

## HOURS WORKED

Lower hours worked is one of the forms in which the benefits of productivity growth have been shared by people. Hours worked is also one of the ways that labour markets adjust during business cycles. In recent years, governments of several OECD countries have also pursued policies to make it easier for parents to reconcile work and family life, and some of these policies have tended to reduce working time.

### Definition

The average number of hours worked per year is calculated as the total number of hours actually worked over the year divided by the average number of people in employment. The data cover employees and self-employed workers; they include both full-time and part-time employment.

Employment is generally measured through household labour force surveys. In accordance with the ILO Guidelines, employed persons are defined as those aged 15 years or over who report that they have worked in gainful employment for at least one hour in the previous week or were temporarily absent from work.

### Overview

Over the period from 2002 to 2014, average hours worked per employed person have fallen in almost all OECD countries except Norway, the Slovak Republic and Sweden. This decline is more pronounced in two-thirds of countries than the decline in the previous decade, while annual hours worked remained stable in Belgium, the Netherlands, Sweden, the Slovak Republic and the United Kingdom.

For the OECD as a whole, the average hours worked per employed person fell from 1 819 annual hours in 2002 to 1 770 in 2014; this is equivalent to a reduction of more than one hour per week over a year with 45 work weeks. Sharp reductions in annual hours worked over this period occurred in about one-third of OECD countries where they fell by 80 or more hours, with a further decline of 150 or more hours in Korea (minus 340), Chile (minus 260), albeit from high levels, Austria, Hungary, Iceland, Israel, Estonia, Turkey, Italy and Ireland. Most of the decline in hours worked materialised following the onset of the global crisis in ten countries - some hard hit by the crisis, such as Estonia, Greece, Hungary, and Italy, but also Austria, Chile, Korea, Israel, Switzerland and Turkey.

Although one should exercise caution when comparing levels across countries, actual hours worked are significantly above the OECD average, by 200 or more hours, in Mexico, Korea, Greece and Chile and significantly below the OECD average, by 200 or less hours, in Germany, the Netherlands, Norway, Denmark, France, Slovenia and Switzerland.

Estimates of the hours actually worked are based on national labour force surveys in many countries, while others use establishment surveys, administrative records or a combination of sources. Actual hours worked include regular work hours of full-time and part-time workers, over-time (paid and unpaid), hours worked in additional jobs, and time not worked because of public holidays, annual paid leave, illness, maternity and parental leave, strikes and labour disputes, bad weather, economic conditions and several other minor reasons.

### Comparability

Data are based on a range of sources of varying reliability. Annual working hours reported for 34 OECD countries and Russia are provided by national statistical offices and are estimated using the best available sources. These national data are intended for comparisons of trends in productivity and labour inputs (or total hours) and are not fully suitable for inter-country comparisons of the level of hours worked per worker because of differences in their sources and other uncertainties about their international comparability.

### Sources

- OECD (2015), *OECD Employment Outlook*, OECD Publishing.

### Further information

#### Analytical publications

- OECD (2015), *How's Life?*, OECD Publishing.

#### Methodological publications

- OECD (2009), *Productivity Measurement and Analysis*, OECD Publishing.
- OECD (2004), "Recent Labour Market Developments and Prospects: Clocking In (and Out): Several Facets of Working Time", *OECD Employment Outlook 2004*, OECD Publishing.

#### Online databases

- *OECD Employment and Labour Market Statistics*.

#### Websites

- Productivity statistics, [www.oecd.org/statistics/productivity](http://www.oecd.org/statistics/productivity).
- Online OECD employment database, [www.oecd.org/employment/database](http://www.oecd.org/employment/database).


**Average hours actually worked**

Hours per year per person in paid employment

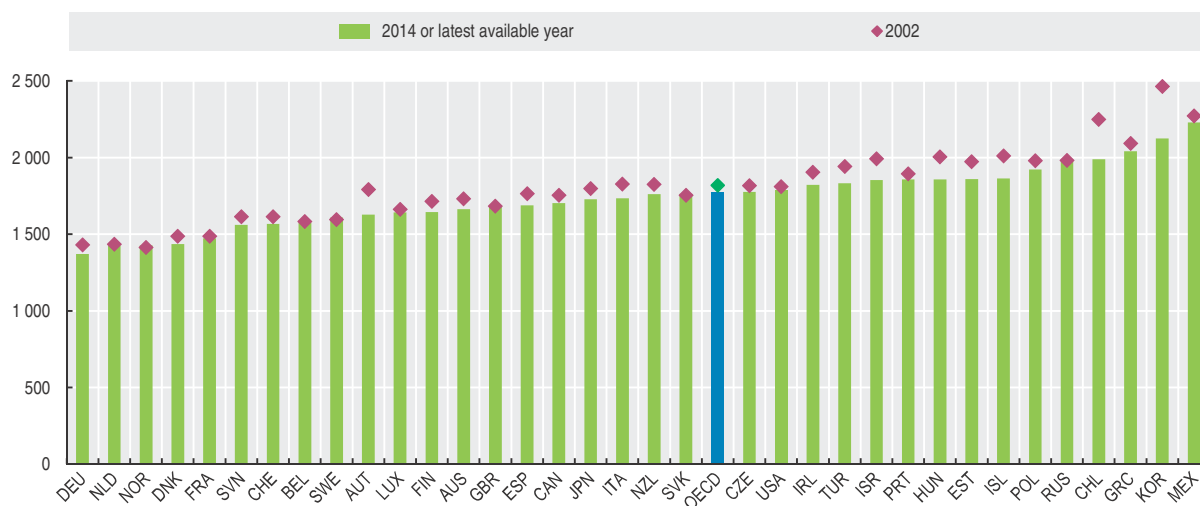
	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
Australia	1 731	1 736	1 736	1 730	1 720	1 711	1 717	1 690	1 692	1 699	1 678	1 663	1 664
Austria	1 792	1 784	1 787	1 764	1 746	1 736	1 729	1 673	1 665	1 670	1 649	1 629	1 629
Belgium	1 582	1 578	1 572	1 565	1 575	1 579	1 572	1 554	1 560	1 572	1 573	1 576	..
Canada	1 754	1 740	1 760	1 747	1 745	1 741	1 734	1 702	1 703	1 700	1 713	1 708	1 704
Chile	2 250	2 235	2 232	2 157	2 165	2 128	2 095	2 074	2 068	2 047	2 024	2 015	1 990
Czech Republic	1 816	1 806	1 817	1 817	1 799	1 784	1 790	1 779	1 800	1 806	1 776	1 763	1 776
Denmark	1 487	1 482	1 481	1 474	1 479	1 456	1 450	1 446	1 436	1 455	1 443	1 438	1 436
Estonia	1 973	1 978	1 986	2 008	2 001	1 998	1 968	1 831	1 875	1 919	1 886	1 866	1 859
Finland	1 714	1 705	1 707	1 697	1 693	1 691	1 685	1 661	1 668	1 662	1 650	1 643	1 645
France	1 487	1 484	1 513	1 507	1 484	1 500	1 507	1 489	1 494	1 496	1 490	1 474	1 473
Germany	1 431	1 425	1 422	1 411	1 425	1 424	1 418	1 373	1 390	1 393	1 374	1 363	1 371
Greece	2 093	2 091	2 083	2 136	2 125	2 111	2 106	2 081	2 019	2 131	2 058	2 060	2 042
Hungary	2 005	1 978	1 986	1 987	1 984	1 979	1 982	1 963	1 958	1 976	1 889	1 880	1 858
Iceland	2 012	1 973	1 979	1 970	1 958	1 932	1 934	1 849	1 834	1 878	1 853	1 846	1 864
Ireland	1 904	1 887	1 875	1 883	1 879	1 865	1 844	1 812	1 801	1 801	1 806	1 815	1 821
Israel	1 993	1 974	1 942	1 931	1 919	1 931	1 929	1 927	1 918	1 920	1 910	1 867	1 853
Italy	1 827	1 816	1 815	1 812	1 813	1 818	1 807	1 776	1 777	1 773	1 734	1 733	1 734
Japan	1 798	1 799	1 787	1 775	1 784	1 785	1 771	1 714	1 733	1 728	1 745	1 734	1 729
Korea	2 464	2 424	2 392	2 351	2 346	2 306	2 246	2 232	2 187	2 090	2 163	2 079	2 124
Luxembourg	1 663	1 658	1 614	1 597	1 608	1 544	1 584	1 628	1 643	1 607	1 615	1 649	1 643
Mexico	2 271	2 277	2 271	2 281	2 281	2 262	2 260	2 253	2 242	2 250	2 226	2 237	2 228
Netherlands	1 435	1 427	1 448	1 434	1 430	1 430	1 430	1 422	1 421	1 422	1 426	1 421	1 425
New Zealand	1 826	1 823	1 830	1 815	1 795	1 774	1 761	1 740	1 755	1 746	1 734	1 752	1 762
Norway	1 414	1 401	1 421	1 423	1 420	1 426	1 430	1 407	1 415	1 421	1 420	1 408	1 427
Poland	1 979	1 984	1 983	1 994	1 985	1 976	1 969	1 948	1 940	1 938	1 929	1 918	1 923
Portugal	1 894	1 887	1 893	1 895	1 883	1 900	1 887	1 887	1 890	1 867	1 849	1 852	1 857
Slovak Republic	1 754	1 698	1 742	1 769	1 774	1 791	1 793	1 780	1 805	1 793	1 789	1 772	1 763
Slovenia	1 614	1 616	1 627	1 590	1 562	1 551	1 566	1 569	1 580	1 557	1 537	1 550	1 561
Spain	1 765	1 756	1 742	1 726	1 716	1 704	1 713	1 720	1 710	1 717	1 704	1 699	1 689
Sweden	1 595	1 582	1 605	1 605	1 599	1 612	1 617	1 609	1 635	1 632	1 618	1 607	1 609
Switzerland	1 614	1 627	1 657	1 652	1 643	1 633	1 623	1 615	1 613	1 607	1 592	1 576	1 568
Turkey	1 943	1 943	1 918	1 936	1 944	1 911	1 900	1 881	1 877	1 864	1 855	1 832	..
United Kingdom	1 684	1 674	1 674	1 673	1 669	1 677	1 659	1 651	1 652	1 625	1 654	1 669	1 677
United States	1 810	1 800	1 802	1 799	1 800	1 797	1 791	1 767	1 777	1 786	1 789	1 788	1 789
EU 28	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
OECD	1 819	1 812	1 813	1 807	1 808	1 802	1 794	1 700	1 776	1 773	1 773	1 770	1 770
Brazil	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
China	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
India	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Indonesia	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Russian Federation	1 982	1 993	1 993	1 989	1 998	1 999	1 997	1 974	1 976	1 979	1 982	1 980	1 985
South Africa	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..

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<http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/888933336245>
**Average hours actually worked**

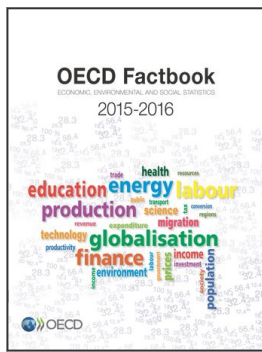
Hours per year per person in paid employment



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<http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/888933335059>



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