



European Foundation
for the Improvement
of Living and Working
Conditions

The tripartite EU Agency providing knowledge
to assist in the development of better social,
employment and work-related policies

The European Working Condition Survey : cross cultural and multimode cognitive pretesting on employment status and job quality

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Content of my presentation

- The study
 - The context
 - Selected results
 - Concluding remarks
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- Report published on Gesis pre test data bank and will also be made available on eurofound's web site

The objectives of the project : « stress test » – substantive and methodological questions

- Assess the comparability of our indices between self employed and employees in different national contexts
- The substantive concerns
 - « destandardisation » of employment relations
 - blurring frontiers between dependant employment and self employment
 - changes in employment law (NFE)
 - legal uncertainties by some of their employment status
 - revision of ISCE .. A new emerging category dependant contractors / task-based work
- Improve the questionnaire for the next edition
- Concern about ‘ workers at the margin ’ ‘
- What working conditions / job quality can they talk about when they have either / or in combination short term work / marginal work related earnings / may not have a strong occupational identity ?
- Assessing the suitability of the survey instrument to capture the working conditions of workers in these groups

Methodology

Questionnaire focus	Employment status (first part of the questionnaire)	Job quality indices (second part of the questionnaire)
Pretesting task	How do « workers at the margins » relate to the employment status ?	How do employed and self employed understand job quality ?
(Primary) Pretesting mode	F2F cognitive interviews = 20 respondents in GE and PL, No focus on being representative (½ of the sample are workers at the margin, the second half are employed / self employed assist in elaborating results from online probing	Online pretest(OP) in 3 countries UK, GE, and PL 365 employed and self employed Quota sampling age, sex and employment status

European Working Conditions Survey

49

language
versions

43,850

face to face
interviews (CAPI)
at worker's
homes

35

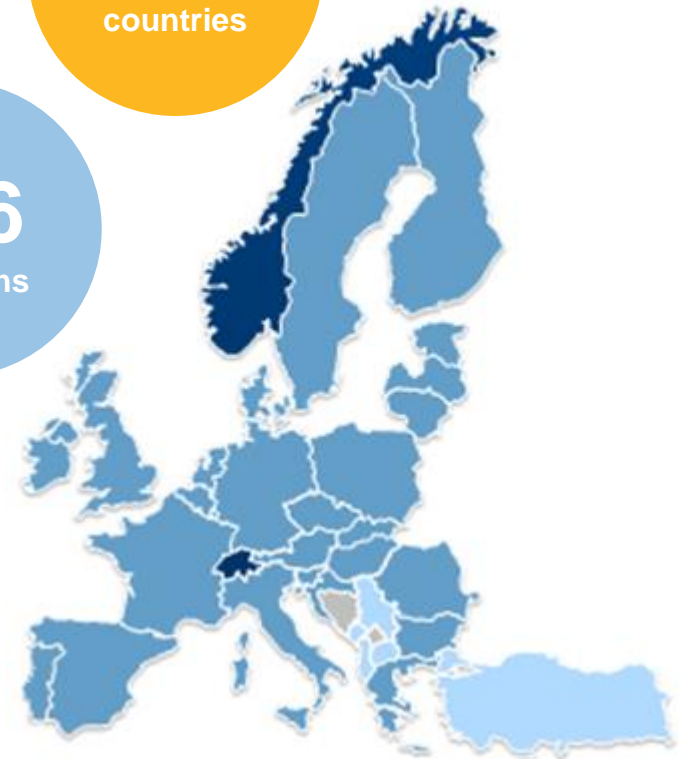
countries

106

questions

45

minutes



Sixth edition

1991, 1995, 2000, 2005, 2010,

2015

Job quality

Physical environment

- Posture-related
- Ambient
- Biological and chemical

Work intensity

- Quantitative demands incl. emotional
- Pace determinants and interdependency

Working time quality

- Duration
- Atypical working time
- Working time arrangements
- Flexibility

Social environment

- Adverse social behaviour
- Social support
- Management quality

Skills and discretion

- Cognitive dimension incl. computer use
- Decision latitude
- Organisational participation
- Training

Prospects

- Career prospects
- Employment status
- Job security
- Downsizing

Earnings

Employment status

Employment status (Q7)

- (OP) Confidence rating, (CI) general / elaborative probing, specific probing, difficulty probing
- In some countries, the situation is not dichotomous self employed versus employees
 - Legal ambiguity
 - Respondents knowledge
- Country adaptation in some forms
 - Instruction
 - New category
 - Routing ?

People in multi-employment status

- They want to talk –earlier than we had given them the opportunity – about their second job
- Conclusions
 - clarify at the beginning of the questionnaire, the number of jobs people have
 - Be more explicit and systematic on whether the question refers to their main paid job, their second job and all their job taken together

Job quality

- Where filters were tested (eg self employed, multiple job holders), the questions work
 - confirmation and interpretation
- In some cases, interpretation is made by the respondent
 - In some of these, we should thank the interviewer for that
 - « I might lose my job in the next 6 months » could be reworded « I might go out of business in the next 6 months » bt interpreted ok a the moment
- Some questions have significant problems
 - Eg q 46 work in your free time
 - Question under construction
- A different set of variables than the employment status is relevant to address some of the problems
 - Eg social support by colleagues
 - NA in web

Some Self employed have « colleagues » and some employees don't

Concluding remarks

- While many employed respondents have colleagues and most self employed don't, the working situations are less clear cut
 - Need for secondary sets of variables to compare workers and self employed
- The mix of methods have allowed us to
 - Quantify the prevalence of differing question interpretation (via comprehension probing)
 - While still giving a voice to workers at the margins via F2F interviews , who would not usually get a voice in an online panel
- 3MC concern : « extrapolating » countries

Want to follow up on this ?

- The report is available on gesis pretest databank and will be made available on eurofound's website

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Merci