

# Variations in time use at stages of the life cycle

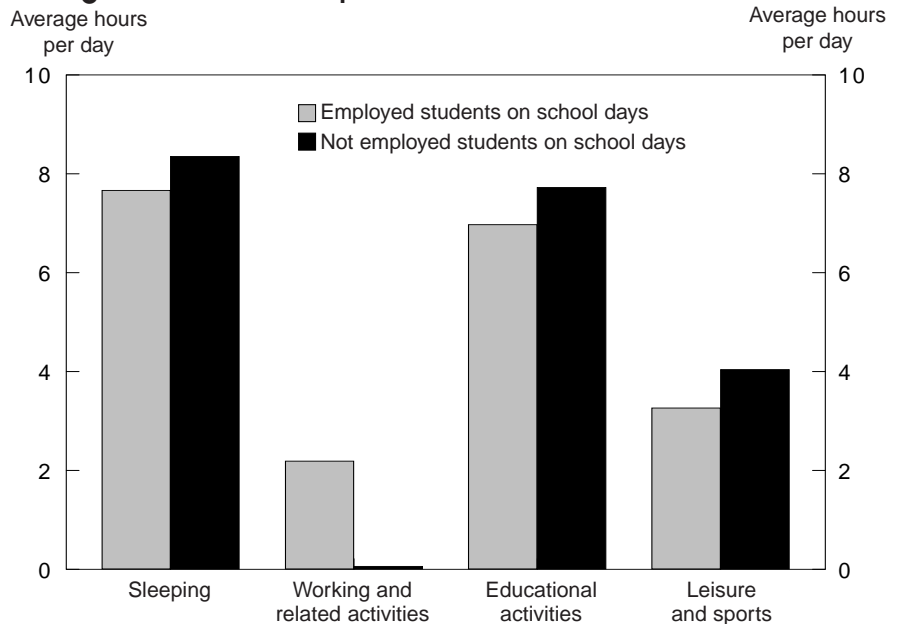
This visual essay focuses on students, the employed, parents, and older individuals—persons at different stages in the life cycle. The essay includes snapshots of how these groups of individuals, on average, allot their time. It illustrates how a few, select differences—such as employment status, school enrollment status, or the presence of children in the household—can impact a group’s average division of time across various activities. To control for multiple variables that can affect time-use allocation, many charts focus on a specific group of individuals. The essay also includes charts that provide information about when and how long select groups of individuals

reported working, as well as information about who worked at home. Data are from the 2003 American Time Use Survey (ATUS), and they refer to activities that respondents identified as primary; except for secondary childcare, activities done simultaneously with these primary activities are not included in the survey. For information about the ATUS activity categories, see the American Time Use Survey Activity Lexicon for 2003, available on the Internet at <http://www.bls.gov/tus/home.htm>. This essay was prepared by Rachel Krantz-Kent, an economist in the Division of Labor Force Statistics, Bureau of Labor Statistics. E-mail: [Krantz-Kent.Rachel@bls.gov](mailto:Krantz-Kent.Rachel@bls.gov)

## Students

- Employed students must balance the demands of work and school. Thirty-four percent of U.S. high school students reported that they were employed during the school year.
- On school days, employed high school students spent less time, on average, doing leisure and sports activities (42 minutes), sleeping (36 minutes), and doing educational activities (42 minutes) than their non-working peers. Employed and not employed high school students spent essentially the same amount of time doing other activities.

1. Average hours per school day employed and not employed high school students spent on selected activities

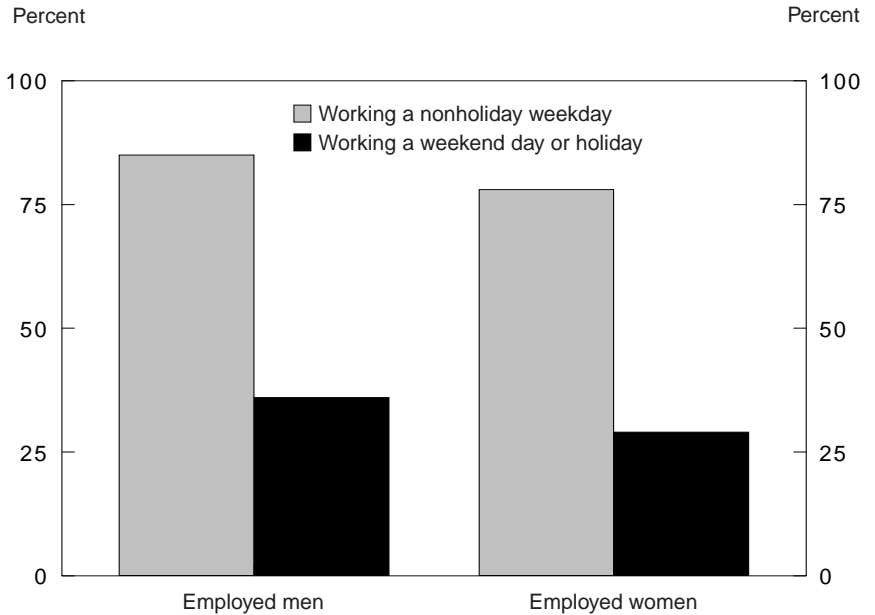


NOTE: Data are for individuals, ages 15–19, who were enrolled in high school and on days they attended class. School days refers to days the students attended class.  
SOURCE: ATUS 2003 annual averages.

## The employed

- On weekend days and weekdays, employed men were more likely to report working than employed women.

### 2. Percent of employed men and women working on a nonholiday weekday and weekend day or holiday

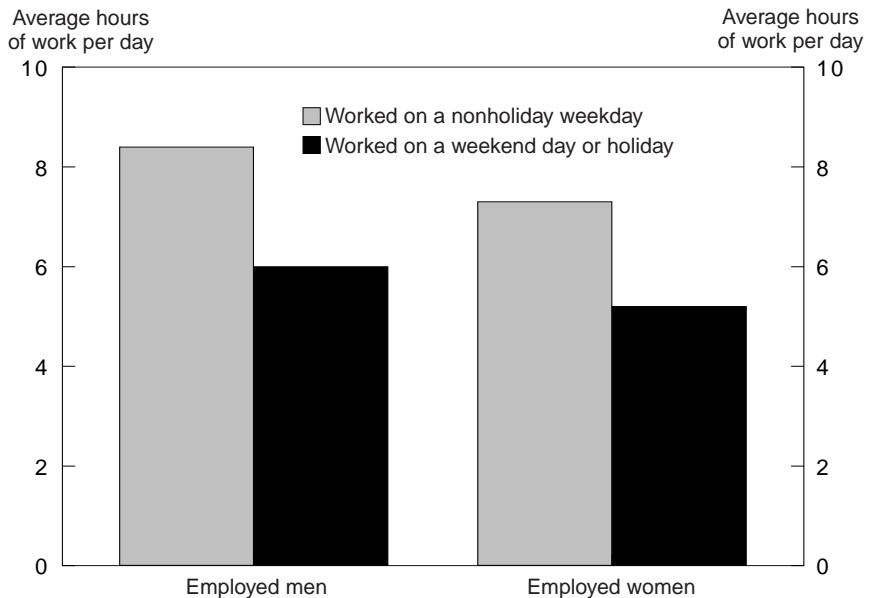


NOTE: Data are for employed individuals, ages 15 and older. Also, includes work for main and other jobs.

SOURCE: ATUS 2003 annual averages.

- On days that they worked, employed men averaged about an hour more of work per day than employed women; this is partly explained by women's greater likelihood of working part time.

### 3. Average hours employed men and women worked per nonholiday weekday and weekend day or holiday on days they worked

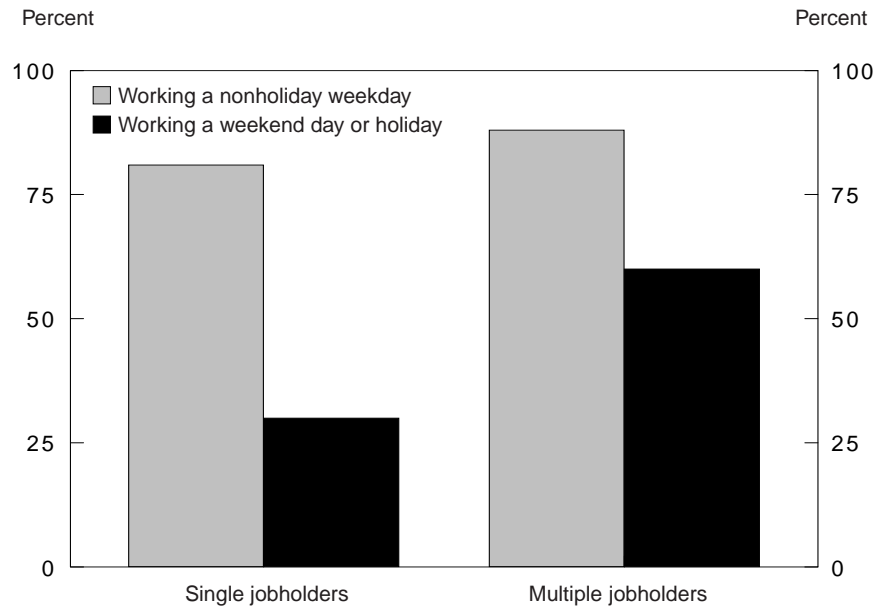


NOTE: Data are for employed individuals, ages 15 and older. Also, includes work for main and other jobs.

SOURCE: ATUS 2003 annual averages.

- Multiple jobholders were twice as likely as single jobholders to work on a weekend day or holiday and slightly more likely to work on a nonholiday weekday.

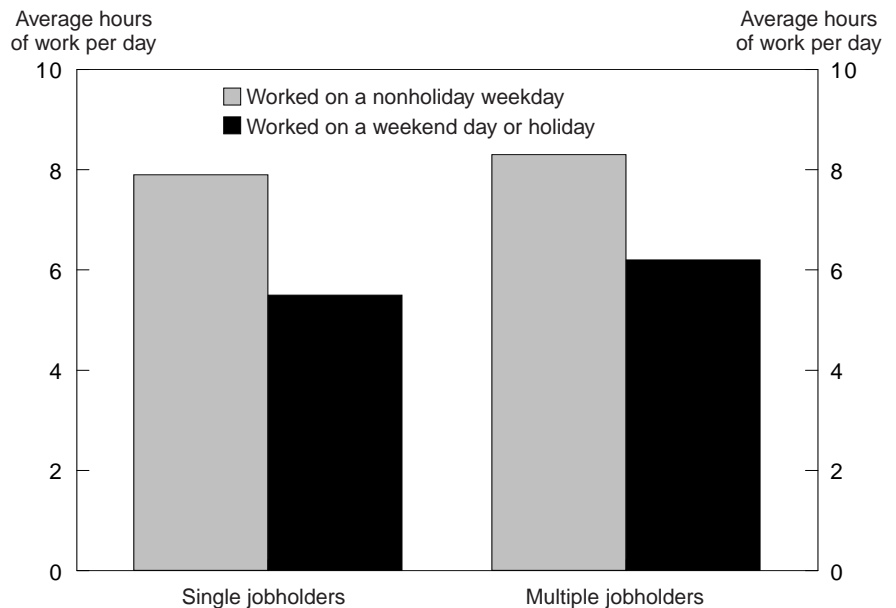
#### 4. Percent of single and multiple jobholders working on a nonholiday weekday and weekend day or holiday



NOTE: Data are for employed individuals, ages 15 and older. Also, includes work for main and other jobs.  
SOURCE: ATUS 2003 annual averages.

- On days that they worked, multiple jobholders averaged more work time than single jobholders; multiple jobholders worked 24 minutes more on nonholiday weekdays and 42 minutes more on weekend days and holidays.

#### 5. Average hours single and multiple jobholders worked per nonholiday weekday and weekend day or holiday on days they worked



NOTE: Data are for employed individuals, ages 15 and older. Also, includes work for main and other jobs.  
SOURCE: ATUS 2003 annual averages.

- The self-employed were about 1.5 times more likely than wage and salary workers to work on a weekend day or holiday. However, on the average nonholiday weekday in 2003, an equal proportion (82 percent) of self-employed and wage and salary workers reported working.

### 6. Percent of self-employed and wage and salary workers working on a nonholiday weekday and weekend day or holiday



NOTE: Data are for employed individuals, ages 15 and older. Class of worker status is determined based on one's primary job. Also, includes work for main and other jobs.  
SOURCE: ATUS 2003 annual averages.

- On nonholiday weekdays that they worked, wage and salary workers worked 54 minutes more per day than the self-employed. Self-employed and wage and salary workers who worked on a weekend day or holiday averaged work days of similar length.

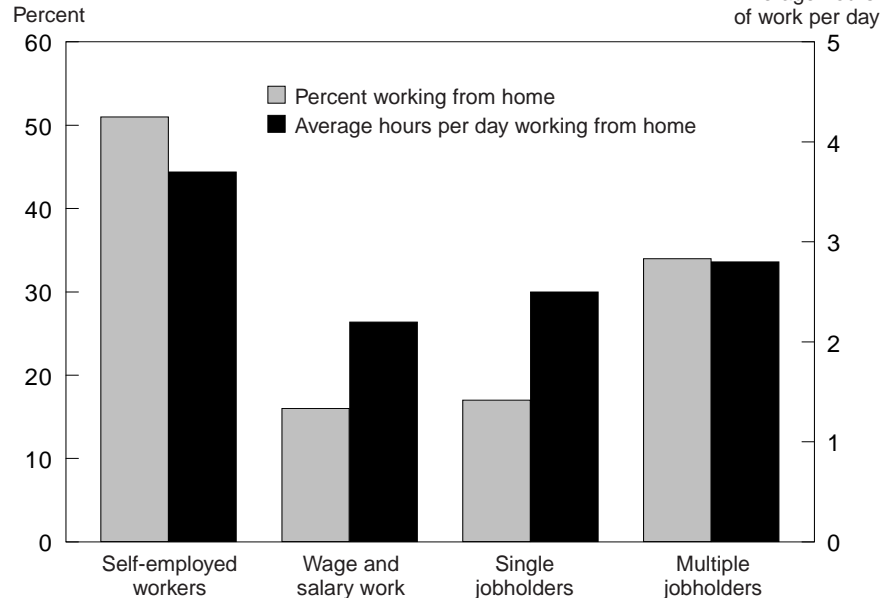
### 7. Average hours self-employed and wage and salary workers worked per nonholiday weekday and weekend day or holiday on days they worked



NOTE: Data are for employed individuals, ages 15 and older. Class of worker status is determined based on one's primary job. Also, includes work for main and other jobs.  
SOURCE: ATUS 2003 annual averages.

- Self-employed workers were three times more likely than wage and salary workers to report working from home. Multiple jobholders were twice as likely as single jobholders to report working from home. On the days they worked, about one-half of the self employed and one-third of multiple jobholders reported doing some or all work at home.
- On the days that they worked at home, the self employed averaged 1.5 hours more work per day than wage and salary workers.

**8. Percent of self-employed, wage and salary workers, single jobholders, and multiple jobholders and average hours per day spent working from home on the days they worked**



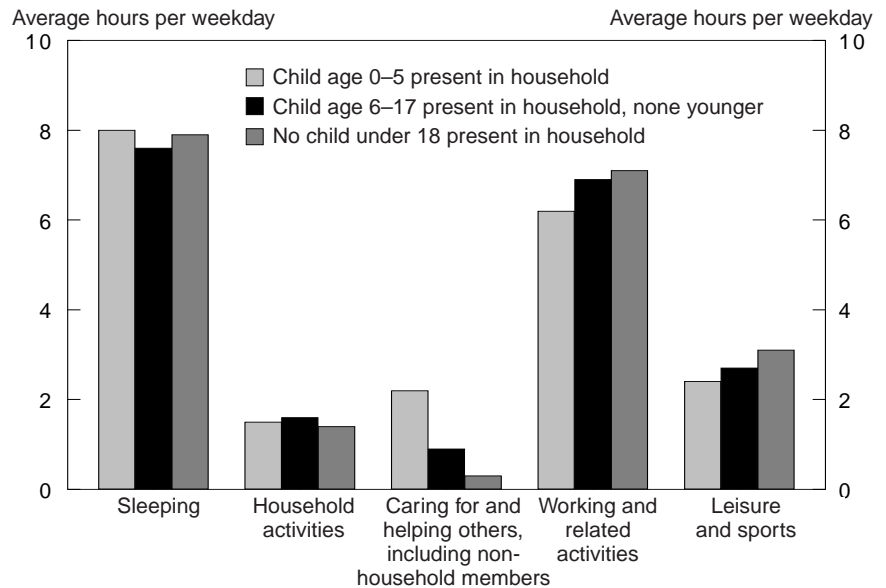
NOTE: Data are for employed individuals, ages 15 and older, who reported working from home on their diary day. That is, they reported doing activities that were identified as "part of one's job"; this is not restricted to persons whose usual workplace is their home. Also, includes work for main and other jobs.

SOURCE: ATUS 2003 annual averages.

- Mothers of young children (ages 0–5 years) who were employed full time had 42 fewer minutes of leisure and sports time on an average weekday than employed women with no children. Mothers of young children also worked 54 fewer minutes per weekday than women with no children.
- Mothers of older children (ages 6–17) spent relatively more time working than those with younger children. Employed mothers of older children averaged 42 minutes more work per weekday and spent 1.3 fewer hours per weekday caring for and helping others.

**Parents**

**9. Hours per weekday spent on selected activities by mothers of young children, mothers of older children, and women with no children**

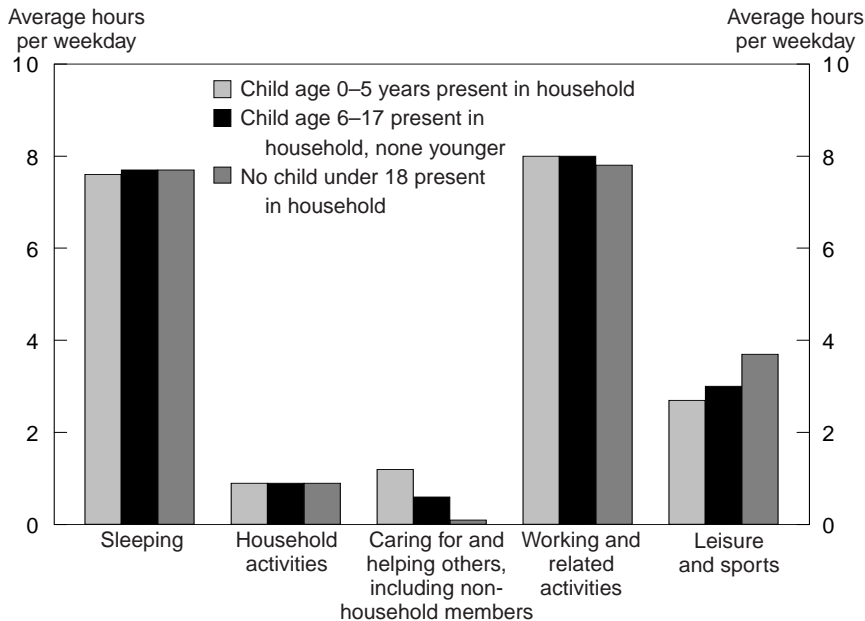


NOTE: Data are for women, ages 15 and older, and employed full time. A mother is defined as a woman with her own household children under 18.

SOURCE: ATUS 2003 annual averages.

- Employed fathers of young children (ages 0–5 years) averaged 1 fewer hour per weekday doing leisure and sports activities and about 1 additional hour per weekday caring for and helping others than men with no children. Fathers of older children (ages 6–17) also had less leisure time than men with no children. Fathers of older children engaged in 42 fewer minutes of leisure and sports activities on an average weekday than men with no children; they also spent 30 more minutes per weekday caring for and helping others.
- On average, fathers worked about the same time per weekday as men with no children. This contrasts with the pattern for mothers: mothers of young children worked 42 fewer minutes per weekday than women with no children.

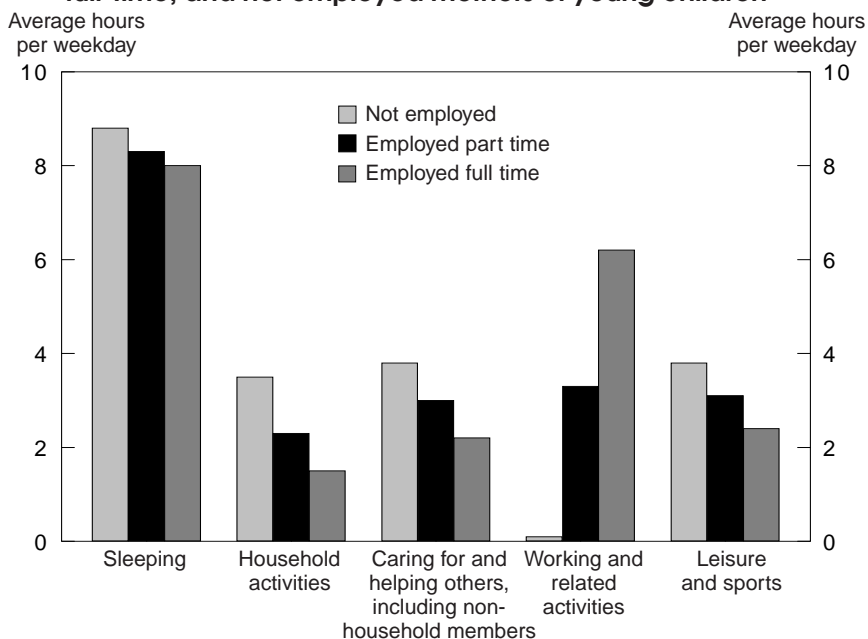
### 10. Hours per weekday spent on selected activities by fathers of young children, fathers of older children, and men with no children



NOTE: Data are for males, ages 15 and older, and employed full time. A father is defined as a man with his own household children under 18.  
SOURCE: ATUS 2003 annual averages.

- On weekdays, employed mothers of young children (ages 0–5 years) spent less time doing leisure and sports activities, caring for and helping others, doing household activities, and sleeping than mothers who were not employed.
- Mothers of young children who were employed full time had 1.4 fewer hours of leisure and sports time on an average weekday than those who were not employed, while part-time workers had 42 fewer minutes of leisure and sports time. Independent of their employment status, mothers of young children spent the majority of their leisure and sports time simultaneously providing secondary childcare.

### 11. Hours per weekday spent on selected activities by part-time, full-time, and not employed mothers of young children

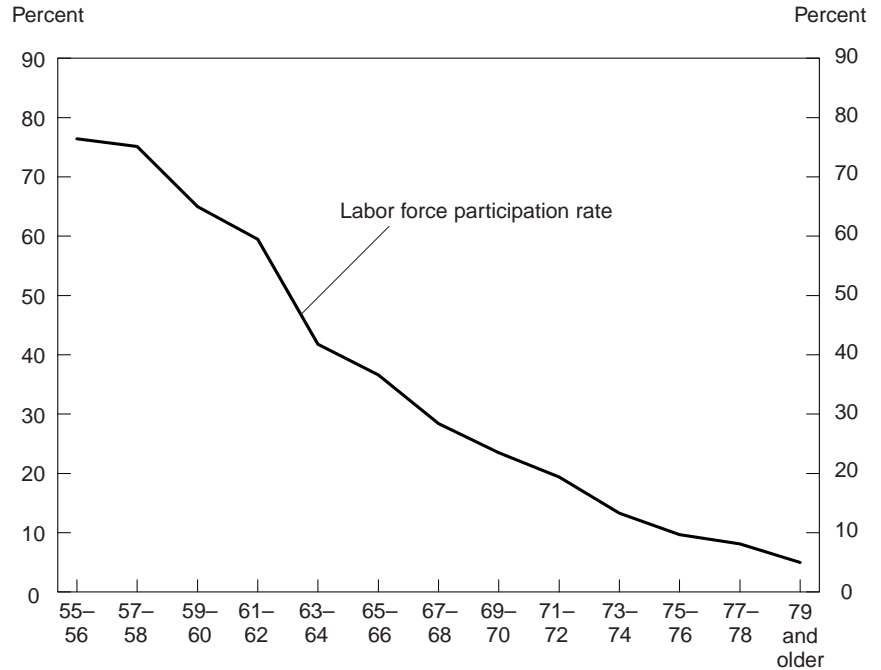


NOTE: Data are for mothers, ages 15 and older. A mother is defined as a woman with her own household children under 6.  
SOURCE: ATUS 2003 annual averages.

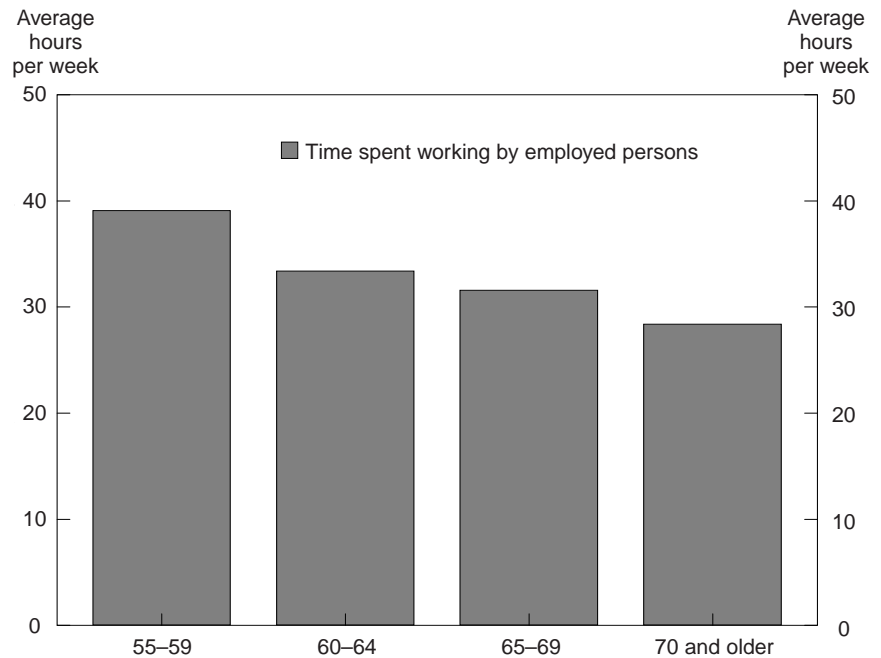
## Older individuals

- Older individuals often exit the labor force when they are in their late fifties or older. The labor force participation rate illustrates this movement out of the labor force, as it drops from 76 percent for individuals ages 55–56 to 5 percent for those ages 79 and older.

### 12. Percent participating in the labor force and hours per week spent working by individuals, ages 55 and older



- On average, older, employed individuals also worked fewer hours per week than the young-old: employed persons ages 70 and older worked 10.7 fewer hours per week and employed persons ages 65–69 worked 7.5 fewer hours than employed persons ages 55–59.

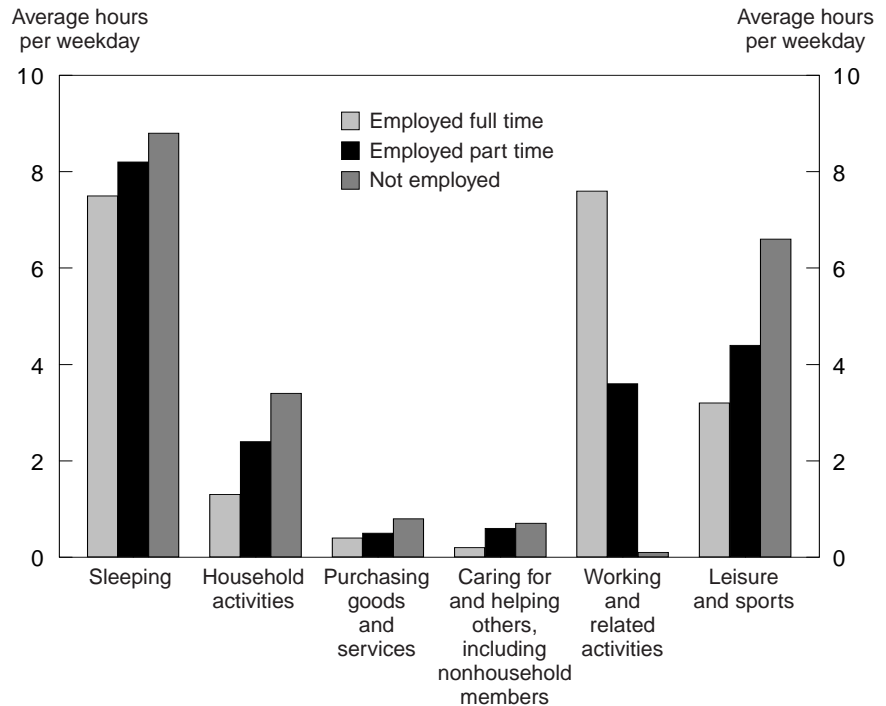


NOTE: Labor force participation rates from the Current Population Survey (CPS) are somewhat different than those from the ATUS. However, both labor force participation rates show similar trends of participation falling with age.

SOURCE: ATUS 2003 annual averages.

- Individuals nearing or of “retirement age” who were not employed spent more time per weekday sleeping (1.3 hours), doing household activities (2.1 hours), and engaged in leisure and sports activities (3.4 hours) than individuals employed full time.
- Individuals ages 55–64 and employed part time had 38 percent (1.2 hours) more leisure and sports time on an average weekday and those not employed had more than twice as much (3.4 hours) leisure and sports time on an average weekday than those who were employed full time.

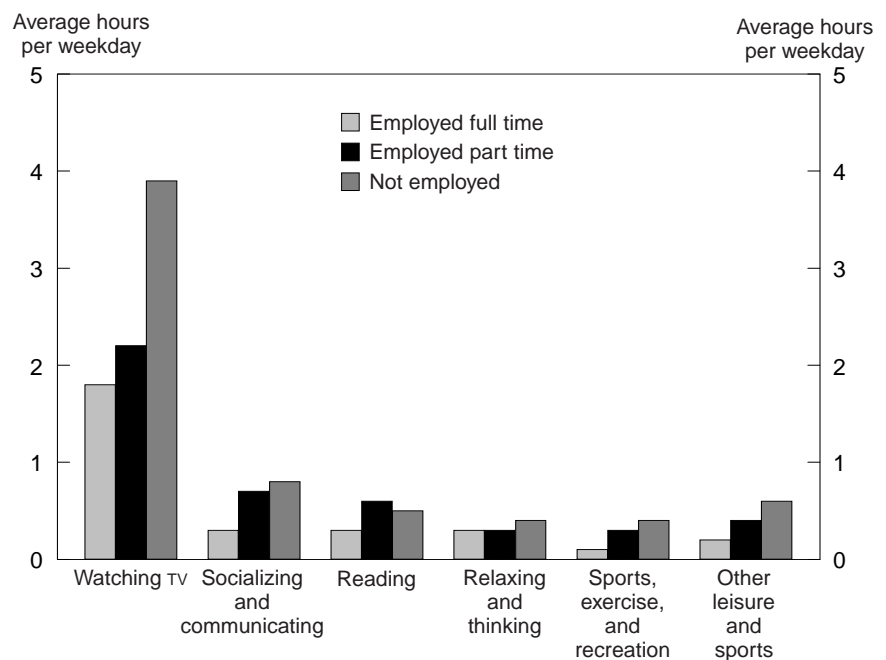
**13. Hours per weekday spent on selected activities by full-time, part-time, and not employed individuals, ages 55–64**



SOURCE: ATUS 2003 annual averages.

- Compared with individuals ages 55–64 who were employed full time, part-time workers and those who were not employed averaged more time per weekday in a variety of leisure and sporting activities.
- Individuals ages 55–64 who were not employed watched TV an average of nearly 4 hours per weekday. This amounted to 59 percent of their leisure and sports time and about twice as much TV watching time per weekday as their peers who were employed full time. Although individuals ages 55–64 who were employed full time watched TV for less time than their non-employed counterparts, TV-watching still accounted for well over half (56 percent) of their total weekday leisure and sports time.

**14. Hours per weekday spent on leisure and sporting activities by full-time, part-time, and not employed individuals, ages 55–64**



SOURCE: ATUS 2003 annual averages.