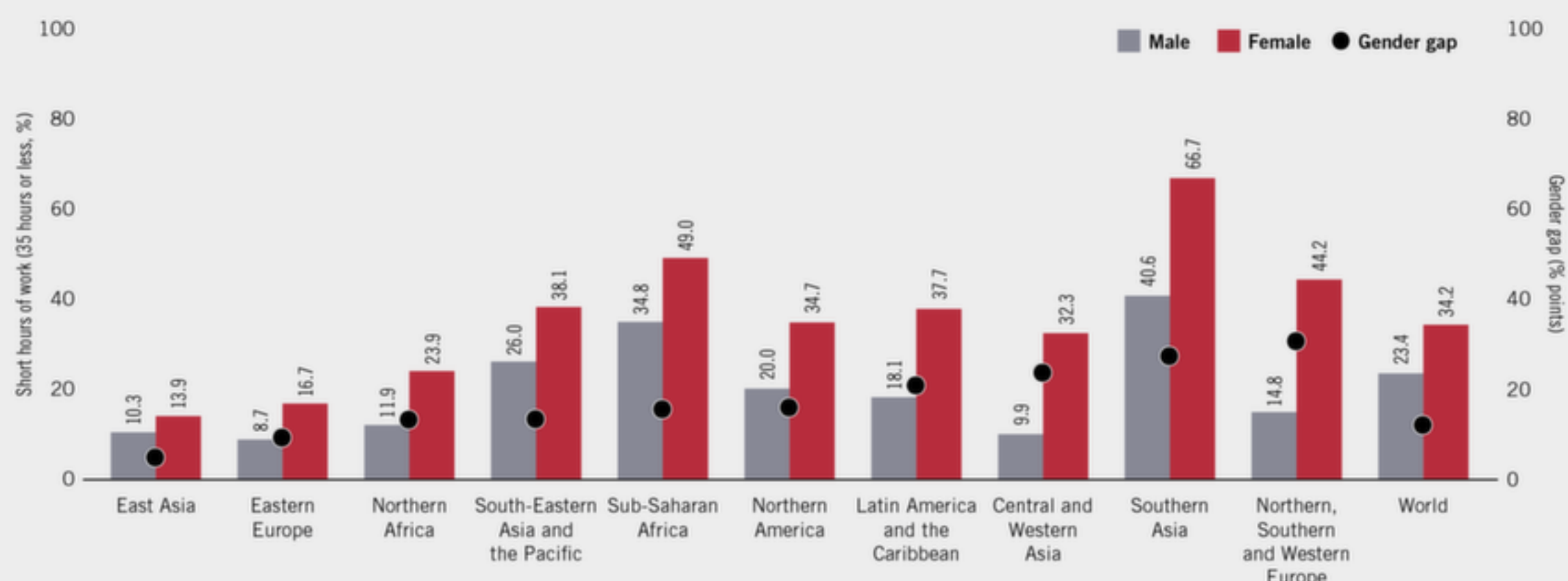


Figure VI Persons working less than 35 hours per week and gender gap, 100 countries (latest year available)



Note: Global estimates based on 100 countries representing more than 87 per cent of total employment. The Arab States are not represented in the figure because of a representation of less than 25 per cent. Latest years are used (data for 2010 and after for more than 80 per cent of the countries). Regions are ranked by increased gender gap in part-time employment as a percentage of total employment.

Source: ILO calculations based on national household survey data.

Excessive hours of work

In addition, across the 100 countries surveyed, more than one third of men in employment (35.5 per cent) and more than one fourth of women in employment (25.7 per cent) work more than 48 hours a week. Excessive hours are most common in Asia, notably in Eastern Asia and in Western and Central Asia, where close to one half of men and women employed work more than 48 hours a week. Two main findings are worth highlighting. First, men tend to work longer hours than women, whether in wage and salaried employment (where there is a gender gap of over 10 percentage points) or in self-employment (gender gap of 5.5 percentage points). Second, the proportions of people working both long hours and short hours are higher among the self-employed, which means that self-employed people are likely to work either more than 48 hours or less than 35 hours a week. This suggests that working hours tend to be more polarized for self-employed than for wage and salaried workers, whose working hours tend to cluster around standard working hours, in line with national regulations. It also has implications for workers' healthy harmonization of work and family life and the equal distribution of unpaid household and care work between women and men.

At current trends, it will take 70 years to close the gender wage gap

Globally, the gender wage gap is estimated to be 23 per cent; in other words, women earn 77 per cent of what men earn. Even when considering hourly wage rates (given the fact that women are working shorter hours than men), women continue to face a persistent gender wage gap, amounting to 10 per cent or more in countries for which data are available. These gaps cannot be explained solely by differences in education or age, but are also linked to the undervaluation of the work that women undertake and of the skills required in female-dominated sectors or occupations, the practice of discrimination, and the need for women to take career breaks to attend to additional care responsibilities, for instance after the birth of a child. Recently, some progress has been made in reducing these gender wage gaps, but improvements are small and, if current trends prevail, it will take more than 70 years before gender wage gaps are closed completely. Reductions in the gender wage gap are mostly attributable to explicit policy actions to address gender imbalances in the labour market, rather than to general improvements in living standards. In fact, the gender wage gap is unrelated to a country's level of economic development, as some of the countries with high per-capita levels are among those with the highest gender wage gaps. Economic development alone will not ensure an equitable distribution of the gains from growth between men and women.