The European working conditions survey series

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Eurofound
Established in 1975, tripartite agency

Eurofound’s MISSION STATEMENT reads:
‘To contribute to the planning and establishment of better living and working conditions through action designed to increase and disseminate knowledge likely to assist this development.’

Annual budget: 20mEUR; 100 employees

3 surveys: EWCS, EQLS and ECS and 2 “observatories” : Eurwork, ERM
The European Working Conditions Survey

- Six editions (since 1991)
- 35 countries (2015)
- 43,850 workers (employees and self-employed, age: 15+)
- 45 minute face to face interviews at respondents’ home (HH survey). No proxy interviews
- 33 languages, 49 language versions
- Multi-stage, stratified, random samples of the working population ranging from 1,000 to 3,300 people in each country
## EWCS – country coverage over time

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Edition</th>
<th>Date fieldwork</th>
<th>Country coverage</th>
<th>Total sample size</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1st EWCS</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>EU12:</td>
<td>12,819</td>
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<tr>
<td>2nd EWCS</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>EU15</td>
<td>15,986</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3rd EWCS</td>
<td>2000-2001-2002</td>
<td>EU15+CC10+ NO+ TK</td>
<td>33,080</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4th EWCS</td>
<td>2005</td>
<td>EU25+ 2 AC + 2 CC+NO+CH</td>
<td>29,758</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5th EWCS</td>
<td>2010</td>
<td>EU27+ NO +HR+FY+TK+AL+ME+KO</td>
<td>43,816</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6TH EWCS</td>
<td>2015</td>
<td>EU28+ NO+CH+ AL +MK, SE + FY + TK</td>
<td>43,850</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Assess and quantify working conditions of both employees and the self-employed across Europe on a harmonised basis.

Analyse relationships between different aspects of working conditions.

Identify groups at risk and issues of concern as well as of progress.

Monitor trends by providing homogeneous indicators on these issues.

Contribute to European policy development in particular on quality of work and employment issues.
Working conditions can be modified for example in order to prevent negative impact on health of workers, contribute to the performance of companies, increase capability of individual, ensure that more can work and to be improved as an end in itself, etc.

Alternatives and / or complements

Expert observations and measurement:
Registers capturing eg occupational diseases and work accidents,
Workers surveys: the operator acts on his/her work so measure his / her best compromise.
Company surveys

Stiglitz report: “Paid work matters for quality of life partly because it provides identity to people and opportunities to socialise with others. However, not all jobs are equally valuable in this respect”

The future of work
The EWCS: lessons learnt on questions

- “Real work“ by opposition to prescribed work
- Assessed through dimensions which have proved to be relevant particularly for health and well being (epidemiological studies)
- Wide range of working conditions (Not in-depth, not specific occupations)
- Address a number of theoretical frameworks and interdisciplinary
- Factual knowledge, behaviour-related and personal experience is preferred over subjective feelings, opinions and indirect knowledge.
- Use multiple indicators to contribute to more complex concepts (build on qualitative materials)
- Gender mainstreaming, a key concern:
  - Gender segregated jobs,
  - Question wording modified eg heavy load,
  - HH composition, the different roles of men and women,
  - gender discrimination, sexual harassment but
Questionnaire development: process

- Feedback from analysis
- Users survey (survey posted on the essex data archive)
- (European) Policy agenda analysis
- Eurofound’s stakeholders: priorities for revision, review near final source questionnaire
- Literature reviews on specific themes eg engagement, self employed
- Analysis of national and other working conditions questionnaires including ‘validated questionnaires’
- ‘Old survey’ meeting
- Expert questionnaire development groups (35 people: international users, academics of different disciplines, survey producers)
## Questionnaire finalisation: process

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Internal project team</th>
<th>Contractor in charge of cognitive interviews</th>
<th>Advance translations in German and Polish</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SQP testing</td>
<td>Cognitive interviews in 2 stages</td>
<td>Advance translations carried</td>
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<tr>
<td>Glossary: review and development</td>
<td>Revision of very problematic questions</td>
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<tr>
<td>Joint meeting to discuss findings</td>
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<tr>
<td>New revised questionnaire</td>
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<td>Instructions to translators and development of templates</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Translatability assessment in 7 languages</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
## Themes covered by the 6th EWCS

- Demographics, structure of workforce, job characteristics, household info
- Working time: duration, organisation
- Place of work
- Physical factors
- Psychosocial work factors,
- Leadership,
- Change, Insecurity
- Work organisation,
- Trust at the workplace
- Job content and training
- Work-life balance, work life spillovers and conflicts
- Information and consultation, osh
- Health and well being
- Engagement,
- Earnings
New questions in the 6th EWCS

- Demographics: company size, country of birth
- Working time: Part time / full time status of partner, working time preferences at individual and household level, on call work
- Self employed: map heterogeneity of self employment
- Health: sleeping, chronic diseases
- Measure recent changes in the job, in the organisation
- Address organisational justice at the workplace
- Employee representation
- Develop more work life balance and positive experience of work
- Job engagement
- Review place of work, leadership, sustainability of work, Quantity of training received
Thank you for your attention

www.eurofound.europa.eu/surveys/ewcs
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New material including methodological reports to be published by 17th of November