



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

# **Sustainable work over the life course for men and women in Europe**

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# Outline

- sustainable work over the life course
- Conceptual framework on sustainable work
- Working longer, including after retirement
  - National policies on sustainable work
  - Final reflections on role of different actors

*‘Paid work contributes to quality of life both positively and negatively. Paid work provides income as well as identity and social interactions, but it may also be a source of negative experiences and risks.*

*However, not all jobs are equally valuable in this respect. This underscores the **importance of collecting more systematic information on the quality of paid work ...**’*

*Report by the Commission on the Measurement of Economic Performance and Social Progress  
Joseph Stiglitz, Amartya Sen, and Jean-Paul Fitoussi, 2010*

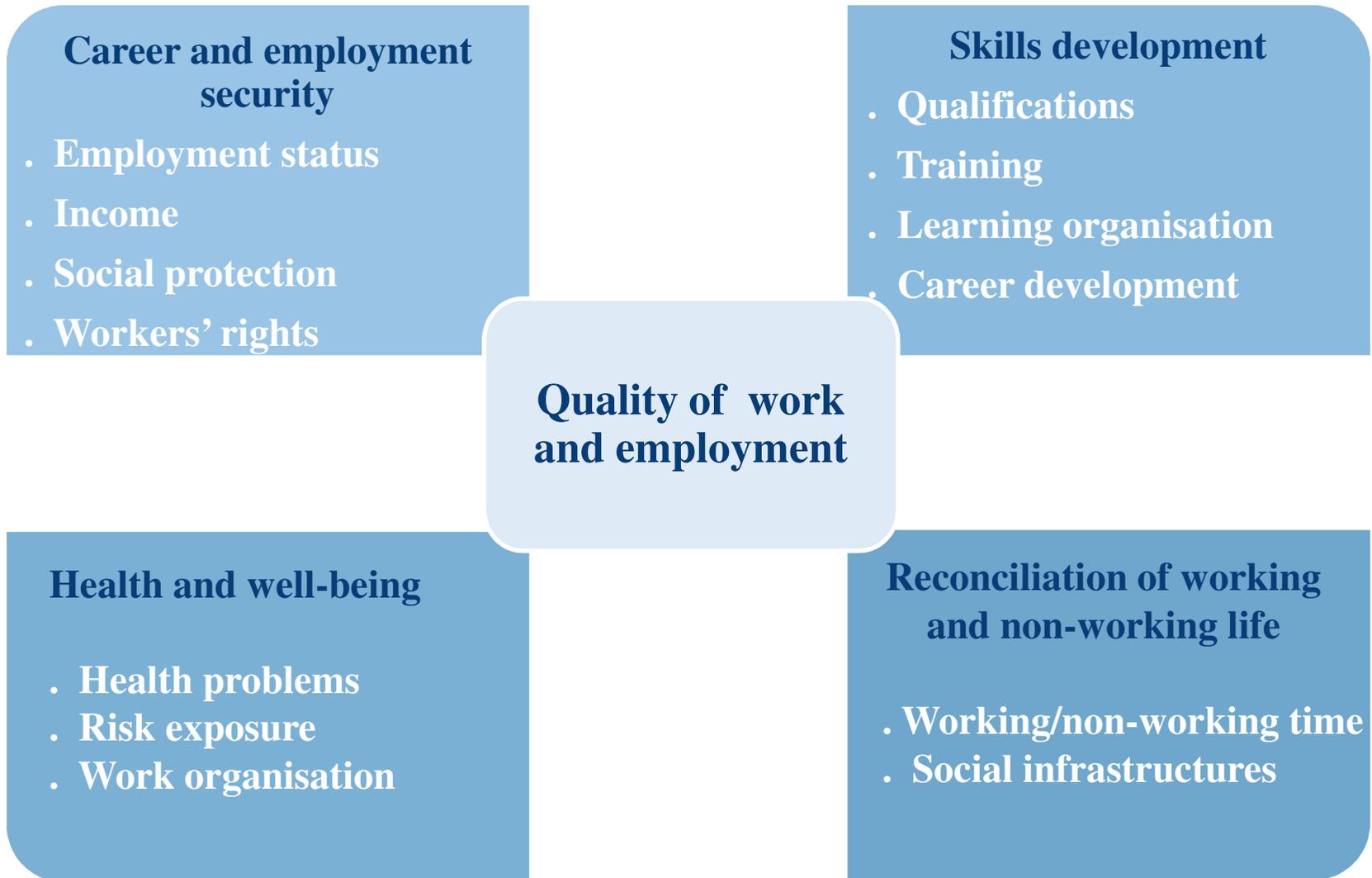
# The European Working Conditions Survey

- 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

# Work and working life are changing

- Employment structure
  - More service industry, less agriculture and industry
  - High level of unemployment
  - Smaller working age population
- Globalisation, increase use of ICT and intensified competition have led organisations to become more ‘flexible’
  - Different types of organisations with different impact on workers as well as on the economy
  - ‘blurring frontiers’ in employment status, work and non-work, place of work...
  - Some concern over short term governance
- Increasing emphasis on skills development, « self management » by workers, employment security over job security
- Increasing inequalities and precarious work

# Eurofound's 2002 model

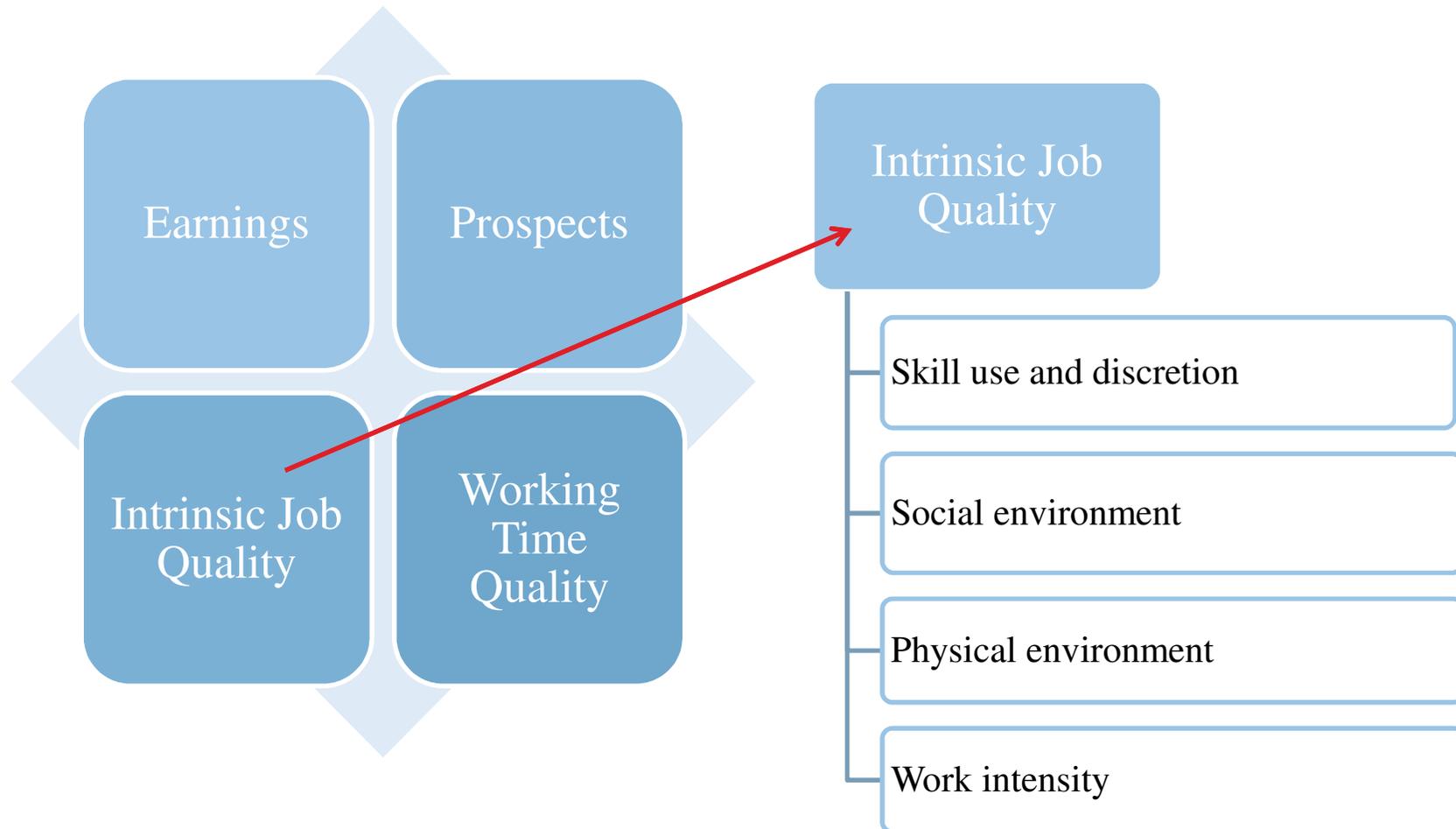


# Towards a job quality model

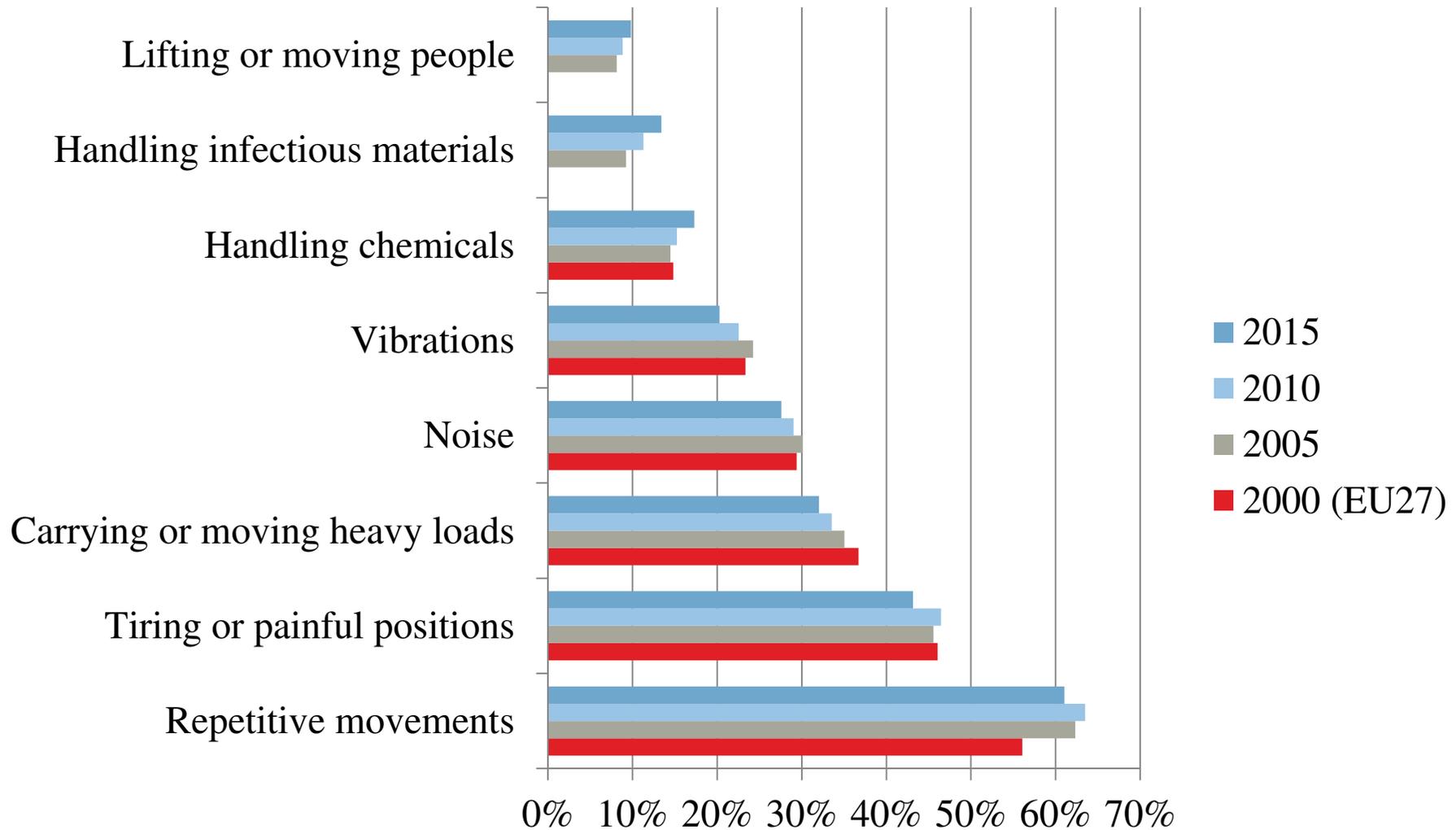
A general, simple definition:

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

# Job quality: multidimensional concept (job aspects with potential impact on well-being)

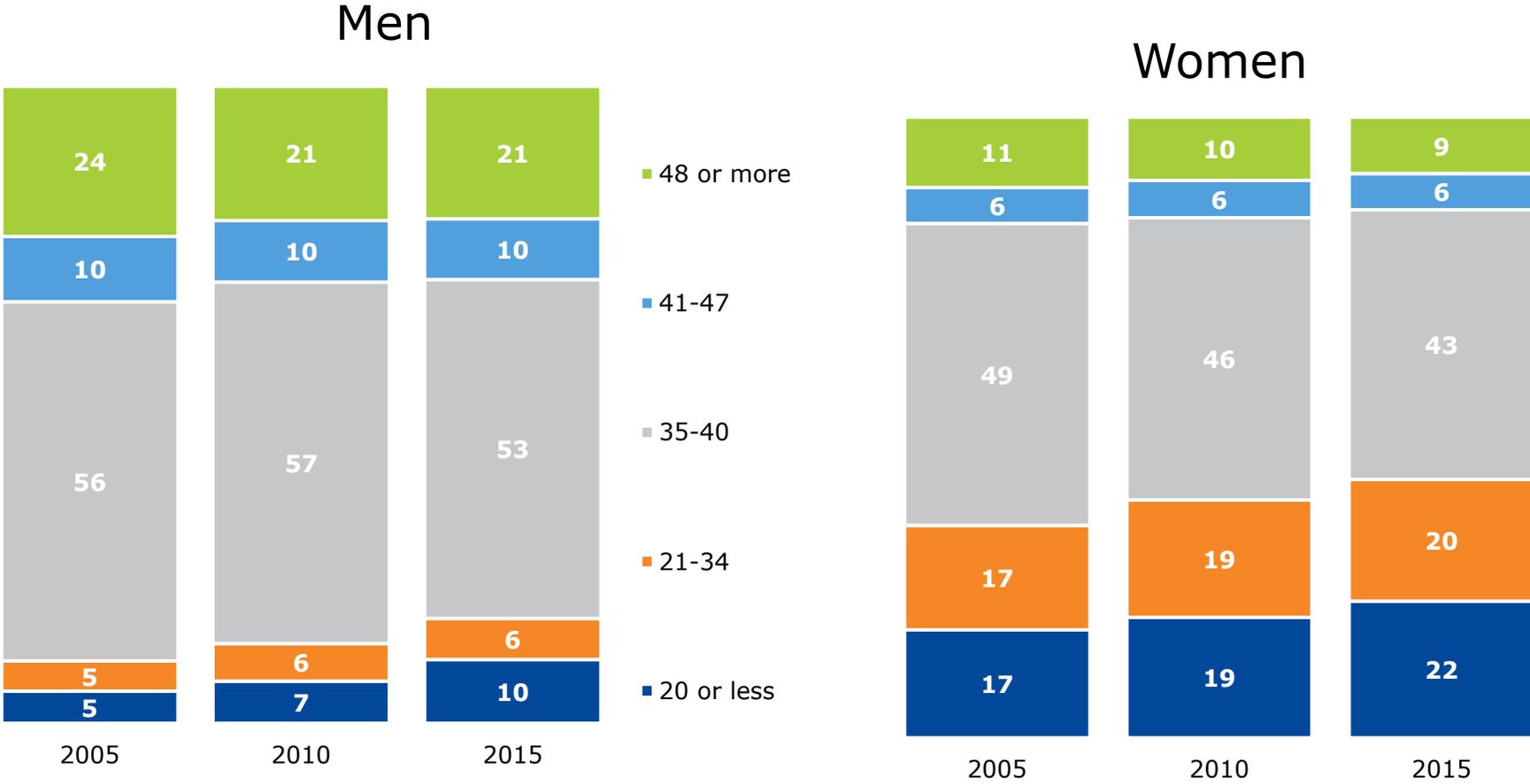


# Some results from the EWCS: Physical risks



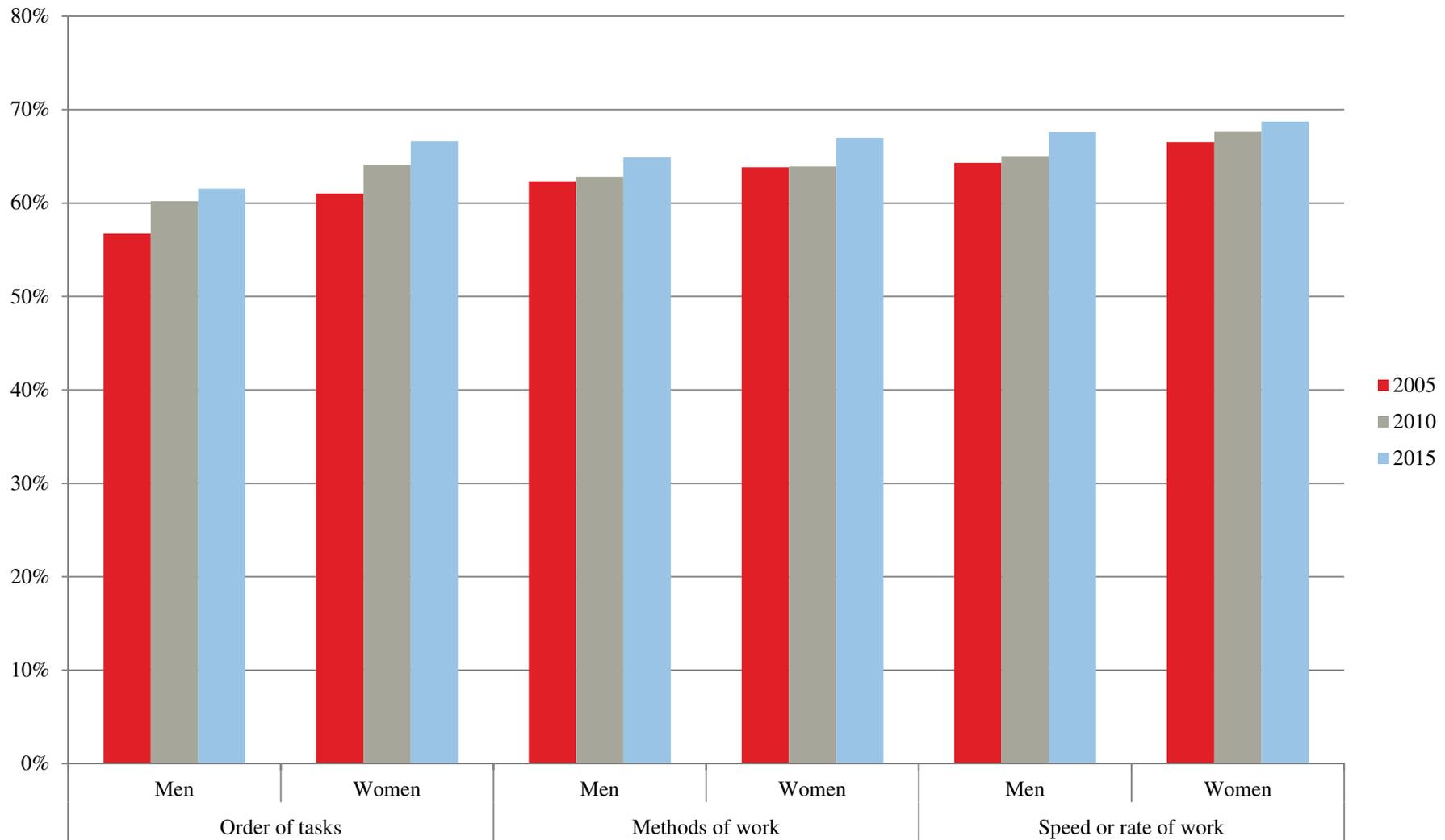
Source: EWCS

# Working time duration



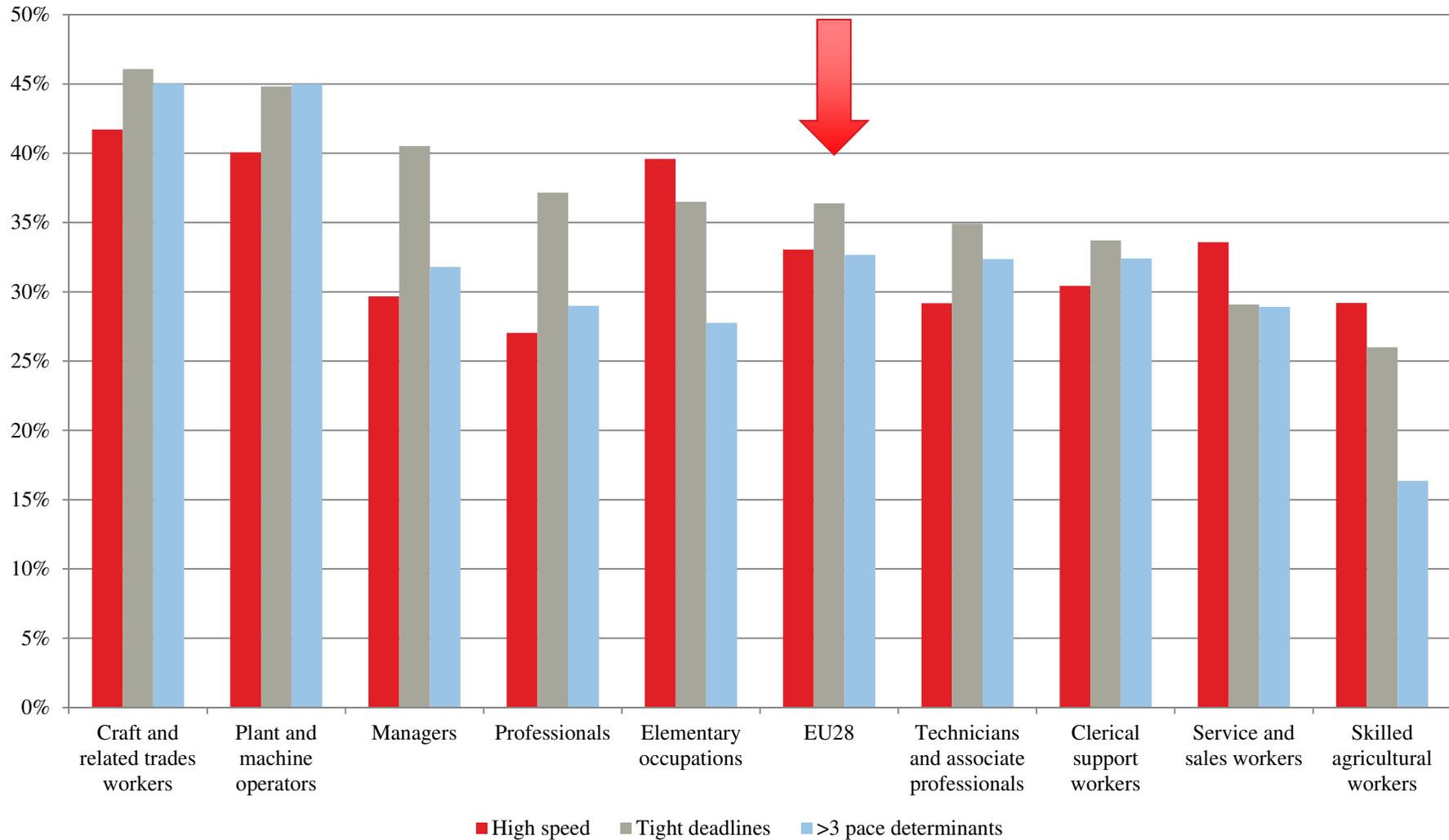
Source: EWCS

# Job autonomy



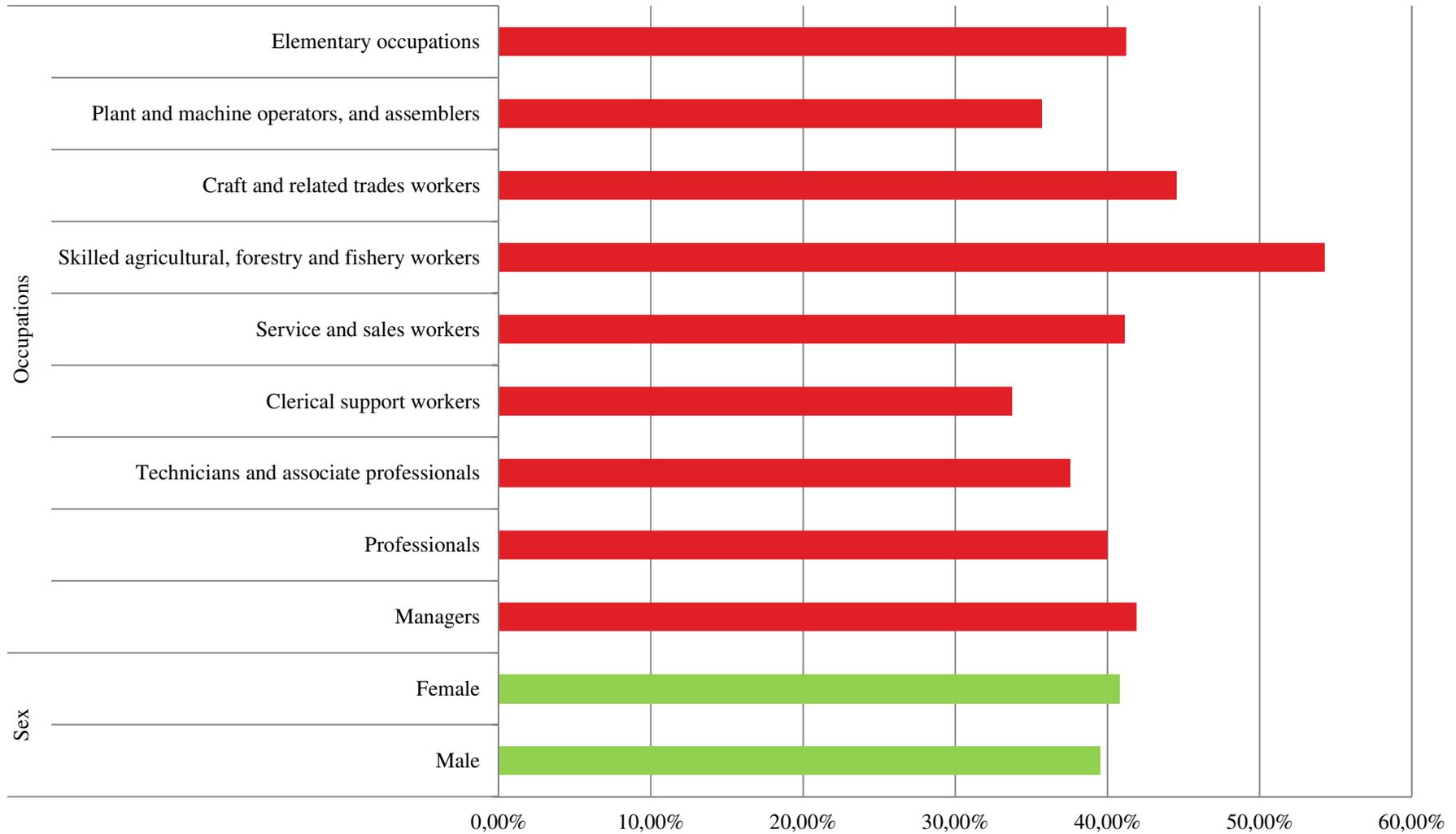
Source: EWCS

# Intense work by occupation



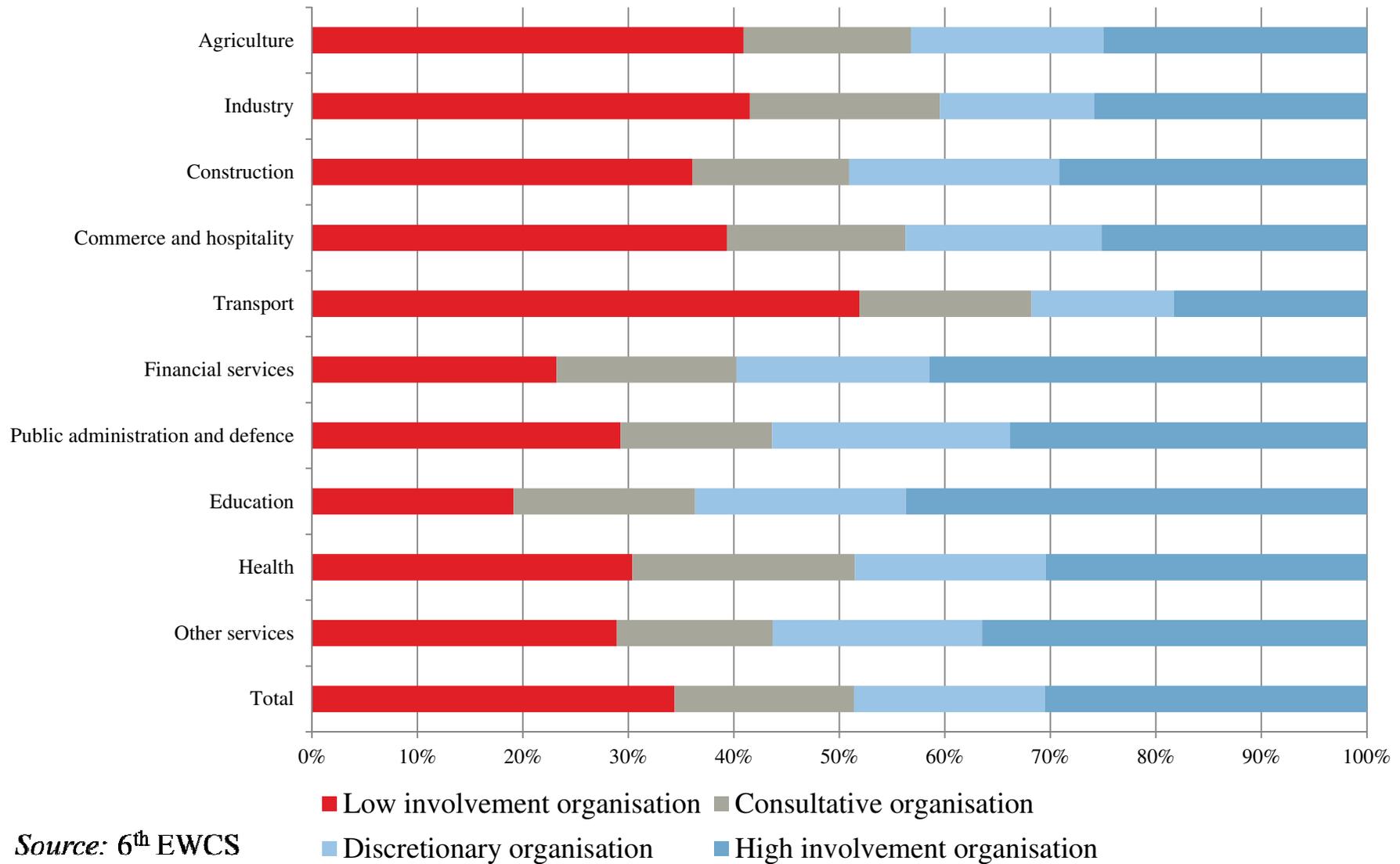
Source: 6TH EWCS

# Feeling of work well done



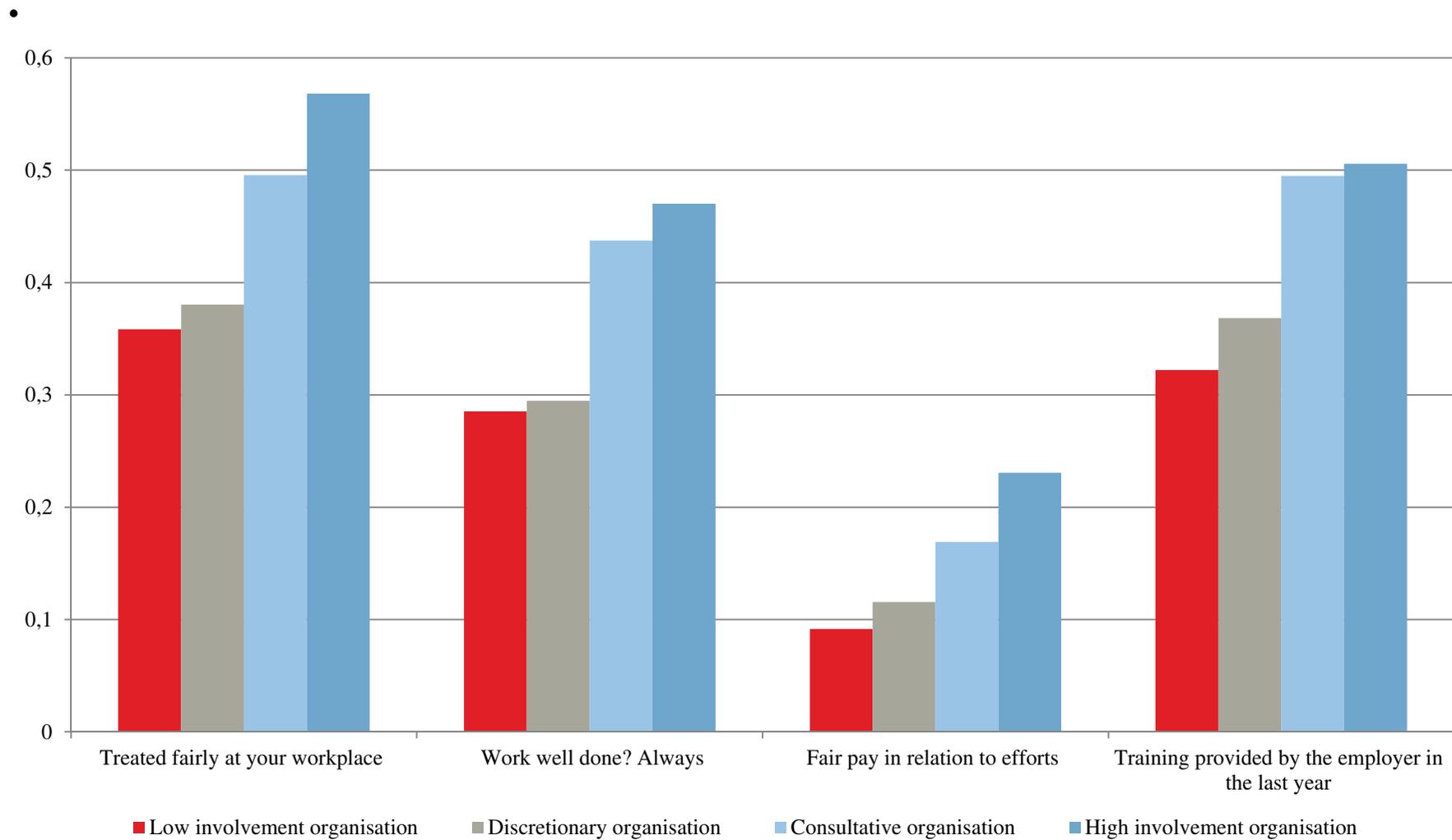
Source: 6<sup>th</sup> EWCS

# Employee participation per sector (autonomy & organisational participation)



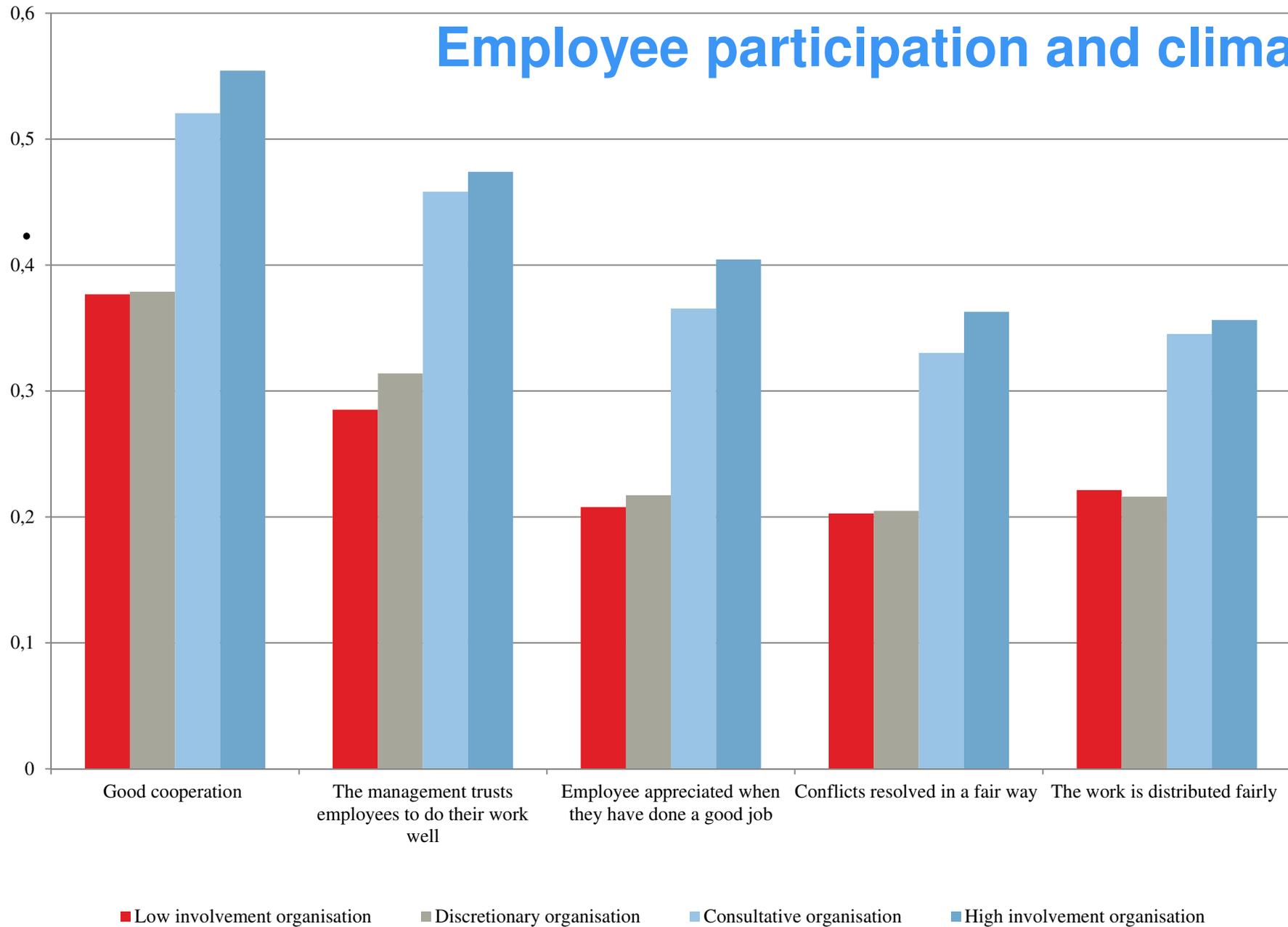
Source: 6<sup>th</sup> EWCS

# Employee participation and other work features



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

# Employee participation and climate

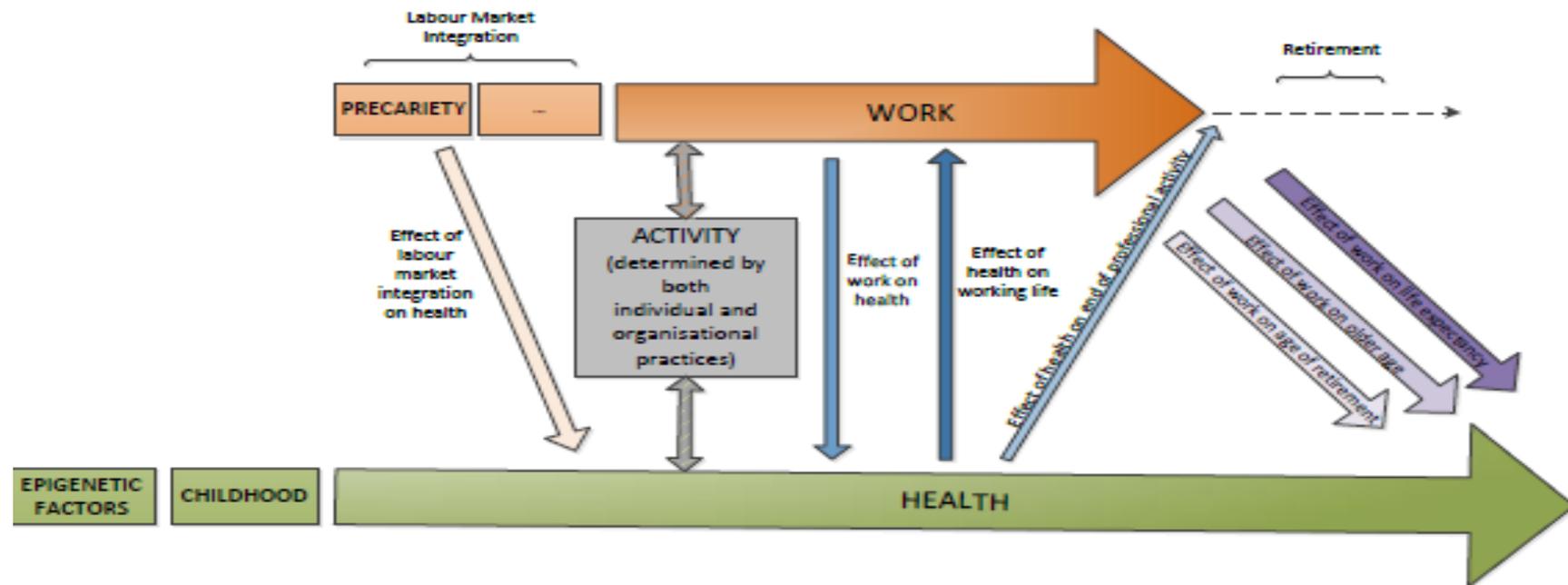


Source: 6<sup>th</sup> EWCS

# Health and well-being of workers

- Health and well-being
  - All job quality dimensions are important
    - Particularly intrinsic job quality
  - Certain groups of workers combine several risks
  - Work organisation and employee participation are associated with well-being
    - Work intensity, feeling that you cannot do meaningful work, poor management quality, not being treated fairly at work are associated negatively with health and well-being outcomes
    - Job autonomy and organisational participation are associated with better health and well-being outcomes

# Working over the life course: interaction between work and health over the life course is quite complex

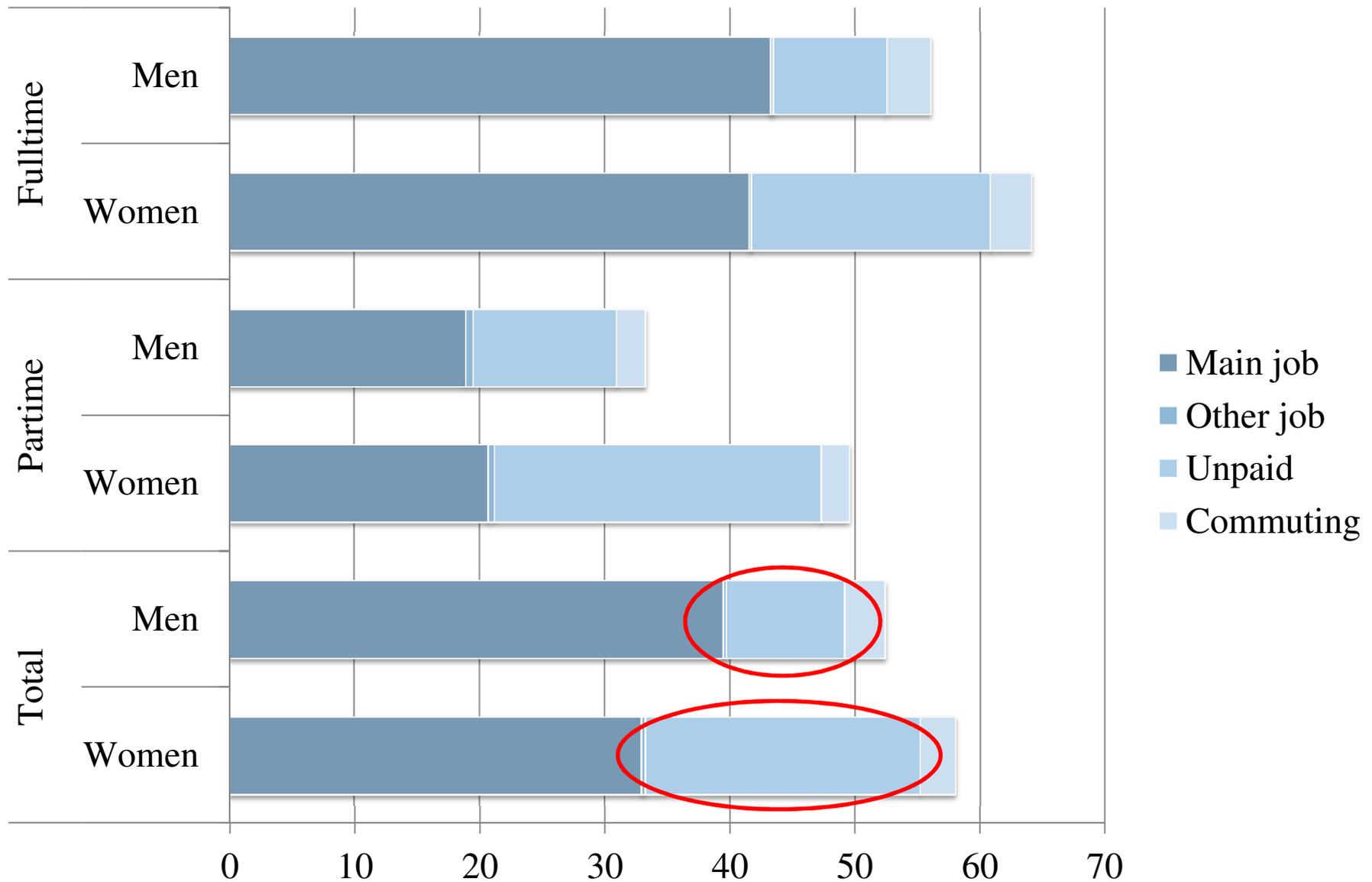


Adapted from Molinier, Gaudart, Pueyo (2012), La vie professionnelle :  
Age, expérience et santé à l'épreuve des conditions de travail

# Reconciliation between work and private life

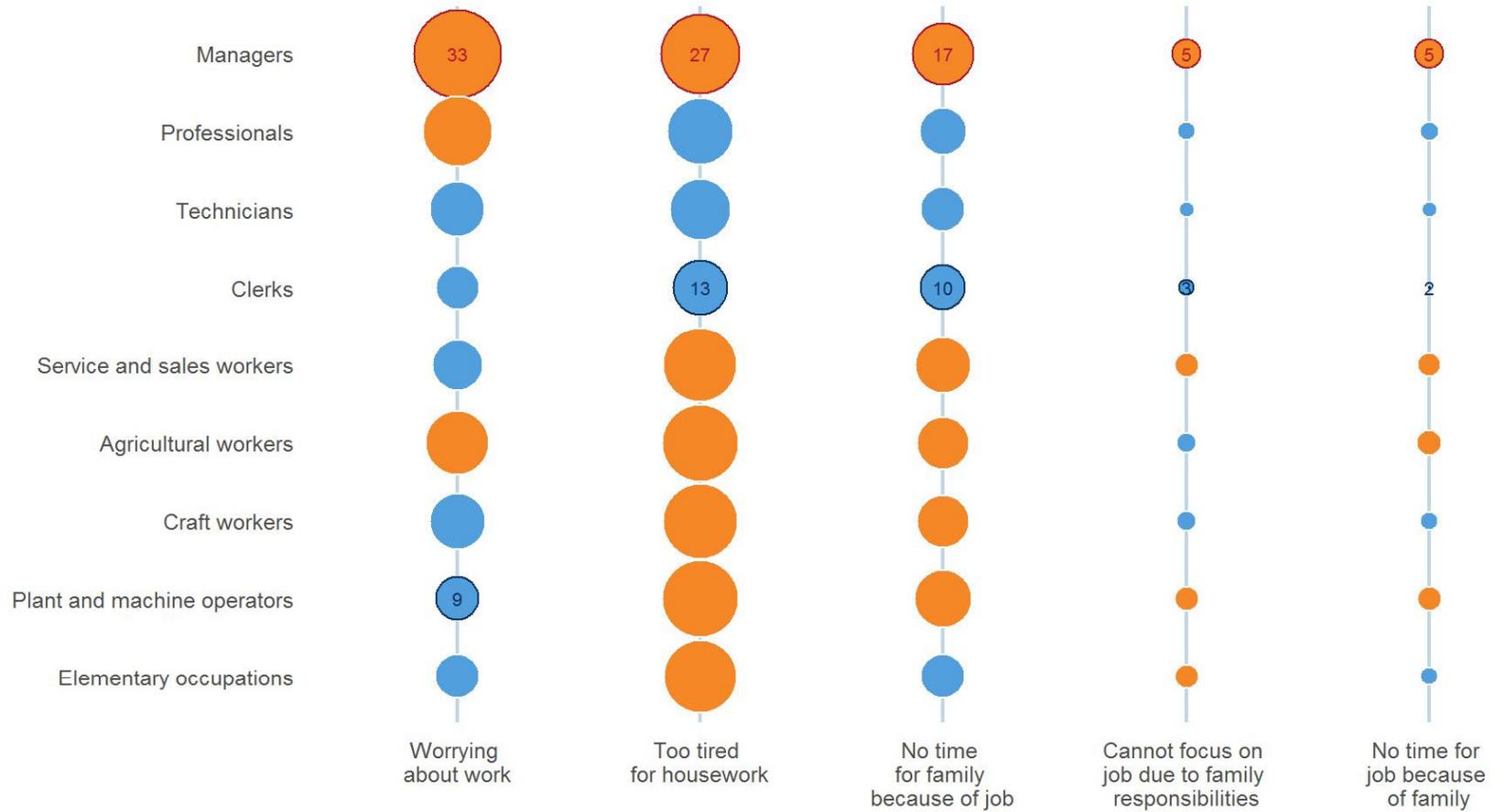
- 19% of workers report poor fit between work and private life :
  - more men than women (adaptive choices), while women still do more unpaid work
  - for both: most intensive time when there are children
- Work life balance:
  - associated negatively with long working hours, irregular working hours, 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

# Overall time use



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

# Work-family conflict



Within work-family conflict    ● above average    ● highest percentage    ● below average    ● lowest percentage



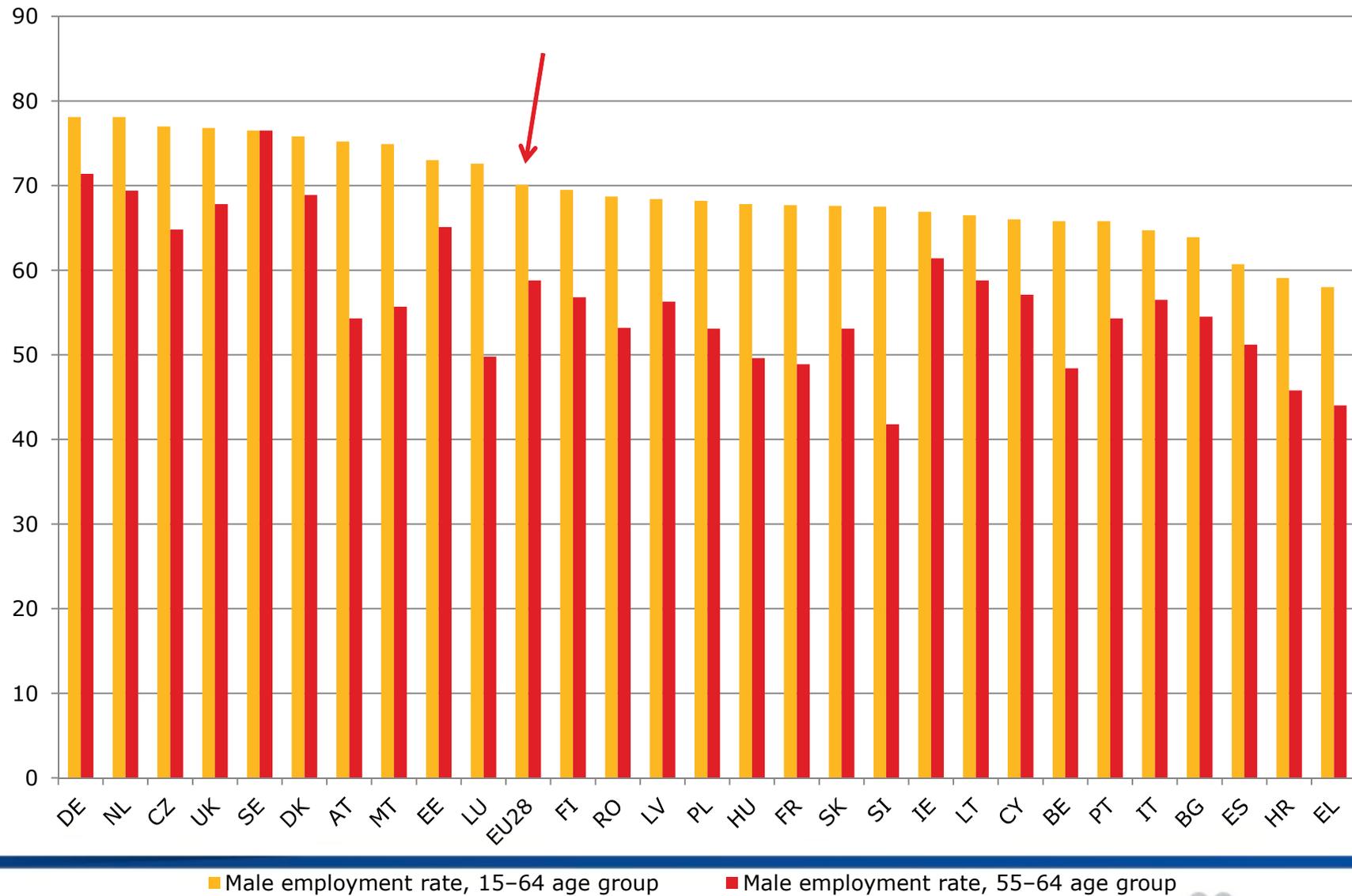
Source: 6<sup>th</sup> EWCS

# Sustainable work over the life course

tackling demographic change:  
more people at work for longer?

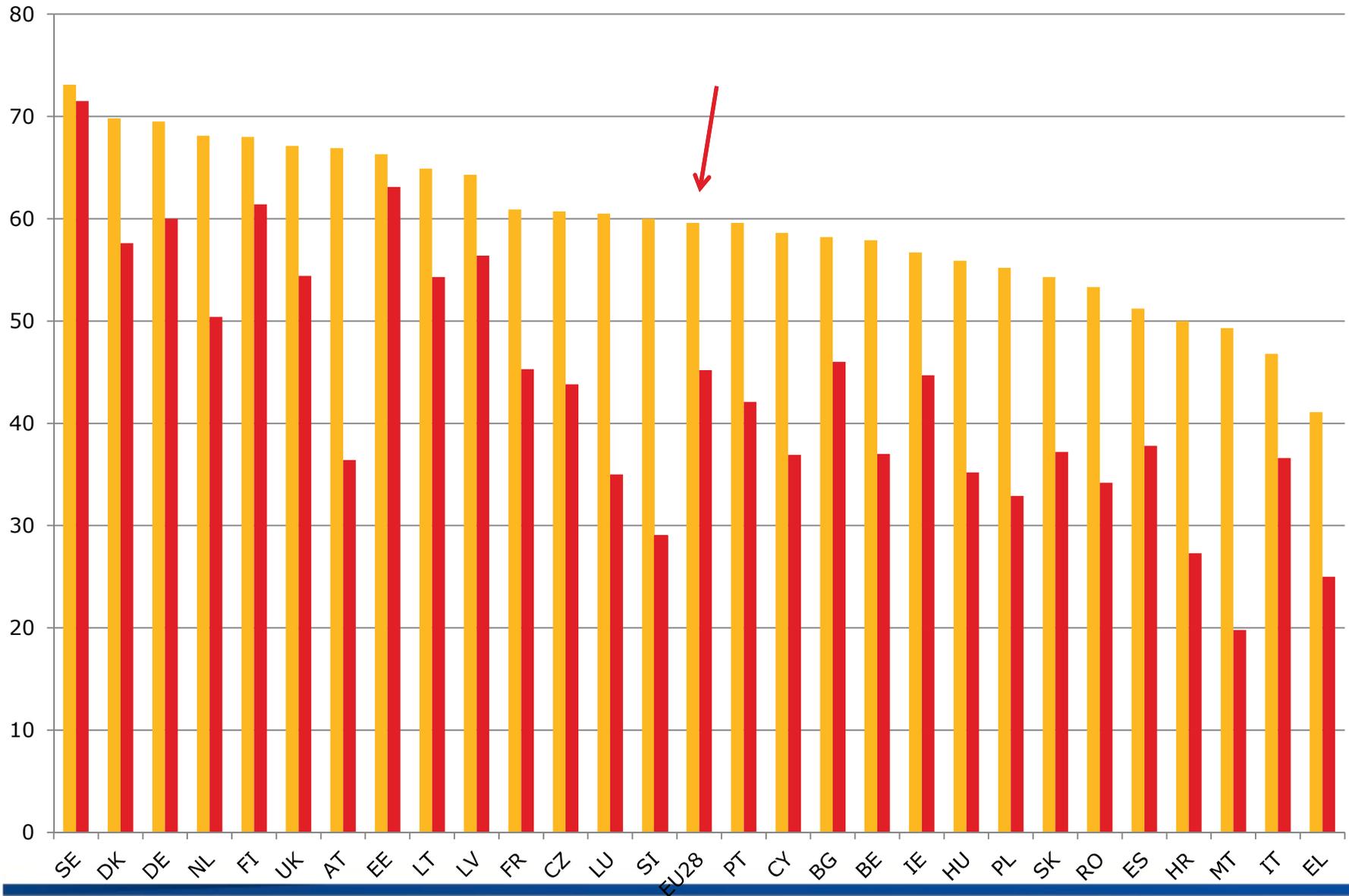
- Sustainable work over the life course means that **working and living** conditions are such that they support people in **engaging and remaining in work** throughout an extended working life
  - These conditions enable a fit between work and the characteristics/circumstances of the individual throughout their changing working life.
  - They must be developed through policies & practices at work & outside of work.
  
- > replenishing resources throughout one's life course (Docherty, 2009)
- > capabilities approach (Sen) : taking into account wide range of needs of workers / fit between workers and work
  
- 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)

## Employment participation of men (LFS)



Source: LFS

# Employment participation of women (LFS)

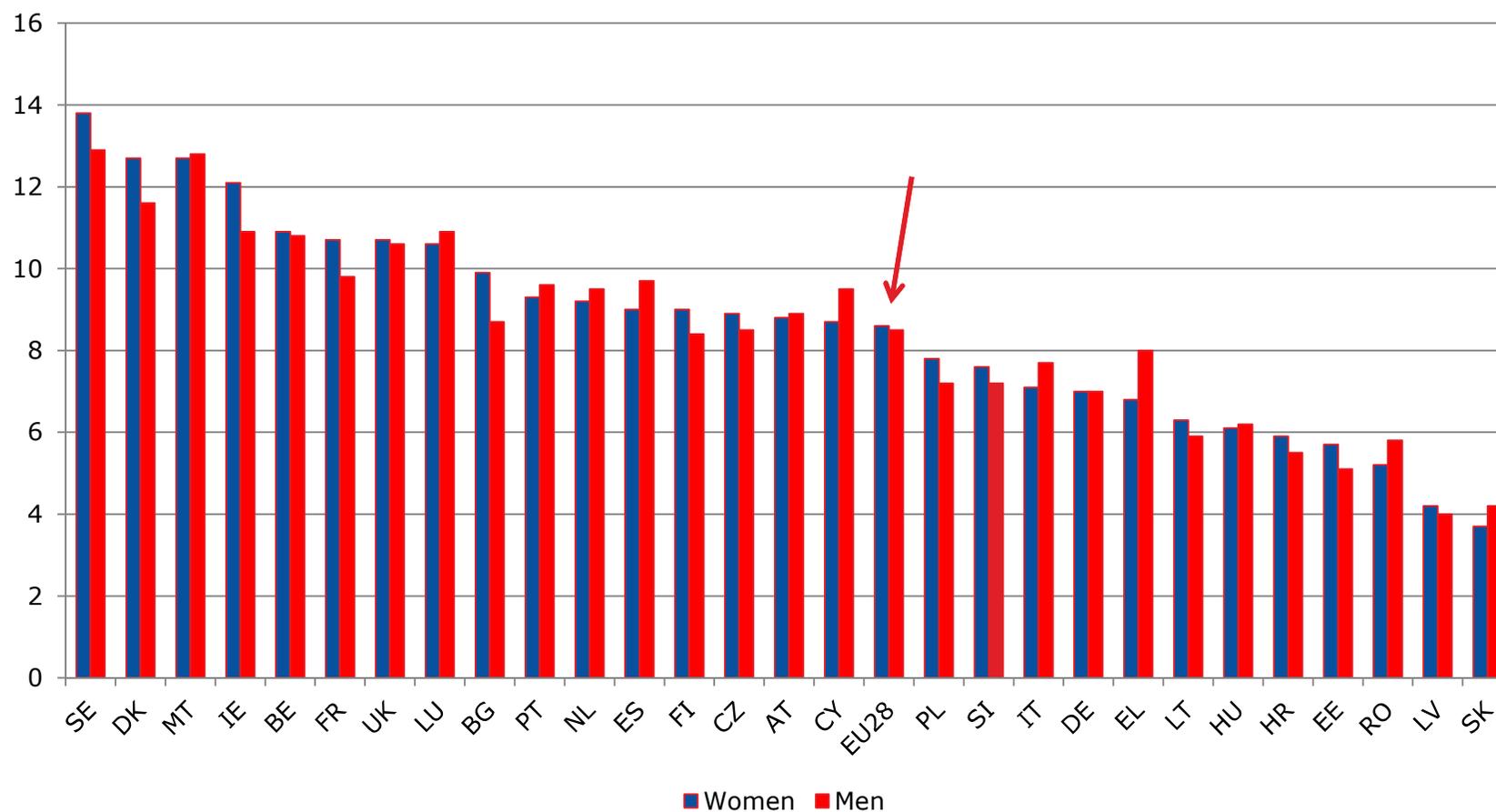


Source: LFS

■ Female employment rate, 15-64 age group

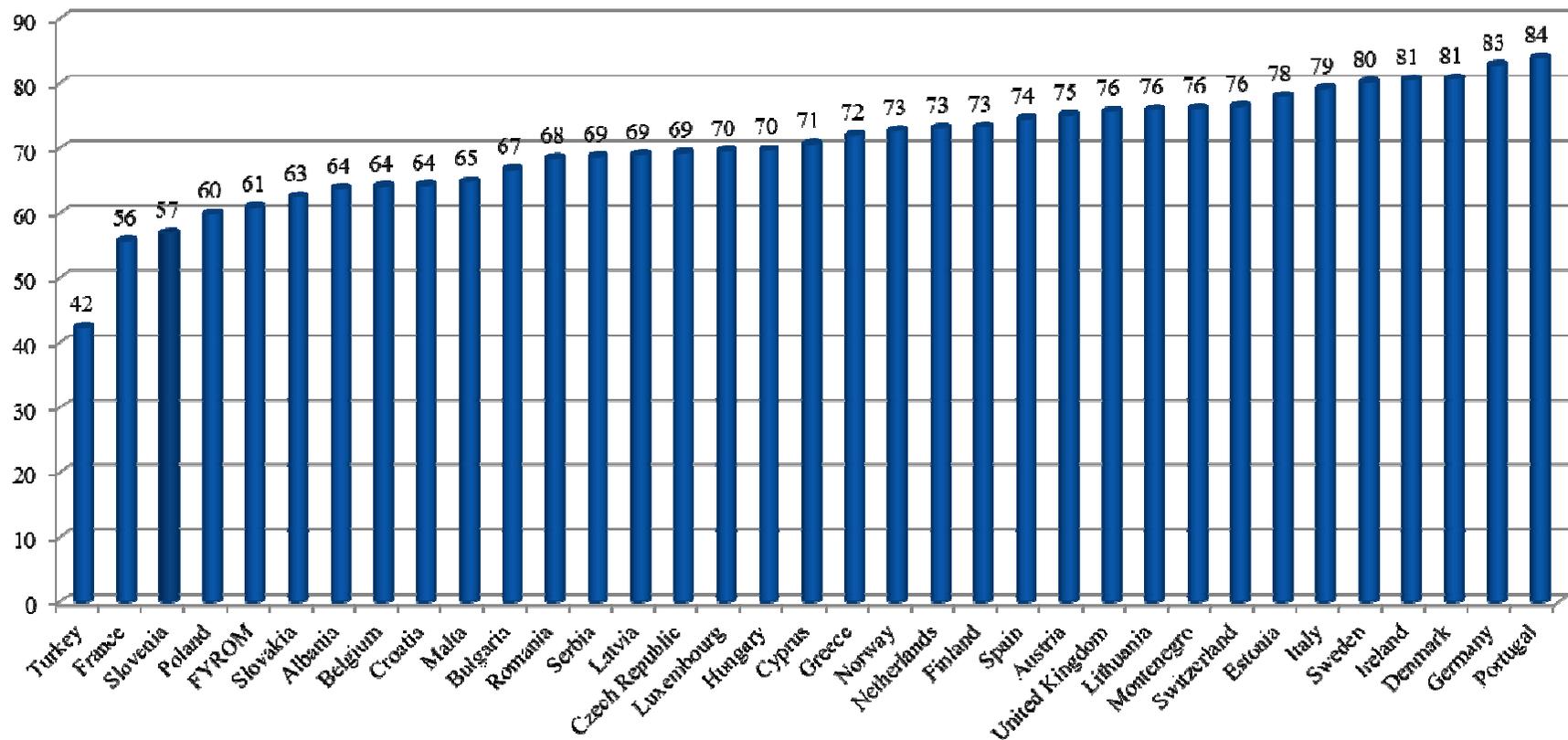
■ Female employment rate, 55-64 age group

## Healthy life years at 65



Source: Eurostat

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

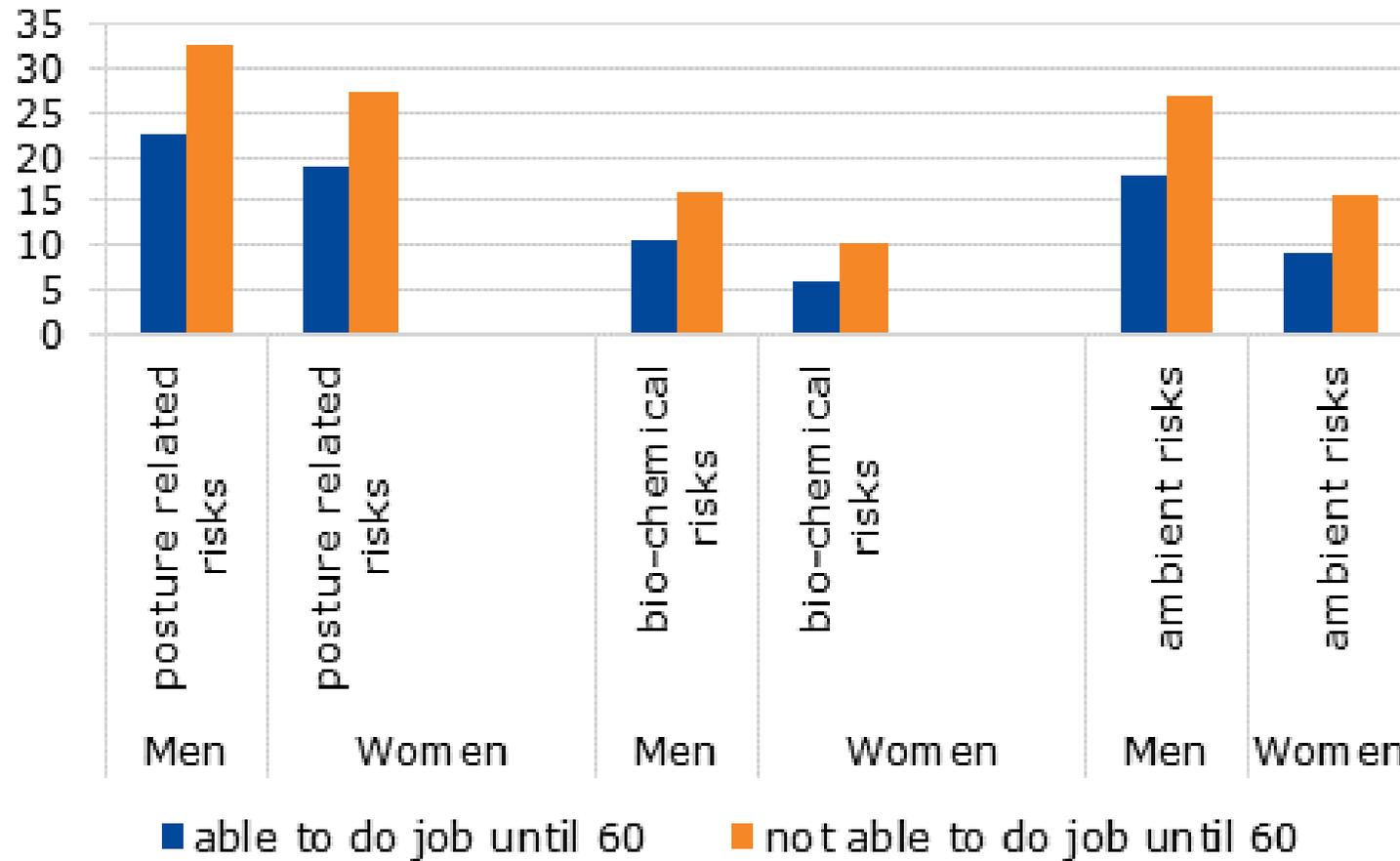


Source: 6<sup>th</sup> EWCS

# Sustainable work

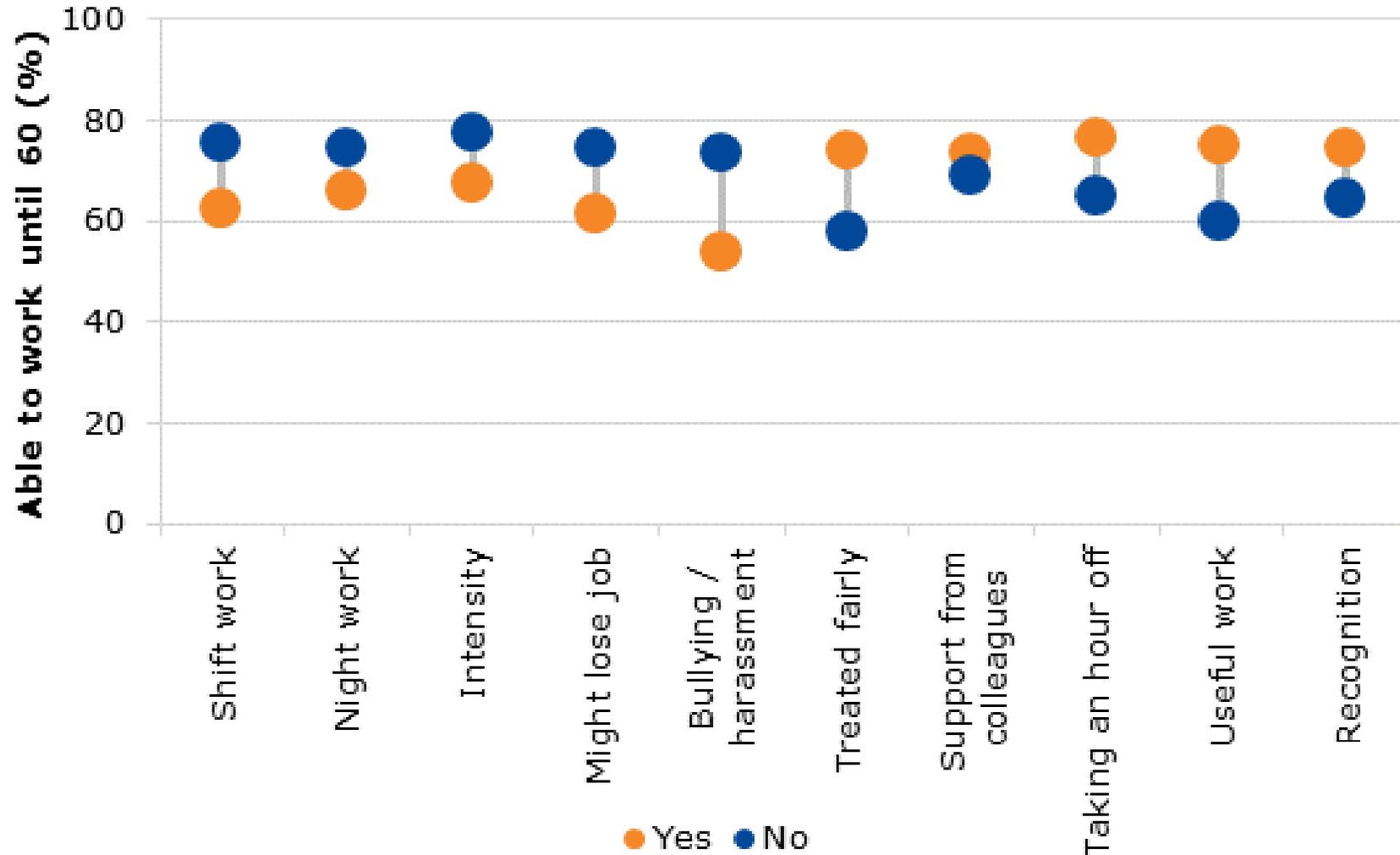
- Factors which influence the likelihood of sustainability of work in a negative way:
  - being exposed to physical risks, work intensity, shift work (and particularly daily split shifts), night work, fear of losing one's job, not being treated fairly as well as violence and harassment.
- Factors which influence the likelihood of 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

# Being exposed to physical risks & sustainable work



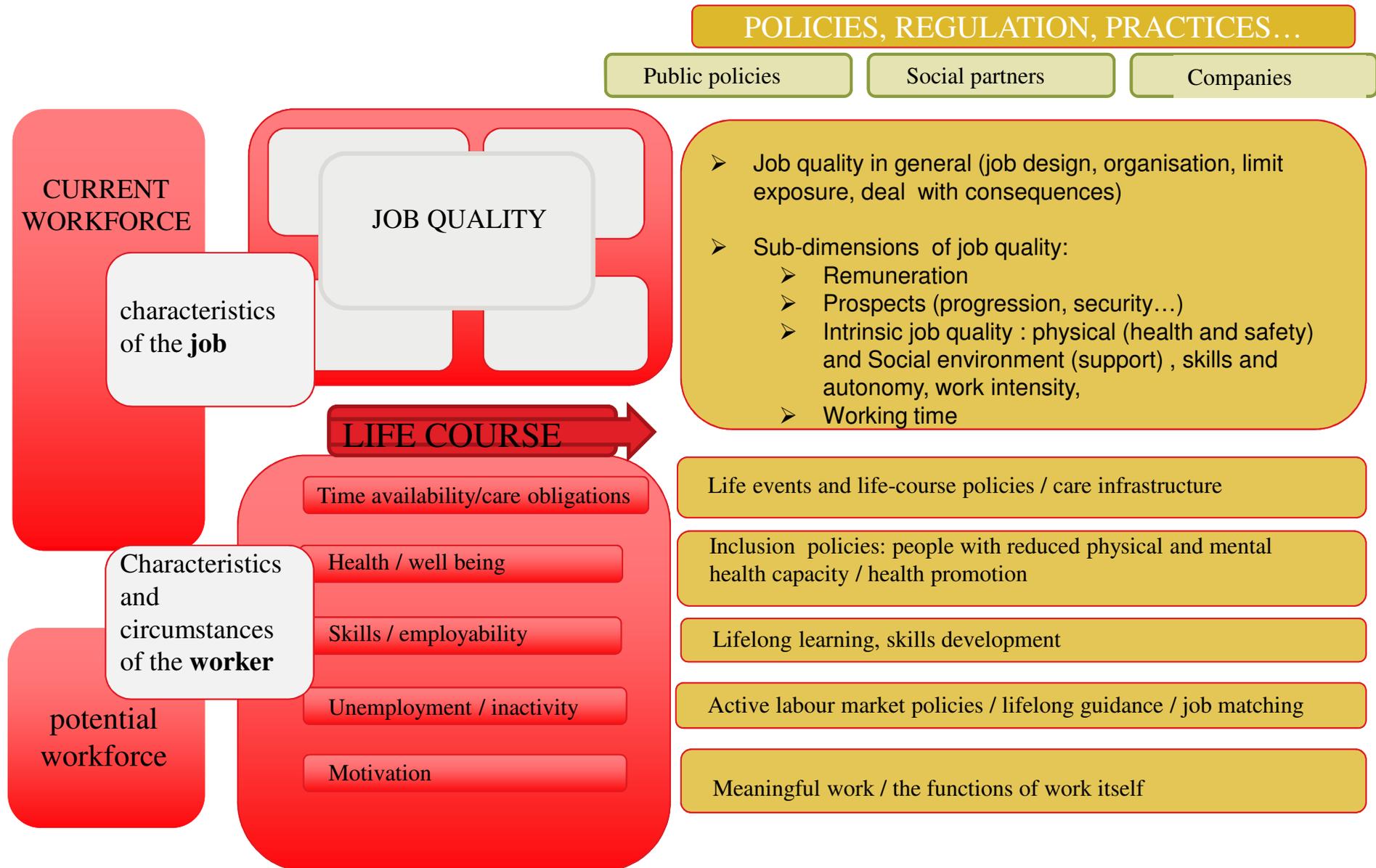
Source: 6<sup>th</sup> EWCS

# Other working conditions and sustainable work



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

# Sustainable work: Eurofound concept



Source: Eurofound (2015) *Sustainable work: concept paper*

# Sustainable work: Eurofound concept



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



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

## Non-pension measures

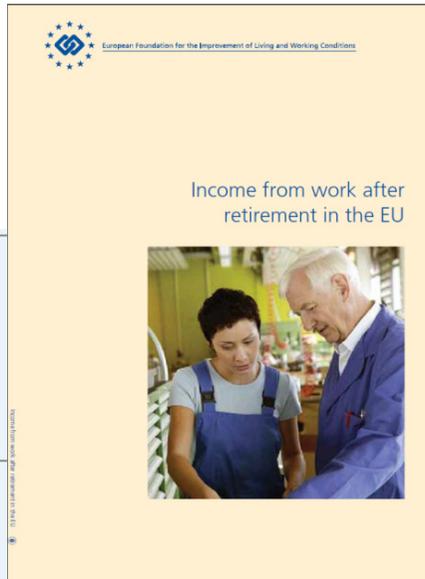
- Sustainable work: life-course approach, intervening at early stage
  - Quality of work and work environment
  - Adapting work
    - » adjusting tasks
    - » workplace design
    - » flexible working
  - Transitions throughout life course
  - Job mobility

## 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 (%)



Source: [http://www.eurofound.europa.eu/sites/default/files/ef\\_publication/field\\_ef\\_document/ef1259en\\_0.pdf](http://www.eurofound.europa.eu/sites/default/files/ef_publication/field_ef_document/ef1259en_0.pdf) & LFS quarterly data

## Working after retirement

- 1/2 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)

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<sup>1</sup> Source: Eurofound (2016) *Extending working lives through flexible retirement schemes: partial retirement*

# 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

# 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

**EWCS: first findings** available on  
<http://www.eurofound.europa.eu/surveys/2015/sixth-european-working-conditions-survey-2015>

**Overview report** on 17 November 2016

## **Sustainable work:**

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

**Concept paper / case studies on national policies**

**Survey data** available via Essex Data Archive (6th EWCS: Q1 2017)

## **Specific reports:**

Income from work after retirement in the EU

Extending working lives through flexible retirement schemes: partial retirement (NEW)

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