



Education

Fact sheet

Background

Eurofound's European Working Conditions Surveys (EWCS) have been carried out every five years since 1991. Each wave of the survey provides an overview of the state of working conditions throughout Europe and indicates the nature and extent of changes affecting the workforce and the quality of work. The fieldwork for Eurofound's most recent edition of the EWCS was carried out in 2005 in 31 countries, including the 27 EU Member States, plus candidate countries Croatia and Turkey, as well as EFTA countries Norway and Switzerland. In 2005, the sample size was set at 1000 per country (600 for Cyprus, Estonia, Luxemburg, Malta and Slovenia).

Following the 2005 survey, Eurofound asked TNO Work & Employment to perform a secondary statistical analysis of the data from the fourth EWCS 2005 on sector profiles with regard to working conditions in the 27 Member States. For the analysis, NACE Revision 1.1¹ was applied. The findings are set out in 26 fact sheets, each covering one of the 26 sectors in the NACE classification. Each fact sheet presents:

- a profile of the sector's socio-demographic characteristics based on data at NACE at 1 and 2 digit level;
- a profile of working conditions in the sector based on data at NACE at 1 and 2 digit level.

This fact sheet presents a snapshot of working conditions in the education sector (Nace Rev 1.1 M).

¹ This is a revision of the 'General Industrial Classification of Economic Activities within the European Communities', known by the acronym NACE and originally published by Eurostat in 1970. The NACE code was subsequently revised (REV. 1.1) in the 1990s.

Sector profile

The education sector is characterised by a higher than average proportion of female workers (72.2% compared with an average of 44.5% for all sectors) and a relatively small proportion of young workers under the age of 25 years (5.3 % compared to a cross-sector average of 11.8% in this age group).

This fact is in line with the higher educational level which is characteristic of the sector. The proportion of workers who have completed tertiary education (ISCED 5 or 6) is twice as high in the education sector as the average for all sectors.

With regard to job tenure, only 18.9% of workers in the education sector have spent two years or less in their current job, which is below the average (27.1%). By employment status, it should be noted that the average percentage of employees in the sector is 97.7% compared to an average for all sectors of 83.3%.

Finally, turning to company size, a large proportion of workers in the education sector work in small and medium-sized organisations (45% and 33% respectively) while only small proportions of such workers are employed in one-person companies (3%), micro enterprises (12.4%) and large enterprises with 250 employees and over (6.6%).

Gender		
	Men	Women
Education	27.8%▼▼▼	72.2%▲▲▲
All sectors	55.5%	44.5%

Age					
	Average age	Age group			
		≤ 24 years	25-39 years	40-54 years	≥ 55 years
Education	41.6	5.3%▼▼▼	39.7%	41.1%	14.0%
All sectors	40.0	11.8%	36.8%	38.6%	12.7%

Years in company or organisation				
	≥ 2 years	3-5 years	6-15 years	≤16 years
Education	18.9%▼▼▼	20.4%	33.5%	27.3%
All sectors	27.1%	20.9%	29.6%	22.4%

Type of employment		
	Self-employed	Employee
Education	2.3%▼▼▼	97.7%▲▲▲
All sectors	16.7%	83.3%

Employment contract		
	Permanent contract	Non-permanent contract
Education	77.5%	22.5%
All sectors	76.6%	23.4%

Company size					
	One-person company	Micro enterprise (2-9 employees)	Small enterprise (10-49 employees)	Medium enterprise (50-249 employees)	Large enterprise (250+ employees)
Education	3.0%▼▼▼	12.4%▼▼▼	45.0%▲▲▲	33.0%▲▲▲	6.6%▼▼▼
All sectors	10.4%	27.5%	27.7%	19.4%	15.0%

Education level							
	No education	Primary education (ISCED 1)	Lower secondary education (ISCED 2)	Upper secondary education (ISCED 3)	Post-secondary including pre-vocational or vocational education	Tertiary education - first level (ISCED 5)	Tertiary education - advanced level (ISCED 6)
Education	0.2%	0.9%▼▼▼	4.0%▼▼▼	22.9%▼▼▼	6.2%	61.1%▲▲▲	4.7%▲▲▲
All sectors	0.9%	5.3%	16.5%	44.5%	7.3%	23.5%	2.0%

Income level				
	Income bands			
	Lowest	Low	High	Highest
Education	20.1%	21.0%	33.0%	25.8%
All sectors	25.1%	23.9%	26.7%	24.3%

How to read the table

The comparison is between the subgroup/sector and the average for all sectors based on the 2005 European Working Conditions Survey sample for the EU27. ▲ (p<0.05), ▲▲ (p<0.01), and ▲▲▲ (p<0.001) indicate differences between the sector profiled and the sample average at different levels of statistical significance (each mean is tested with the t-test). The more triangles, the higher the statistical significance of the figure (i.e. it is more likely to reflect a real difference in the population).

Where estimates are not accompanied by triangles, this indicates that observed differences are not statistically significant.

Working conditions and outcomes

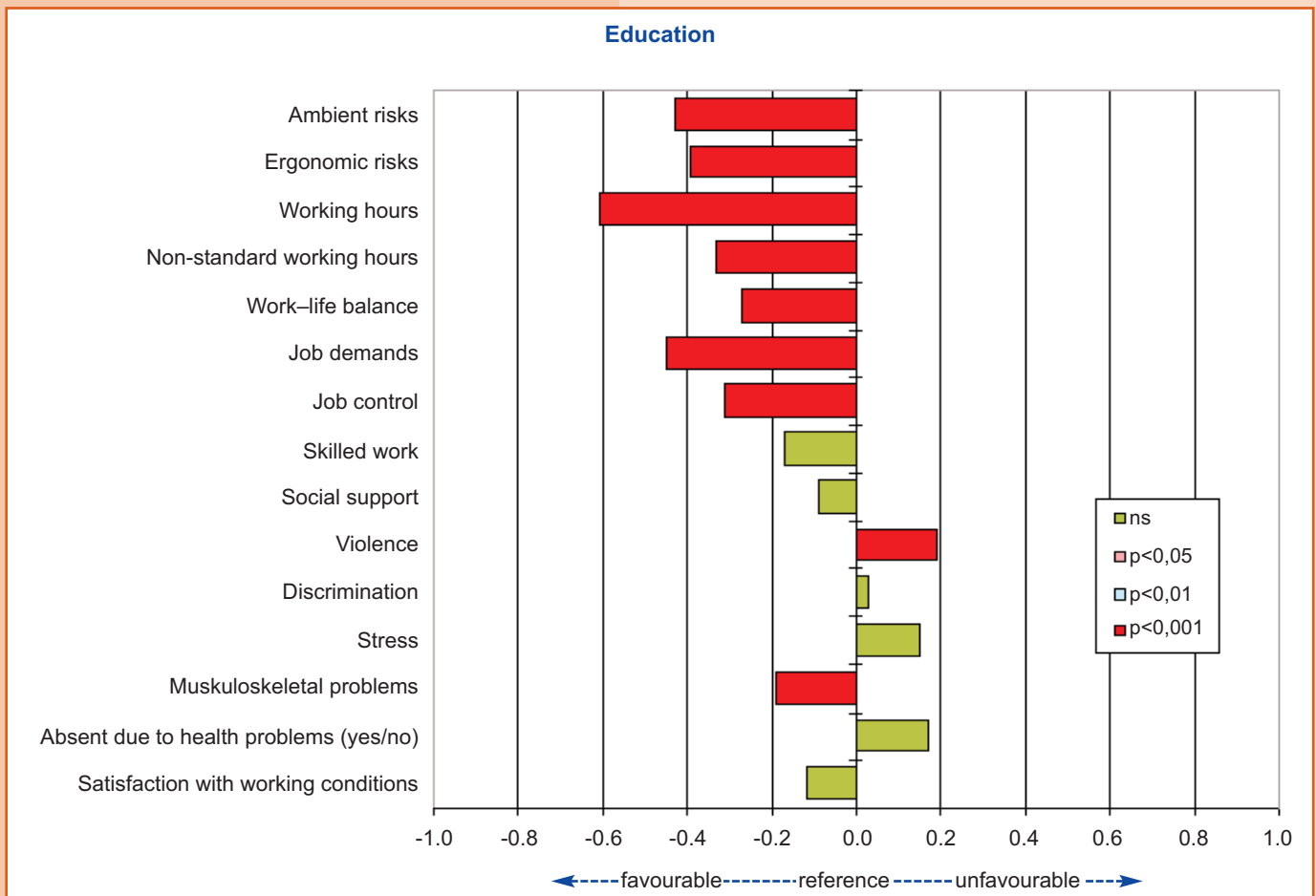
The figure below shows specific dimensions of working conditions with favourable and unfavourable scores in education, taking as a point of reference mean exposure (0.0 score in the graph below).

Looking at the statistically significant differences only, employees in this sector are less exposed than average to ambient risks (exposure to vibrations, noise, high/low temperatures, breathing in smoke, fumes, powder or dust, breathing in vapours, handling chemical products or substances) and ergonomic risks (tiring or painful positions, carrying or moving heavy loads, standing or walking and repetitive hand or arm movements). However, while physical risks are low in the education sector, exposure to psychological risks is high. As shown in the graph, exposure to threats of physical violence and actual acts of violence from colleagues and non-colleagues is highly prevalent in the education sector.

The sector also scores favourably in relation to working time, job demands, job control and work–life balance. The analysis reveals that working long hours (more than 48 weekly working hours) and non-standard hours (night and evening work, Saturday/ Sunday work and more than 10 working hours a day) is relatively uncommon in the education sector. Also favourable is the score on matching working hours and family or social commitments.

The education sector is characterised by comparatively low levels of job demands (working at high speed and to tight deadlines) and high levels of job control (ability to choose or change the order of tasks, methods of work and speed or rate of work).

In terms of health outcomes, workers in the education sector tend to report relatively lower than average levels of work-related musculoskeletal problems (consisting of backache and muscular pains).



How to read the figure

For the profiling of the sector, eleven aspects of working conditions (mainly composite indexes based on several variables) and four outcomes (stress, musculoskeletal disorders, absence due to health problems and job satisfaction) were taken into account.

In the chart above, $p < 0.001$ represents the highest level of statistical significance, while $p < 0.01$ and $p < 0.05$ indicate comparatively lower levels of statistical significance; 'ns' stands for no statistically significant difference. Statistical differences from the average can be either favourable (scores on the left side of the chart) or unfavourable (scores on the right side of the chart) on a specific set of working conditions.

Score values greater than ± 0.2 indicate a small deviation from mean exposure (0.0) while score values ranging from ± 0.2 to ± 0.5 and greater than ± 0.5 indicate respectively substantial and very substantial deviation from mean exposure.

Key findings

- In terms of socio-demographic characteristics, the education sector has a high number of female workers, and the majority of workers are employees.
- In general, a higher than average proportion of workers in this sector have completed third-level education.
- Most workers in education are employed in small and medium-sized enterprises.
- Workers report favourable physical working conditions and working times in the education sector. Also, job demands are relatively low while job control is high.
- In terms of health outcomes, workers in the education sector report fewer work-related musculoskeletal problems than the average for all sectors. Only the higher than average exposure to violence seems to be a significant disadvantage.

Methodology

The European Working Conditions Survey (EWCS) is carried out every five years by the European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions (Eurofound), a tripartite European agency based in Dublin. The questionnaire is developed by the Eurofound team in close cooperation with an expert questionnaire development group. This group comprises representatives of the European social partners, other EU bodies (European Commission, Eurostat, European Agency for Safety and Health at work) international organisations (OECD, ILO), national statistical institutes, as well as leading European experts in the field. The sample of the EWCS is representative of persons in employment (according to the Eurostat definition this comprises both employees and the self-employed) resident in the countries covered for the respective periods. In each country, the EWCS sample followed a multi-stage, stratified and clustered design with a random walk procedure for the selection of the respondents at the last stage. All interviews were conducted face-to-face in the respondent's own household.

Further Eurofound research on the sector

Violence in the education sector - Background paper
<http://www.eurofound.europa.eu/publications/htmlfiles/ef0874.htm>

Further information

The Fourth *European Working Conditions Survey* report and secondary analysis of survey data are available on the *European Working Conditions Observatory* website:
<http://www.eurofound.europa.eu/ewco/surveys/ewcs2005/>

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