

18 March 2021 | 1100 hrs | 050/2021

Job Autonomy: 2019

The data provided in this news release is extracted from the 2019 Labour Force Survey (LFS) ad hoc module on work organisation and working time arrangements. The LFS is a household-based survey and is used as a monitoring tool across the European Union for assessing progress made in various spheres of labour market and social statistics.

The EU-LFS Regulation (EC) No 577/981 and EC Implementing Regulation 2017/2384 made up the legal framework for the collection of data on work organisation and working time arrangements. This ad hoc module focuses on elements that are considered to be important for the well-being of workers and their work-life balance.

This news release, part of a series of three releases on the 2019 ad hoc module, provides a snapshot on the flexibility of workers and employers in 2019. It focuses on autonomy among the employed population and provides information on the methods of recording hours or presence at work, working under time pressure and autonomy over order and content of tasks.

Employees' methods for recording working time in Malta and the EU-28¹

In 2019, LFS estimates showed that 40.9 per cent of employees had their working hours recorded automatically, that is through an automated system when the employee enters the building, when logging into a computer or through a clocking system. This figure is almost 10 percentage points higher than the EU-28 average of 31.1 per cent (Chart 1).

A further 22.2 per cent of employees had their hours recorded manually, of which, 18.3 per cent recorded their own hours while 3.9 per cent had their hours recorded by their supervisor (Chart 1).

Results indicated that more than one fifth of employees in Malta did not record their working hours hence hinting at a higher degree of autonomy and flexibility on their job. This is almost at par with the EU-28 average of 21.2 per cent (Table 1, Chart 1).

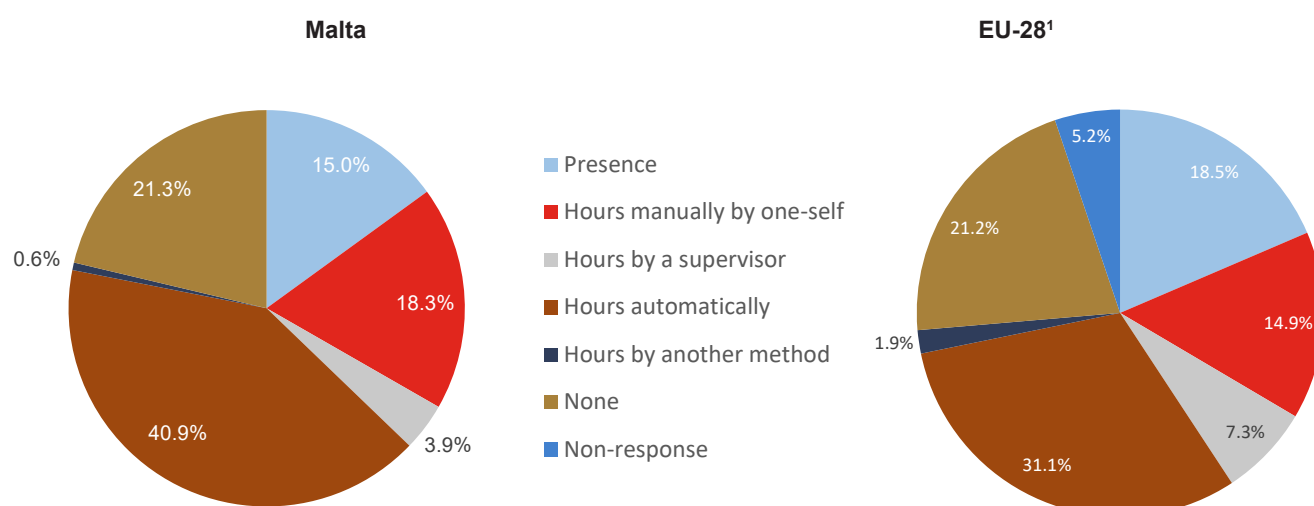
¹ The EU-28 aggregate is used for this ad hoc module, since in 2019 the United Kingdom was still part of the European Union.

Table 1. Methods of recording working time among employees in Malta and EU-28¹

Methods	MT	EU-28 ¹
	% employees	
Presence recorded	15.0	18.6
Hours recorded	63.7	55.1
Hours worked recorded manually by oneself	18.3	14.9
Hours worked recorded manually by supervisor/colleague	3.9	7.3
Hours worked recorded automatically	40.9	31.1
Hours worked recorded with another method	0.6 ^u	1.9
Presence and hours not recorded	21.3	21.2
Non-response	-	5.2
Total	100.0	100.0

^u Under represented - between 20 and 49 sample observations

Chart 1. Employees' methods for recording working times



The method of recording hours at work varied according to the employee's economic activity. Employees who worked in the Other services sector (39.6 per cent), Construction (32.9 per cent) and Professional, scientific, technical, administration and support service activities (28.9 per cent) were more likely not to record their hours worked or presence at work (Table 2).

The highest share of employees who only recorded their presence at work were employed in the Public administration, defence, education, human health and social work activities (26.4 per cent). Meanwhile, employees in Manufacturing, mining and quarrying and other industry (77.9 per cent) were more likely to record their hours rather than their presence at work (Table 2).

¹ The EU-28 aggregate is used for this ad hoc module, since in 2019 the United Kingdom was still part of the European Union.

Table 2. Employees' methods of recording working time by economic activity

Economic activity	None	Presence	Hours	Total
	No.			
Agriculture, forestry and fishing	:	:	:	1,130 ^u
Manufacturing, mining and quarrying and other industry	4,046	2,109 ^u	21,743	27,898
Construction	3,698	:	6,388	11,248
Wholesale and retail trade, transportation and storage, accommodation and food service activities	14,473	5,898	34,138	54,509
Information and communication	2,008 ^u	:	5,345	8,091
Financial and insurance activities	2,679	1,317 ^u	6,960	10,956
Real estate activities	:	:	:	1,109 ^u
Professional, scientific, technical, administration and support service activities	5,806	2,332 ^u	11,923	20,061
Public administration, defence, education, human health and social work activities	5,396	15,926	38,934	60,256
Other services	6,194	2,043 ^u	7,420	15,657
Total	44,890	31,633	134,392	210,915
	% economic activity			
Agriculture, forestry and fishing	:	:	:	100.0 ^u
Manufacturing, mining and quarrying and other industry	14.5	7.6 ^u	77.9	100.0
Construction	32.9	:	56.8	100.0
Wholesale and retail trade, transportation and storage, accommodation and food service activities	26.6	10.8	62.6	100.0
Information and communication	24.8 ^u	:	66.1	100.0
Financial and insurance activities	24.5	12.0 ^u	63.5	100.0
Real estate activities	:	:	:	100.0 ^u
Professional, scientific, technical, administration and support service activities	28.9	11.6 ^u	59.4	100.0
Public administration, defence, education, human health and social work activities	9.0	26.4	64.6	100.0
Other services	39.6	13.0 ^u	47.4	100.0
Total	21.3	15.0	63.7	100.0

^u Under represented - between 20 and 49 sample observations

: Unreliable - less than 20 sample observations

Methods of recording working times also differed across employees' occupational groups. Results from the LFS ad hoc module indicated that almost half of Managers did not record their hours nor their presence at work (44.7 per cent). The largest share of employees who only recorded their presence at work were Professionals (22.1 per cent). Meanwhile, the majority of employees who worked as Plant and machine operators and assemblers; in Elementary occupations or as Clerical and support workers had to record their working hours (79.7 per cent, 72.5 per cent, 70.2 per cent respectively) (Table 3, Chart 2).

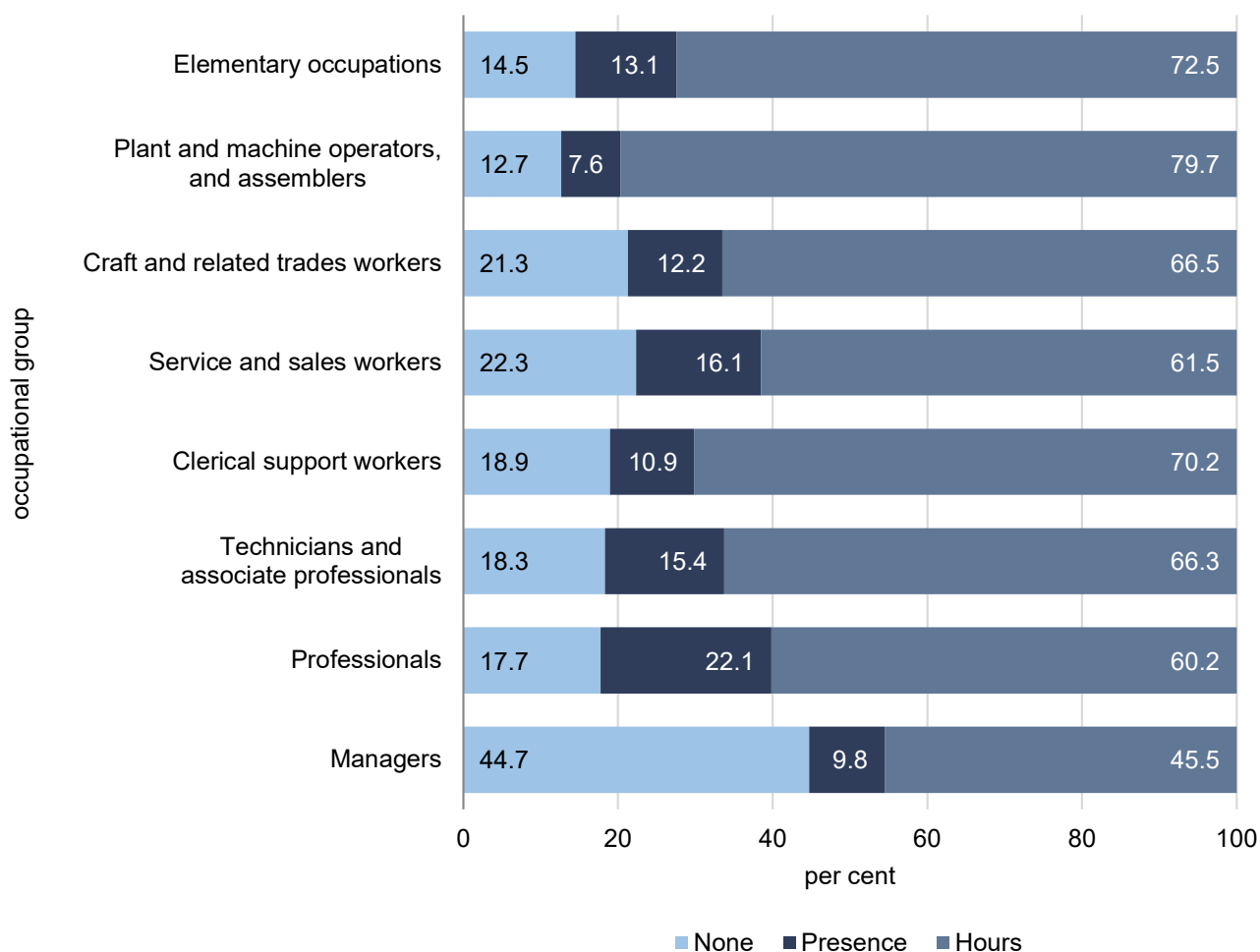
Table 3. Employees' methods of recording working time by occupation

Occupational group	None	Presence	Hours	Total
	No.			
Armed Forces	:	:	1,381 ^u	2,041 ^u
Managers	10,115	2,207	10,298	22,620
Professionals	7,191	8,956	24,390	40,537
Technicians and associate professionals	5,649	4,760	20,447	30,856
Clerical support workers	5,067	2,913	18,769	26,749
Service and sales workers	9,221	6,660	25,396	41,277
Skilled agricultural, forestry and fishery workers	:	:	:	:
Craft and related trades workers	3,592 ^u	2,057 ^u	11,204	16,853
Plant and machine operators, and assemblers	1,432 ^u	862 ^u	9,002	11,296
Elementary occupations	2,590 ^u	2,335	12,965	17,890
Total	44,890	31,633	134,392	210,915
	% occupational group			
Armed Forces	:	:	67.7 ^u	100.0 ^u
Managers	44.7	9.8	45.5	100.0
Professionals	17.7	22.1	60.2	100.0
Technicians and associate professionals	18.3	15.4	66.3	100.0
Clerical support workers	18.9	10.9	70.2	100.0
Service and sales workers	22.3	16.1	61.5	100.0
Skilled agricultural, forestry and fishery workers	:	:	:	:
Craft and related trades workers	21.3 ^u	12.2 ^u	66.5	100.0
Plant and machine operators, and assemblers	12.7 ^u	7.6 ^u	79.7	100.0
Elementary occupations	14.5 ^u	13.1	72.5	100.0
Total	21.3	15.0	63.7	100.0

^u Under represented - between 20 and 49 sample observations

: Unreliable - less than 20 sample observations

Chart 2. Employees' methods for recording working times by occupation



Working under time pressure

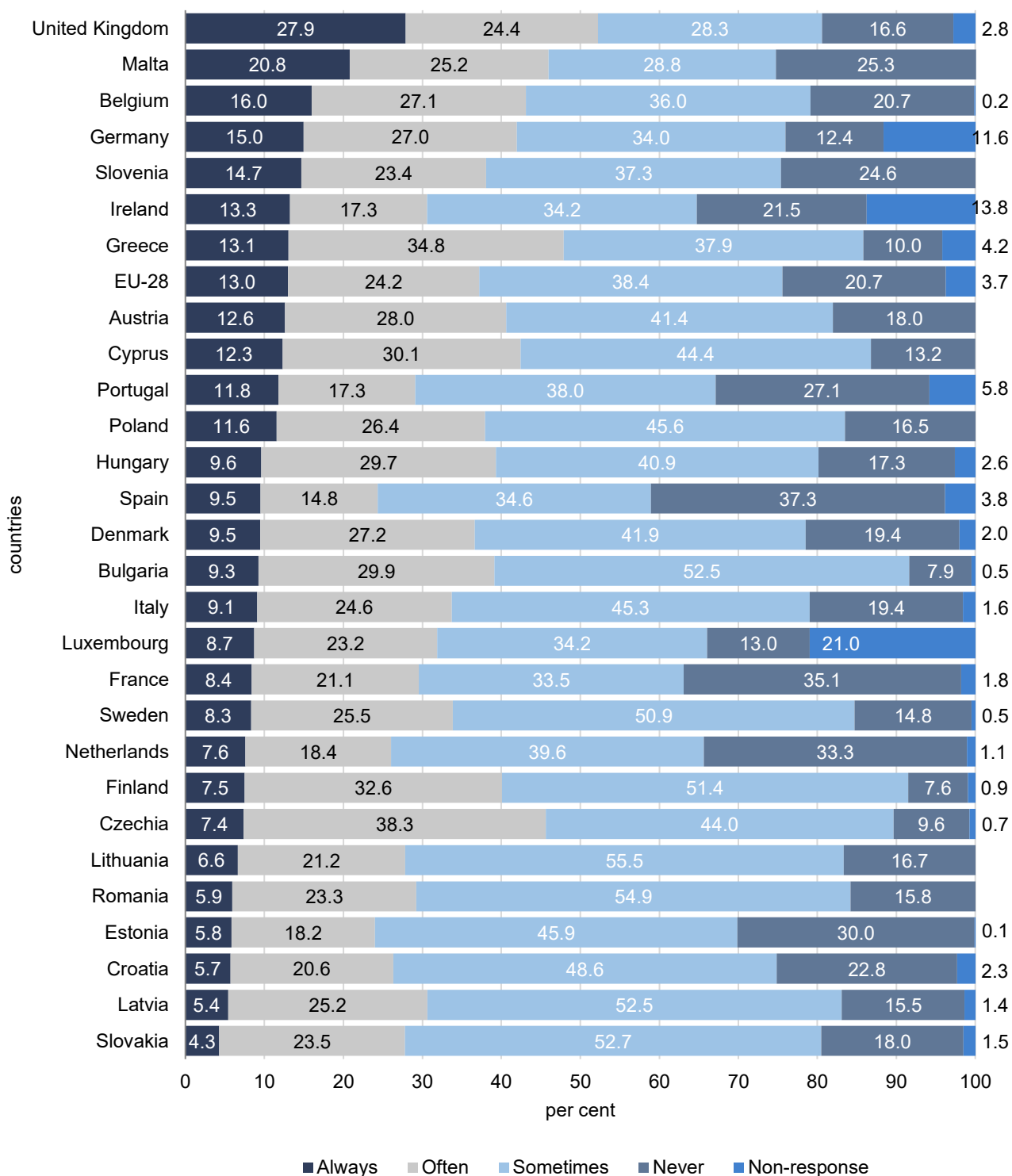
During 2019, more than one fifth of all employed persons in Malta felt that they always worked under time pressure (20.8 per cent). The share was slightly higher for males (21.6 per cent) when compared to females (19.7 per cent), resulting in a gender gap of 1.9 percentage points (Table 4).

Table 4. Employed persons' frequency of working under time pressure by sex

Frequency	Males		Females		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Always	32,326	21.6	20,078	19.7	52,404	20.8
Often	37,881	25.3	25,379	24.9	63,260	25.2
Sometimes	43,426	29.0	28,905	28.3	72,331	28.8
Never	35,900	24.0	27,631	27.1	63,531	25.3
Total	149,533	100.0	101,993	100.0	251,526	100.0

This means that employees feel that the time allotted to accomplish tasks at work was not sufficient, implying that they had to speed up work or extend working times. When compared to the EU-28 average, employed persons in Malta were the second most likely to always experience time pressure at work following the United Kingdom (27.9 per cent) (Chart 3).

Chart 3. Employed persons' frequency of working under time pressure among EU-28¹



¹ The EU-28 aggregate is used for this ad hoc module, since in 2019 the United Kingdom was still part of the European Union.

In Malta, persons employed as Managers (38.2 per cent); Professionals (25.0 per cent) and Technicians and associate professionals (23.3 per cent) were more likely to constantly work under time pressure. Conversely, the larger share of Elementary workers (37.4 per cent); Service and sales workers (33.0 per cent) and Plant and machine operators (32.3 per cent) claimed that they never experience time pressure at their workplace (Table 5).

Table 5. Employed persons' frequency of working under time pressure by occupation

Occupational group	Always	Often	Sometimes	Never	Total
	No.				
Armed Forces	:	:	:	:	2,041 ^u
Managers	10,803	8,226	5,710	3,517	28,256
Professionals	11,592	11,344	14,839	8,585	46,360
Technicians and associate professionals	8,384	10,085	11,210	6,231	35,910
Clerical support workers	3,744	6,123	8,906	8,484	27,257
Service and sales workers	7,494	11,656	14,304	16,485	49,939
Skilled agricultural, forestry and fishery workers	:	:	:	1,086 ^u	2,651
Craft and related trades workers	5,181	6,920	6,673	6,806	25,580
Plant and machine operators, and assemblers	2,201 ^u	3,699	3,261	4,377	13,538
Elementary occupations	2,289 ^u	4,221	6,009	7,475	19,994
Total	52,404	63,260	72,331	63,531	251,526
	% occupational group				
Armed Forces	:	:	:	:	100.0 ^u
Managers	38.2	29.1	20.2	12.4	100.0
Professionals	25.0	24.5	32.0	18.5	100.0
Technicians and associate professionals	23.3	28.1	31.2	17.4	100.0
Clerical support workers	13.7	22.5	32.7	31.1	100.0
Service and sales workers	15.0	23.3	28.6	33.0	100.0
Skilled agricultural, forestry and fishery workers	:	:	:	41.0 ^u	100.0
Craft and related trades workers	20.3	27.1	26.1	26.6	100.0
Plant and machine operators, and assemblers	16.3 ^u	27.3	24.1	32.3	100.0
Elementary occupations	11.4 ^u	21.1	30.1	37.4	100.0
Total	20.8	25.2	28.8	25.3	100.0

^u Under represented - between 20 and 49 sample observations

: Unreliable - less than 20 sample observations

The economic activity of employed persons also impacted their level of time-related pressure on the job. Persons employed in Financial and insurance activities were more likely to experience such pressure (29.6 per cent). On the other hand, persons working in Other services were most likely to never experience time pressure at their workplace (33.1 per cent) (Table 6).

Table 6. Employed persons' frequency of working under time pressure by economic activity

Economic activity	Always	Often	Sometimes	Never	Total
	No.				
Agriculture, forestry and fishing	:	:	:	945 ^u	3,058
Manufacturing, mining and quarrying and other industry	7,475	8,227	8,221	7,486	31,409
Construction	4,019	4,752	4,094	4,747	17,612
Wholesale and retail trade, transportation and storage, accommodation and food service activities	11,336	17,281	20,089	18,879	67,585
Information and communication	2,295 ^u	3,120	2,521 ^u	1,582 ^u	9,518
Financial and insurance activities	3,444	3,578	3,141	1,487 ^u	11,650
Real estate activities	:	:	:	:	2,829 ^u
Professional, scientific, technical, administration and support service activities	4,948	6,842	6,777	5,871	24,438
Public administration, defence, education, human health and social work activities	13,750	14,837	18,996	14,822	62,405
Other services	3,569	3,941	6,550	6,962	21,022
Total	52,404	63,260	72,331	63,531	251,526
	% economic activity				
Agriculture, forestry and fishing	:	:	:	30.9 ^u	100.0
Manufacturing, mining and quarrying and other industry	23.8	26.2	26.2	23.8	100.0
Construction	22.8	27.0	23.2	27.0	100.0
Wholesale and retail trade, transportation and storage, accommodation and food service activities	16.8	25.6	29.7	27.9	100.0
Information and communication	24.1 ^u	32.8	26.5 ^u	16.6 ^u	100.0
Financial and insurance activities	29.6	30.7	27.0	12.8 ^u	100.0
Real estate activities	:	:	:	:	100.0 ^u
Professional, scientific, technical, administration and support service activities	20.2	28.0	27.7	24.0	100.0
Public administration, defence, education, human health and social work activities	22.0	23.8	30.4	23.8	100.0
Other services	17.0	18.7	31.2	33.1	100.0
Total	20.8	25.2	28.8	25.3	100.0

^u Under represented - between 20 and 49 sample observations

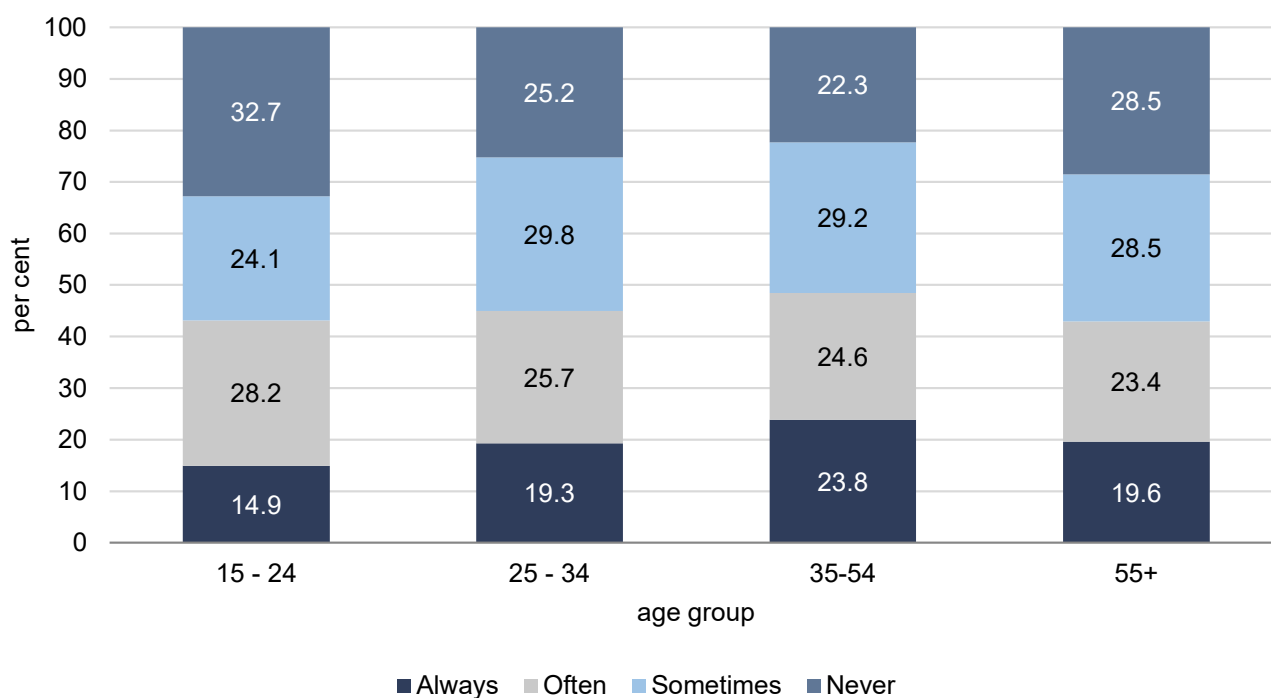
: Unreliable - less than 20 sample observations

An employed person's age was found to be highly related to pressure at work and, in fact, the likelihood of experiencing time pressure at work increases with one's age until the age of 54 years. In fact, the younger cohorts had less time pressure (14.9 per cent) when compared to those between 35 and 54 years (23.8 per cent). Work pressure then declined among those who were 55 years and over but the share was still higher than the younger segment of workers (Table 7, Chart 4).

Table 7. Employed persons' frequency of working under time pressure by age group

Frequency	15-24	25-34	35-54	55+	Total
	No.				
Always	4,088	14,907	26,066	7,343	52,404
Often	7,717	19,868	26,921	8,754	63,260
Sometimes	6,592	23,086	31,971	10,682	72,331
Never	8,953	19,480	24,410	10,688	63,531
Total	27,350	77,341	109,368	37,467	251,526
	% employed persons				
Always	14.9	19.3	23.8	19.6	20.8
Often	28.2	25.7	24.6	23.4	25.2
Sometimes	24.1	29.8	29.2	28.5	28.8
Never	32.7	25.2	22.3	28.5	25.3
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Chart 4. Employed persons working under time pressure by age group



Job autonomy

The level of autonomy persons have in their job measures the extent to which workers can influence the order and the content of their assigned tasks. More independence at work is perceived to be an indicator for higher job quality and is linked to increased job satisfaction.

In 2019, more than half of the employed population had some or large influence on the content and order of their tasks (52.8 per cent), 3.8 percentage points higher than the EU-28 average of 49.0 per cent (Table 8).

Nearly one third of the employed population indicated that they had little or no influence on both the content and the order of their tasks in their job (32.1 per cent), 1.9 percentage points higher than the EU-28 average of 30.2 per cent (Table 8).

Table 8. Employed persons' job autonomy in main job in Malta and EU-28¹

Job autonomy	MT	EU-28 ¹
	% employed persons	
Some or large on content and order of tasks	52.8	49.0
Little or none on content and some or large on order of tasks	10.9	14.1
Some or large on content and little or none on order of tasks	4.2	3.5
Little or none on content and order of tasks	32.1	30.2
Non-response	-	3.2
Total	100.0	100.0

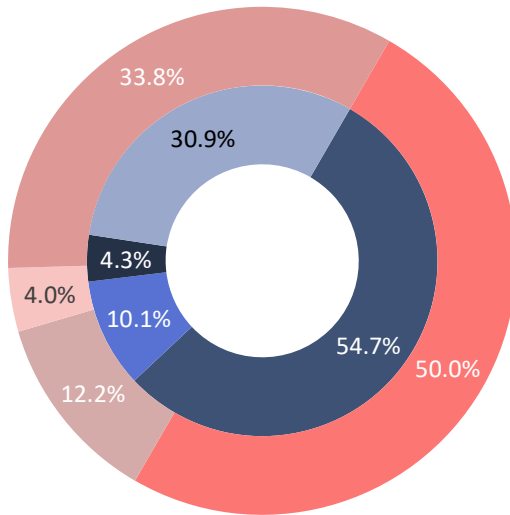
¹ The EU-28 aggregate is used for this ad hoc module, since in 2019 the United Kingdom was still part of the European Union.

LFS results indicated that the level of job autonomy in one's work varied by sex. In fact, 54.7 per cent of males, as opposed to 50.0 per cent of females, had some or large influence on the content and order of their tasks. On the other hand, more females (33.8 per cent) than males (30.9 per cent) indicated that they had little or no influence on the content and the order of their tasks in their job (Table 9, Chart 5).

Table 9. Employed persons' job autonomy in main job by sex

Job autonomy	Males		Females		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Some or large on content and order of tasks	81,746	54.7	51,019	50.0	132,765	52.8
Little or none on content and some or large on order of tasks	15,097	10.1	12,393	12.2	27,490	10.9
Some or large on content and little or none on order of tasks	6,418	4.3	4,128	4.0	10,546	4.2
Little or none on content and order of tasks	46,272	30.9	34,453	33.8	80,725	32.1
Total	149,533	100.0	101,993	100.0	251,526	100.0

Chart 5. Employed persons' job autonomy in main job by sex



Males

- Some or large on content and order of tasks
- Little or none on content and some or large on order of tasks
- Some or large on content and little or none on order of tasks
- Little or none on content and order of tasks

Females

- Some or large on content and order of tasks
- Little or none on content and some or large on order of tasks
- Some or large on content and little or none on order of tasks
- Little or none on content and order of tasks

The self-employed were more likely to have a larger influence on their jobs when compared to employees. In this regard, almost 80 per cent of self-employed persons had some or large influence on the content and order of their tasks (79.5 per cent). This share is 31.8 percentage points higher than the level registered for employees (47.7 per cent) (Table 10).

Table 10. Employed persons' job autonomy in main job by professional status

Job autonomy	Self-employed	Employees	Family workers	Total
	No.			
Some or large on content and order of tasks	32,081	100,503	:	132,765
Little or none on content and some or large on order of tasks	2,739 ^u	24,724	:	27,490
Some or large on content and little or none on order of tasks	1,954 ^u	8,567	:	10,546
Little or none on content and order of tasks	3,558	77,121	:	80,725
Total	40,332	210,915	:	251,526
	% employed persons			
Some or large on content and order of tasks	79.5	47.7	:	52.8
Little or none on content and some or large on order of tasks	6.8 ^u	11.7	:	10.9
Some or large on content and little or none on order of tasks	4.8 ^u	4.1	:	4.2
Little or none on content and order of tasks	8.8	36.6	:	32.1
Total	100.0	100.0	:	100.0

^u Under represented - between 20 and 49 sample observations

: Unreliable - less than 20 sample observations

The majority of Managers and Professionals had some or large influence on the content and order of their tasks (74.8 per cent and 61.1 per cent respectively). On the other hand, persons employed as Plant and machine operators and assemblers as well as those employed in Elementary occupations felt that they had little or no influence on the content and the order of their tasks in their job (56.8 per cent and 47.9 per cent respectively) (Table 11).

Table 11. Employed persons' job autonomy in main job by occupation

Occupational group	Some or large on content and order of tasks	Little or none on content and some or large on order of tasks	Some or large on content and little or none on order of tasks	Little or none on content and order of tasks	Total
	No.				
Armed Forces	:	:	:	1,351 ^u	2,041 ^u
Managers	21,123	2,701 ^u	:	3,587	28,256
Professionals	28,336	5,560	2,699 ^u	9,765	46,360
Technicians and associate professionals	20,360	4,556	2,346 ^u	8,648	35,910
Clerical support workers	12,984	3,570	999 ^u	9,704	27,257
Service and sales workers	22,719	4,646	1,909 ^u	20,665	49,939
Skilled agricultural, forestry and fishery workers	1,921 ^u	:	:	:	2,651
Craft and related trades workers	13,448	2,356 ^u	:	9,374	25,580
Plant and machine operators, and assemblers	3,675	1,786 ^u	:	7,685	13,538
Elementary occupations	7,782	2,056 ^u	:	9,581	19,994
Total	132,765	27,490	10,546	80,725	251,526
	% occupational group				
Armed Forces	:	:	:	66.2 ^u	100.0 ^u
Managers	74.8	9.6 ^u	:	12.7	100.0
Professionals	61.1	12.0	5.8 ^u	21.1	100.0
Technicians and associate professionals	56.7	12.7	6.5 ^u	24.1	100.0
Clerical support workers	47.6	13.1	3.7 ^u	35.6	100.0
Service and sales workers	45.5	9.3	3.8 ^u	41.4	100.0
Skilled agricultural, forestry and fishery workers	72.5 ^u	:	:	:	100.0
Craft and related trades workers	52.6	9.2 ^u	:	36.6	100.0
Plant and machine operators, and assemblers	27.1	13.2 ^u	:	56.8	100.0
Elementary occupations	38.9	10.3 ^u	:	47.9	100.0
Total	52.8	10.9	4.2	32.1	100.0

^u Under represented - between 20 and 49 sample observations

: Unreliable - less than 20 sample observations

Methodological Notes

1. The data provided in this release is based on the Commission Implementing Regulation 2017/2384 specifying the technical characteristics of the 2019 ad hoc module on work organisation and working time arrangements. The data was partly financed through EU grants.
2. During 2019, the ad hoc module was carried out on a sample of persons taking part in the LFS survey for the first and fourth time.
3. The Labour Force Survey (LFS) is carried out on an ongoing basis using a quarterly gross sample of 3,200 private households. The objective is to have a continuous assessment of labour market trends given that the reference weeks are evenly spread throughout the 13 weeks of the quarter. One-fourth of the sample is made up of households who have been selected to participate in the LFS for the first time. Three-fourths of the quarterly sample is made up of households who were selected to participate in the survey in previous instances, either one quarter before, or one year before, one year and a quarter before (2-(2)-2). Unless otherwise indicated, figures provided in this release refer to persons aged 15 and over and living in private households during the reference period. All criteria used for this survey match international methodologies used by the International Labour Organisation (ILO).
4. The LFS is designed to satisfy the concepts and definitions as outlined by Eurostat. This allows the comparability of results with other EU member states and countries following ILO definitions of employment and unemployment. Occupations are classified according to the ISCO-08 classification (International Standard Classification of Occupations) whereas the economic activity is classified according to NACE Rev. 2 (Nomenclature générale des Activités économiques dans les Communautés Européennes). Education attainment is classified according to ISCED 2011.
5. The 2019 ad hoc module 'Work organisation and working time arrangements' comprises 3 sub modules. This news release focuses on the 2nd sub module 'Job autonomy'.

The first news release was published on 10 March, 2021 ([Working Time Flexibility: 2019](#)). The third news release will be published as follows:

24 March, 2021: Commuting Time: 2019

6. Definitions:

- **Employees:** are defined as persons who work for a public or private employer and who receive compensation in the form of wages, salaries, fees, gratuities, payment by results or payment in kind.
- **Employed persons:** all persons aged 15 and over who, during the reference week, were in one of the following categories:
 - **paid employment:** includes those who during the reference week worked for at least one hour for a wage or salary, in cash or in kind.
 - **were employed but absent from work:** due to sick leave, bad weather, were undergoing training or education, did not work due to a labour dispute, were on maternity or parental leave, did not work due to slack work for technical or economic reasons, were absent from work for a period of less than 3 months, or were not working because on layoff and receiving at least 50 per cent of the salary/wage.
 - **self-employed:** covers persons who run a trade or business, rather than working as an employee for someone else. A person is self-employed if s/he is a sole proprietor or a partner working in a business.
 - **unpaid family workers:** refers to people who worked without pay in a family business or farm. Excluded from this definition are housewives.
- **Job autonomy** measures how far the respondent in the main job can influence the way work is carried out or the extent that this is predefined by the organisation and more left to the employee. It measures the employees' influence on the content and the order of his/her tasks.
- **Recording of presence or working hours** measures the method by which the working hours or the employees' presence at work is recorded.
- **Working under time pressure** measures the frequency a person works under time pressure in the main job as the time allotted to accomplish the work is not sufficient.

7. Key

: Unreliable - less than 20 sample observations.

^u Under represented - between 20 and 49 sample observations.

9. Absolute changes between one survey estimate and another must be treated with caution since minor changes (i.e. less than 2,500 persons) might be the result of sampling error.
10. More information is available from the NSO upon written request.
11. More information relating to this news release may be accessed at:

Sources and Methods:

https://nso.gov.mt/en/nso/Sources_and_Methods/Unit_C2/Labour_Market_Statistics/Pages/Labour-Force-Survey.aspx

Statistical Concepts: <https://metadata.nso.gov.mt/concepts.aspx>

Metadata: <https://metadata.nso.gov.mt/reports.aspx?id=33>

Classification: <https://metadata.nso.gov.mt/classificationdetails.aspx?id=ISCO%202008>
<https://metadata.nso.gov.mt/classificationdetails.aspx?id=NACE%20Rev.%202008>
<https://metadata.nso.gov.mt/classificationdetails.aspx?id=ISCED%202011>

12. More information relating to this topic at Eurostat level may be accessed at:

News Items: <https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/en/news/whats-new>

Statistics Explained article on the submodule 1: https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php?title=Flexibility_at_work_-_statistics

Statistics Explained article on the submodule 2: https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php?title=Job_autonomy_and_pressure_at_work_-_statistics

Statistics Explained article on the submodule 3: https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php?title=Main_place_of_work_and_commuting_time_-_statistics

Eurobase tables: <https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/lfs/data/database> (under: LFS ad-hoc modules | Eurobase code [lfs_19](#))

13. References to this news release are to be cited appropriately.
14. A detailed news release calendar is available on:
https://nso.gov.mt/en/News_Releases/Release_Calendar/Pages/News-Release-Calendar.aspx