EGGE – EC’s Expert Group on Gender and Employment

Title: Gender Impact Assessment & the Employment Strategy in France

Country: France

Author(s): Rachel Silvera

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GENDER IMPACT ASSESSMENT AND THE EMPLOYMENT STRATEGY IN FRANCE

Thematic report

Rachel SILVERA

OCTOBRE 2000

FRENCH REPORT OF THE EXPERT GROUP « WOMEN AND EMPLOYMENT » OF THE EC - DG EMPLOYMENT AND SOCIAL RELATIONS - EQUAL OPPORTUNITY
1 - OVERVIEW OF THE STATE OF DEVELOPMENT OF GENDER IMPACT ASSESSMENT

In France, recent years have been marked by a strong political desire to promote equality between women and men in all fields, including employment policy. This strategy is, therefore, initially broader than that of the strict field of the labour market: in order to promote occupational equality and equal access of women to the labour market, one must mobilise all economic, social and industrial decision-makers and players - and also political ones. Thus, the law on parity, the revival of the work of the Interministerial Committee on Women’s Rights and Equality and of the Higher Council on Occupational equality, as well as mobilisation around the theme of “the place of women in decision-making” within the Economic and Social Council are all measures, that are part of the same approach: progress in the field of occupational equality happens through the mobilisation of all players (at different levels - Ministries, associations, regions) and through a multidisciplinary (political, economic, industrial and social) approach...

The assessment of this policy that can be made today seems positive: significant results are visible in France, in that an “equality reflex” has gradually been instituted, even if many fields are still in the process of developing. However, these changes are too recent for it to be possible to really assess them. One can, indeed, consider that integrating the issue of equality really began at the instigation of the European Luxembourg Summit and, even more precisely, since the second NAP in 1999. Assessment of employment policy in France is tending to develop, but there is very little research that explicitly measures gender impact. There is only one real assessment, that was carried out in the framework of the European Social fund and added to by more partial work on the place of women in employment policy measures (1.1). It, therefore, seems of interest to observe another directive, which is indirectly linked to employment policy, because it is intermediate between family policy and employment policy: namely, the assessment of the parental childcare allowance (APE) and the issue of exclusion and working poor (1.2). Finally, gender statistical data is indeed a central issue in methods of gender impact assessment. An assessment of available resources will be covered by the third point (1.3).

1.1 Identification of gender impact assessment of employment policy through the programme of objective 3 of the European Social Fund.

The CEE (Centre for Employment Studies), which is a research centre attached to the Ministry of Research, was asked to assess objective 3 of the European Social Fund and, especially the issue of equal opportunities, regarding possibilities of access to employment, public training systems and help for finding a job. The main results of this assessment were as follows:

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1 For instance, the gender approach is quite absent in a recent and very important research on European Employment Policies: J. C. Barbier, J. Gautié (1998), *Les politiques de l’emploi en Europe et aux Etats-Unis*, PUF.
Gender in French employment policy

Firstly, the appraisal drawn up by the Ministry of Employment on employment policies over the past forty years is disappointing from the point of view of gender impact.

- Already in the 1970s, specific measures were introduced: firstly, regarding older workers, then, regarding young people and, finally, regarding the long-term unemployed (training, sandwich courses, return to employment contracts (CRE) and, later, employment initiative contracts (CIE)). But, as the authors of the report remark: “In none of these measures is the issue of the place of women, compared with that of men, present, as far as normative policies are concerned”. Women are sometime in the majority in certain measures, as for example in subsidised contracts in the non-market sector, but this is not the result of explicit policy; there are fewer of them, on the other hand, in market sector measures.

- In the 1980s, emphasis was put on reducing labour costs, especially as far as lower skilled qualified workers were concerned (national insurance exemptions, recruitment bonuses, especially for part-timers). There is an important paradox to this: in fact, women have in particular “benefited” from these measures (especially as far as reduced contributions for part-time workers are concerned), but these measures were not introduced in the name of equality - on the contrary, many studies have shown that the development of measures that encourage part-time work increases inequality between women and men, by keeping women in situations of under-employment and reduced employment (few qualifications, difficult working hours and, above all, low wages, etc.).

- Only a few specific measures for women, that were introduced in the 1980s, had clear “equality” objectives, but they were always very marginal: in 1979, a basic allowance, which became in 1984 an allowance for helping single mothers to enter the labour market; in 1985, “Programmes of collective activities for women in difficulty” (PLIF) and training courses of the National employment fund for single women; in 1989, a Guarantee fund for women to create, resume or develop a company (FGIF), in order to reduce their difficulties in getting bank loans; regional programmes for fighting against women’s unemployment were created in 1990; then in 1992, a fund for encouraging training for women (childcare during training); and, finally, funding for innovative training for young women; single women have also had priority access to some of the general measures for fighting against unemployment (CES (Solidarity employment contracts in the public sector), CRE and CIE).

- In the current phase, such specific measures have almost disappeared: only FGIF remains, while all priority access was abolished. Only with the 1999 and 2000 NAPs did the will to give priority to women in difficulty return (access to the “new departure” programme for all women who are victims of violence or going back to work, with no criteria concerning length of unemployment; and, at the very recent Family Conference (15 June 2000) an allowance for childcare is offered to all women who go back to work or training).
Thus, according to a report of the Ministry of Labour (DARES), from 1973 to 1995, 62% of beneficiaries were men. But, above all, the closer subsidised employment is to classical employment, the smaller the number of women to be found: thus, the share of women in subsidised employment in the market sector is only 39% (excepting exemptions for part-time work). In reality, only the latter measures, regarding reduced contributions for part-time work, concern mainly women because of the type of work involved (almost 67% of this measure concerned women in 1998). Conversely, the more it is a matter of subsidised employment in the non-market sector, the greater the share of women (women represent 62% of CES contracts). Almost three out of five women “starting on employment measures” benefit from subsidised contracts in the non-market sector or from adult training, compared with two out of five men. Market sector employment remains male-dominated and measures aimed at companies involve greater selection of beneficiaries.

However, one knows that the closer a measure is to a “normal” job, the greater the chances of being taken on and having a stable job. In other words, recent developments in employment policy favouring market measures have penalised women. This is because of the effects of the sector (for example, apprenticeships are concentrated in sectors that are traditionally male), to which is added the fact that companies’ selection procedures are strongly biased against women.

Share of women in various employment policy measures

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Principle measures</th>
<th>1998</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Subsidised market jobs</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reductions for part-time work</td>
<td>66.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exemptions for the first employee</td>
<td>32.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Return to employment contracts (CRE/CIE)</td>
<td>39.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Qualification contract</td>
<td>46.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apprenticeship</td>
<td>28.4*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Subsidised non-market jobs</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Solidarity employment contract (CES)</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Youth jobs</td>
<td>56.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Training</td>
<td>55.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* 1997 data
Source: Fouquet, Rack, 1999

In all, “these measures remain marginal, both from the point of view of the budget devoted to them and from the point of view of the number of beneficiaries concerned. The amount of money involved has never reached 600 million francs, i.e., less than 1% of the total amount devoted to active employment policies” (A. Fouquet, C. Rack, 1999).

Equal opportunities in structural fund programmes in France
Assessment of equal opportunities in the framework of structural funds in France confirm the above trends. Various appraisals have, thus, concluded that there is insufficient effort regarding equality in France. On the basis of a regional study carried out by DATAR\(^2\), DOCUP3 (Unique documents of regional programmes) emphasises: “the only aspect in which the State’s proposals are lower than European policy expectations is that of equal opportunities between men and women, for which the sums requested are too small”. A fundamental issue is at the basis of this gap: according to the French government, equal opportunities are a general aim that concerns everyone and should make it possible for men, as well as women, to have access to training and a job. Only a few exceptions exist to cover specific needs (single women, return to work). The dimension of equality exists explicitly only in two general measures: apprenticeships (where a major difference between young women and men has been observed) and sandwich courses, with a view to diversifying women’s employment.

“The place of women is, therefore, relatively small in the results of the first half of the ESF programme objective 3 (1994-1996). It remained less than their share in national unemployment in 1995 and 1996 (44.1% of beneficiaries are women in 1996, who receive 40% of co-funding). The weak quantitative nature of specific measures has not apparently made it possible to change this trend. The share of money spent in 1995 and 1996 on this aspect, as a percentage of all money used during both these years, is 0.6%. In all, the fact that objective 3 only funds in a very marginal way subsidised jobs in the non-market sector has, therefore, had an obvious negative impact on the place of women in the programme.” This study shows that objective 3 has above all favoured traditionally male measures (CRE, apprenticeships, etc.), thus even increasing the imbalance…

This assessment is, therefore, relatively pessimistic concerning the use of French structural funds regarding equal opportunities, given the absence of a real will to introduce and generalise this aspect in all employment policy measures. It should be noted, however, that this assessment is based on data that concern the period before the impact of new measures adopted in the framework of the two most recent NAPs. It seems that, since then, an improvement is under way, which is still difficult to measure and assess. In other words, it seems that the French government has modified somewhat its interpretation of equal opportunities, by the on-going introduction of a mainstreaming approach.

\(^2\) DATAR : Commission of national and regional development
1.2 Other fields of indirect gender impact assessment

*Gender impact assessment of family policy and employment: the example of APE (parental childcare allowance)*

Despite the fact that the Prime Minister recently spoke in favour of “a feminist family policy”, links between family, employment and equal opportunities policies remain ambiguous: on the one hand, some measures have promoted women’s employment - including in full-time jobs. For example, school hours and the system of nursery schools (where 93% of 3 to 6 year old children and a third of two and a half year-olds go) offer facilities that are accessible to all and promote women’s employment. However, on the other hand, some measures are sources of indirect discrimination of women’s employment, such as APE (half of children under 3 years old are looked after by one of the “parents” and 50% of them “benefit” from APE) and part-time work.

Family Conference 2000 was presented as offering new progress promoting “links between family and working life”, but their effectiveness is doubtful. We shall look at some of the proposed measures and especially those that are long awaited in the world of research and feminist associations, namely those concerning changes to APE.3

The Family Conference seems most disappointing on this aspect. For some time now, assessments, backed up by research results, have exposed the negative effects of APE. Within the government, some proposals for making the measure more flexible were drawn up (for example the possibility of dividing the allowance up in order to avoid leaving work for three years), but they were not adopted. Above all, there is no question of abolishing it, given its success. Family Conference 2000 half-heartedly proposed three new measures:

- In order to encourage returning to work, a mechanism for accumulating two months of APE with income from work (if the person returns to work when the child is between the 18 and 30 months old). So, just as for RMI (a form of income support), but for a very short period, it is hoped to struggle against the “poverty trap”, which APE is;
- Job seekers, who do not receive an allowance and who have at least one child under 6 years, whom they look after, will be able to apply for a bonus if they return to work (for pay of less than 8,500 francs). This limited help given by the Employment benefits office amounts to between 2,000 and 3,000 francs and is aimed at helping towards childcare;
- “Sick child” leave, which will enable a parent to stop work for three months per year and receive a “parental presence allowance” of the same amount as APE (3,050 francs per month).

The weakness of these measures is disappointing. Experience in the Nordic countries has shown the need for greater incentives, in order to improve parental leave and encourage fathers to take it, as in Sweden and Finland: as long as part of this leave and allowance

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3 other measures are proposed concerning the development of childcare...
are not only for fathers (in Sweden, the father’s “month” is lost if he does not take it), as long as there is no discussion about higher remuneration (for example, on a pro rata basis of parents’ pay) and as long as accompanying measures for returning to work are not greater (training and retraining, etc.), it is clear that this measure will remain a form of indirect discrimination against mothers of “working poor” families.

Several assessments of APE beneficiaries have shown that this measure increases occupational risks of the most disadvantaged women. Firstly, until 1994, the economic activity rate of mothers with two children was close to that of mothers with one child. Major differences have developed since: the economic activity rate of other family situations has continued to increase, but that of mothers of two children has dropped by 10%. Between 200,000 and 250,000 women left the labour market out of 536,000 beneficiaries in 1999. Amongst the beneficiaries, some were already registered unemployed and, therefore, benefited from the opportunity of this allowance. If one looks at their unemployment rate before and after APE, one observes that women who are registered unemployed represent 9.2% of the active female population before entering APE and that 13.8% are unemployed after APE. This measure therefore increases the risk of unemployment and poses the problem of returning to work after a break of three years. For these women, this allowance often enables women to withdraw from a job where working conditions are often very hard with difficult hours and low wages. Thus, major segmentations appear amongst these mothers, according to age, level of qualifications and difficulties of entering the labour market: the youngest, the least qualified and those with the greatest difficulties in entering the labour market use APE most. At the other end of the scale, there is a small group of women with stable jobs, who can also benefit from parental leave (normally with the guarantee of finding “their” job again) and have chosen APE, but they do so for a much shorter period (and, therefore, it does not last 3 years) - it is more a matter of prolonging maternity leave, in order to avoid a break in their career that would be too long and, therefore, a disadvantage.

Despite progressive talk and despite assessments made by different researchers, including some who belong to the CNAF (National Family Allowances Agency), the measure has been maintained and the proposed changes will not avoid risks of exclusion. In fact, there has not been a real break with the idea that the mother is the only legitimate person for looking after children. Her participation in the world of work remains subjected to family imperatives, and all the more so when she has few qualifications and diplomas.

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4 For instance the research of the National Family Allowances Agency (CNAF) presented in the review « Recherches et prévisions, n°59, 2000.
The question of working poor

As we have observed, as far as the situation of women in the labour market in France today is concerned, the price of some social progress and victories is increased inequality amongst women themselves and the development of “working poor”.

This point merits our attention: until now, there has not been much of an issue of “working poor” in France, because, despite growing inequality, this phenomenon was masked. Indeed, statistics about income mainly concern households, therefore some poor workers could appear in households with better situations. The real situation is quite different. Given the explosion of part-time work, more and more employees are poor and the great majority of them are women…

In May 2000, a symposium of economists dealt with this theme for the first time ever. But, the approach was special: at no moment did the organisers refer to the gender of working poor, as if it was a matter of “neutral” workers. But, when one looks at this category closer, it is clear that more than 80% are women, who are working part-time. The “silence” of these economists created a lot of noise. A petition (cf. box) emphasised to what extent, once again, economics wants to be neutral and is silent about mechanisms of gender division of the labour market in the production of inequality and risks of poverty. More than 300 social science researchers have signed the petition, which reveals another thing that was “forgotten” by the organisers: not a single woman was invited to speak at the symposium. At a time when the government is mobilising to promote parity in decision-making places, such action is far from insignificant, as the text explains.

Extracts from the petition “Is economics a male science?” May 2000

The Higher Council on Employment, Income and Costs (CSERC), INSEE (National Institute of Statistics and Economic Studies), the General Plan Commissariat and Evry University is organising a symposium on the “working poor” in France at Evry University on 29 May 2000. In all, there will be 16 chairs of sessions and platform speakers. There is not a single women amongst them. The morning is chaired by the Commissar for the Plan and the afternoon by the Director General of INSEE. The absence of women is surprising at a time when parity is being introduced and when occupational equality in higher management of the civil service is becoming a government concern 5. This is all the more surprising as women researchers are working in this field and, therefore, one cannot explain away their exclusion by claiming they have not done much work on this issue. Such absence of women in a particular circle, which is both academic and institutional, will go quite unnoticed by some and could seem insignificant to others or even anecdotal. Our concern is to take this opportunity, not only to question such or such institution that has organised this symposium or the event itself, but to contribute towards opening a much broader discussion on methods of recruitment and functioning of a professional milieu and on theoretical presuppositions of a discipline. Indeed, the conception of this symposium seems to us to be very revealing about current imbalances in French research, especially as far as economics is concerned. Firstly, a theoretical imbalance, that is revealed by the structural difficulty in integrating a gender dimension. Secondly, an imbalance

5 Cf A.M. Colmou (1999), Encadrement supérieur de la fonction publique : vers l’égalité entre hommes et femmes, La documentation française.
6 Cf the first number of the review « Travail, genre et Société » on « Work and poverty : the place of women ».
regarding representation, which is translated by clear over-representation of men in a whole series of places, where academic power exists (juries, specialist commissions, scientific committees of publications, etc.).

Theoretical shortcomings and “forgetting” about the gender issue

The presentation of the symposium on 29 May 2000 shows that the purely male composition of the platform is not the only thing that needs to be challenged. “Working poor” are defined in the text presenting the symposium “as households whose income level is close to, or below, the poverty threshold and whose income comes mainly from working. It is an intermediate category between exclusion or traditional poverty (with 100% or almost 100% of income from transfers) and other households, whose members are in full-time employment.” This definition - and the whole of the text presenting this symposium - totally ignores the gender dimension of the phenomenon. Is it necessary to recall that 85% of part-time jobs are filled by women and that the development of various forms of atypical jobs, which women are particularly involved in, explains the recent increase in working poverty in France? Of course, the organisers of the symposium know about such data. Perhaps they would answer by saying that this is an empirical question, which does not challenge the bases of economic theory (…). Such an approach is based on the assumption that empirical observations are not likely to challenge economic models, that are used to give an account of reality.

We are, on the contrary, convinced that the total lack of reference to the situation of men and women does not only pose an empirical problem. Integrating the gender dimension raises theoretical questions, that are poorly taken into account by economic theories today. As far as working poverty is concerned, there are several types of theoretical issues. Some come from the difficulty of even defining what the concept of working poor covers: a worker is, indeed, first of all an individual, who is defined in relation to his or her position in the labour market (type of job occupied, wage level, sector of work, etc.). Their income is a wage, which is given to them as an individual. However, almost all French statistics concerning poverty are statistics referring to households - and not individuals. This methodological difficulty is reflected directly in thinking about the various mechanisms of support for lowest incomes, that are referred to by the symposium. Economists generally give two objectives to such mechanisms: on the one hand, fighting against poverty - and therefore the poverty of households - and, on the other, not discouraging individuals of working age from working, regardless of gender and family situation. This two-fold objective leads to contradictions in public policy as, for example, the results of negative tax mechanisms in the United States, which have very different effects on work supply, according to gender and family situation. It should be recalled that the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) mechanism had a globally weak, or even negligible, effect on the overall work supply, but was an incentive for single mothers and rather a disincentive for women living in a couple. This example, as that of the APE in France, shows that the effects on the labour market of public decisions concerning income support are far from being neutral as far as gender is concerned: APE, in fact, “encourages” women to leave the labour market. More generally speaking, the effects of support measures for those with low wages are gender-based - even if their aims or titles are neutral - because they are part of a particular context of divided family and symbolic roles and of a labour market, whose way of functioning is developing, but where there is still much inequality between men and women.

Another difficulty can be emphasised, namely that of the present inability of the most common economic theories to account for occupational segregation: for example, the concentration of women’s jobs in sectors that pay the least and generate atypical jobs. This is not a new situation and is described in many empirical studies. Even if it is observed, it is rarely explained: the orthodox approach proposes an explanation in terms of human capital (education and experience), which would explain the differences in pay between men and women, and in terms of women’s work, which would explain employers’ reticence, when women’s work supply appears to depend on their system of “preferences”, which are often summed up by the existence of a partner and the presence of children. The impact of such theories is reduced in contexts where the average educational level of women is close to (or higher than, as is the case in France, for example) that of men, when low paid jobs are mainly occupied by women and when a significant proportion of women is present on the labour market.
Such theoretical gaps in a wholly “neutral” approach of economic phenomena do not exist only in the field covered by the symposium, nor only in economics. They reflect, more broadly, a “special French characteristic”, namely, the small place devoted in research to studies on women, gender studies and studies of social relations between men and women (rapports sociaux de sexe)- whatever title they are given. In Françoise Collin’s view, the specific feature of these studies is not only that they are particularly interested in women: “this work is not simply an addition. It necessarily involves reviewing and restructuring all data that up till now were taken for granted. Thus, writing a history of women or restoring women in history involves posing the question of the validity of existing historical science.”

(…)

Unbalanced representation

It might seem surprising that the notion of representation, borrowed from politics, is used here. Indeed, the existence of imbalances in the presence of men and women does not come from the same mechanisms of producing inequality, notably because the conditions of access to political functions and the conditions of access to the profession of economist are very different. In order to be elected, women do not need any particular diploma. However, in France, if one wants to be an economist, it is essential to have a doctorate, in order to be a university lecturer or a researcher at CNRS (National Centre for Scientific Research). As far as access to university is concerned - where most economics teacher-researchers are to be found - a doctorate is only the first stage. One then has to be accepted on to a qualifications list at national level and, then, apply at the local level for a post and be selected by a commission of specialists, which decides upon recruitment. However, the bodies which take decisions concerning the careers of researchers are mainly made up of men. This can be illustrated by a few statistics. In 1998, the situation of economics staff in higher education was as follows: 951 lecturers, including 249 women (26.2%); 546 professors including 64 women (11.7%), i.e., of a total of 1,497 teacher-researchers, including 313 women (20.9%). The commissions of specialists only reproduce this imbalance between women and men - and this imbalance is growing. Statistics concerning the jury for the highest level external teaching examination, which is made up of seven professors, were as follows in the 1980s: two juries included women (two women in 1982-83 and one woman in 1987-88); in the 1990s, only one jury (that of 1999-2000) included a women. In all, 8 out of 11 juries were made up of men alone. (…)

We do not want to defend a demand for parity or quotas here. It is the idea that all human sciences research takes the presence of women (mixité) into account - including in places of power. It is the idea that if this issue is not explicitly posed, implicit, invisible and often unconscious segregation will continue to be reproduced. It is finally - and perhaps, above all - the idea that the gender issue can only be ignored in social sciences at the risk of profoundly betraying the description and analysis of the real world - and at the risk of preventing the emergence of new theoretical tools that are likely to account for the reality of our contemporary societies more effectively.

1.3 The issue of gender statistics in gender impact assessment

In March 2000, the Prime Minister sent a circular to all Ministries on “Adapting the statistical apparatus of the State to improve knowledge about the respective situations of women and men”. The aim of the circular was to encourage all services concerned to improve the production of gender statistics by introducing this criterion where it does not exist, by supplementing the production of such data and by systematically using data according to gender. Statistical and qualitative studies should be developed, in order to supplement results and analyse more effectively the causes of inequality. In order to do
this, a network - made up of all those responsible for statistics in each Ministry - was created. It is co-ordinated by INSEE. The most significant performance indicators will be published regularly and a budget appendix will make it possible to identify the Nation’s efforts concerning equality.

Before this circular was written, a working group had been asked to assess the respective situation of women and men as far as statistical data are concerned.

This assessment report refers to available statistics and “gaps” and proposes recommendations regarding occupational equality, parity and specific issues. We will only insist on the first aspect, that concerns our subject: occupational equality. The report observes firstly that “statistical gaps are not as big as is sometimes imagined. (…) The main difficulty is that collection of data is neither regular nor co-ordinated. Everyone produces information, which often includes male/female data, but there is rarely concern for gender issues”.

Even if there is a lot of data, their abundance requires monitoring indicators in a more precise way and improving certain points, especially in terms of career and educational guidance at the end of collège (first four years of secondary school). The main sources are the INSEE’s Employment Survey and Eurostat data (Labour Forces Survey).

- Economic activity, concentration of jobs, girls’ studies

Proposed indicators: comparative development of economic activity rates of men and men by age group (…), the share of women with higher education diplomas in the civil service compared with all women with diplomas (stock and flows); developments of the share of women in all industrial jobs and service jobs; data on educational guidance after collège exist according to gender, but the use of individualised files would make it possible to integrate all the characteristics of pupils (social milieu, age) better, in order to better understand choices made and orientation towards gender-based subjects which result (general courses for girls and vocational courses for boys).

- Unemployment and job insecurity

Even if there are data on differences in unemployment, according to the respective situations of women and men, there are difficulties in accounting for higher than average unemployment amongst women in France. There is a proposal for ANPE (National Unemployment Office) to carry out in-depth studies to see what explains the difference during recruitment for similar types of unemployed people.

- Data on job insecurity provided by DARES (Ministry of Employment) are to be found in monthly indicators, but practically none of the data is gender-based. This absolutely needs to be done.

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7 C. Blum (1999), *Les situations respectives des femmes et des hommes : statistiques pertinentes*, INSEE.
8 See *Les femmes*, or *Portrait social* of INSEE...
Salaries and careers

There is much data on pay differences. The most common indicators are:
- the share of full-time women employees, who receive the minimum wage
- the share of women amongst the 20% highest and lowest full-time wages.
- The main source is the survey on the structure of wages.

But, in order to really be able to study pay differences, traditional variables do not suffice. One should use longitudinal data in order to take into account periods of economic activity, unemployment, economic inactivity, which exist throughout one’s career. The (annual) employment survey gives an image of careers, but only in the short-term. Other surveys make it possible to monitor careers more effectively (FQP surveys, youth and careers, DADS, etc.). The real problem is, therefore, not the absence of statistical sources, but, rather, the need to add to them by more qualitative approaches of a monographic type, in order to be able to identify better the real mechanisms of access to training and promotion and in order to “pierce the mystery of the glass ceiling”, especially in key sectors and functions (banking, human resources, consulting, etc.).

11 - SELECTION OF TWO EMPLOYMENT POLICY MEASURES FOR A GENDER IMPACT ASSESSMENT

We have chosen to assess a measure that comes under pillar 1 on employability: the “New Departure” programme; the second assessment concerns the implementation of the 35 hour week (pillar 111: adaptability).

11.1. Gender impact assessment and measures concerning “New Departure”

Since 1998, both programmes aim at improved integration of the most vulnerable unemployed: young people who have been unemployed more than 6 months and long-term (more than one year) unemployed adults. The aim is to offer each unemployed person proposals that are adapted to the difficulties they meet (support for starting to look for a job again; personalised support for finding a job by a specific advisor; access to training and, where necessary, personalised support for defining a training project; personalised support including social support for those in greatest difficulty.

1. Identify the position of men and women prior to policy development

This measure involves all the unemployed, a priori, but it targets two publics, who are considered priorities by French employment policy: young people and the long-term unemployed. The measure does not openly target unemployed women as a priority, but, indirectly, the participation of women is sought. Between November 1998 and September 2000, 1,400,000 people benefited from the programme, of whom 54% were women. The declared aim of the 1999 NAP Programme was, however, slightly higher (55%). Moreover, support for defining a training project was provided for 217,419 job seekers by AFPA (Public Adult Training Agency), but only 37% of them were women. There is,
therefore, a declared aim of ensuring balanced participation between men and women in this measure, but, in fact, the situation does not meet the real specific needs of women, especially as regards training.

If one observes the results of the programme, the share of women is relatively disappointing: overall, the measure is relatively effective, because, on average, it is estimated that the probability of leaving unemployment has increased by 27%: in 1999, 81.7% of young people left unemployment before the 6th. month, but 83.9% of young men and 79.4% of young women did so; 84.1% of adults left unemployment before the 12th. month (85.5% of men and only 82.5% of women). **But leaving unemployment does not mean entering employment**: we examine the impact of this measure in terms of employment in point 4. At best, overall participation of women in this measure, in fact, only reflects their presence amongst the unemployed, or sometimes even less than that.

2. **Assess the trends in men’s and women’s position independent of the policies proposed**

The phenomenon of above-average unemployment of women in France is well-known. Despite efforts to fight against unemployment and the significant drop in its level (from 12.6% in 1997 to 11.5% in 1998 and 10.6% in 1999), overall - as the following table shows - this drop in unemployment has not really led to a reduction of the gap between men and women.

**Development of unemployment rates**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Men</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>10.6</td>
<td>9.9</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women</td>
<td>14.4</td>
<td>14.3</td>
<td>13.5</td>
<td>12.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gap</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>3.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: NAP 2000

Women represent overall 45% of the economically active population, but 53% of the unemployed. The objective of 55% women in the measures is therefore logical, especially as they concern two categories of unemployed (young people and long-term unemployed), where there are still more women: unemployment of young people has dropped by 16% since 1998, but unemployment of young women is still high: at the end of 1999, 22.3% of young women and 17.8% of young men were unemployed, i.e., a gap of 4.5%. Finally, the share of long-term unemployment is still greater amongst women (39.5% of unemployed women and 37.6% of unemployed men).

3. **Determine the priority to be attached to adopting policies which actively promote equality**

Overall, as we have shown above, French employment policy did not introduce, at the beginning, an explicit will to actively promote equality, but rather to introduce measures
that are supposedly neutral from the point of view of gender. However, there are changes on some points. Thus, new measures in 2000 have attempted to take women’s unequal access to employment more into account. Thus, the above measures are accessible to all women in difficulty regardless of the length of unemployment or age. In other words, the full vulnerability of women is at last recognised in the same way as that of young people and the long-term unemployed. This measure is, therefore, a form of positive discrimination, even though French law is usually rather reticent about such an approach. Until now, taking into account specific measures (which were rapidly abandoned) regarding women was linked to specific criteria: long-term unemployment, single parents. Here, their situation is taken into account better and they are integrated in general measures, rather than in specific, separate ones.

Moreover, in order to promote an active policy concerning equality, one should take into account other dimensions besides women’s difficulties in entering the labour market: difficulties of caring for children, and of travelling in order to have training, as well as the values and perceptions of roles within the family, especially those in difficulty: for example, whether it is possible, or not, for women to have free time for themselves, in order to really follow a training course (time for reading and revision at home, etc.). The government has also studied this dimension, but in a too limited way: henceforth, one-off financial aid (from 2,000 to 3,000 francs) will be given to economically inactive women who take up a job or training in order to help towards paying for childcare. This approach should be followed up and not just in terms of financial encouragement (but also concrete help for finding childcare, making families more aware of the issues involved when mothers return to work, etc.). Equality training is planned for all employment public services (ANPE and AFPA). It is necessary to generalise and perpetuate this approach.

4. **Assess the potential impact of policy**

The potential impact of the measure should not be limited to observing the number of beneficiaries, but rather the results obtained in terms of return to employment. Let us look closer at preliminary results of monitoring those who have benefited from the measure.

“New Departure” results (4 months after entering the measure from January to August 1999)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Taken up employment</th>
<th>Entered training</th>
<th>Other reasons for leaving unemployment</th>
<th>Worked +78 hours since the measure</th>
<th>TOTAL who have left unemployment</th>
<th>Search for employment with results</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>56,238</td>
<td>27,933</td>
<td>141,868</td>
<td>58,343</td>
<td>284,382</td>
<td>234,045</td>
<td>518,427</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of women</td>
<td>52%</td>
<td>56%</td>
<td>52%</td>
<td>53%</td>
<td>52%</td>
<td>54%</td>
<td>53%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
This analysis of monitoring the unemployed shows that 4 months after entering the measure, 55% of them have left unemployment. It is estimated that about 32% of them have taken a job, whatever its length, and 11% have worked at least half-time (+78 hours per month).

One can also, therefore, observe that 45% of the unemployed benefiting from the measure have failed in their search for employment and 54% of them are women. It would be useful to know what the real reasons for failure are, especially by studying company recruitment procedures, in order to isolate possible sources of indirect discrimination against women.

There is also little information concerning “other reasons for leaving unemployment”. This population represents half of all those who left unemployment and is, therefore, significant. According to NAP, it is a matter of people, who have taken jobs, that have not been declared to ANPE, but there is nothing to indicate what proportion of them fall into this case and whether there are not also unemployed people, who are discouraged and have left to join the economically inactive.

Finally, the limits of the data also concern the lack of information about the nature of jobs that were found, their stability (short-term contracts or not, etc.). Longitudinal monitoring of those leaving unemployment for employment is necessary, in order to know whether these people are still in work after 6 months or a year.

5. **Assess the potential impact of policy on particular groups**

This measure does not take into account differences between social groups of an ethnic, family or other nature. The only specific category referred to concerns exclusion. Indeed, this programme is one of the elements of the action plan to fight exclusion launched two years ago. Thus, amongst the 1,400,000 job seekers concerned, 54% are considered to be “people under threat of exclusion”. Amongst those in great difficulty, 52% are women. They are mainly people living below the poverty threshold, on RMI, with problems of integration, not only regarding employment, but also socially and regarding their family (homelessness and women, who are victims of violence, etc.). It is difficult to assess the potential impact of this measure on this public. Direct access to a job is in any case very difficult. It is therefore possible to imagine that such personalised support would be a preliminary stage on the way to reintegration. The training of those responsible for such support is therefore primordial, in order to take all dimensions of exclusion into account, especially as far as women, who are victims of violence, are concerned. The following data thus confirm that for this public, the results of the measure are less effective: 51% left unemployment (compared with 55% of all those concerned); 20% took up a job.

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(compared with approximately a third of the total); the proportion of women concerned is however identical to all those involved in the measure.
“New Departure” results for people under threat of exclusion

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Taken up employment</th>
<th>Entered training</th>
<th>Other reasons for leaving unemployment</th>
<th>Worked +78 hours since the measure</th>
<th>TOTAL who have left unemployment</th>
<th>Search for employment with results</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>27,792</td>
<td>13,206</td>
<td>70,952</td>
<td>27,999</td>
<td>139,949</td>
<td>133,483</td>
<td>273,432</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of women</td>
<td>52%</td>
<td>56%</td>
<td>51%</td>
<td>52%</td>
<td>52%</td>
<td>52%</td>
<td>52%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Ministry of Employment and Solidarity

6. Assess the indirect impacts of both the current state of gender inequalities and the proposed policies

The indirect impact of this measure in terms of equality is difficult to measure. As we have observed, the place reserved to equality essentially involves introducing a quantified objective (55% of women beneficiaries) into the measure. Other dimensions of social and family organisation of female job seekers are not taken into account much. Certainly, as a complement to this measure, as special effort will be given to women who take up an economic activity again. For example, we have mentioned the 2,000 to 3,000 francs given to them for childcare, and the possibility of accumulating 2 months of APE with their wage that is going to be introduced. But the question is not limited to specific financial aspects alone. These proposals seem insufficient. Such financial encouragement does not resolve all the problems concerning childcare: access to sufficient places in high quality childcare, that is financially feasible for these families remains a real problem and means that some women (provisionally) leave the labour market via APE. These measures indirectly suggest that the question of childcare only concerns mothers - there are no incentives for fathers. These measures run the risk of indirectly shoring up traditional roles and they only consider the financial dimension of choices concerning work and childcare. However, such choices depend also on other aspects, such as autonomy and freedom, that access to a job represents for mothers, and the development of children, thanks to access to high quality collective structures.

7. Identify ways in which the policy could be redesigned or re-specified to promote gender equality

The “New Departure” programme is a policy for fighting against unemployment, which takes into account the dimension of gender equality, but efforts still have to be made, in order to make it possible to monitor such job seekers and, above all, ensure real access to employment for these populations. Indeed, leaving unemployment does not always mean entering and staying in employment. From the point of view of equality, two issues should be analysed through such policy: first of all, monitoring should not just happen
upstream from the labour market, but should also intervene more directly in relation to companies. Indeed, forms of indirect discrimination persist in company recruitment policies, especially concerning these publics and particularly when women are concerned. However, direct intervention in companies is not an aim that really exists in equality policies. Such intervention is, however, necessary, if one is to fight effectively against women’s unemployment. Moreover, another important aspect concerns private life and the family. French family policy is relatively ambiguous concerning equality in employment. We have already shown (in Part 1) that the Parental Childcare Allowance (APE) could be an unemployment and economic inactivity trap for mothers. One should, therefore, improve arrangements for these women to return to employment and also, perhaps, challenge this allowance, which is a disincentive for these women to work: substantially improving collective child care would partly meet their needs. However, the budget devoted to APE (about 18 billion francs) is much greater than that devoted to collective childcare (2.8 billion francs). Even though the last Family Conference announced improved childcare structures, the gap remains substantial.
II.2. Assessment of the gender impact of the measures aiming at « reducing the working week ».

In the framework of pillar III concerning the adaptation of companies and workers, France has made its mark by implementing the law of January 19th 2000 (the so called Aubry II Law) on the implementation of the 35 hour week that complements and extends the scope of the law of 1998 (Aubry I). This new legislation “sets a working week of 35 h, lays the rules for overtime, opens up new possibilities in terms of the organisation of work (modulation, days taken off in lieu, time saving account, part time work, arrangements for managerial and professional staff), provides for a decrease in some of the employers’ contributions and establishes mechanisms for a guaranteed income level for workers: the SMIC (minimum wage). This legislation encourages the bargaining process, in particular as regards professional training and gender equality”(NAP, 2000). Thus, a major shift has occurred between the first and the second Law in terms of the assessment of the gender impact which deserves our full attention: whereas this aspect was totally absent from the first Law, the second Aubry Law makes negotiation of gender issues a prerequisite for access to financial incentives. It is because of this major change that we have decided to examine this second measure: Can we consider that mainstreaming of gender has occurred? What are the consequences and what are the outcomes that can so far be observed?

1. Identify the position of men and women prior to policy development

This law therefore introduces real changes, but some issues still pose a problem as regards gender:

- The first crucial point affecting the balanced participation of men and women in the process and the resources allocated to this objective concerns the issue of part time work. A step forward has been made with the abolition of the exemption of employers’ contributions for part time work (which was only achieved through bargaining and numerous mobilisations). In France, part time work is motivated by a series of factors: it is partly the result of an individual “choice” to reduce one’s working hours (for example to work four days a week in order to look after one’s children on Wednesdays, as children in France get the day off school), but it also meets the wish of companies for greater flexibility in their production processes, based on financial contributions from the government (30% reduction in employers’ contributions). Part time work has developed spectacularly in France over the past years, experiencing one of the fastest rates of growth in Europe (in 1980, there were 1.5 million part time jobs, and 3.5 million in 1998 that is to say 18% of all jobs, over 30% of female jobs and 5% of male jobs, 85% of part time jobs going to women). It must be borne in mind that in France part time work was not widespread (so levels of part time work were rather low) and contrary to what occurred in some countries of Northern Europe, the growth in female employment began with full time jobs, and now no longer with interruptions in their careers – this being an exception shared with the former GDR (and to a certain extent with Portugal and Finland) - countries such as Denmark for instance, where women are active on the labour market at every age group (in particular from 25 to 49) owe this development to part time work. Also, contrary to what happens in Northern Europe, part time work affects women to a far greater extent in France.

Thus this abolition is to be welcomed as it was a truly discriminating factor for women who were employed on very short contracts with salaries bordering on the poverty line (3 000F). But this will only concern the new part time contracts and should only come into force in 2001. These tax breaks will be a true windfall for companies in particular in retailing and catering where part time work is imposed upon workers and is often tantamount to casual employment. At the same time, a number of measures to « protect part time workers » have been announced, such as the limitation of overtime. However, no provision has been made for a right to revert to full time employment, as is the case with the recently enacted legislation in the Netherlands which enables each worker to extend or shorten their working hours. On this question, the French legislation leaves it up to the bargaining process to set up the procedures to improve the relation between part time work and the 35 hour week, and for example to develop the conditions for « freely chosen part time work ». But will the social partners really take these issues on board? Are workers –including female workers- who are often in a weak position when their jobs are being threatened, really likely to take the initiative on this? If women (since it is mostly women) have “chosen” to work less, often because of family constraints, that does not mean that they want to set themselves apart from the company in which
they work, on the contrary. Their rights and working conditions must be part of a collective approach, not an individual one, and the reduction in the collective working week should provide them with the opportunity to express their difference whilst reasserting their equal rights. That is why women need to take on a greater role in the collective bargaining process.

- A second positive element in the new legislation provides for the benefit of employers’ contributions cuts to fall on companies that have entered agreements including measures in favour of professional equality and the development of « freely chosen part time work » (possibility of changing from part time work to full time work or vice versa). That is to say that in terms of resources, the emphasis is placed on equality and the struggle against gender discriminations. In the same spirit, as regards norms and values, the legislation on the 35 hour week strives to strike a better balance on ‘social time’ for women as well as for men and a better balance between family life and professional life. Thus workers will be able to ask for a reduction in their working time equivalent to at least a week « so as to meet the needs of their family life ». In the same way, a worker in part time employment will be able to turn down an increase in overtime for family reasons. However, these principles are still rather symbolical as no specific provisions have been made apart from the limitation of discrimination when applying for a job. It is up to those involved in the bargaining process to come up with concrete measures, but there is a risk that only formal principles will be included in the agreements.

2. Assess the trends in men’s and women’s position independent of the policies proposed.

Until the new legislation is comprehensively applied, a major gap between men’s and women’s working hours will be observed, as shown in the following table.

**Weekly length of working hours for regular work** (both salaried and non salaried, part time and full time)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Men</td>
<td>41,4h</td>
<td>41,2h</td>
<td>41,1h</td>
<td>40,9h</td>
<td>40,7h</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women</td>
<td>34,8h</td>
<td>34,7h</td>
<td>34,3h</td>
<td>34,3h</td>
<td>34,2h</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Difference</td>
<td>6,6h</td>
<td>6,5h</td>
<td>6,8h</td>
<td>6,6h</td>
<td>6,5h</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: employment survey, INSEE

Eurostat data complete this first table for 1998, and provides data for part time and full time work. It appears quite clearly that the gap for full time work (2,4h) and especially part time work (0,5) is in fact small. It is rather the employment profile (share of part time work in female employment) that explains this overall gap of 6,6h. As long as part time work continues to grow and to affect mainly women, this gap will continue to be substantial.

**Average working hours worked per week by people in employment in 1998**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>All forms of employment</th>
<th>Full time</th>
<th>Part time</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Men</td>
<td>40,9</td>
<td>42h</td>
<td>23,3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women</td>
<td>34,3</td>
<td>39,6</td>
<td>22,8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Difference</td>
<td>6,6</td>
<td>2,4</td>
<td>0,5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It can be expected that the new legislation on the 35 hour working week will lead to greater convergence in the length of working hours: on the one hand there will be a reduction in men’s working hours for full time jobs (as before the introduction of the 35 hour week they would work 3 hours more on average per week) and by limiting short part time work (because of the end of financial incentives). From our point of view, only a greater convergence of working hours between men and women will ensure equality at work,
but also in family life (reduction in full time work and longer hours for part time work as well as less frequent instances of part time work).

3. Determine the priority to be attached to adopting policies which actively promote equality

A number of priorities could be set in order to complete this law and actively foster equality:

- **first of all employment**: At a time when the figures for new jobs and employment are being hotly debated, nobody has asked who is benefiting from the possible new jobs being created. Is equality going to be promoted, by maintaining or even increasing the share of women hired at a time when women are still hit harder by unemployment? Isn’t there a risk of just replacing male workers with female workers, in view of the labour conditions and type of working hours proposed? What is the use of measures aimed at favouring the recruitment of women such as those proposed for example in Mme Génisson’s recent report\(^1\) if they do not lead to specific measures which are more enforceable? Equality cannot be tackled merely by offering companies financial incentives. There should be a call for ensuring that there is a fair share of women taken on during recruitment procedures and even propose that they are over-represented so as to fight against discriminations.

- At a time when the government is set to fight against casual employment, especially under the widespread form of short term contracts or interim work, there is a case for imposing a tax on non-voluntary part time work which often goes together with a short term contract, and that a **bonus for insecurity of employment** is paid out to workers on short term contracts involving unsocial hours.

4. Assess the potential impact of policy

Some observations can be made that enable us to carry out a preliminary assessment of the impact which these measures have had on gender. There is evidence that the current context in which the legislation is being applied is favourable to gender equality promotion: Firstly, although unionisation rates are lower for women than they are for men, women are better represented in the bargaining process and in particular there are more mandated women than men\(^11\). In some agreements, women have managed to make their voice heard by refusing for instance a 35 hour week spread over 4 days (with a longer working day of 9 hours) which was being asked by men but is not easily reconcilable with school hours.; at a hypermarket, an agreement passed during the negotiations on the 35 hour working week led to an increase in the length of part time work. In a textile company, female workers negotiated a reduction in the working week which took the form of days of leave to be taken on an individual basis, etc.

However, in other instances women have denounced a deterioration in their working conditions (in particular an increase in stress) as the application of the reduction in their working hours does not take their needs into account or favours the recruitment of men. In March 2000, a Trade Union confederation (the CFTC) publicised the findings of a qualitative survey carried out amongst the employees of around forty companies. The survey concluded that the 35 hour week did not meet the female employees’ expectations, as the results showed that, to a far greater extent than for their male colleagues, women expected the reduction in the working week to improve their living conditions but that in fact it resulted in greater stress and fatigue. There is a risk that these conditions become widespread. From this point of view, much remains to be done for the principle of equality to be asserted at the outset of the bargaining process. It is quite likely that only the mobilisation of local partners, in particular the Trade Unions and workers themselves will effectively challenge this trend in the negotiation of future agreements. The conclusion is thus a mitigated one.

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\(^1\) Davantage de mixité professionnelle pour plus d'égalité entre hommes et femmes, Report to the Prime Minister, July 1999.

\(^11\) The system of mandates enables a person who is not a member of a Trade Union to negotiate and sign an agreement in a company by being mandated by a representative Trade Union.
5. Assess the potential impact of policy on particular groups

The reduction in the working week is first and foremost a way of striking a better balance between family life and professional life, in particular for parents. Yet, from the company’s point of view, the reduction in the working week is a tool that enables greater flexibility in working hours, the calculation of leave on a yearly basis and modulation of working hours. There is a widespread development of unsocial hours (working hours spread out over long periods of time, night work, etc.). Thus, when agreements were negotiated on the 35 hour working week, night shifts for female workers has sometimes been encouraged. Women, who often happen to be mothers, have accepted to work night shifts in order to receive a financial bonus or to look after their young children during the day, obviously at the expense of their health (few and erratic hours of sleep). Giving workers sufficient notice of changes in working hours is also a crucial aspect. It appears that in the name of production constraints and “just-in-time” production, very short notice is given and often statutory notification periods are not respected. To be notified one week in advance, or worst still just three days in advance of a change in working hours, which according to the law is possible in case of an economic necessity, poses insurmountable problems in terms of personal organisation, especially for women. This issue needs to be better taken into account by all the social partners.

The issue of the reduction in the working hours of professional and managerial employees has also been the subject of numerous debates. The decision which has finally been reached of a reduction in working days with no reference made to working hours for some types of qualified employees known as « third type » (neither managers nor members of a team), will have social consequences for the whole of that category, more specifically in terms of equality, since these employees will most likely come under pressure to work longer days, since a working day can legally be of up to 13 hours. Who will be able to accept these longer working days? Once more, it can be expected that highly qualified women will be penalised first and to a greater extent and that the feminisation of some qualified professions will be slowed down because of this change in working hours.

6. Assess the indirect impacts of both the current state of gender inequalities and the proposed policies

In order to assess the indirect impact of policies on inequality we can refer to a number of surveys that assess the use of free time according to gender. As is revealed by data produced by surveys on the use of free time of households (currently being analysed) or surveys assessing the impact of the first Aubry Law, a balanced share of household chores but also of child rearing is still far from being achieved in France. Worst still, whereas the reduction in the working week could appear to be a good way to strike a better balance in the share out of domestic chores in favour of women, the opposite could be true : for example, when the company gives employees the possibility of choosing when the wish to take their extra time off, men tend to chose to take a longer week-end break whereas women prefer to take Wednesdays off so they can stay with their children (as there is no school on Wednesdays in France). Similarly, concerning the use of free time, it appears that whereas children seem to be a high priority for their mothers but also for their fathers, a substantial gap seems to separate men and women when it comes to household chores (chosen by women) as opposed to DIY or gardening for men (semi-leasure activities...). Finally, just resting seems to be a major need, in particular for women.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Use of free time by gender breakdown (extracts)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Men</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DIY, gardening</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Looking after the children</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carrying out household chores</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

12 Let us recall that France has only just issued new legislation which will modify the labour code by authorising women to work night shifts is industry in accordance with the European Directive.
Questions with several possible answers and other possible answers have not been presented (sport, leisure activities, etc.).

7. Identify ways in which the policy could be redesigned or reformulated to promote gender equality

It seems to me that regarding the reduction in the working week one should proceed on a case by case basis in order to ensure that among salaried workers women are not the ones who shoulder all the burdens outside the working place, in particular household chores and family duties. Thus, awareness campaigns should be organised in the workplace explaining that children are a responsibility for mothers and for fathers, as has already happened in Sweden, where being a parent is not a liability to ones career or is less so and where fathers can take parental leave in the same way as mothers (« fathers’ month », 60 days leave in case of children being ill instead of 3 days in France with unpaid parental leave or “Allocation parentale d’Education” (Parental childcare allowance) which given the amount of the allowance paid only concerns women). In conclusion, if the government really wants to mainstream equality, it must involve the companies more and must foster cultural changes of fathers in the work place and outside the work place.
1.1 The state of development of guidelines on gender impact assessment

**Draft fiche for summarising national examples of GIA guidelines**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ORGANISATION RESPONSIBLE FOR DEVELOPING THE GUIDELINES</th>
<th>Centre for Employment Studies (CEE)</th>
<th>National Family Allowances Agency (CNAF)</th>
<th>National Institute of Statistics and Economic Studies</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Type of Organisation</strong></td>
<td>Research centre of the Ministry of Research, linked to the Ministry of Employment</td>
<td>Sector of the social security system (research service)</td>
<td>Ministry of the Economy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Level of responsibility</strong></td>
<td>National</td>
<td>National</td>
<td>National</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>The broad responsibility of the organisation</strong></td>
<td>Assessment of ESF projects</td>
<td>Assessment of a measure funded by the health service sector</td>
<td>Production of statistics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>THE GUIDELINES</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Name or title of guidelines</strong></td>
<td>Assessment of implementing equality in French structural fund programmes</td>
<td>Overview of the Parental Childcare Allowance (APE)</td>
<td>Improving statistics about the respective situations of women and men</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Date when the guidelines were issued or adopted</strong></td>
<td>1998</td>
<td>2000</td>
<td>1999</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Aims and objectives of the guidelines</strong></td>
<td>Assessing equality of access to employment and public measures regarding training and help for integration</td>
<td>Assessing the impact of the measure on the economic activity of mothers of 2 children</td>
<td>Assessing statistical tools from the point of view of gender</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| **Summary of contents of the guidelines (attach in more detail in appendix if necessary)** | - the place of equality in employment policies  
  - the share of women amongst the beneficiaries  
  - equal opportunities in structural fund programmes | - incentive effect with regard to leaving economic activity  
  - monitoring occupational reintegration | - available statistics  
  - points that need improving  
  - setting up a permanent network for producing and analysing gender statistics |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Method of implementation</th>
<th>Method of monitoring and evaluation</th>
<th>Obstacles which may limit the effectiveness of the policy (lack of statistics, institutional and political problems of coordination, etc.)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Analysis of employment statistics: analysis of government directives; measuring the share of women in the measures</td>
<td>Problem of the overall coherence of perceptions of players regarding equality; contradictions between the general objective of equality and specific actions that are still not considered legitimate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Monitoring a cohort of women over a period of 4 years on the basis of the employment survey; survey of beneficiaries</td>
<td>From the point of view of employment and equality, this measure is a disincentive for women to be economically active, but it meets the demands of many mothers in difficulty (regarding employment and childcare). Ambiguity of a family policy measure in relation to equality in employment.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Survey of available surveys; analysis of the needs of the different services (women’s rights, employment)</td>
<td>Compartmentalisation of statistics and their use; absence of a will to integrate equality in some services and to confine between Ministries</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>