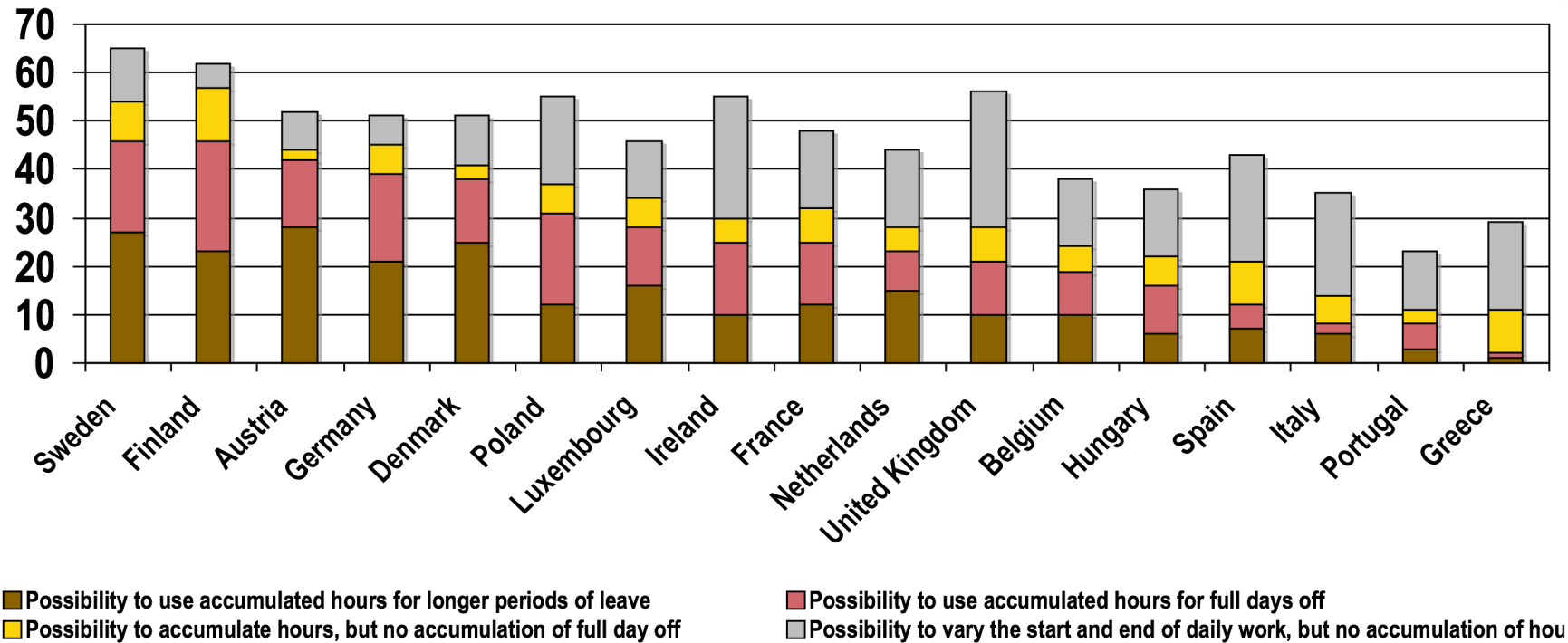
# Part-time work, 2007



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# Employees – flexible work options



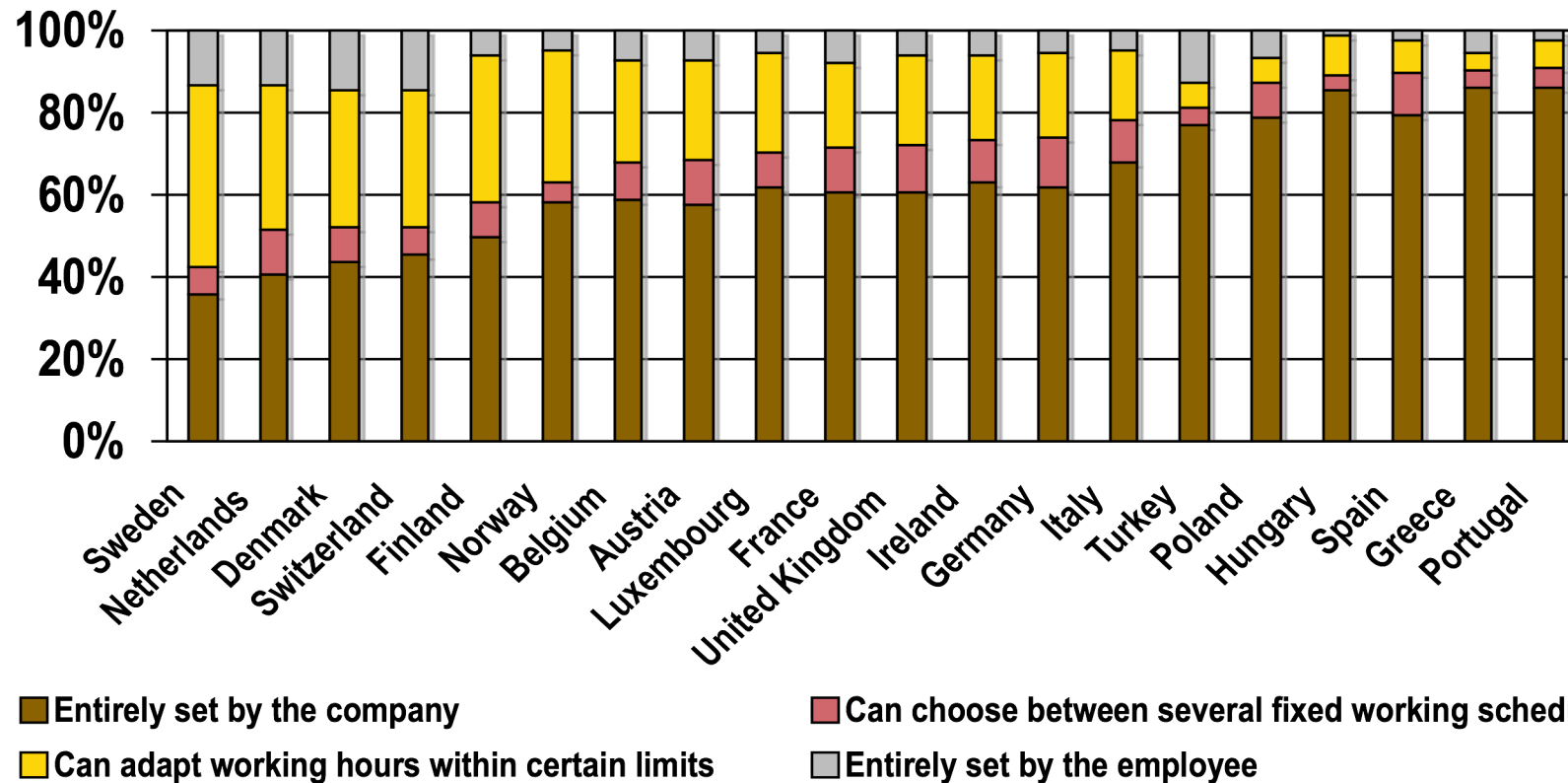
Source: OECD Family Database Chart LMF10.1 Incidence of employer-provided flexible working time arrangements



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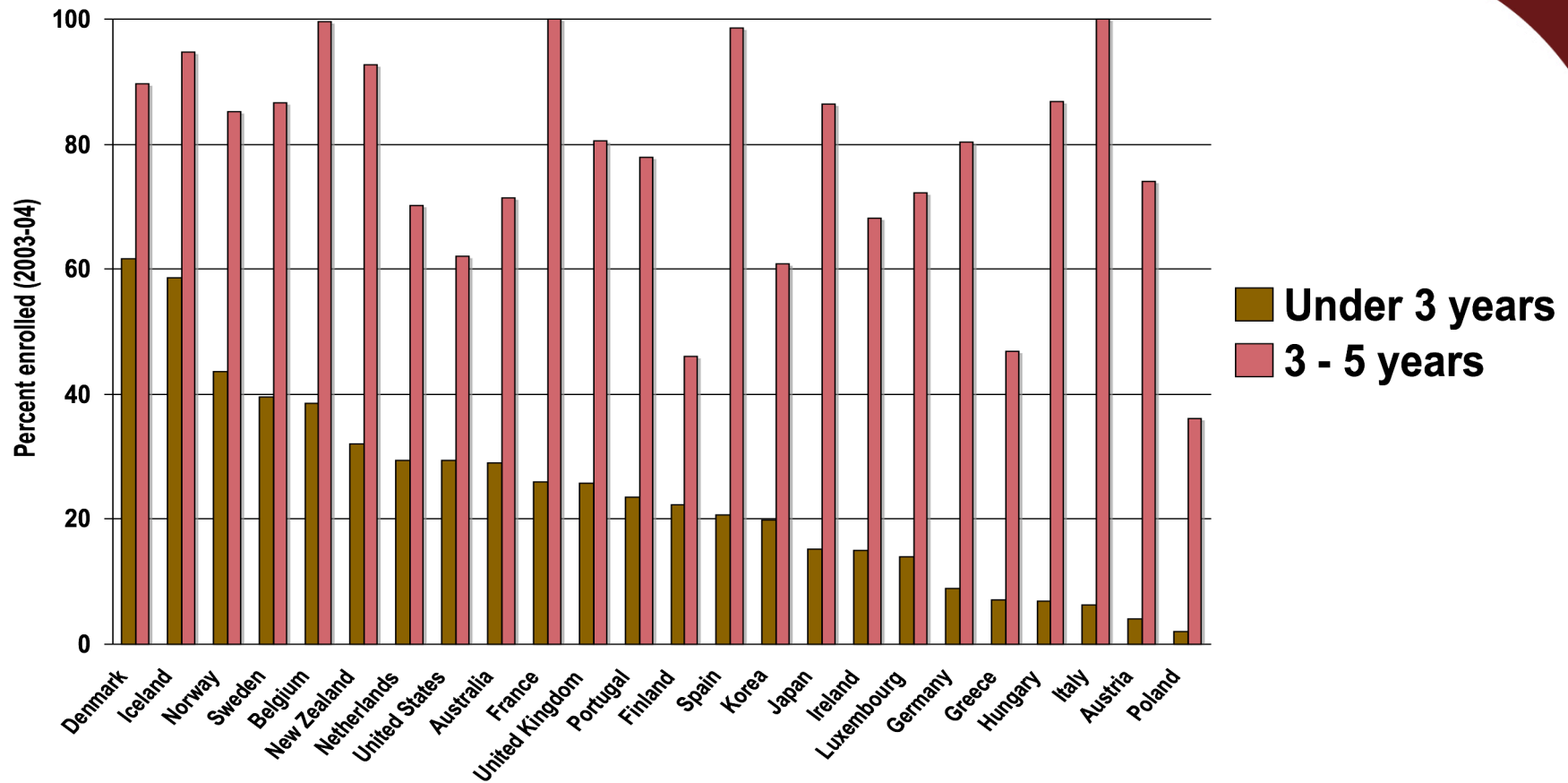
# Employees – how working times are set



Source: OECD Family Database Chart LMF10.2: How working time arrangements are set



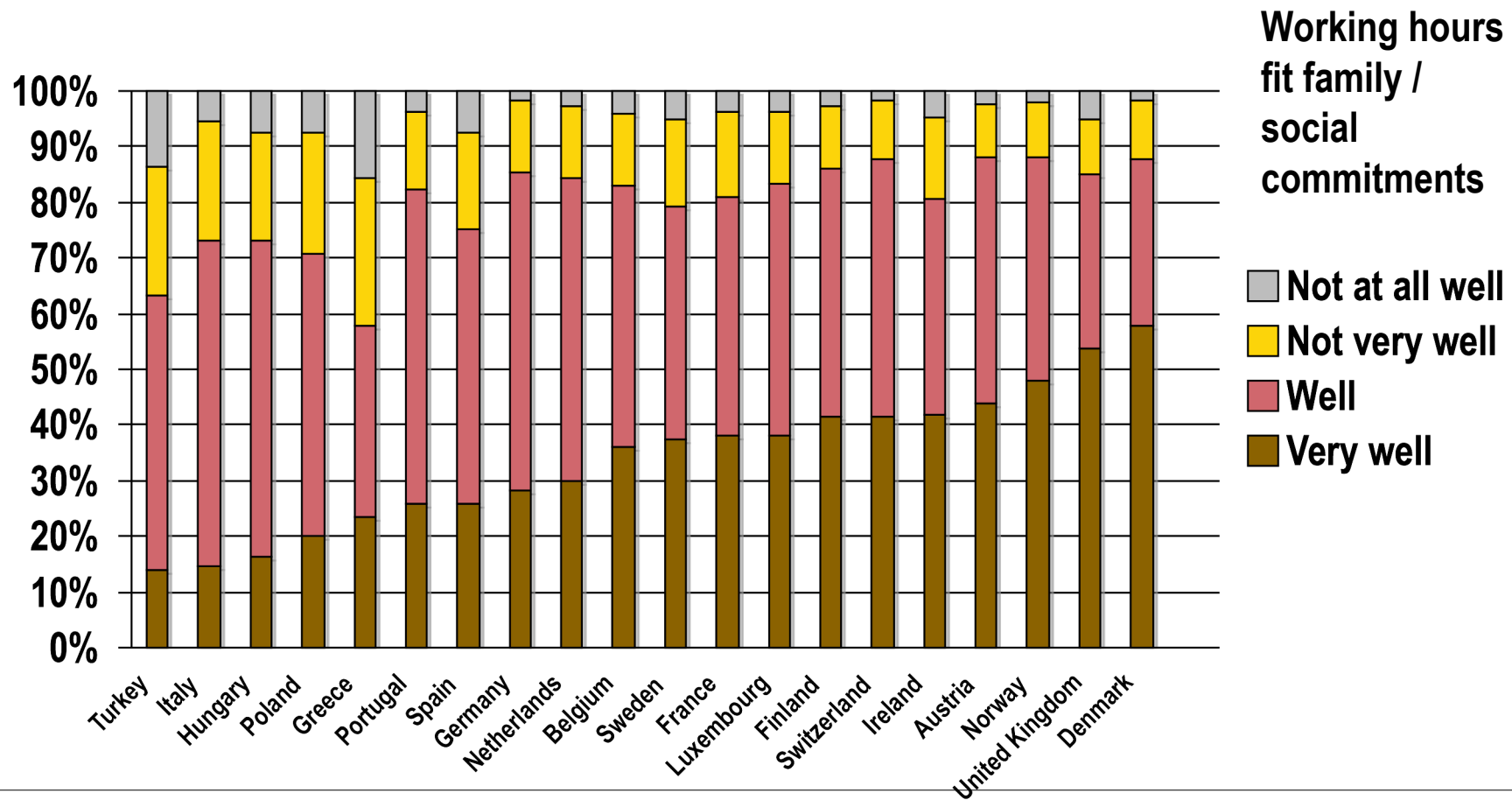
# Childcare and early education enrolment



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# Work-life balance across countries



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# Work–family policy



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# Overview

- What government policies are in place internationally?
  - ◆ Work–family policy is not created only by government.
  - ◆ Need to recognise social, economic, cultural differences across countries
  - ◆ Work-family policy overlaps with many areas of policy - work-family balance is not always the primary goal



# Policy objectives of work-family policies

- Enabling employment
  - ◆ broad labour supply goals
  - ◆ to address issues of financial wellbeing
- Gender equity & father-involvement
- Child wellbeing
- Fertility



# Family.... caring for children and for others

- Work-family policy is mostly developed to address caring for children
  - ◆ OECD: best approaches are those that address caring across the life cycle
- Caring for adults often included in those policies, but not developed specifically for these carers.
  - ◆ Needs differ for those caring for children compared to those with other caring responsibilities
- Another approach is policies for “work-life” balance



# Work-family policies

- Leave for caring
  - ◆ parental leave / carer leave
- Hours and working arrangements
  - ◆ part-time / flexible work
  - ◆ other arrangements
- Childcare
- Other approaches and related policy area



# Specific policy examples: leave for caring

- Parental leave

- ◆ Maternity leave
- ◆ Paternity leave
- ◆ Parental leave

Father involvement

e.g. Sweden  
Iceland

- ◆ Childrearing payments, e.g. Finland

- Family care leave



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# Specific policy examples: working hours and arrangements

- Right to access vs right to request part-time or flexible work options
    - ◆ right to request in the Netherlands, NZ, UK, Germany, France
- } some workplaces or jobs exempt
- Legislation re maximum work week (France)
  - Right to turn down shift or night work (EU)
  - Breastfeeding breaks (EU)



# Australia

**An initial analysis of caring and use and unmet demand for working arrangements using ABS Survey of Employment Arrangements, Retirement and Superannuation, 2007**



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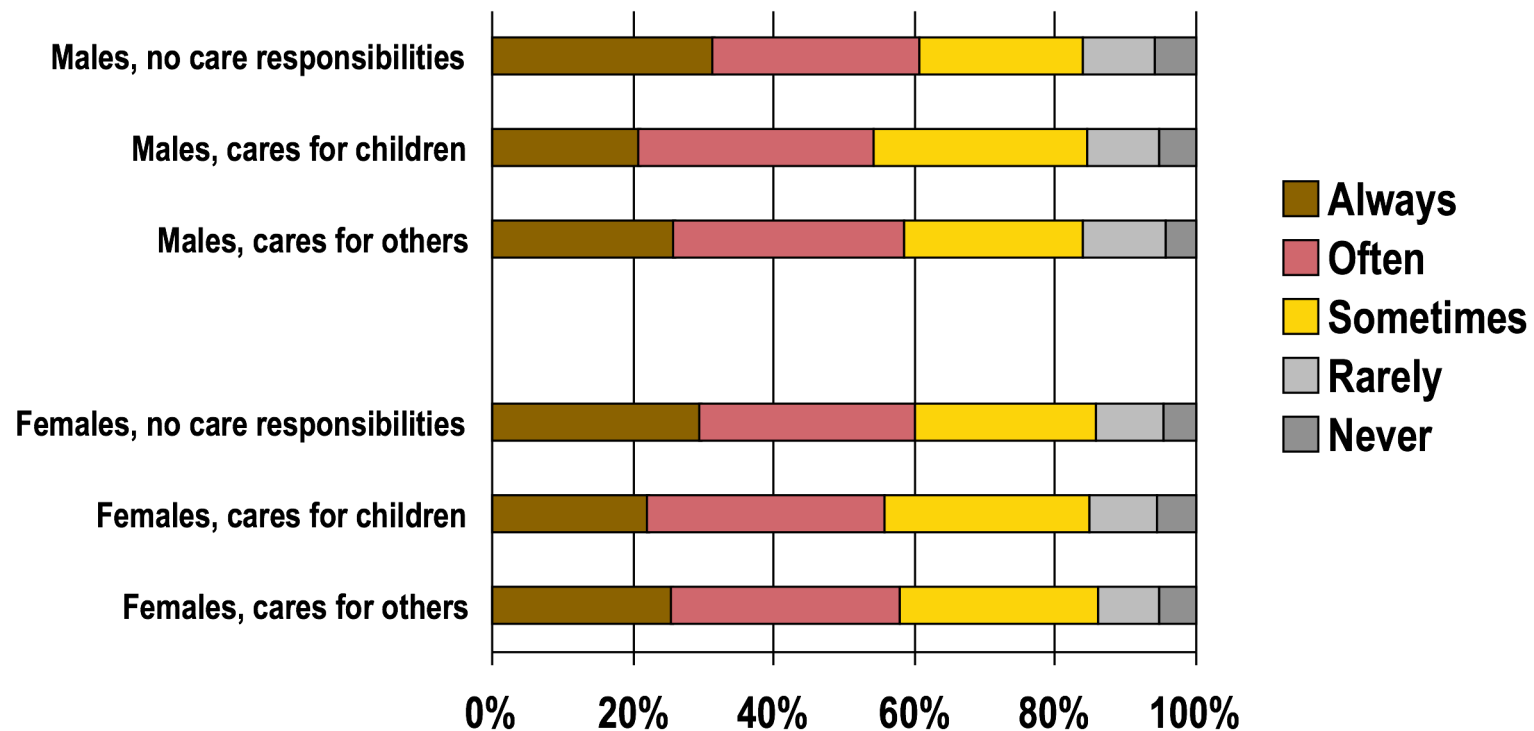
# Employed men and women caring in Australia

Of employed males and females:	Males	Females
<b>Total provided care last week</b>	<b>39%</b>	<b>43%</b>
someone in household	34%	35%
<i>a child or step-child</i>	32%	32%
someone outside household	8%	13%
<i>(including those who did both)</i>	2%	5%



# Work-family balance in Australia:

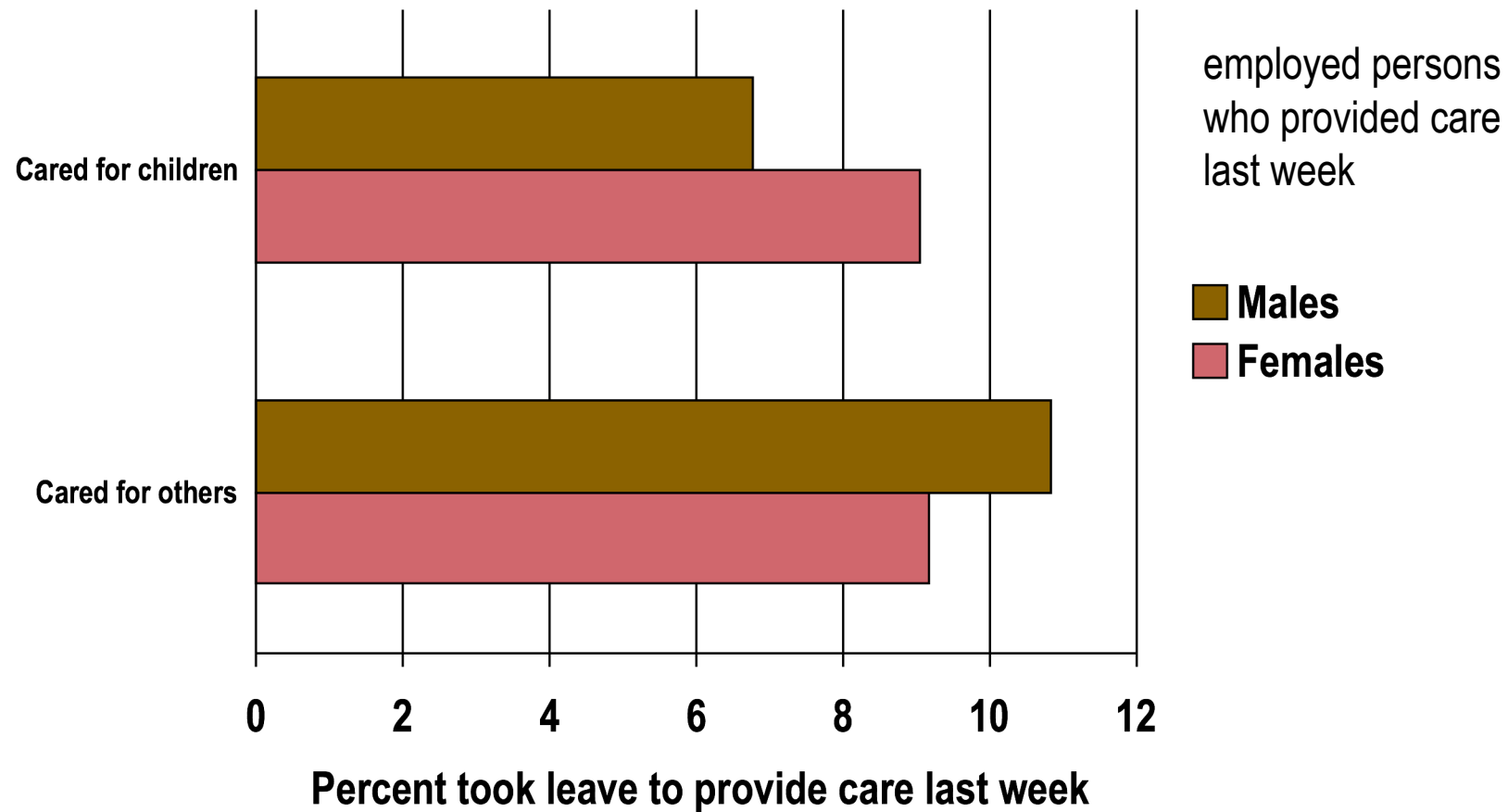
“Feels work and family responsibilities are in balance”



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# Leave to provide care in Australia

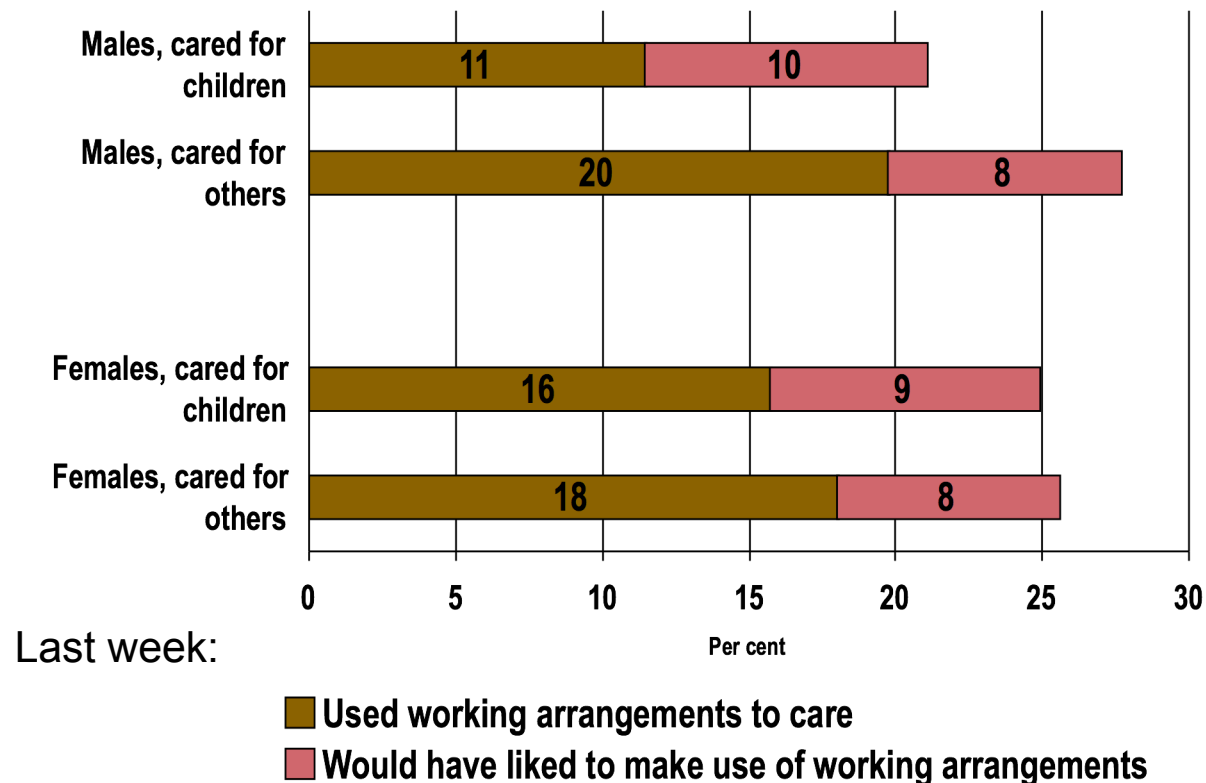


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# Use of and unmet demand for working arrangements for caring

Employees who provided care last week, excluding owner managers



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# Types of working arrangements for caring

## Most commonly used

- Flexible work hours
- Unpaid leave
- Informal arrangement
- Paid leave (carers' and holiday leave)
- Working from home
- Took children to work
- RDOs

## Most commonly sought:

- Paid leave
- Flexible work hours (especially those with children)
- RDOs
- Working from home
- Informal arrangements



# Reasons for not using working arrangements for caring

Of those who did not use and did not express unmet demand for working arrangement, main reason did not use = “no need” (96%)

% of those who would have liked to use working arrangement (most commonly cited reasons)	Males	Females
No need	27%	20%
Work commitments	23%	18%
Do not have adequate working arrangements	16%	12%
Nature of work makes using flexible working arrangements difficult	15%	17%
Not paid for time off	10%	18%



# Work-family policy directions for Australia

- National Employment Standards, include
  - ◆ Maximum working hours
  - ◆ Request for flexible working hours
  - ◆ Parental leave
  - ◆ Other return-to-work entitlements
  - ◆ Annual leave
  - ◆ Personal/carer's and compassionate leave
- Paid maternity leave
  - ◆ Supports women in employment
  - ◆ Part can be transferred to the father
  - ◆ A review will consider the need for paternity leave

