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Social services workforce in Europe: state of play and challenges

- Answers provided by Employers' organisations affiliated to Social employers and representing 10 Member States, to a questionnaire sent in May 2019.
- A set of data kindly extracted by Eurofound from its sixth European Working Conditions Survey, related to the NACE code 87 and 88, used in this study (sample of workers that has been interviewed face to face / Nearly 44,000 workers in 35 countries).
- A set of statistics kindly extracted by Eurostat from its Labour Force Survey 2017. Eurostat has extracted data for Residential care activities (NACE 87) + Social work activities (NACE 88).

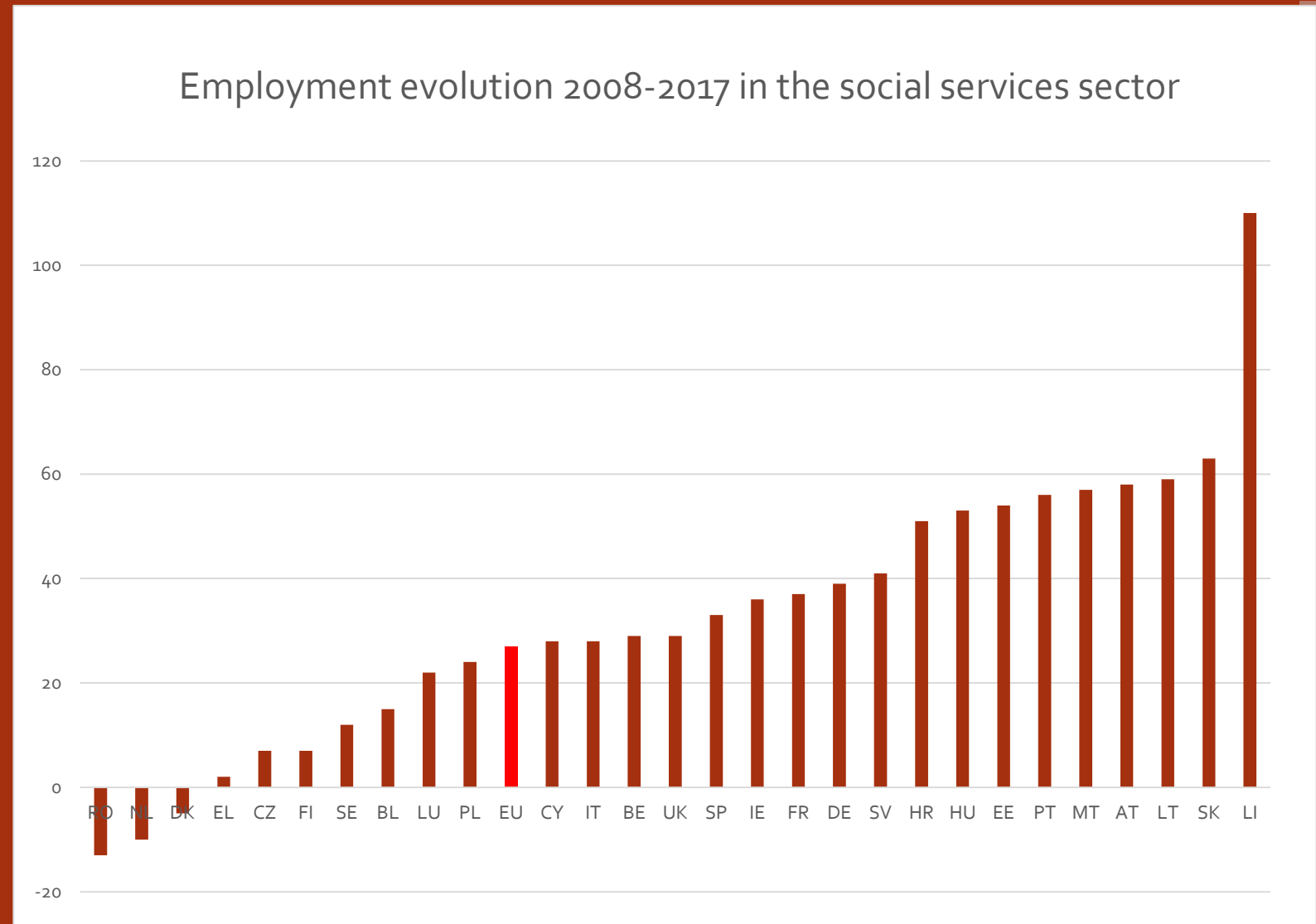


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An important and increasing workforce

- The social services sector employs 10,9 million persons in the EU, for a total labour force of 230,433 million persons in employment. The sector represents close to 4.8% of the total EU labour force.
- Furthermore, the sector has a strong employment dynamic with an increase in the number of people employed of 15 years and more of 27% between 2008 and 2017, while the whole EU workforce increases of about 1.21% on the same period.

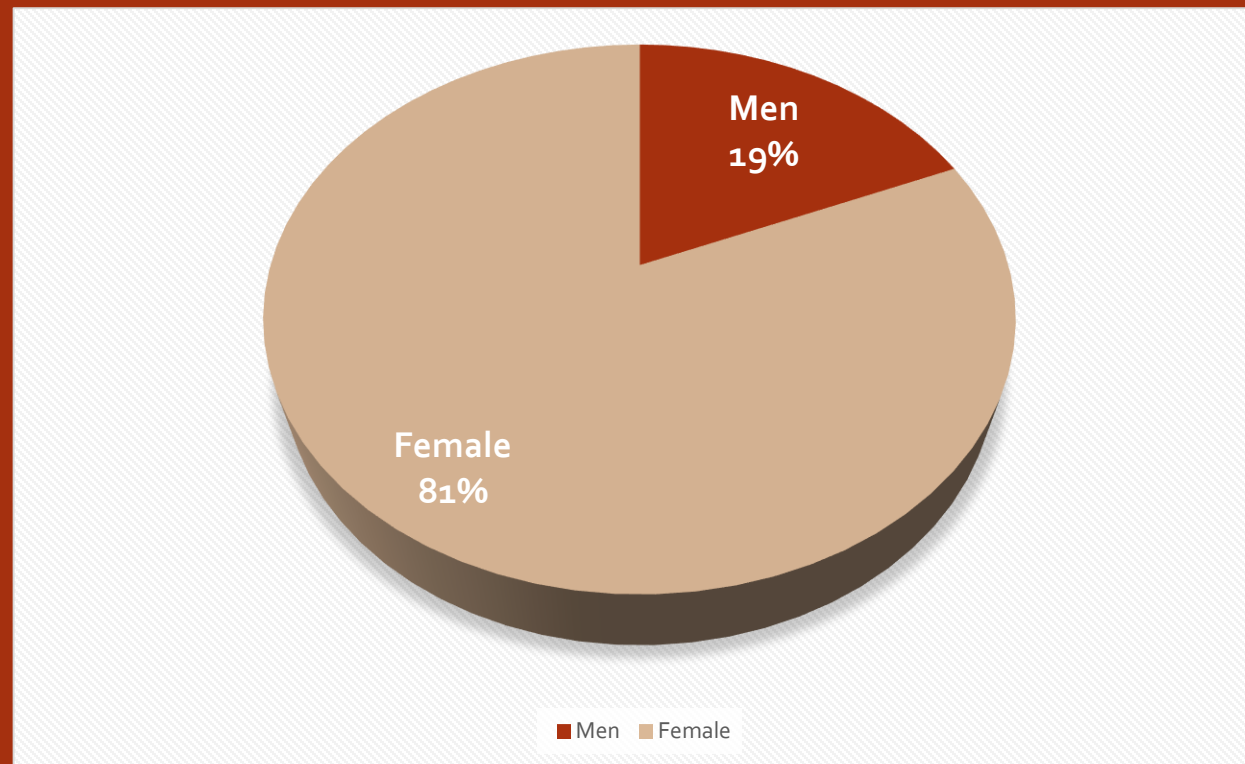


Employment characteristics

> Employment in the social services sector remains overwhelmingly female. In the EU, women represent 81.43% of total employment.

> The norm remains the permanent employment contract. This type of contract concerns more than half of the workforce in seven of the ten countries that participated in the survey.

Share of female and male jobs in social services at EU level



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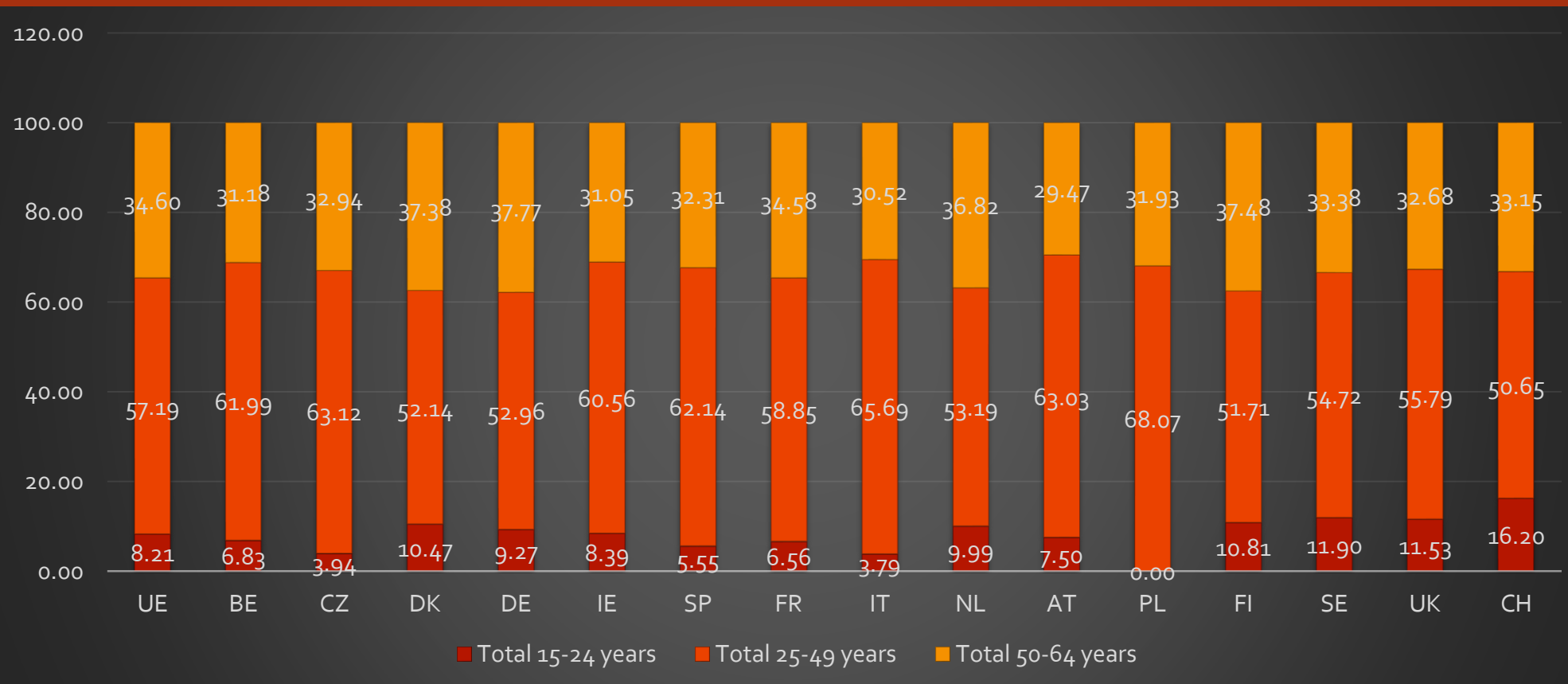
Employment characteristics

> The 50-64 age group represents more than a third of total employment in the social services sector (34.6%), compared to 29.6% for the whole economy.



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- > In the private sector, the social dialogue is strong. All national correspondent of Social employers highlight that collective bargaining exists in their sector.
- > In some countries, collective bargaining practices are observed at all existing levels.
- > According to the answers provided by 10 Member States, it appears that very few national employers' organisations in the social services are affiliated to other EU organisations than Social employers.



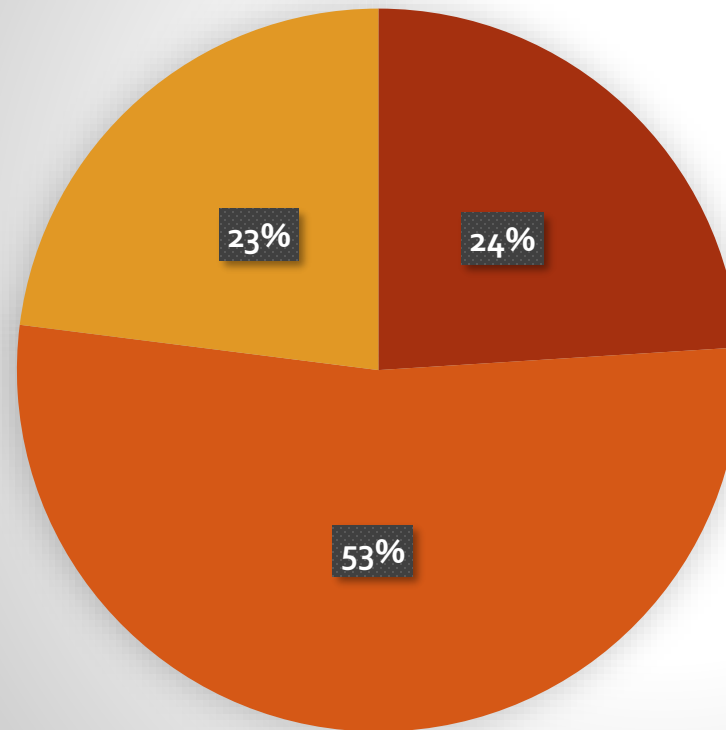
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Qualification and training

> A large majority of employees in the social services sector estimate that their present skills correspond well with their duties (53%). However, almost a quarter of the workforce declare needing further training to cope well with their duty (tasks are changing).

Which of the following statements would best describe your skills in your own work?



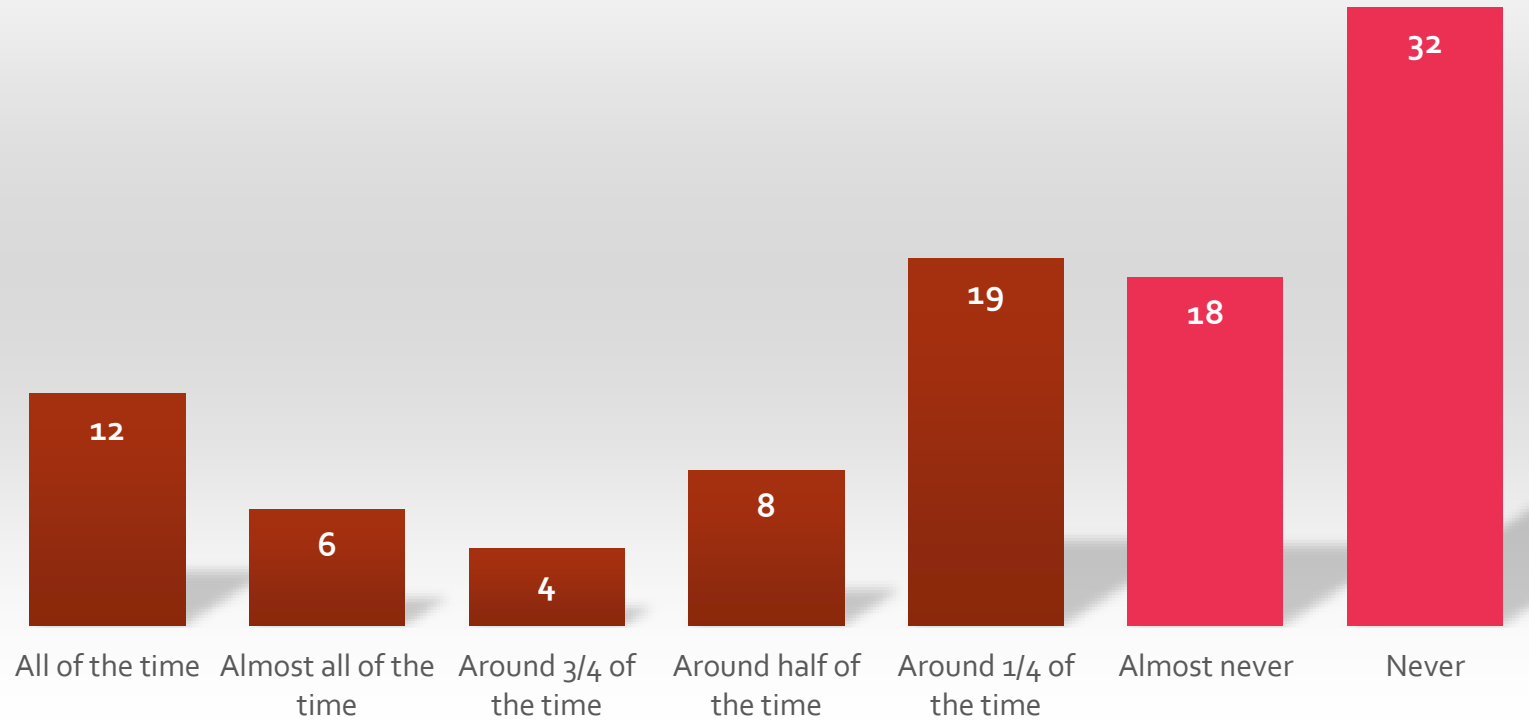
- I need further training to cope well with my duties
- My present skills correspond well with my duties
- I have the skills to cope with more demanding duties

Qualification and training

> Employees in the social sector are more often involved in training paid by the employers than employees in the whole economy.

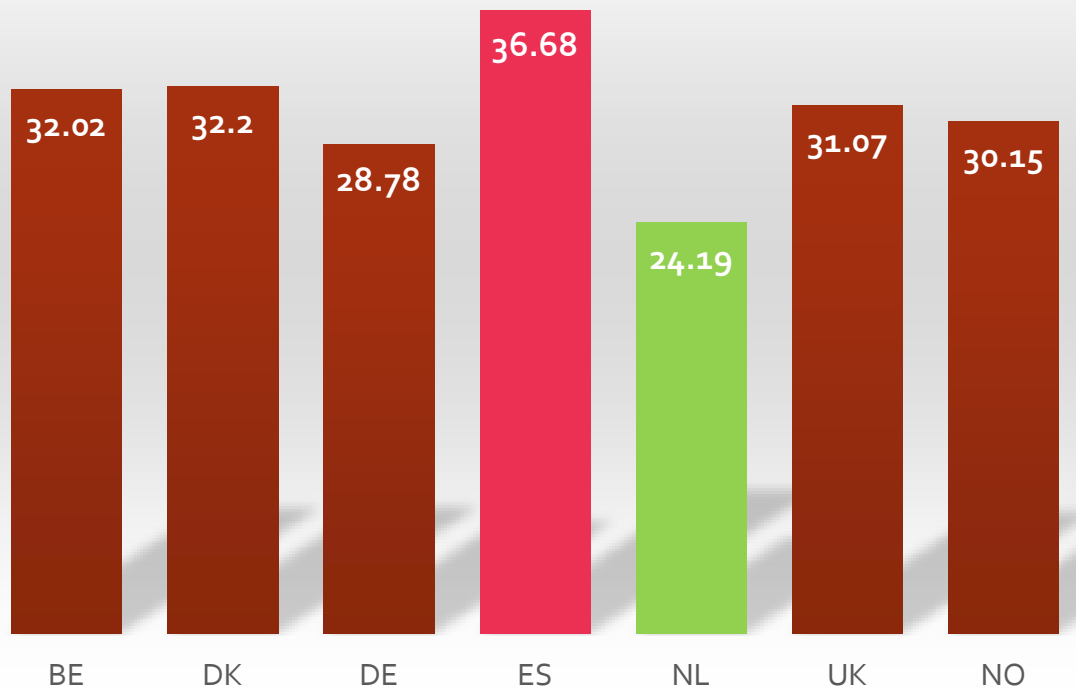
> 50% of the workforce never (or almost never) work with computer, laptops, smartphones, (compared to 43% in the whole economy), but the use of such tools is growing.

Does your main paid job involve...
Working with computers, laptops, smartphones etc?



Working time

How many hours do you usually work per week in your main paid job?



> Workers in the social services sector work an average of 31,37 hours per week in their main paid job. The main reason of the low average working time is the importance of part-time work in the sector.

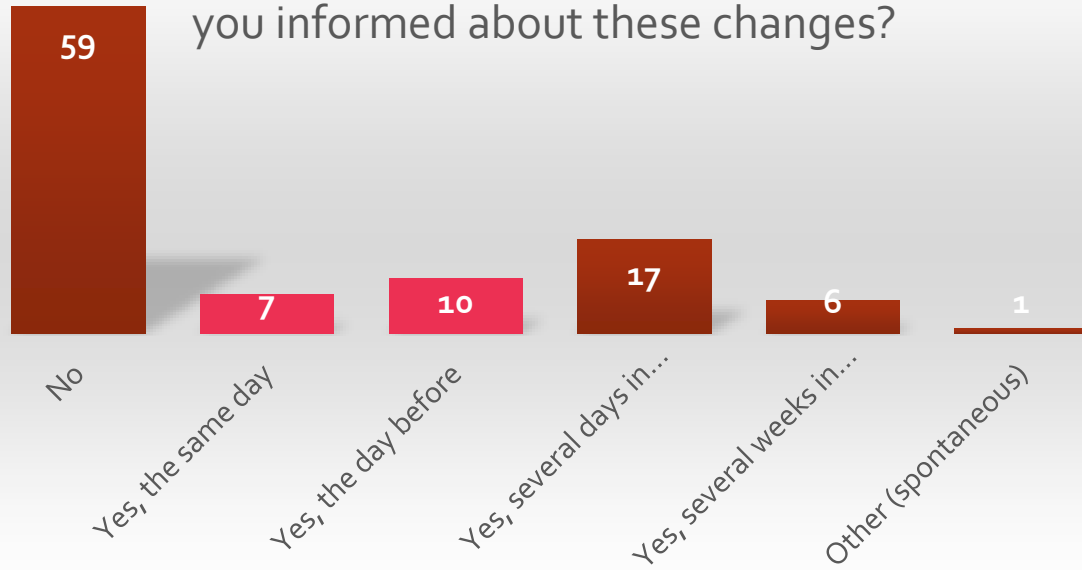
> The workforce works 1.49 time a month at night, for at least 2 hours between 10.00 pm and 05.00 am.

> The practice of stand by time and of on-call work are important but not in all countries.

> The workforce works in average 1.09 Sunday and 1.24 Saturday per month.

Working time

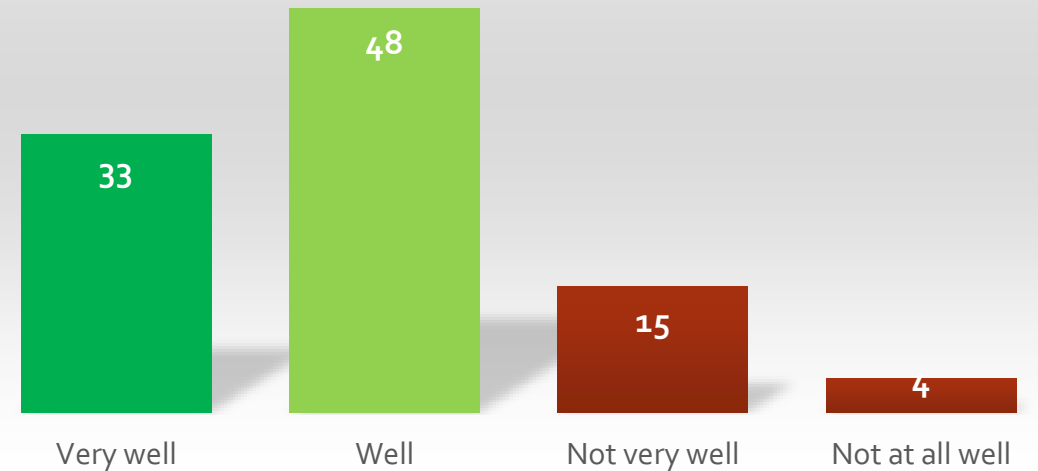
Do changes to your working time arrangements occur regularly? (IF YES) How long before are you informed about these changes?



> 17% of the workforce copes with short notice changes (the day before for 10% of the workers or the same day for 7%) of their working time arrangements.

> The workforce considers that their working hours fit well (48%, 7 points less compared to the EU average) or very well (33%) with their family or social commitments outside work.

In general, how do your working hours fit in with your family or social commitments outside work?



Working conditions

- > In comparison with the whole economy, the workforce in the social services seems to be satisfied with its working condition as the whole EU workforce. 27% is very satisfied (compared to 26% for the whole economy) and 58% is satisfied (compared to 60% of the whole economy).
- > The exposure to physical risks is quite similar in the social services than in the whole economy, even if female workers are more exposed to such risks than male workers.
- > However, the workforce in the social services is more exposed to psychological risks.

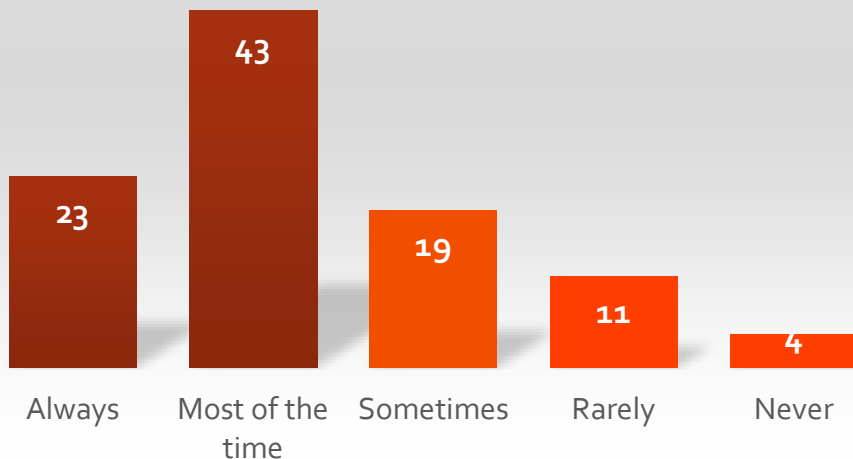


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Working conditions

Select the response which best describes your work situation - You have enough time to get the job done?

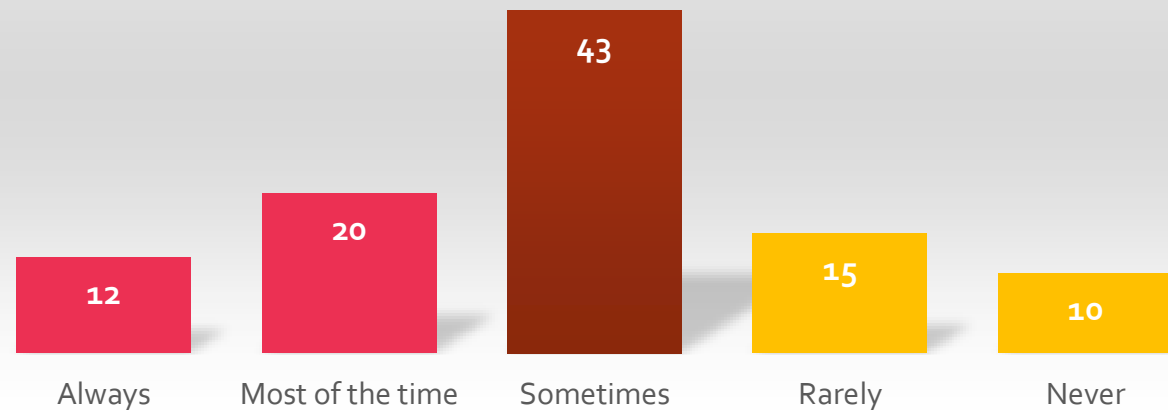


> 34% of the workforce considers that they have not enough time to get their job done (compared to 15% in the whole economy);

> Only 32% of the workforce considers that they have always or most of the time the feeling of doing a useful work. About a quarter have rarely (15%) or never (10%) this feeling.

> 51% of the workforce are involved in situations that are emotionally disturbing for them between $\frac{1}{4}$ and $\frac{3}{4}$ of their working time (25%).

Select the response which best describes your work situation - You have the feeling of doing useful work?



Challenges

- > All the countries covered by the Social employers' survey have to cope with difficulties related to recruitment, qualification shortage and workforce retention mainly for healthcare and social and educational intervention.
- > Disinvestment of public authorities in financing social services.
- > Need of labour force to cope with an ageing population will increase.
- > Need to invest massively in digitisation/e-health, particularly to enable older people to live independently.
- > Trend to organise communities of services and continuity of care and to organise life path with an increased effort of coordination between professionals and a more person-centred approach, within the community.



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**Thank
you !
Merci !**



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