

Beat: Business

Almost 10 million part-time workers in the EU would have preferred to work more

Two-thirds were women

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USPA NEWS - Among the 44.1 million persons in the European Union (EU) working part-time in 2014, 9.8 million were underemployed meaning they wished to work more hours and were available to do so. This corresponds to 22.2% of all part-time workers and 4.5% of total employment in the EU in 2014.

The large majority of part-time workers being underemployed in the EU were women (67%). Alongside the economically active population, 11.6 million economically inactive persons aged 15-74 in the EU had in 2014 a certain attachment to the labour market and could be considered as a potential additional labour force, equivalent to 4.8% of the EU labour force. Among them, 9.5 million were available to work but not seeking, such as discouraged job seekers, and 2.2 million seeking work but not immediately available, for example students seeking a job to start after graduation. The majority of this almost 12 million total potential additional labour force in the EU in 2014 were also women (57%).

In 2014, the proportion of underemployed part-time workers among total part-time workers varied significantly across the EU Member States. A majority of part-time workers wished to work more hours while being available to do so in Greece (72.1%), Cyprus (65.9%) and Spain (57.3%). At the opposite end of the scale, the Netherlands (4.0%) registered by far the smallest share of underemployed part-time workers, followed by Luxembourg (10.5%), Denmark (10.7%), Estonia (11.2%) and the Czech Republic (11.4%). At EU level, 22.2% of persons working part-time were underemployed in 2014. It should be noted that underemployed part-time workers were predominantly women in every EU Member State except Romania and Slovakia.

The potential additional labour force also varied significantly between Member States, with the largest proportion registered by far in Italy (equivalent to 13.6% of the labour force), ahead of Croatia (9.6%), Bulgaria (7.6%) and Finland (7.4%). It should be noted that in every EU Member State, the potential labour force consisted mainly of persons available to work but not seeking. Women made up the largest part of the total potential additional labour force in all EU Member States except Ireland and Finland. At EU level, the potential labour force, made up of 57% women, was equivalent to 4.8% of the total labour force.

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