



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 6th European Working Conditions Survey - Job quality and working life in Europe

Eurofound in brief

- Established in 1975
- Tripartite agency of the EU
- Annual budget: 20M€; Staff: +-100
- Eurofound's Mission Statement:
'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.'
- Long standing interest in working conditions, industrial relations, living conditions and management of change



The European Working Conditions Survey

- Six waves (since 1991)
- 35 countries (2015)
- 43.000 workers (employees and self-employed, age: 15+)
- 45 minutes face to face interviews at respondent's home CAPI
- 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

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.

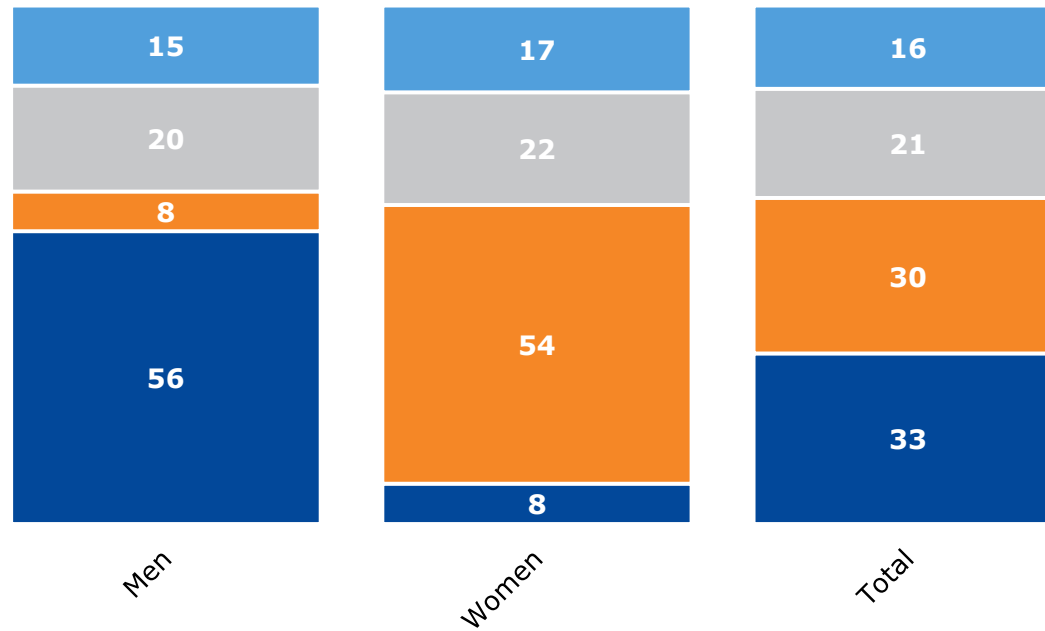
Identify groups at risk and issues of concern as well as of progress.

Monitor trends by providing homogeneous indicators on these issues.

Contribute to European policy development in particular on quality of work and employment issues.

Women and men at work

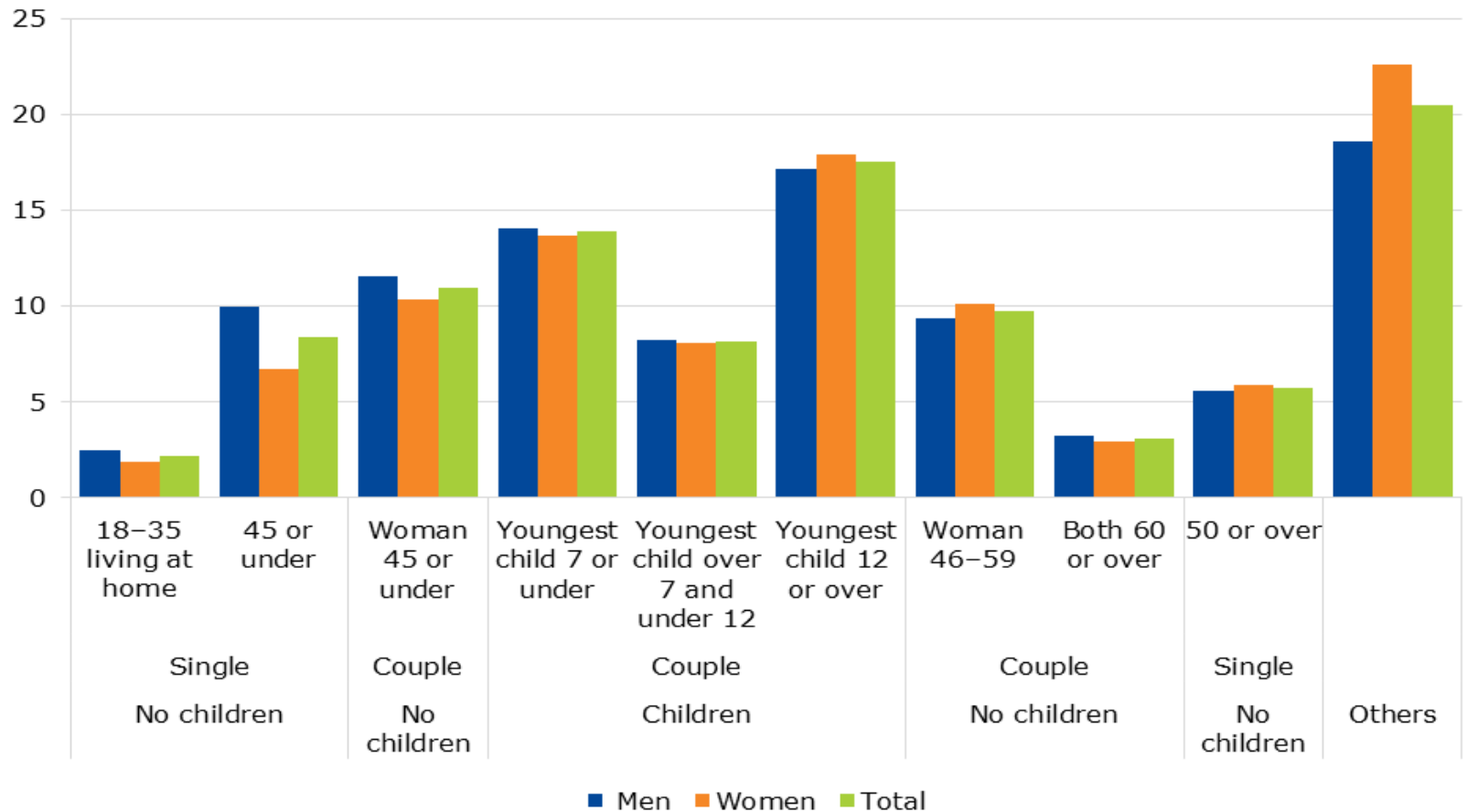
Gender segregation : job level



- Mostly men
- Mostly women
- Approximately equal
- Nobody else has the same job title

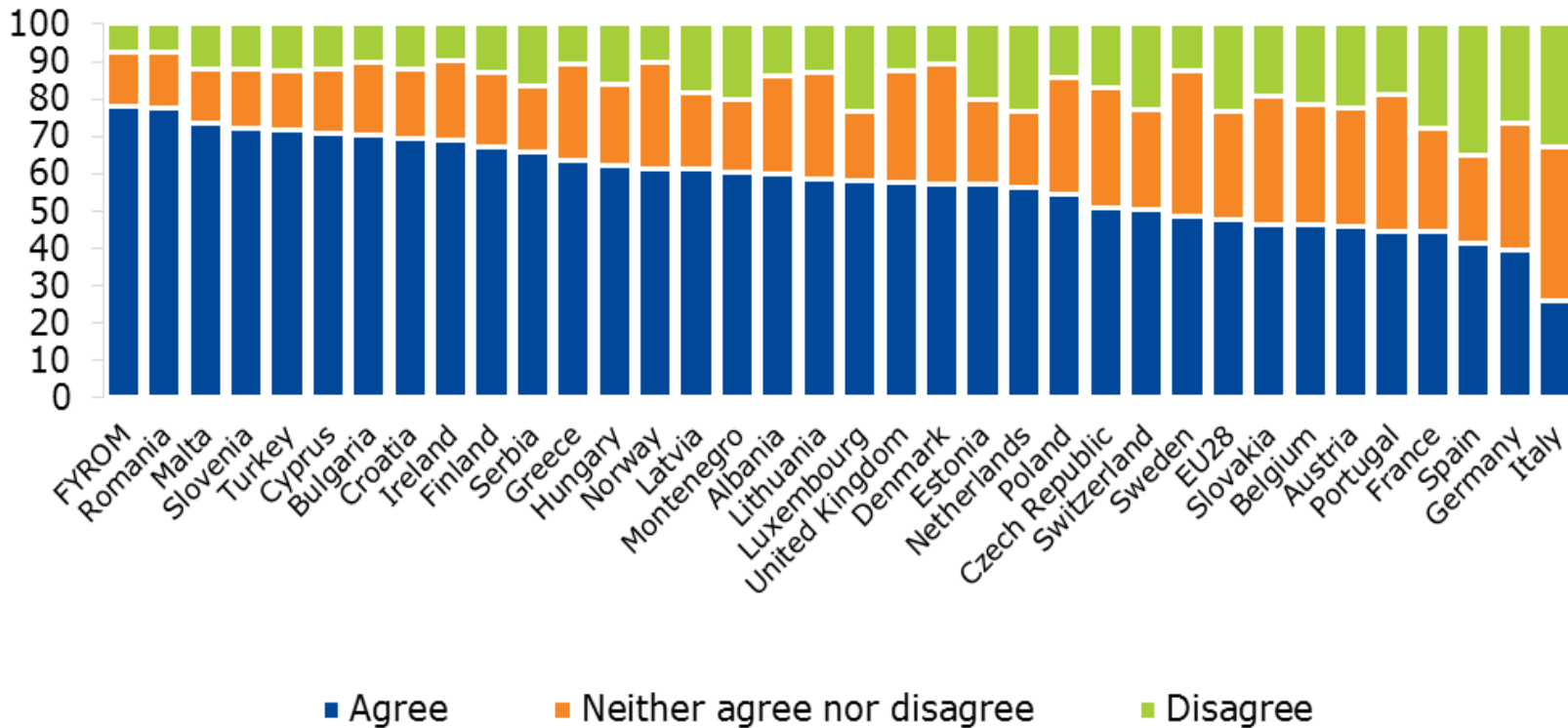
Source: 6thEWCS – EU 28

Workers in life stages



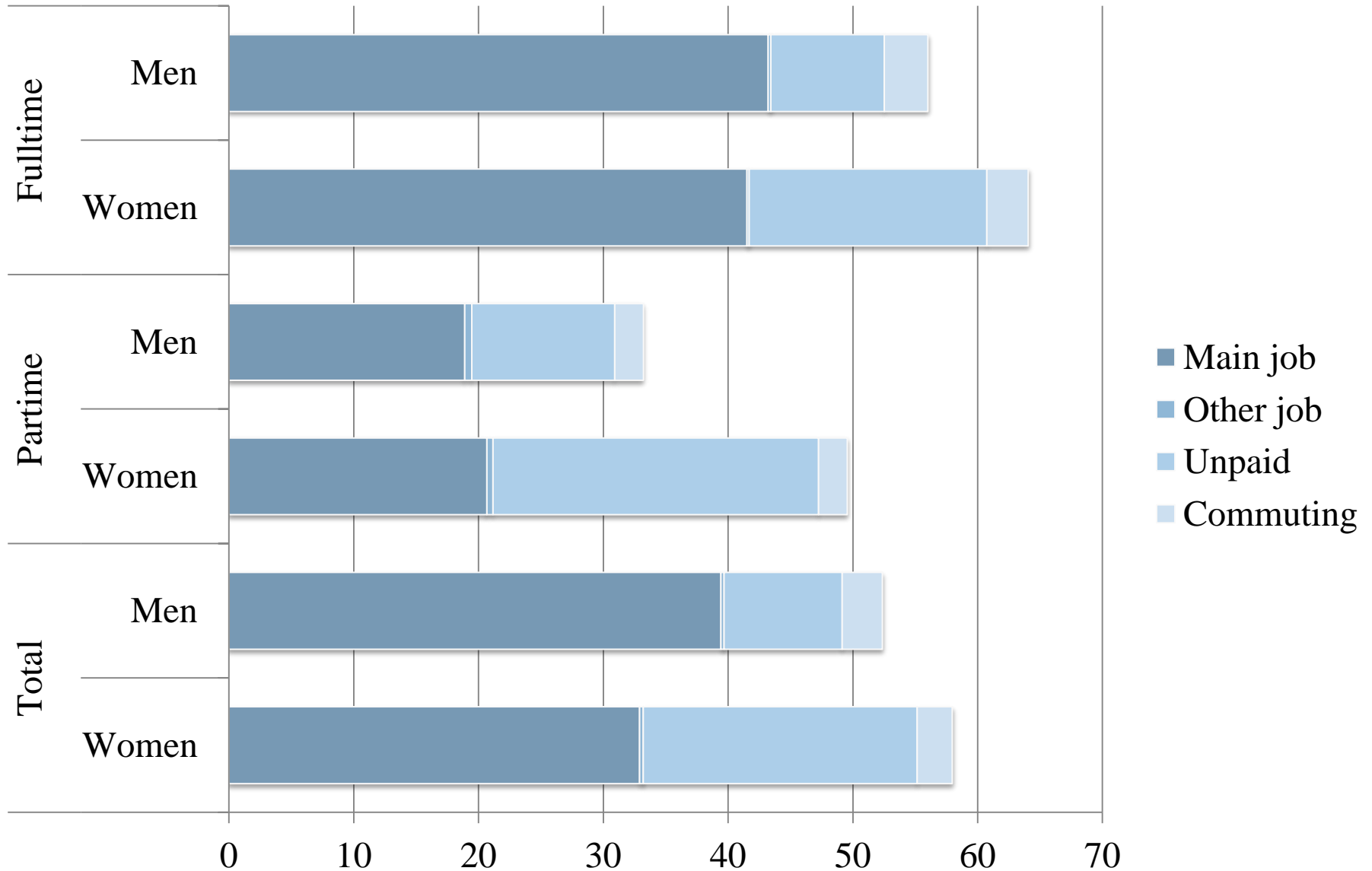
Source: 6th EWCS; EU28

I get on better with my children because I have a job : 50% of men and 46% of women strongly agree and 22% of men and 25% of women disagree



Source: 6th EWCS.

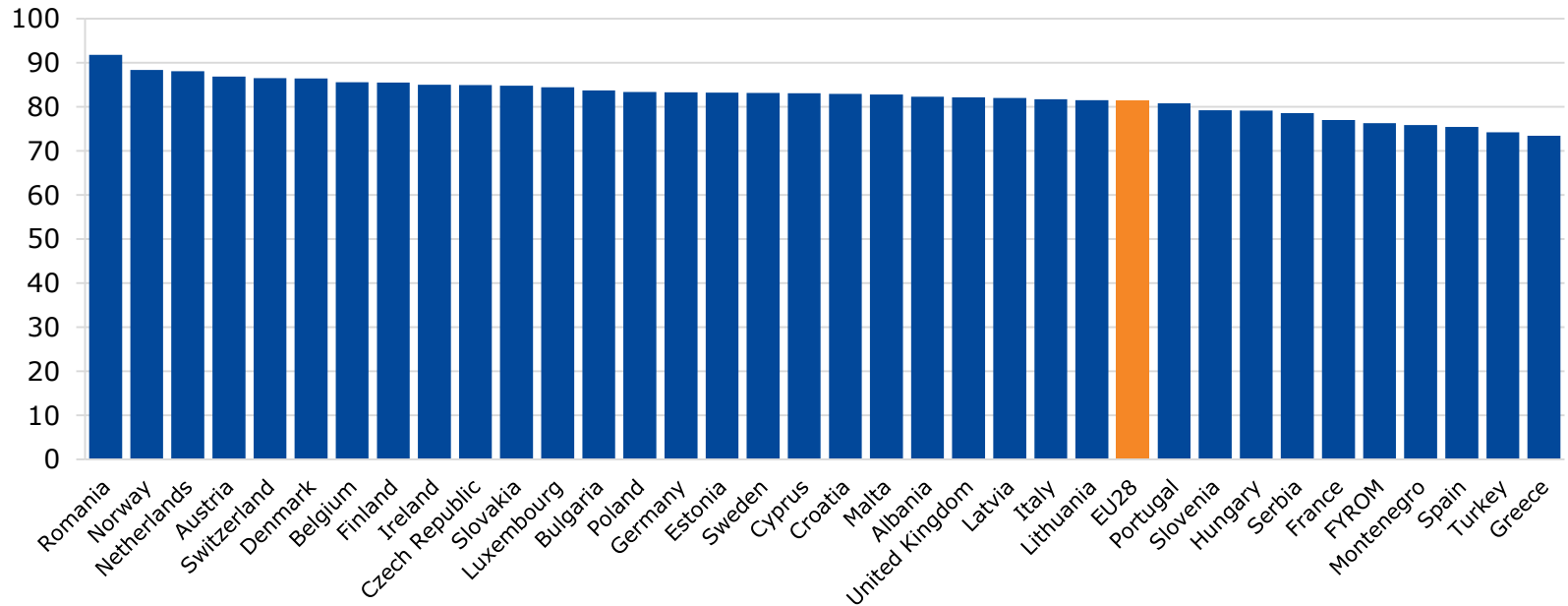
Total work



Which work life balance ?

Working hours fit with other commitments

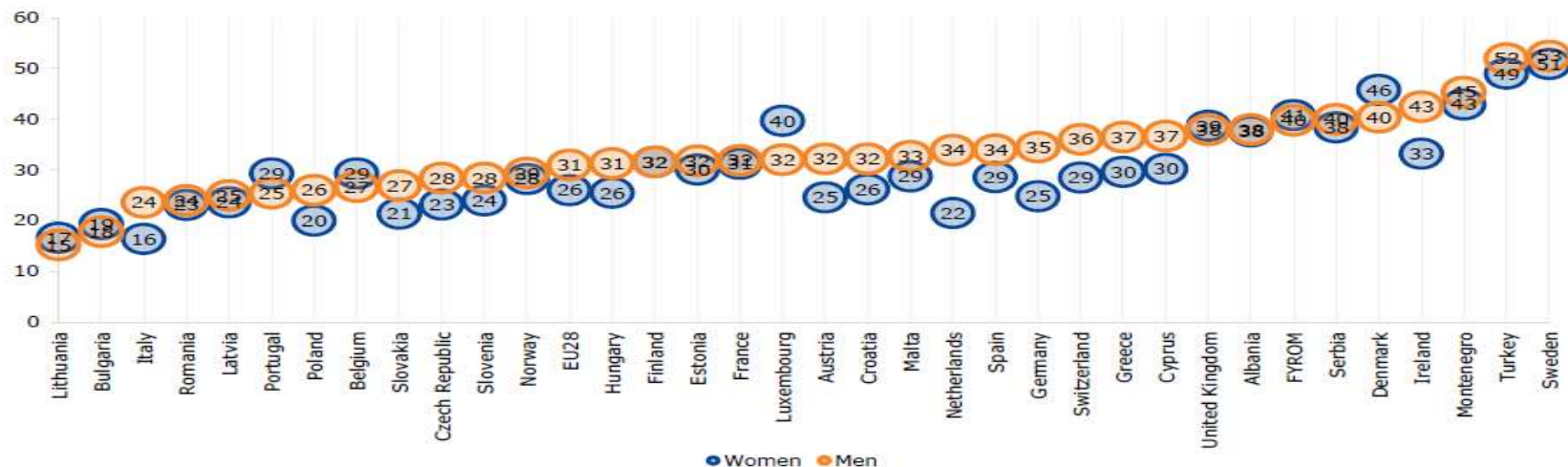
83% of women and 79% of men



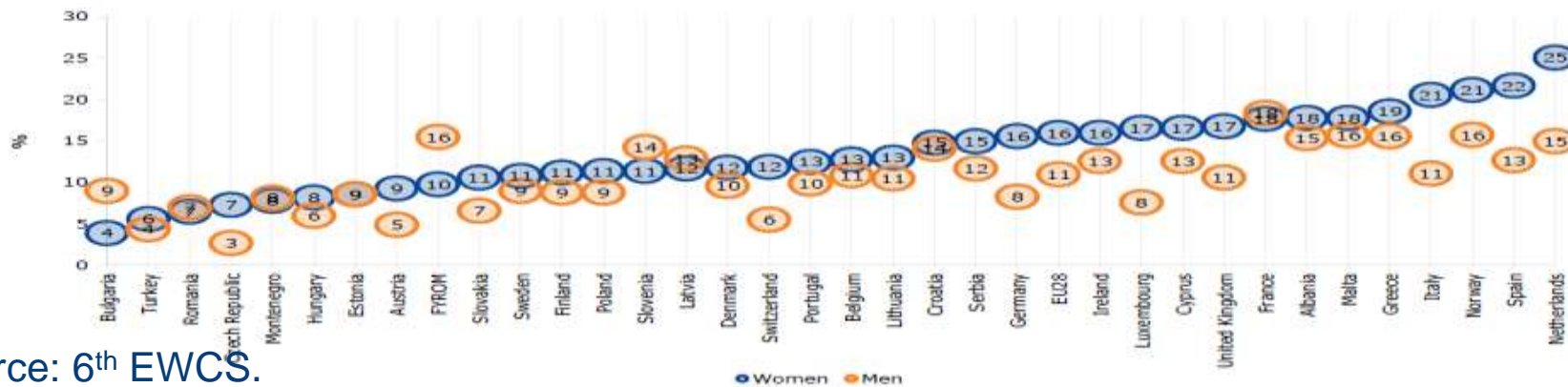
Source: 6th EWCS.

Working time preferences : some mismatch

Preference for working less



Preferences for working more



Source: 6th EWCS.

Work family conflicts

work family spillovers		worrying about work	too tired for housework	no time for family because of job	cannot focus on job due to family responsibilities	no time for job because of family	i get on better with my children because i have a job
Men	14	21	13	3	3	50	
Women	14	22	12	4	4	46	

Source: 6th EWCS.

Working life duration : age at which workers want to stop working



Source: 6th EWCS.

The key role played by job quality indices, in particular working time quality

Job quality indices

Physical environment

Posture-related (ergonomic)
Ambient (vibration, noise,
temperature)
Biological and chemical

Social environment

Adverse social behaviour
Social support
Management quality

Work intensity

Quantitative demands
Pace determinants and
interdependency

Skills and discretion

Cognitive dimension
Decision latitude
Organisational participation
Training

Working time quality

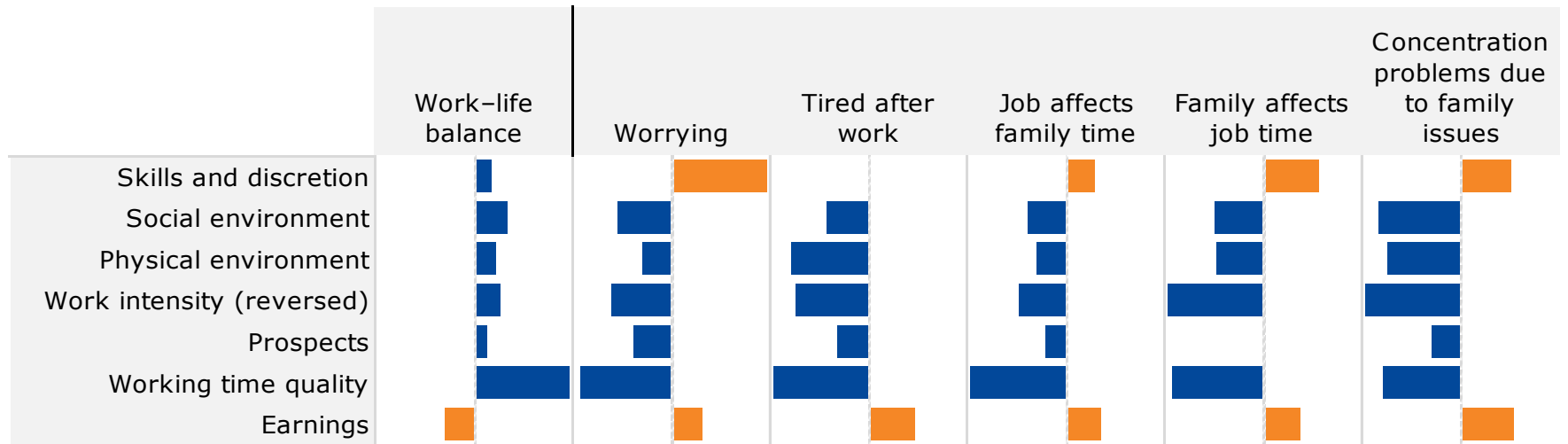
Duration
Atypical working time
Working time arrangements
Flexibility

Prospects

Employment status
Career prospects
Job security
Downsizing

Earnings

Job quality and work life balance



Source: 6th EWCS.

The working time index

		2005	2010	2015
Duration	long hours 48+	18	16	15
	less than 11h break between 2 working days	na	na	23
	Long working days	36	32	32
Atypical working time³	Night work	19	18	19
	Saturday work	53	51	52
	Sunday work	28	28	30
	Shift work	17	17	21
	(shift regime) daily split shift	7	8	7
	(shift regime) permanent shift	38	38	40
	(shift regime) alternating/rotating shifts (shift regime) other type of shift work	50 5	50 4	49 4
Discretion over working time arrangements**	Working time arrangements authority Set by the company	56	59	56
	Can choose between different schedules you can adapt your working hours entirely determined by self	9 17	8 16	9 19
	Change on working time arrangements No regular change	18	17	16
	Change the same day	69	65	69
	Change the day before	8	8	5
	Change several days in advance	9	9	8
	Change several weeks in advance	11	13	13
Flexibility	Requested to come to work at short notice - at least several times a month	4	4	5
	Very easy to arrange to take a hour or 2 off during working hours to take care of personal or family matters	na	na	12
	Work in free time to meet work demands - at least several times a month	na	na	25
	Working time over time - slim	na	na	22
Working time over time - slim		82	84	84
Working time quality (full index)				71

Source: 6th, 5th, 4th EWCS – EU 28 in 2015 and 2010; EU 27 2005 -

Some concluding points

- Work life balance is not only a women issue but addressing it can contribute to higher gender equality
- Work life balance is shaped through cultural values, societal norms, labour market regulations, social protection and taxation rules, citizens independently and in their household decisions
- There are a wide range of actors and actions that can support work life balance
- Individual needs also vary across the lifecourse; not only duration matters but also when, with what discretion; flexibility needs to be managed (and negotiated)
- All job quality indices support good working life balance; Working time quality plays a very strong role (long hours, atypical schedules; working time discretion and change; flexibility) ;
 - Technological change create new issues eg ict mobile workers
 - On call work;
 - Blurring fronteers between work and non work

Thank you for your attention!

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