



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

# Sustainable work for an ageing workforce

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Stakeholder workshop organised by OSE and Fond Brodoloni  
Policies for an aged workforce in the EU 5 May 2017

# Sustainable work over the life course

## tackling demographic change: more people at work for longer?

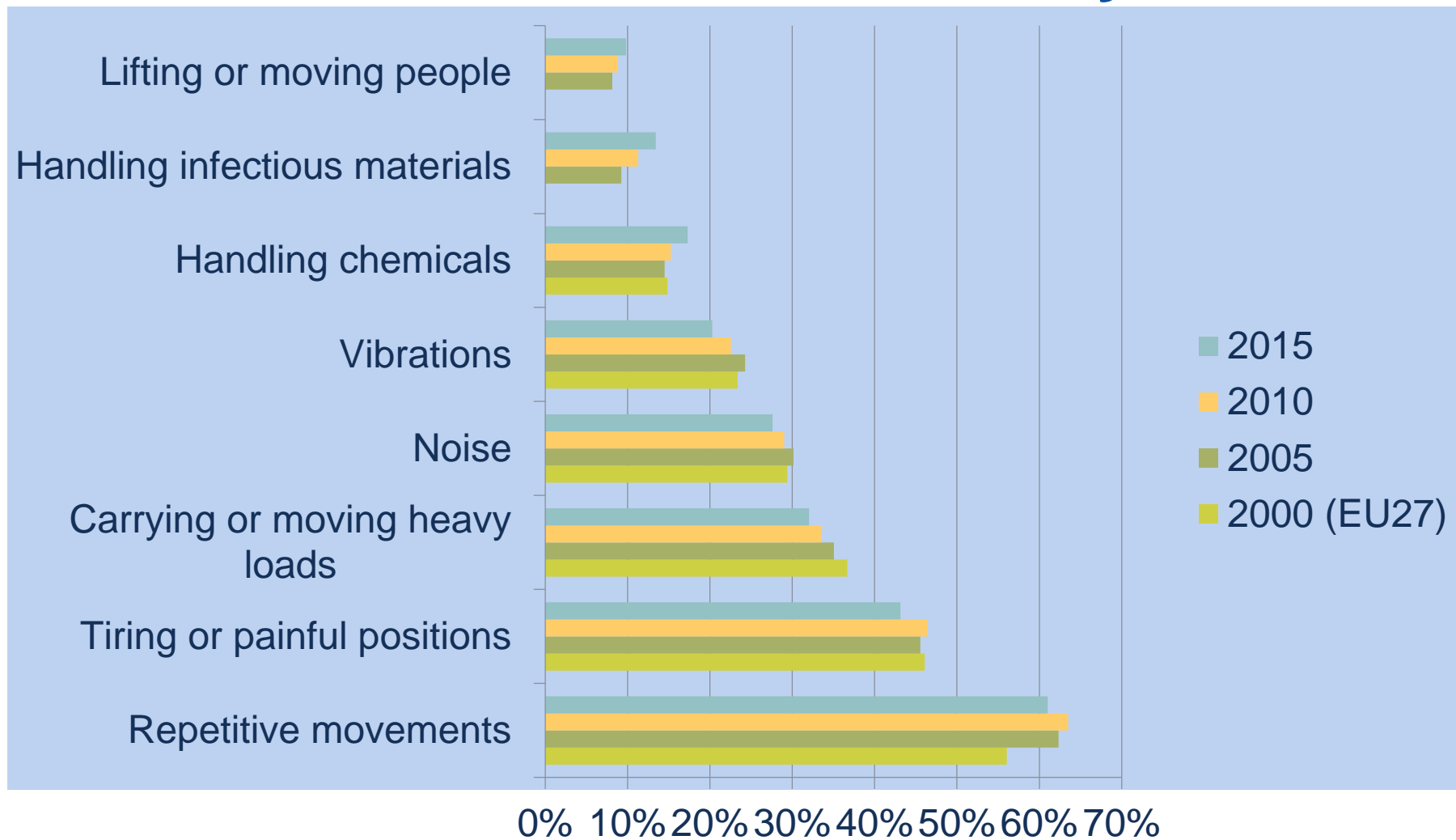
- Sustainable work over the life course means that **working and living** conditions are such that they support people in **engaging and remaining in work** throughout an extended working life
  - These conditions enable a fit between work and the characteristics/circumstances of the individual throughout their changing working life.
  - They must be developed through policies & practices at work & outside of work.

-> the ideas from Docherty on replenishing resources over one's life course
- It's the combination of different elements which make work sustainable
  - multidimensional aspects of quality of **work and employment**
  - certain effects can be evened out or build up over the working life
  - changes throughout the working life: career management
- Changes throughout the life course
  - Critical life events: child bearing and rearing, unemployment spells,...
  - Needs can change throughout life (need for transitions)

# The European Working Conditions Survey

- Six waves (since 1991)
- 35 countries (2015)
- 43.000 workers (employees and self-employed, age: 15+ )
- 45 minute face to face interviews at respondent's home
- 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
- A wide range of elements related to work and employment conditions of workers : status, working time duration and organisation, work organisation, workers participation, learning and training, physical and psychosocial risks, reconciliation, earnings, engagement , organisational justice, health and well-being

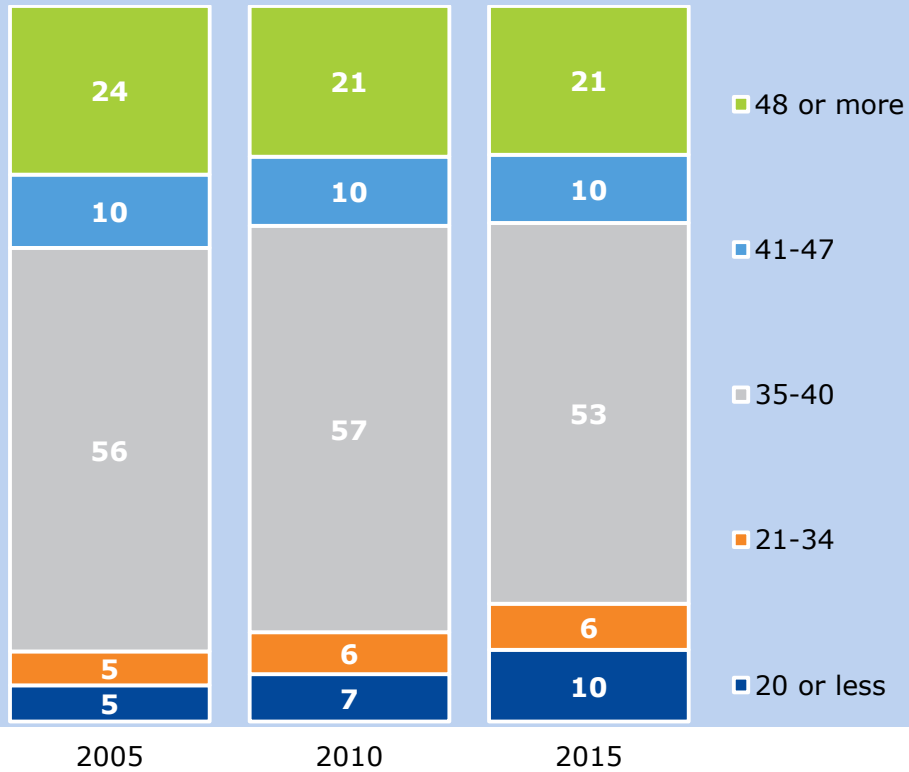
# Some results from the EWCS: Physical risks



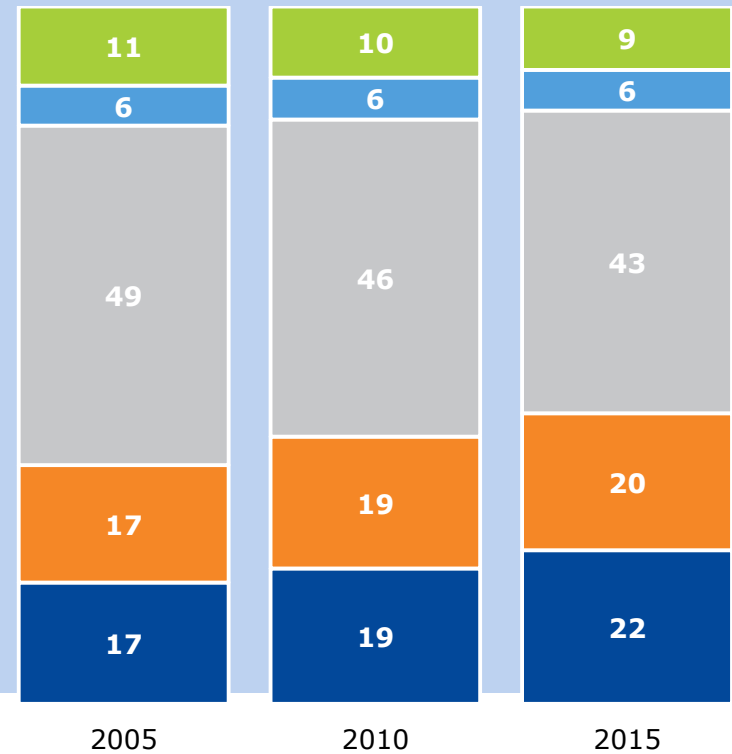
Source: EWCS

# Working time duration

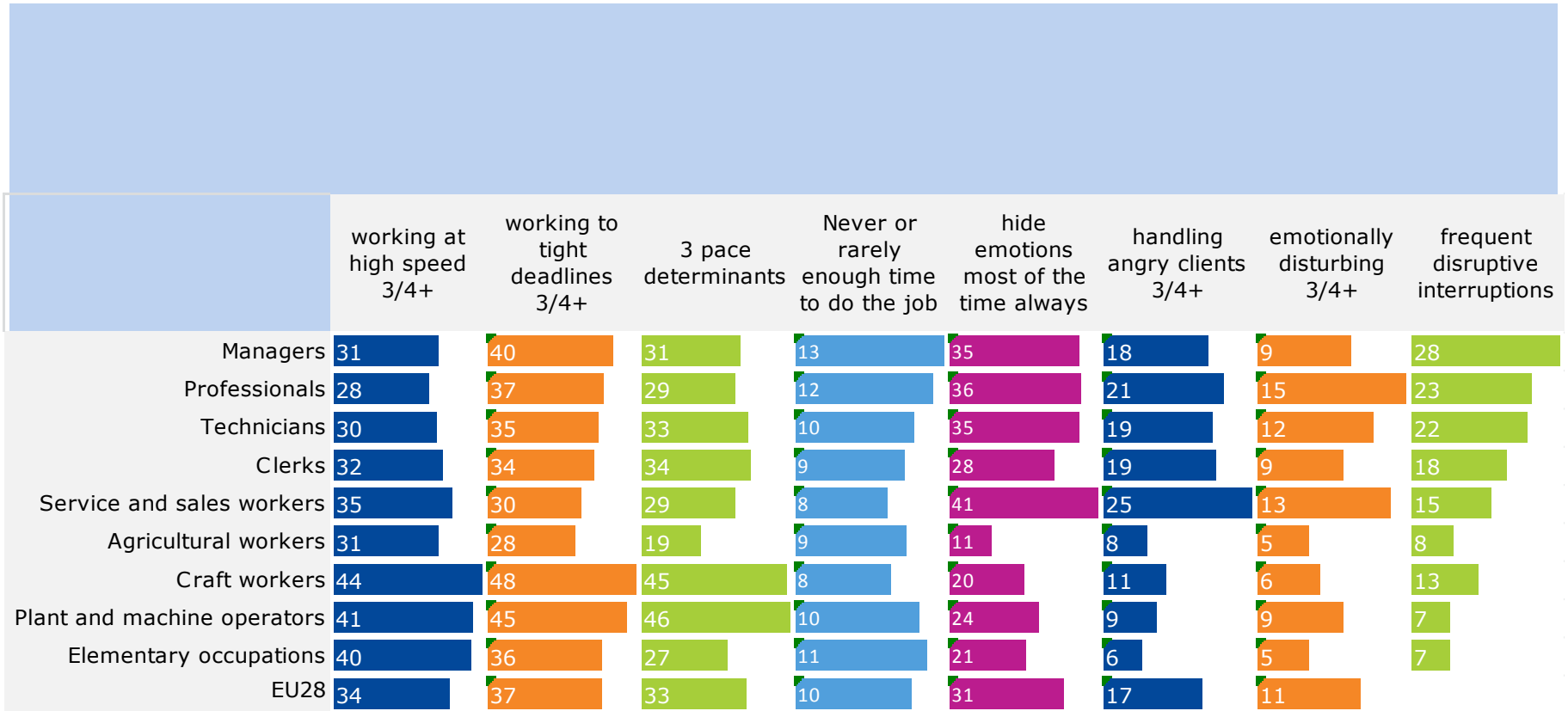
## Men



## Women



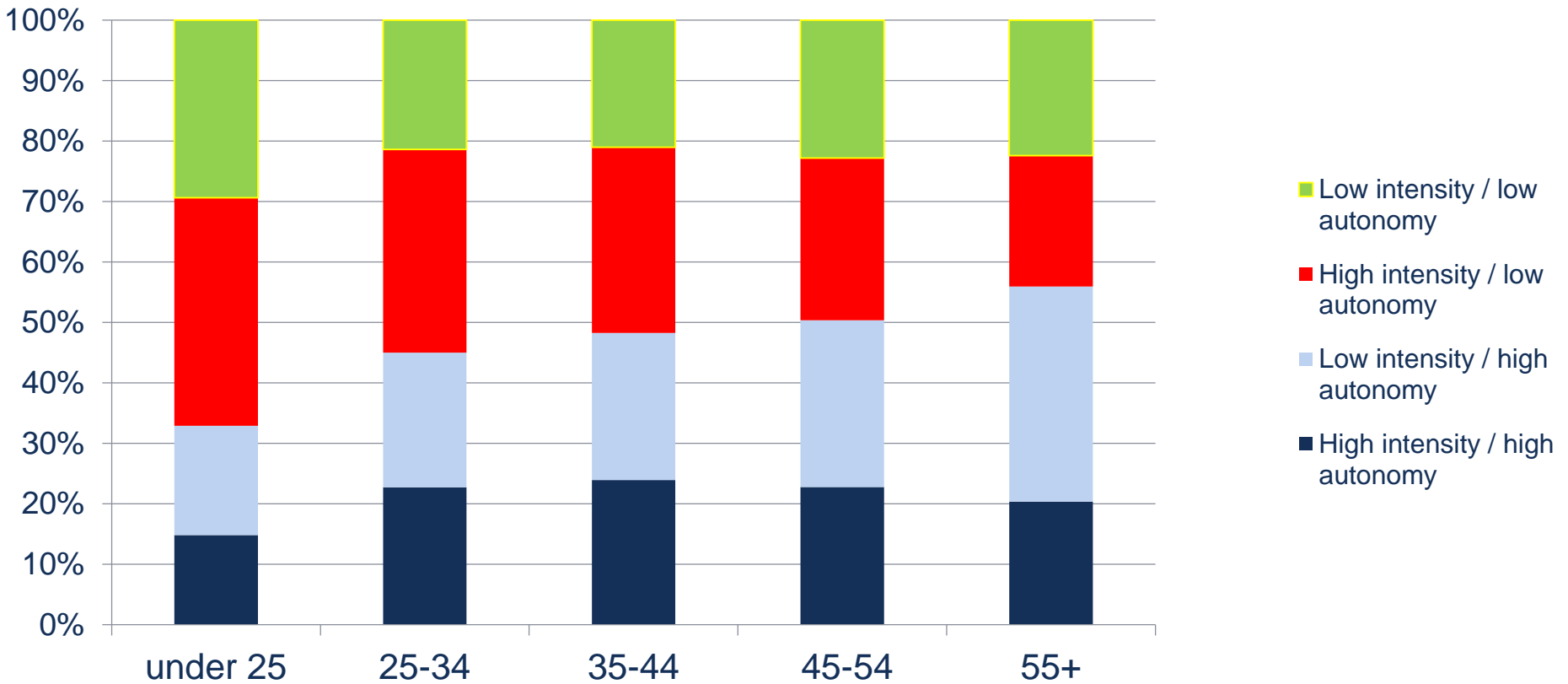
# Psychosocial risks



Source: 6<sup>th</sup> EWCS

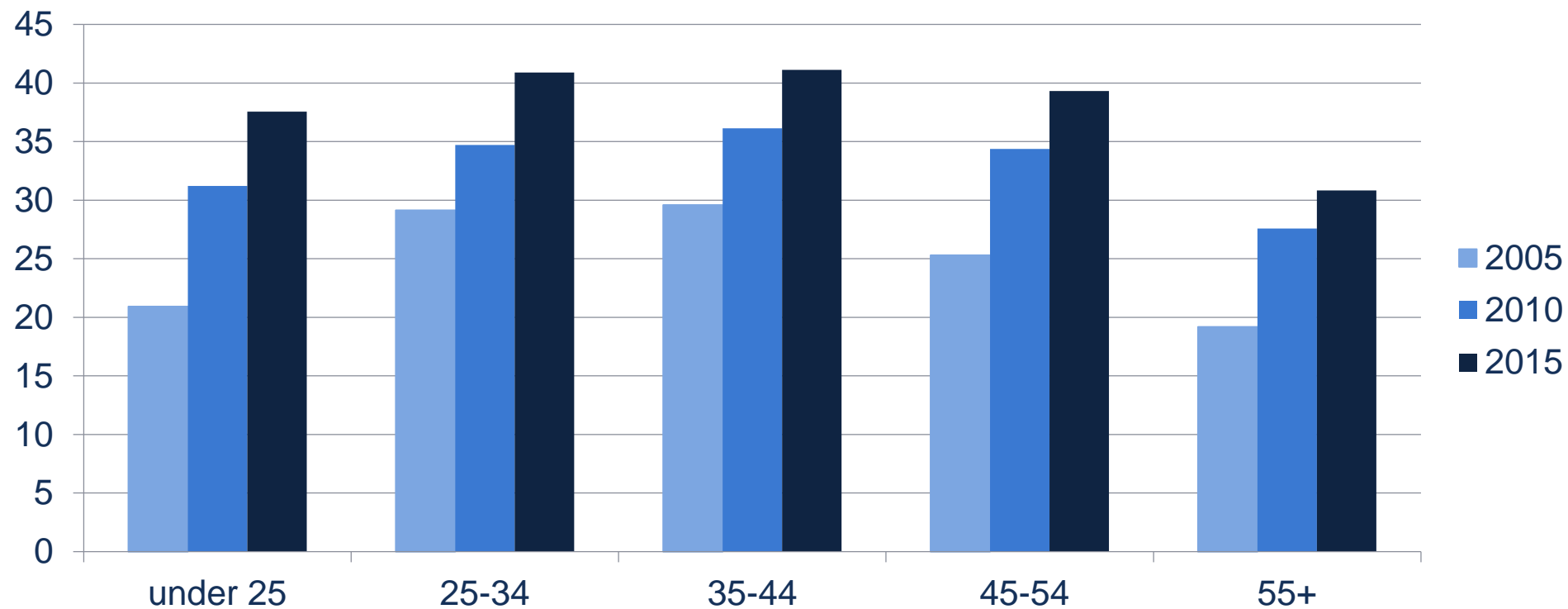
# Working conditions of workers of different age: Demands (work intensity) and autonomy at work

(% workers by age, eu28)



Source: 6<sup>th</sup> EWCS

# Working conditions of workers of different age: Training (offered by the employer) by age (EWCS, 2005,2010,2015)



Source: 6<sup>th</sup> EWCS

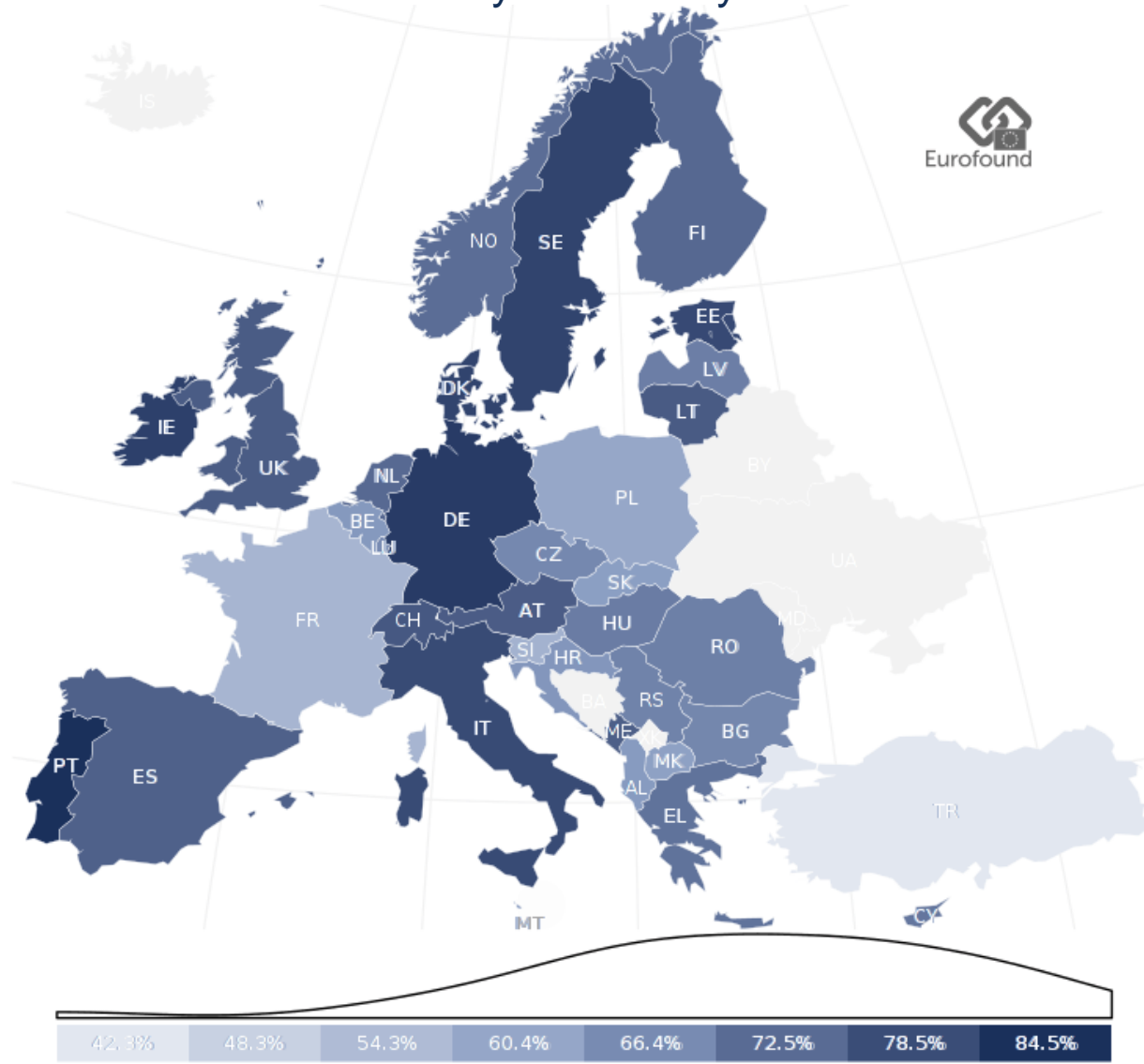


# Reconciliation between work and private life

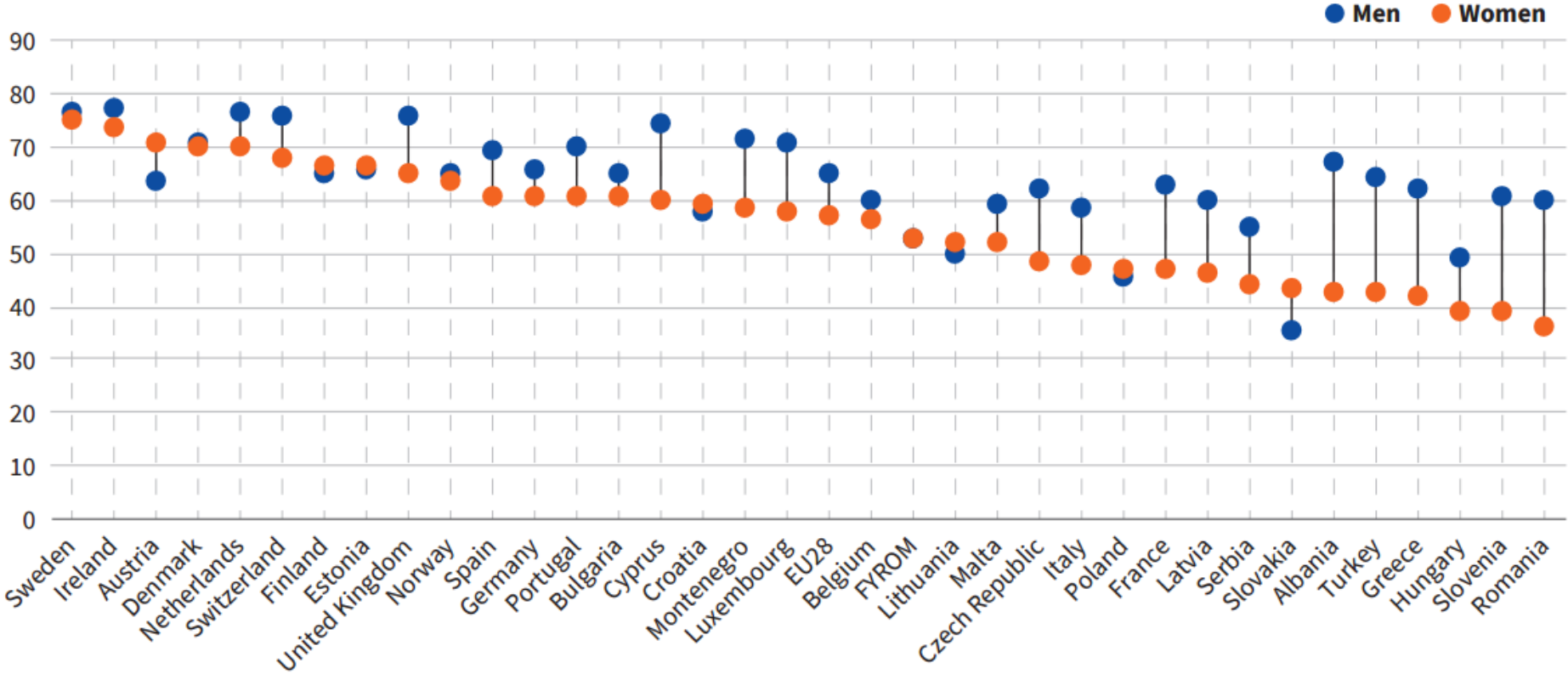
- 19% of workers report poor fit between work and private life :
  - more men than women (adaptive preferences),
  - BUT women still do more unpaid work
  - for both: most intensive time when there are children
- Work life balance:
  - associated negatively with long working hours, irregular working hours, asocial working hours, working in free time (ict)
  - associated positively with shorter working hours, say over working time, being able to take time off at short notice

Source: 6<sup>th</sup> EWCS

# Do you think you will be able to your current job or a similar one until you are 60 years old?



**Figure 120: Self-reported ability to work in five years' time by respondents aged 56 and over, by country and sex (%)**



Source: 6<sup>th</sup> EWCS

# ‘Able to do the job until 60’ (proxy)

- Factors which influence the sustainability of work in a negative way:
  - being exposed to physical risks, work intensity, shift work (and particularly daily split shifts), night work, fear of losing one’s job, not being treated fairly as well as violence and harassment.
- Factors which influence the sustainability of work in a positive way:
  - doing useful work and getting recognition for the work, participation, support from boss and colleagues, being able to take time off at short notice

Source: 6<sup>th</sup> EWCS

# Eurofound concept: Sustainable work over the life course

## POLICIES, REGULATION, PRACTICES...

Public policies

Social partners

Companies

CURRENT  
WORKFORCE

characteristics  
of the **job**

### JOB QUALITY

- Job quality in general (job design, organisation, limit exposure, deal with consequences)
- Sub-dimensions of job quality:
  - Remuneration
  - Prospects (progression, security...)
  - Physical environment (health and safety)
  - Social environment (support)
  - Skills and discretion (training, work organisation)
  - Work intensity
  - Working time

### LIFE COURSE

characteristics  
of the **worker**

Time availability/care obligations

Health / well being

Skills / employability

Unemployment / inactivity

Motivation

Life events and lifecourse policies / care infrastructure

Inclusion policies: people with reduced physical and mental health capacity / health promotion

Lifelong learning, skills development

Active labour market policies / lifelong guidance / job matching

Meaningful work / the functions of work itself

potential  
workforce

# Sustainable work: Eurofound concept

## JOB QUALITY

**Time availability/ care obligations**

**Health / well being**

**Skills / employability**

Unemployment / inactivity

Motivation

- Quality of work and work environment
- Changing jobs: job mobility,
- Adapting job tasks and role
- Flexible working (adapted to personal circumstances and needs)

# Sustainable work over the life course policies and practices

- Case studies in 10 countries on policies and strategies dealing with sustainable work over the life course
  - Different focus in each of the countries
  - Some have more 'encompassing policies', calling it sustainable work, sustainable employability, workable work, quality of work... / horizontal strategies
- All of them have policies related to each of the dimensions
  - Ensuring career and employment security
  - Maintaining and promoting health and well-being of workers
  - Reconciliation between work and non-working life
  - Developing skills and competences
  - But the breath and depth of the policies is very different
  - With different implications on the likelihood of sustainability

Source: Eurofound (2016), Sustainable work: national policies and practices

# Sustainable work over the life course policies and practices

- Key gaps and contradictions across and within countries
  - Lack of comprehensive strategies
  - Different ministries or bodies coming with contradictory policy measures / competition between bodies
    - It is not sufficient to increase retirement age & reduce early retirement options ...
  - Trade-off between issue specific and horizontal policies and actions
  - Involvement of (social) partners and compromises
  - Impact of crisis & changes in social, employment and labour market system
  - 'newer' forms of employment and their (short term?) consequences
    - Self-employment / precarious forms of employment
    - Building up of social rights over the life course
- > hence the importance of an overall approach involving all actors

Source: Eurofound (2016) Sustainable work; national policies and practices



# Some final reflections

Combinations of policies, regulation and practices: **not a 'one fits all' solution**

- Legislation, policies and practices aimed directly or indirectly at increasing working life duration and inclusion with particular focus on **quality of work**, health, skills (employability), reconciliation work/private life (care) and motivation of workers (and work organisation)
- Transitions over the life course / job mobility
- Companies and social partners play the key role
  - Implementation, deepening, materialising in the workplace
  - Role for social dialogue
- Embedded in regulating framework, social protection & infrastructure
  - Social protection: building up rights over the life course

Hence the importance of doing research which supports the policymakers

- Triangulation, quantitative and qualitative research ...  
And more interdisciplinary research with longitudinal data sets....

**towards a capabilities approach for sustainable work**

# Thank you for your attention

6th EWCS overview report:

<https://www.eurofound.europa.eu/publications/report/2016/working-conditions/sixth-european-working-conditions-survey-overview-report>

Sustainable work:

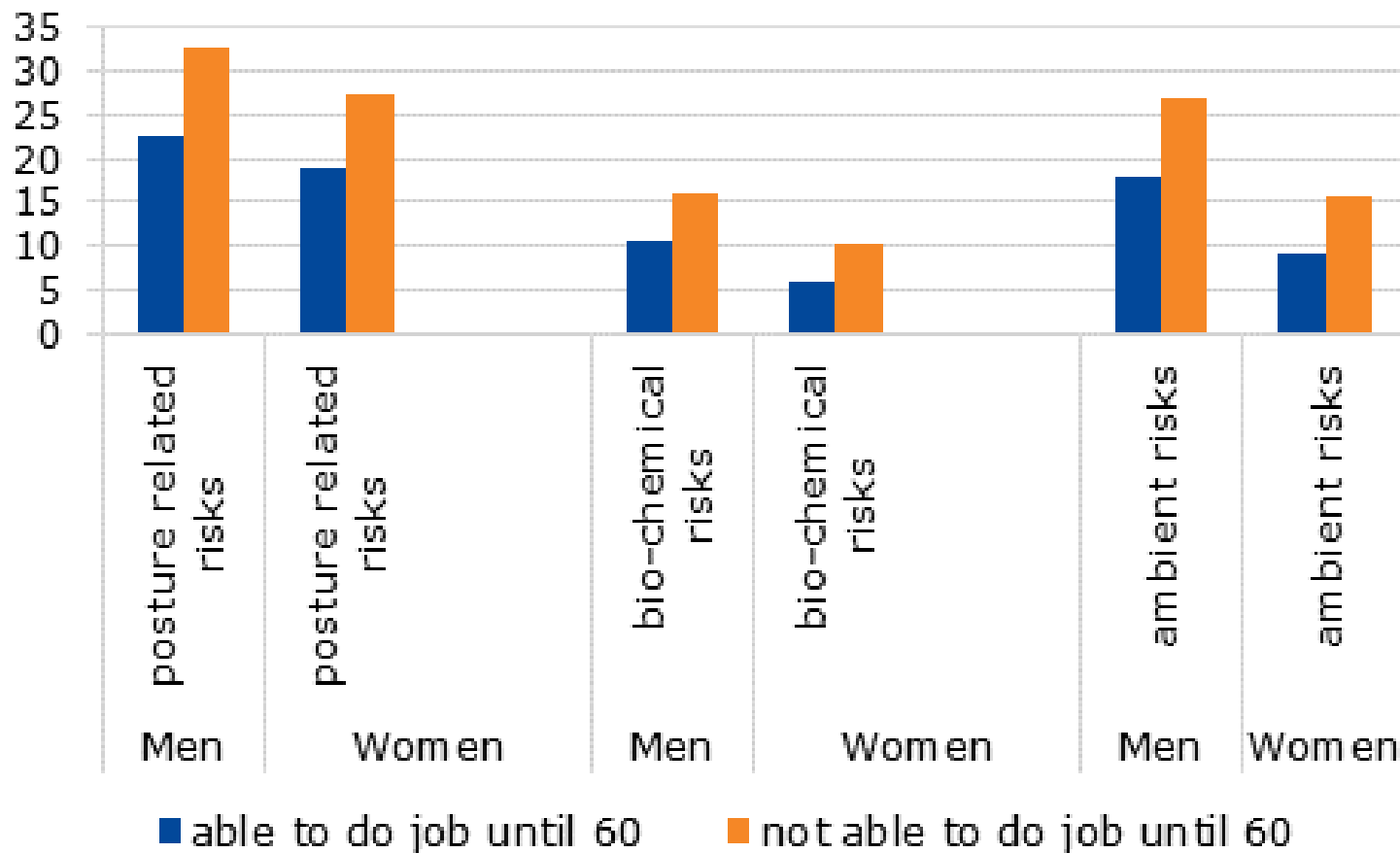
<http://www.eurofound.europa.eu/news/spotlight-on/sustainable-work/overview-sustainable-work-the-future-of-working-life-in-europe>

Survey data available via UK Data Archive:

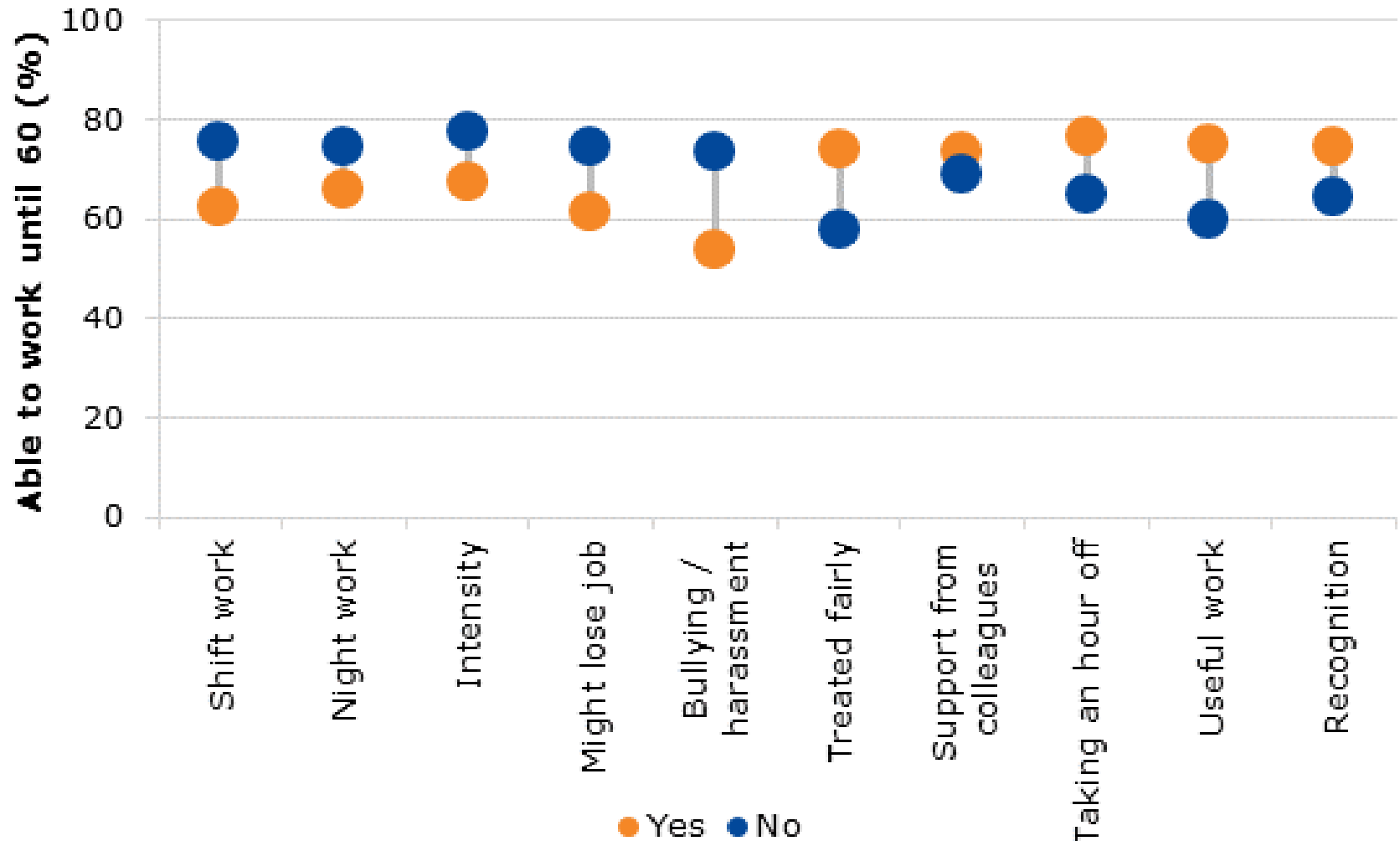
<https://www.eurofound.europa.eu/surveys/about-eurofound-surveys/data-availability>

[gve@eurofound.europa.eu](mailto:gve@eurofound.europa.eu)

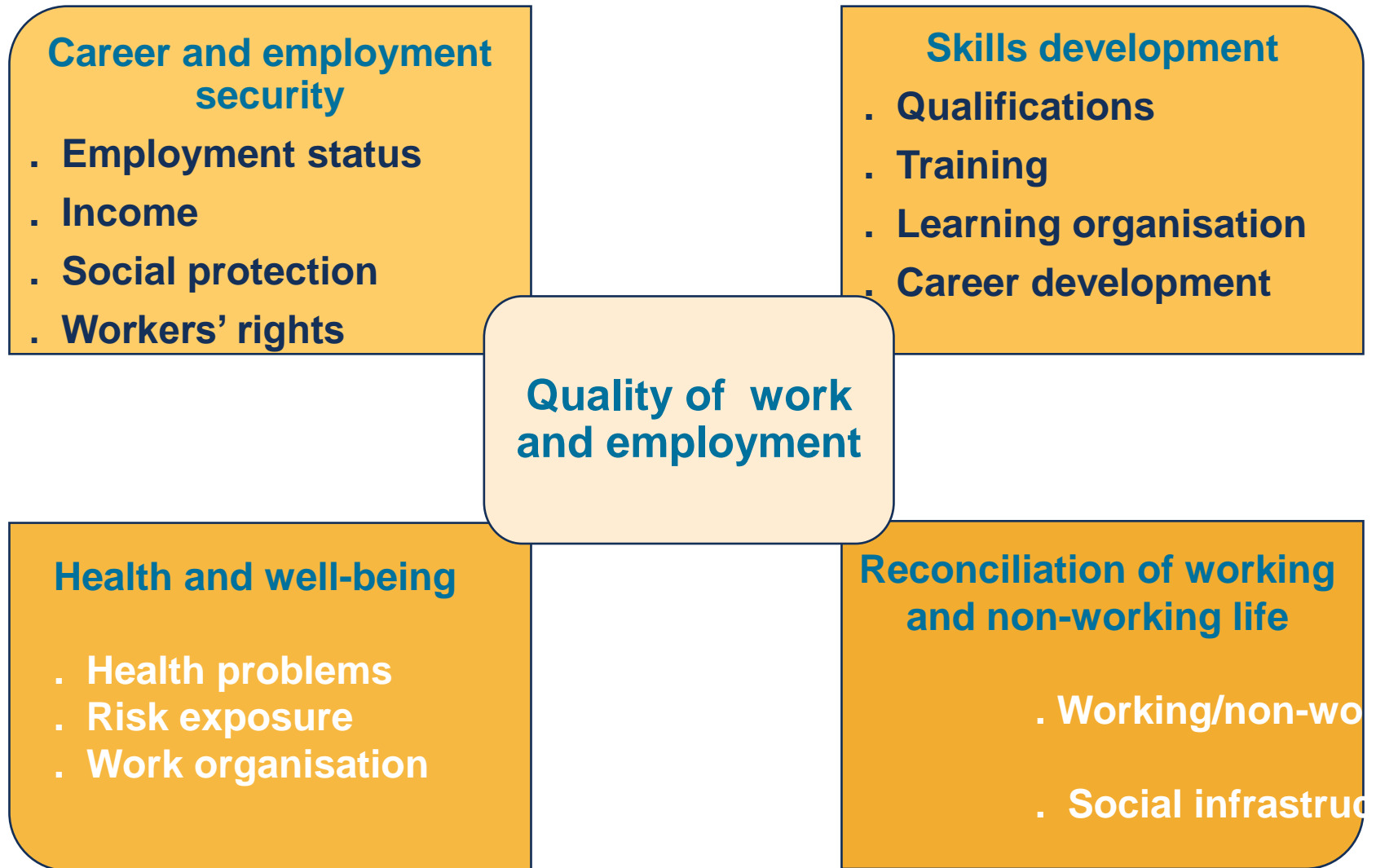
# Being exposed to physical risks & sustainable work



# Other working conditions and sustainable work



# Eurofound's 2002 model

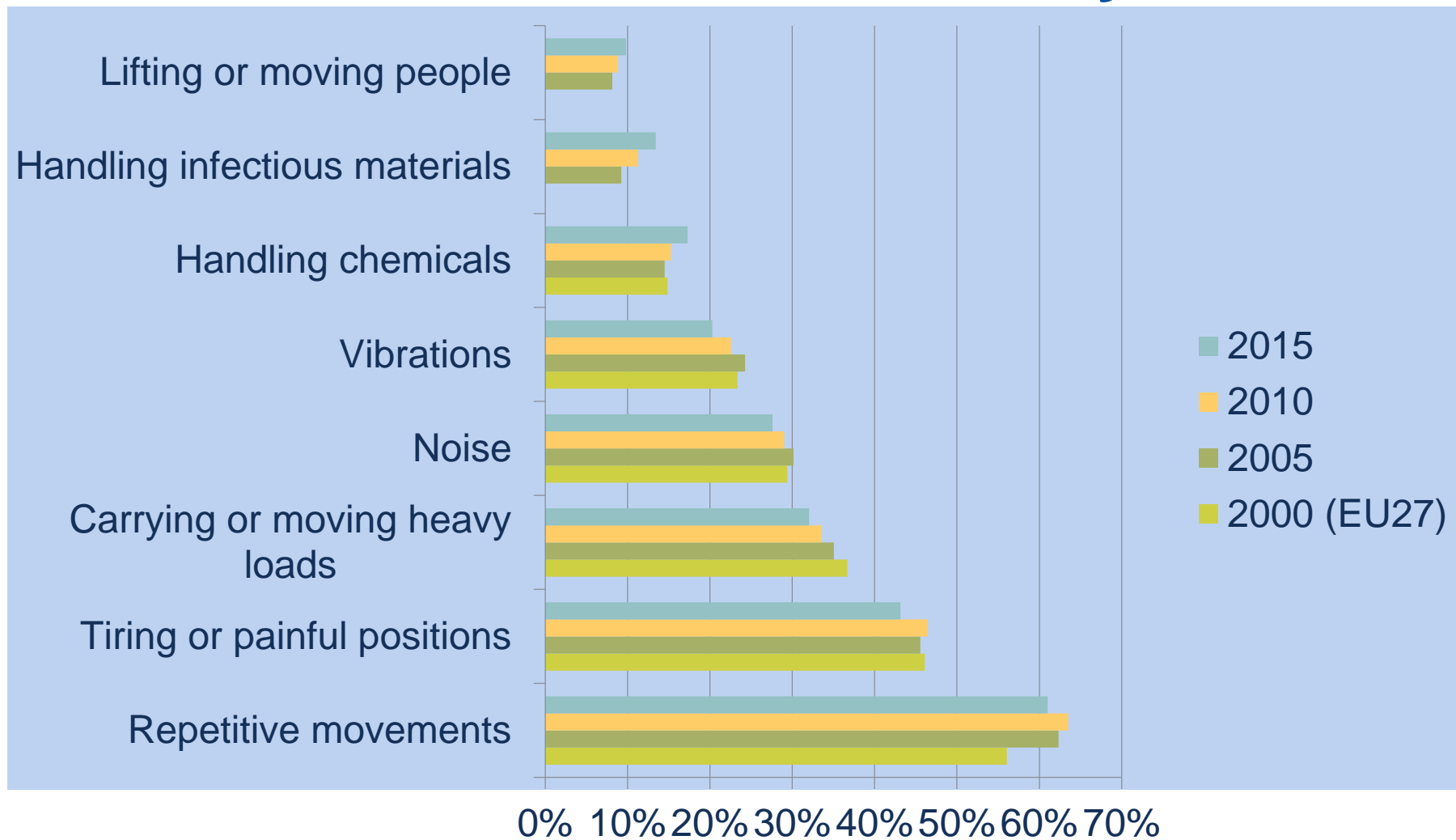


# Towards a job quality model

A general, simple definition:

Job quality refers to the potential impact of the characteristics of jobs on the well-being of workers.

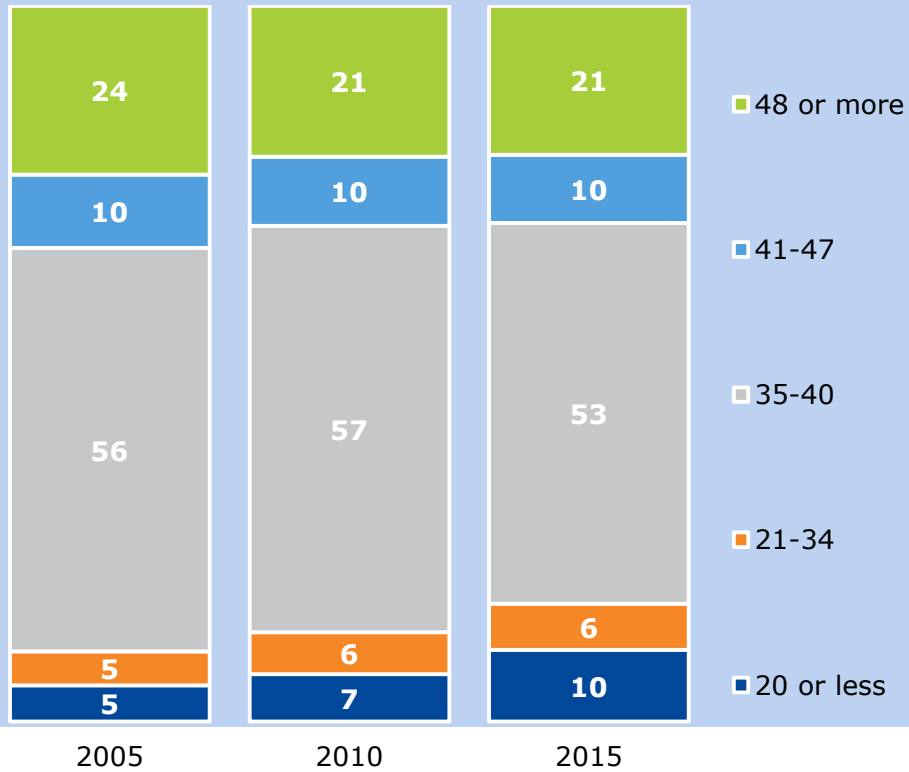
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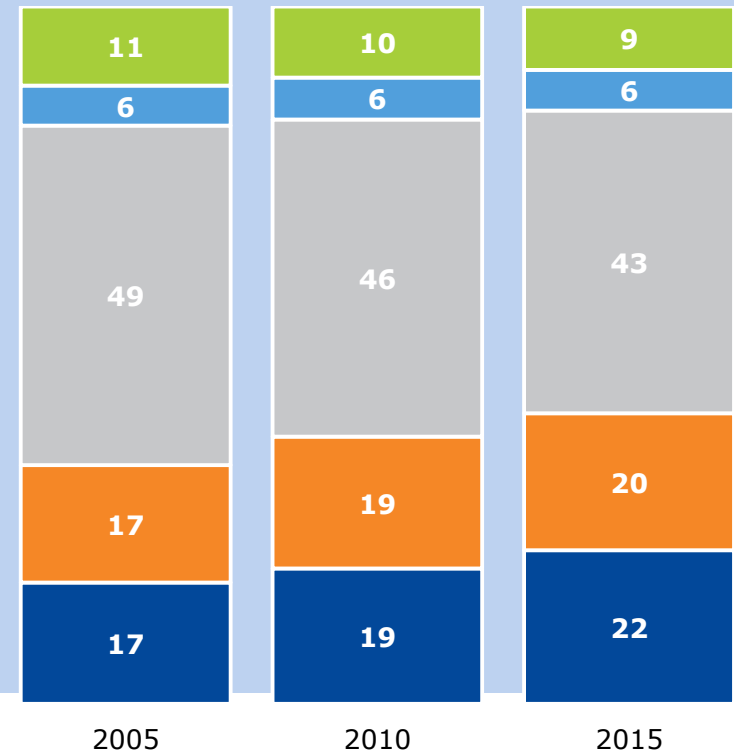
Source: EWCS

# Working time duration

## Men

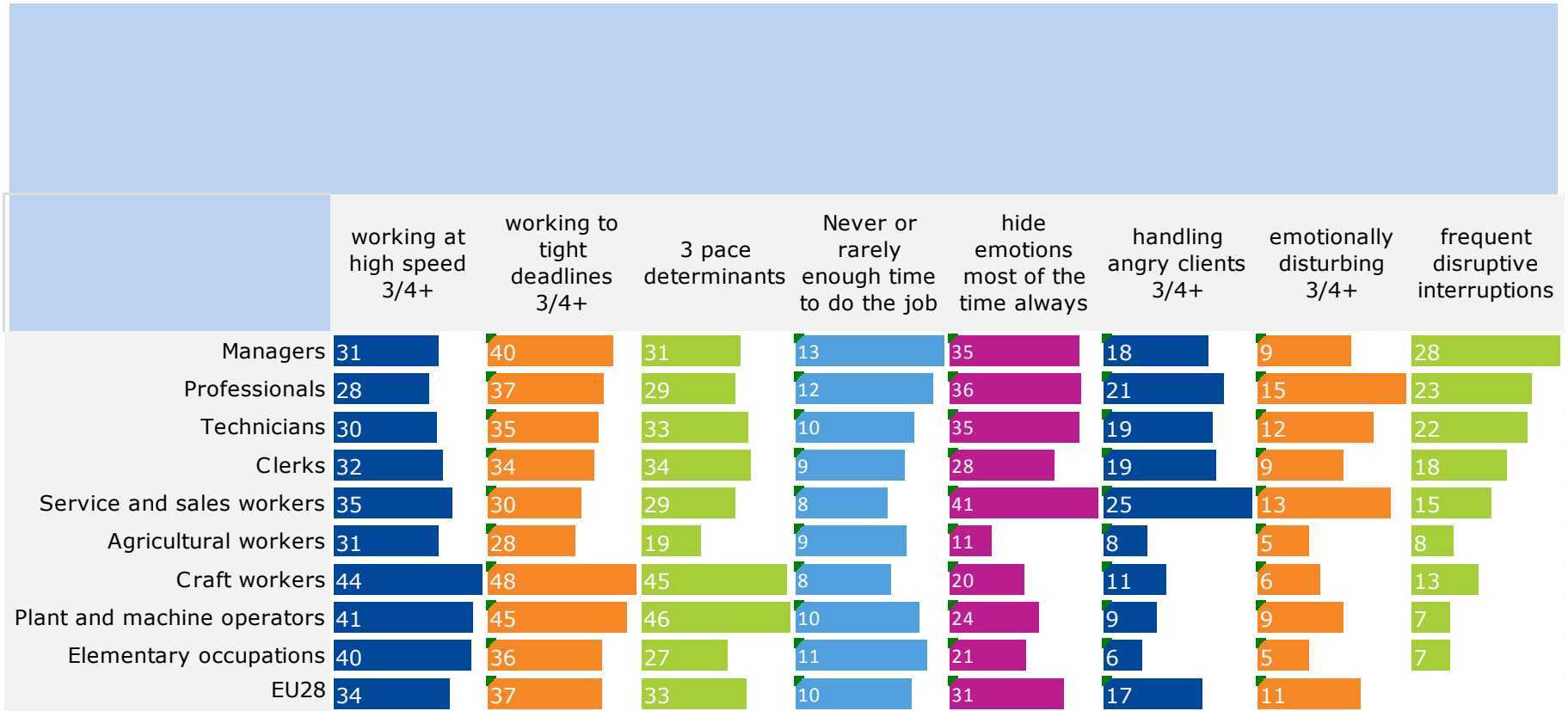


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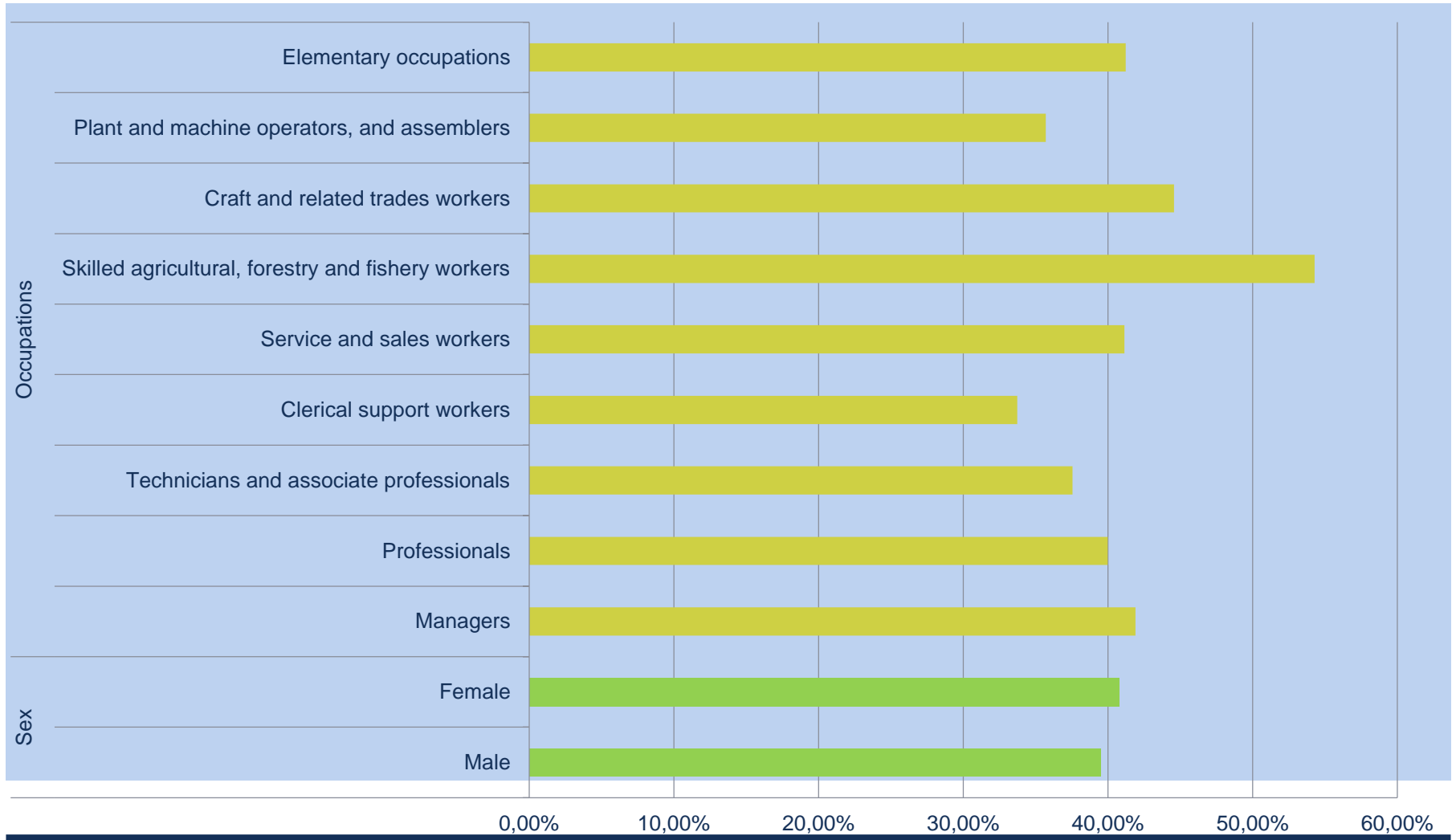


# Psychosocial risks



Source: 6<sup>th</sup> EWCS

# Feeling of work well done



Source: 6<sup>th</sup> EWCS

# Extending working lives? Measures by governments, companies, pension funds, social partners

## Non-pension measures

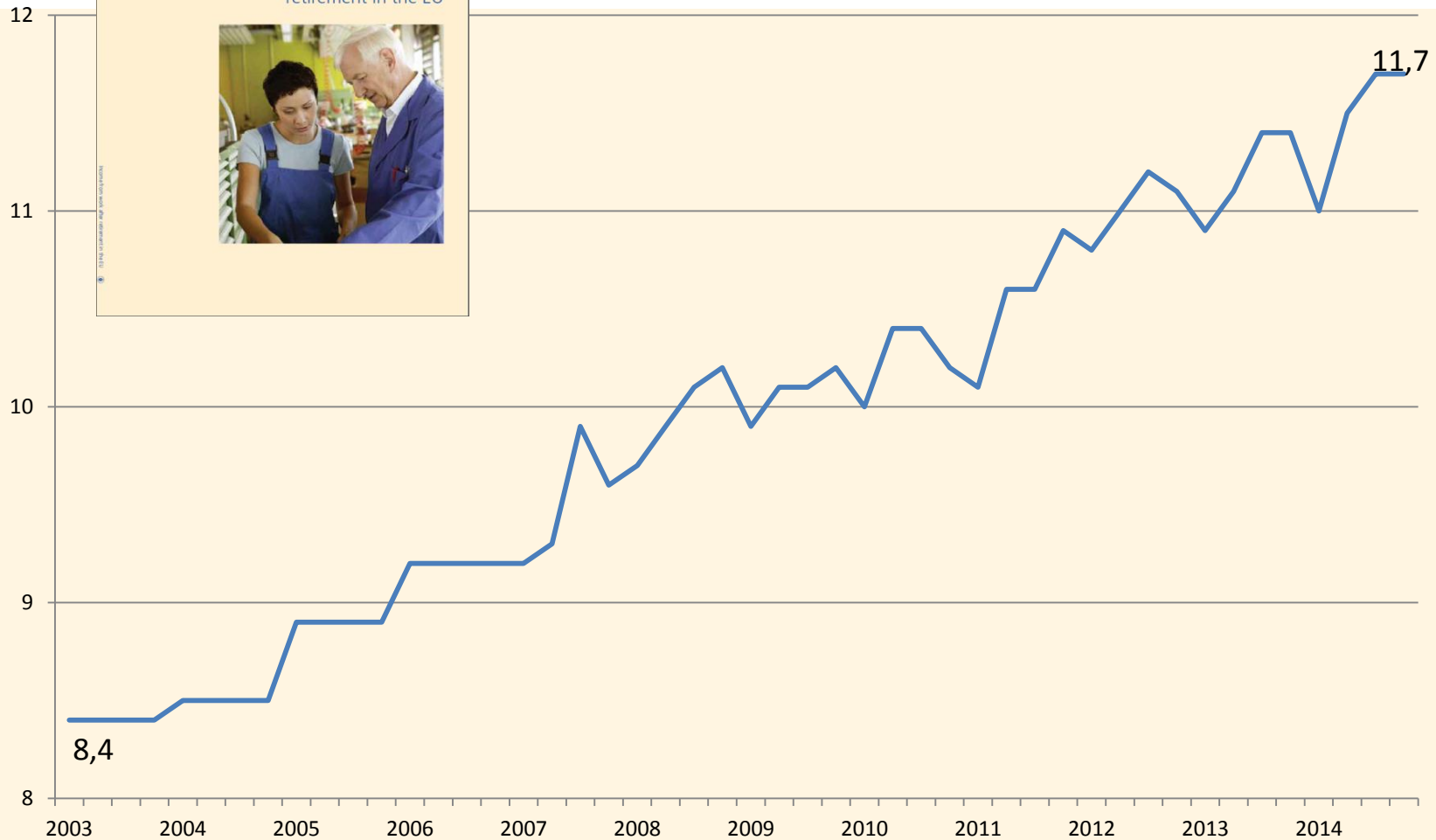
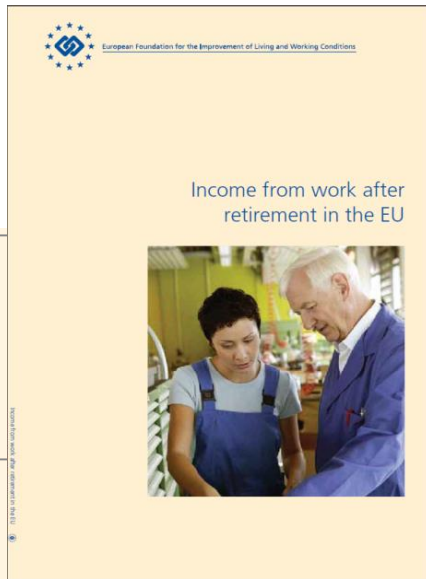
- Sustainable work: life-course approach, intervening at early stage
  - Quality of work and work environment
  - Adapting work
    - » adjusting tasks
    - » workplace design
    - » flexible working
  - Transitions throughout life course
  - Job mobility

## Pension measures

- tackling retirement pensions
  - Increase of retirement, make conditions more stringent, increase contributions, cut pensions, tackle early retirement possibilities
  - Challenges: inequality (health/poverty)
- increased flexibility:
  - combining income from work & pension
  - postponing pension
  - partial retirement

# The meaning of 'working age' has changed

## Employment rate, 65-69 years olds, EU28 (%)



# Working after retirement

- ½ of them do it to get additional income
  - 20% indicate they have financial troubles
- other factors: contacts with colleagues, learning opportunities, contributing to society

## **Facilitating reduction in working hours can motivate/enable people to continue longer.**

- 27% of workers in the EU reported they felt unable to do their current job or a similar one until the age of 60 (6<sup>th</sup> EWCS)
- In Sweden, most (60%) 50-64 year old workers unable to work until the retirement age (16%), said that shorter working hours would enable them (Statistics Sweden 2006)