

Question in Project:

European Working Conditions Survey 2024

Question Topic:

Job and career/ Job motivation & attitudes

Construct:

Preferred work hours

General Information:

Note: The item was tested in English, German and Polish.

Question Text:

English version:

Provided that you could make a free choice regarding your working hours and taking into account the need to earn a living: How many hours per week would you prefer to work at present?

Filter: Provided that you could make a free choice regarding your working hours and taking into account the need to earn a living: How many hours per month would you prefer to work at present?

German version:

Wenn Sie frei entscheiden könnten, wie viele Stunden Sie arbeiten wollen: Wie viele Stunden pro Woche würden Sie gegenwärtig am liebsten arbeiten? Bitte beziehen Sie mit ein, dass Sie Ihren Lebensunterhalt verdienen müssen.

Filter: Wenn Sie frei entscheiden könnten, wie viele Stunden Sie arbeiten wollen: Wie viele Stunden pro Monat würden Sie gegenwärtig am liebsten arbeiten? Bitte beziehen Sie mit ein, dass Sie Ihren Lebensunterhalt verdienen müssen.

Instruction:

English version: Please indicate your preferred working hours for all jobs together.

German version: Geben Sie bitte Ihre bevorzugte Anzahl an Arbeitsstunden für alle Tätigkeiten zusammen an.

Answer Categories:

English version:

Number of hours per week:

I prefer to answer in number of hours per month

The same number of hours as currently

German version:

Anzahl der Stunden pro Woche:

Ich möchte die Arbeitsstunden lieber pro Monat eingeben

Die gleiche Anzahl Stunden wie zurzeit

Cognitive Techniques:

Recall Probing, Difficulty Probing, Specific Probing

Findings for Question:

Findings Cognitive Interviews:

Eleven German and 13 Polish respondents gave a numeric answer. Most of these respondents weighed between their income and their preferred working hours:

- *"In the past, I have also worked 8 hours a day, but in those cases only for the minimum wage. And now I work one hour less every day but end up with a much higher salary. And working 7 hours is much more pleasant than 8 hours a day."* (DE03, 35 hours per week)
- *"If the information about 'still having to earn a living' hadn't been there, I would have answered 20 hours. For me, part-time would be better for my life satisfaction, but then of course the money factor comes into play, which is why I don't work part-time. Therefore, I would only reduce my working hours a bit."* (DE06, 30 hours per week)
- *"Six hours a day, i.e. 30 per week, considering that I work 5 days a week, it would be enough to earn the living."* (PL08, 30 hours per week)

Apart from the need to earn a living, one respondent (DE05) said that the work itself requires a certain number of hours of work:

- *"Well, of course you have to weigh up how much time I need to care for my patients properly. And yes, how much do I want so that I feel good. I mean, I don't feel so bad when I work more. But ideally, a free evening once or twice a week would be very nice."* (DExx, 38 hours per week)

Six respondents (DE: $n = 3$, PL: $n = 3$) indicated that they would prefer to work the same number of hours as currently:

- *"I was thinking about what my hourly wage is. That's actually okay. And the time commitment is acceptable. So, I don't see any reason to change."* (DE01)
- *"Basically, 35 hours is optimal. That's what I chose for myself. I just want a kind of work-life balance, but just enough to make a living."* (DE16)

Respondent DE12 gave a numeric answer but indicated the same number of hours as she currently works: *"I thought about how satisfied I am with the amount of work I already have. And I am. I am in harmony with it. This is the number of hours I can manage"* (DE12, 60 hours per week).

Furthermore, one respondent (DE04) did not answer this question and explained: *"This question is based on the same arithmetic that I was already unable to do in [question 24]. I can't even say I would like to work as few hours as possible, because it's just not true. Because I don't see work just as a livelihood, but as an enrichment of my life"* (DE04, don't know).

Most respondents found it "very easy" or "rather easy" to answer the question ($n = 25$). Respondent DE03 mentioned that he would like to give a range instead of an exact number: *"I would like to write '35 – 40' hours here. But that's not possible, you can only enter a number. If I had to choose, I would enter 35"* (DE03, 35 hours per week).

Out of the respondents with multiple jobs ($n = 15$), four respondents (two from each country) only referred to their main job.

Summary:

- Most of the respondents found it easy to answer this question and weighed between the hours of work and the need to earn a living.
- Some respondents with multiple jobs only referred to their main job.

Recommendations:

No changes recommended.