



European Foundation  
for the Improvement  
of Living and Working  
Conditions

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

# **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)
- 43.8500 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

Edition	Date fieldwork	Country coverage	Total sample size
1st EWCS	91	EU12:	12,819
2 <sup>nd</sup> EWCS	95	EU15	15,986
3rd EWCS	2000-2001-2002	EU15+CC10+ NO+ TK	33,080
4th EWCS	2005	EU25+ 2 AC + 2 CC+NO+CH	29,758
5th EWCS	2010	EU27+ NO +HR+FY+TK+AL+ME+KO	43,816
6TH EWCS	2015	EU28+ NO+CH+ AL +MK, SE + FY + TK	43,850

# The EWCS objectives

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.

# Why this interest ?

- **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
- Litterature 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

Internal project team	Contractor in charge of cognitive interviews	Advance translations in German and Polish
SQP testing	Cognitive interviews in 2 stages	Advance translations carried
Glossary : review and development	Revision of very problematic questions	
Joint meeting to discuss findings		
New revised questionnaire		Instructions to translators and development of templates
	Translatability assesment in 7 languages	

# Themes covered by the 6<sup>th</sup> 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 6<sup>th</sup> 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

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New material including methodological  
reports to be published by 17th of  
November