

# Measuring Job quality and quality of employment in surveys

The experience of the European Working Conditions Survey

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# Fun(damental) facts



Established in 1975



Based in Dublin



Brussels Liaison Office



Budget of c. € 24 million



100 staff members



EU agency



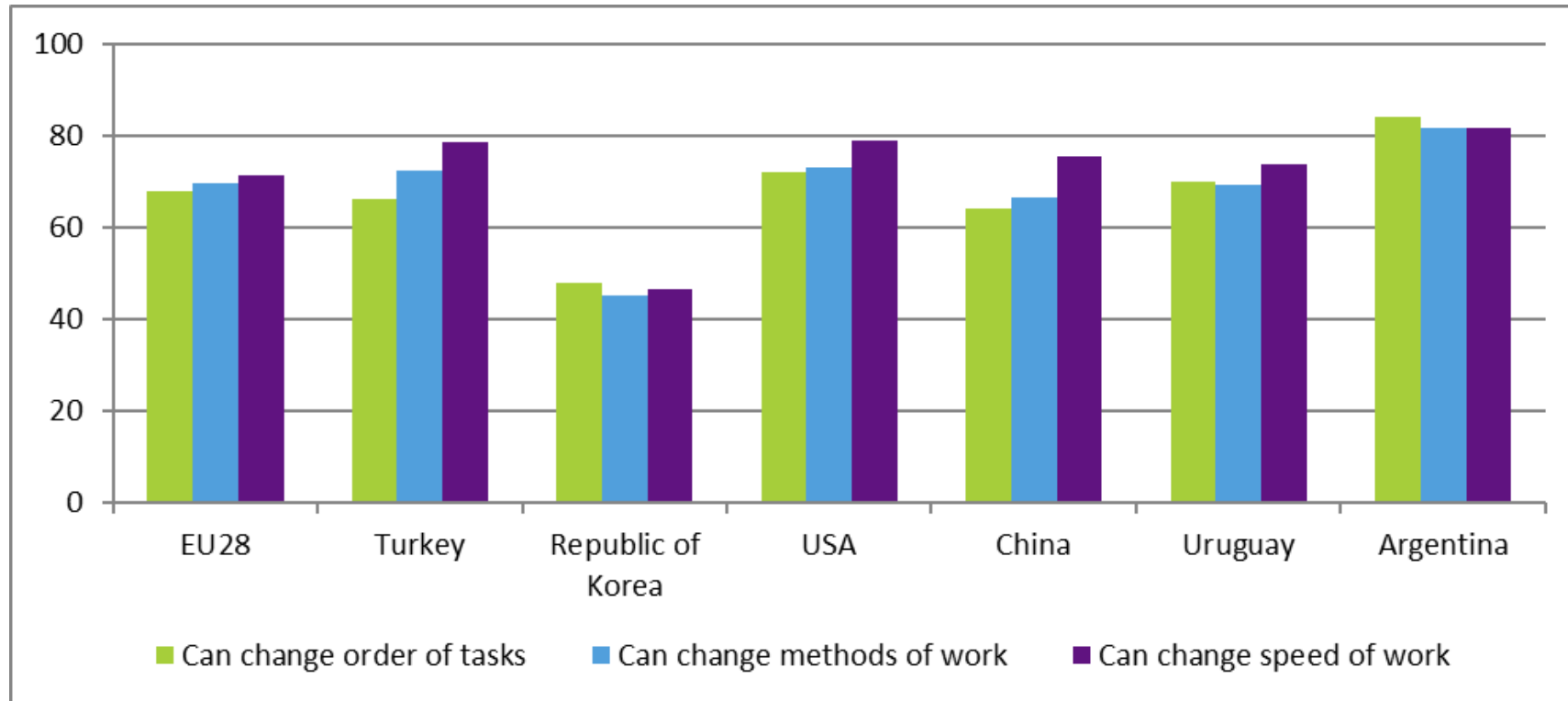
# Conceptual framework



The **European Working Conditions Survey's (EWCS)** main objectives are to:

- Measure working conditions across European countries 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** on quality of work and employment issues

# Global working conditions - different choices : task discretion



Source: ILO - Eurofound (2019), Working conditions in a global perspective , Publications Office of the European Union, Luxembourg

# Design Principles

## Criteria for questions

- Factual knowledge
- Behaviour-related and personal experience preferred over subjective feelings and indirect knowledge.
- Applicable to all occupations/Not specific to a smaller number of occupations
- Knowledge owned by workers ( eg AI)
- Interdisciplinary
- Gender mainstreaming ( different occupations, gender roles, gender issues and indicators suitable for men and women)

## Quality of the questions

- ***Extensive process of consultation of experts and stakeholders***
- Policy and research relevant
- Validated scales ( and translation) if available
- Advance translations
- Cognitively tested

### **Challenge:**

Questions not isolated, contributing to overall analysis  
Complex notions

Questionnaire : European Working Conditions Survey 2024 | European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions

# Job quality supports well being and a positive experience of work life

- Job quality is made of these characteristics of work and employment that matter for health and well being in a positive or negative side make job quality (preventive approach).
- Job quality is assessed at the level of the job, e.g. the contract between an employer and a employee; if there are externalities, legislative actors can intervene

# Main characteristics

- Job quality is assessed at the **level of the job**
- Each indicator has **independent influence** (+/-) on workers' health and wellbeing
- Indicators reflect job **demands** and job **resources**
- Indicators capture **objective, observable attributes** of jobs
- Captures the **experience of real work**, by the workers in their specific context

# Job quality multidimensional

## Physical environment

- Posture-related
- Ambient
- Biological and chemical

## Social environment

- Adverse social behaviour
- Social support
- Management quality

## Work intensity

- Quantitative demands incl. emotional
- Pace determinants and interdependency

## Skills and discretion

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

## Working time quality

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

## Prospects

- Career prospects
- Employment status
- Job security
- Downsizing

## Earnings

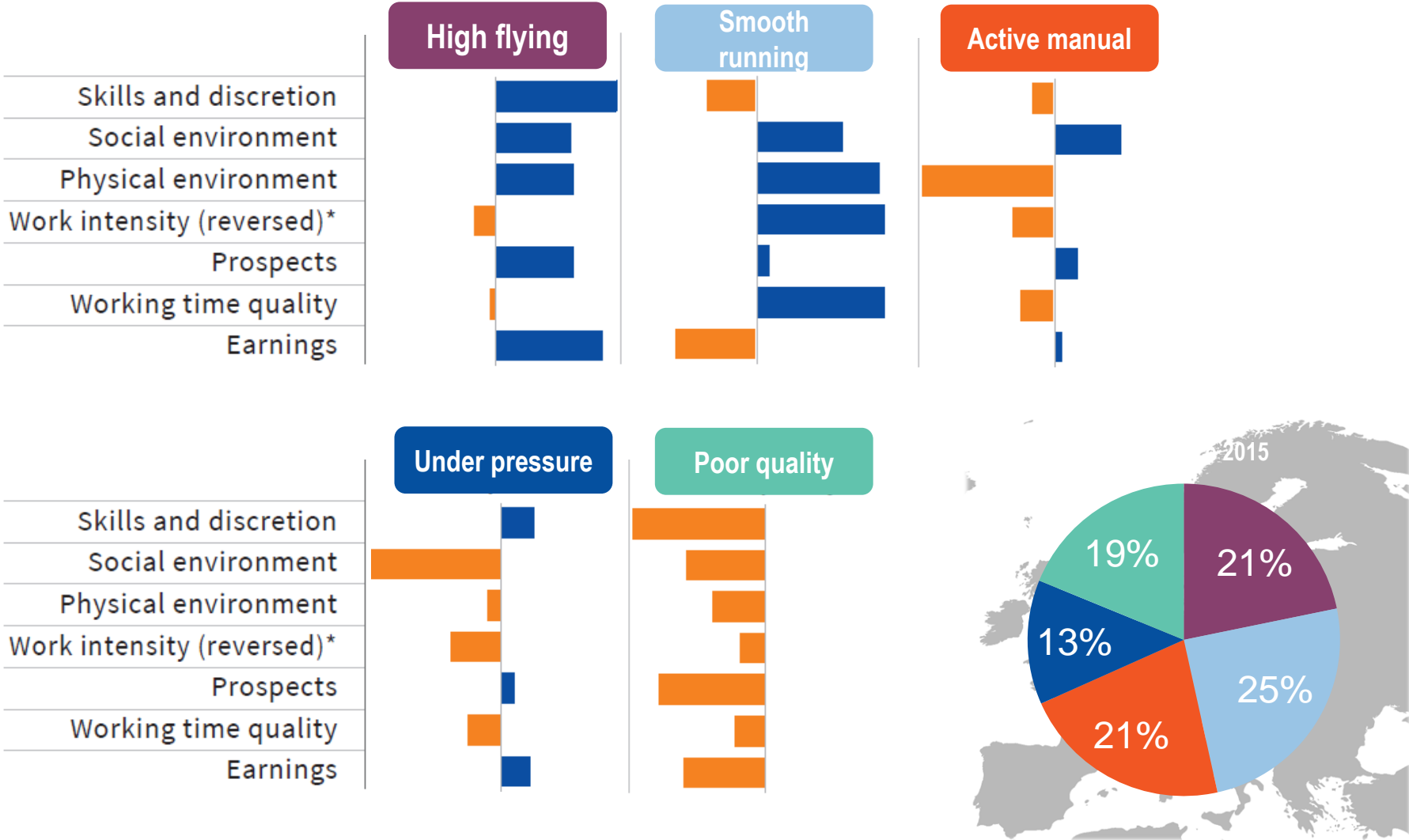


# Challenge : developing a parsimonious set of job quality items : “job strain”

Dimension	Job demands	Job resources
Physical and social environment	Physical risks	
	Physical demands	
	Intimidation and discrimination	Social support
Job tasks	Work intensity	Task discretion and autonomy
Organisational characteristics	Dependence (self-employed only)	Organisational participation and workplace voice
Working time arrangements	Unsocial work schedules	Flexibility of working hours
Job prospects	Perceptions of job insecurity	Training and learning opportunities
		Opportunities for career development
Intrinsic job features		Intrinsic rewards
		Opportunities for self-realisation

Source: Eurofound (2022), Working conditions in the time of Covid-19: implications for

# Job quality profiles to guide policy discussion

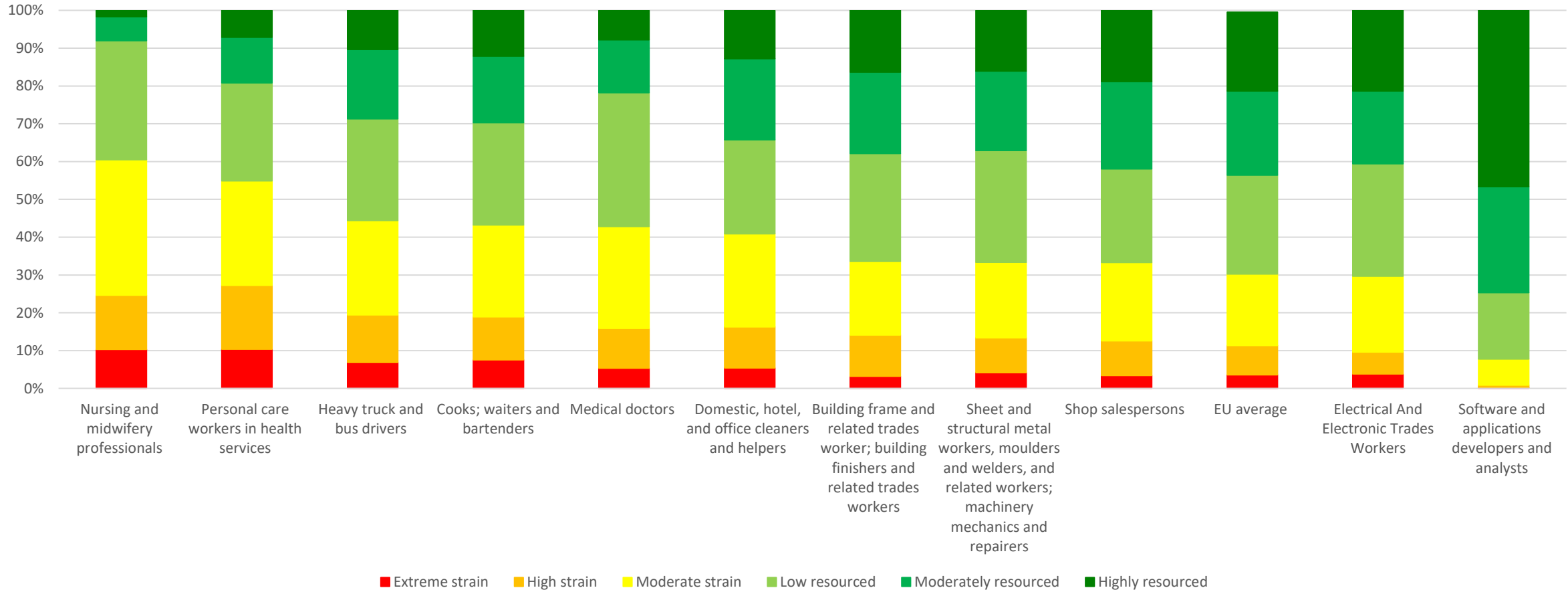


Source: 6<sup>th</sup> EWCS, by country – reweighted

# Job quality matter. Not only to workers

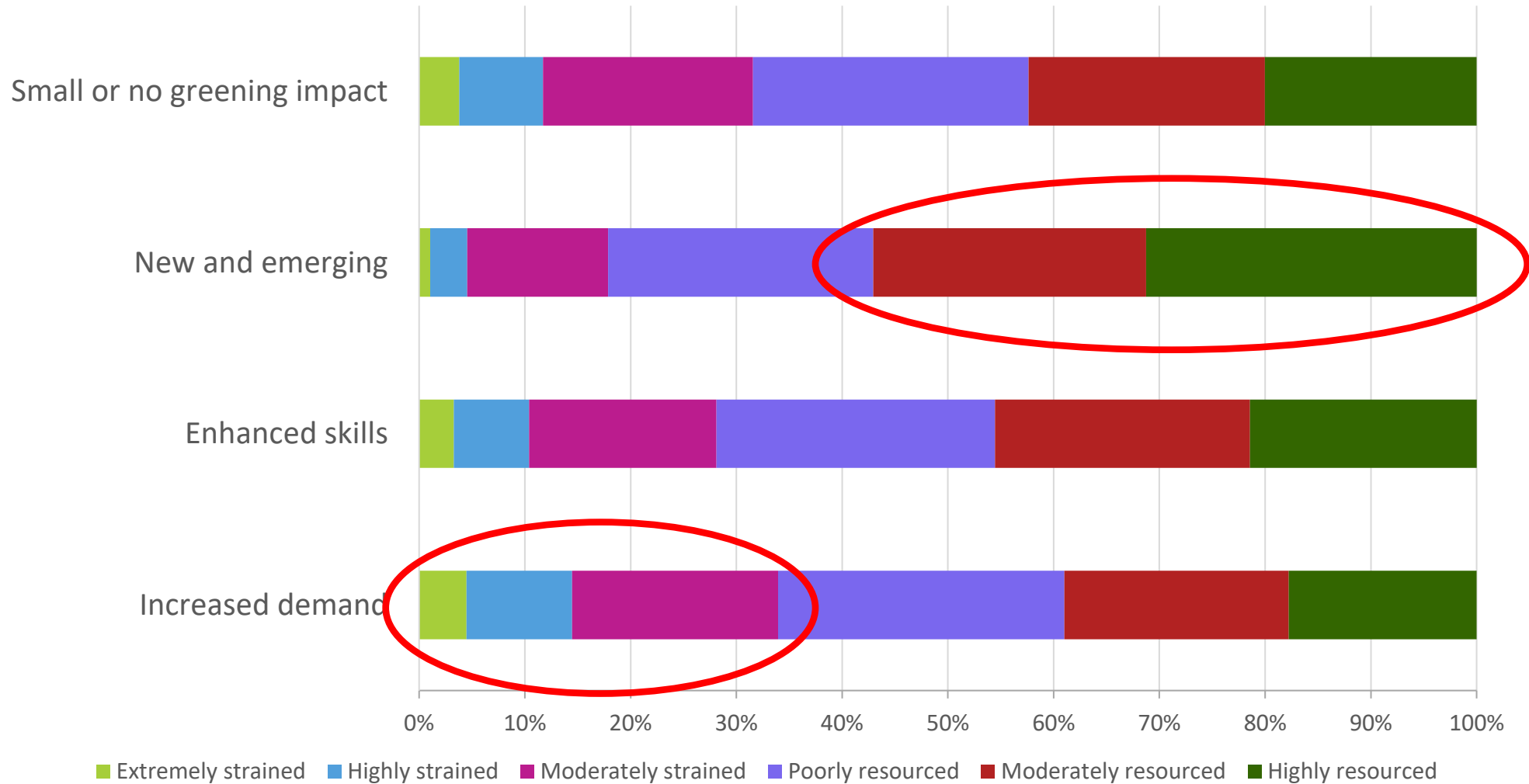


# Job quality in occupations experiencing persistent labour shortages



Source: EWCTS, 2021.

# Job quality index, by greening occupational groups (%) - mitigation



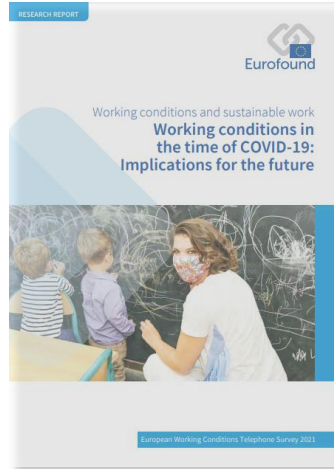
Source: EWCTS, 2021.

# Challenges for the future

- Enriching the job quality framework
  - Eg cyberbullying, isolation at work
- Fragmentation of work and employment
  - addressing the “realities” of work, developing “equivalent” indicators
    - Comparability of job quality indicators between employees and self employed
  - Capturing specific work situations and groups of interest ( “small groups and emerging work situations”)
    - Eg telework / hybrid work / algorithmic management
- Parsimonious set of key indicators
  - developing complementarities between statistics and more in depth surveys
- Future proofing the EWCS
  - EWCS 24, a test survey
  - Access to individual registers, a challenge
  - Rev 2.1
- Longer term needs, longitudinal data
  - transitions
  - combining sources eg climate risks
- Developing the ecosystem of job quality statistics

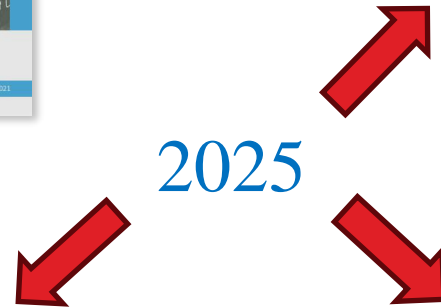


2016



2022

2025



## Other:

- Data explorer (timing tbc)
- Presentations to EP committees, EC, Brussels briefings, social partners, etc.
- Joint webinar with EU-OSHA drawing also on their ESENER results.

Working conditions and sustainable work

## European Working Conditions Survey 2024: First findings

Planned publication date: May 2025

Other

Forthcoming

Job quality

Sustainable work

Working conditions and sustainable work

Psychosocial risks

Work-life balance

Health and well-being at work

Working time

Teleworking

Gender equality

Skills and training

Ageing workforce

### Authors

Agnès Parent-Thirion • Jorge Cabrita • Franz Ferdinand Eiffe

### Abstract

The first findings from the European Working Conditions Survey 2024 (EWCS24) provide information on changes over time in the seven domains of job quality and key indicators on the quality of working life and sustainable work. They also include information on algorithmic management, hybrid work, social relations at the workplace, mental health, meaningful work and priorities for improvement in job quality. Now in its eighth edition, EWCS24 maps changes in working life over more than three decades. This high-quality survey covers 34 European countries, including the 27 EU Member States, Norway, Switzerland and six candidate and potential candidate countries: Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Kosovo and Serbia. Over 35,000 interviews, each lasting approximately 45 minutes, took place as part of the survey.

Working conditions and sustainable work

## European Working Conditions Survey 2024: Overview report

Planned publication date: November 2025

Flagship report

Forthcoming

Job quality

Sustainable work

Working conditions and sustainable work

Psychosocial risks

Work-life balance

Health and well-being at work

Working time

Teleworking

Gender equality

Skills and training

Ageing workforce

### Authors

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### Abstract

The overview report of the European Working Conditions Survey 2024 (EWCS24) provides a comprehensive description of the workforce, and includes information on digital work practices, social relations at work and inclusive workplaces. It evaluates job quality across seven dimensions: earnings, prospects, skills and discretion, working time, work intensity, social environment and physical environment. The report looks at workers' working lives, considering aspects such as work-life balance, career and employment security, health and well-being and sustainability. It describes how jobs fare on the basis of job quality and the role of job quality in supporting good working lives. Now in its eighth edition, EWCS24 maps changes in working life over more than three decades. This high-quality survey covers 34 European countries, including the 27 EU Member States, Norway, Switzerland and six candidate and potential candidate countries: Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Kosovo and Serbia. Over 35,000 interviews, each lasting approximately 45 minutes, took place as part of the survey.

# Thanks for your attention

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