

Question in Project:

European Working Conditions Survey 2024

Question Topic:

Job and career/ Job situation & professional activity

Construct:

Work status

General Information:

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

Question Text:

English version:

Which of these categories describes your current situation the best?

German version:

Welche dieser Kategorien beschreibt Ihre derzeitige Situation am besten?

Instruction:

English version:

Self-employment includes the case that your business does not (yet) generate profit or income.

German version:

Selbständigkeit beinhaltet auch, wenn Ihr Unternehmen (noch) keinen Gewinn oder Einkommen erwirtschaftet.

Answer Categories:

English version:

At work full time as employee or employer, self-employed, or as a paid relative assisting on family farm or business

At work in a part time capacity as employee or employer, self-employed, or as a paid relative assisting on family farm or business

Unemployed
Unable to work due to long-term illness or disability
At work and on child-care leave or other leave
Retired
Full time [male] homemaker or unpaid family member
In full time education, i.e., as a pupil at school or student at university
Other, please specify:

German version:

In Vollzeit berufstätig, als Mitarbeiter/in, Arbeitgeber/in, Selbständige/r oder als Verwandte/r auf dem Bauernhof der Familie oder im Familienbetrieb
In Teilzeit berufstätig, als Mitarbeiter/in, Arbeitgeber/in, Selbständige/r oder als Verwandte/r auf dem Bauernhof der Familie oder im Familienbetrieb
Arbeitslos
Arbeitsunfähig aufgrund einer Langzeiterkrankung oder Behinderung
Berufstätig und im Erziehungsurlaub oder sonstiger Beurlaubung
Im Ruhestand/Vorruhestand
Hausmann bzw. Hausfrau oder unbezahlt mithelfende/r Familienangehörige/r
Schüler/in, Auszubildende/r oder Student/in
Sonstiges, und zwar:

Cognitive Techniques:

Category Selection Probing

Findings for Question:

Findings Cognitive Interviews:

Most respondents indicated that they work full time as employee or employer, self-employed, or as a paid relative assisting on family farm or business (DE: $n = 12$, PL: $n = 13$). Five respondents worked part time (DE: $n = 2$, PL: $n = 3$) and two German respondents were "at work and on child-care leave or other leave" or "in full time education", respectively (see Table 63).

The cognitive interviews revealed two problems. Firstly, respondent DE02, who stated that she was on parental or other leave, was still working on the side and understood the option to encompass both:

"I would interpret that as parental leave and working at the same time. After all, I also work alongside my parental leave." (DE02)

Secondly, two Polish respondents (PL02, PL04) incorrectly identified themselves as working part time. Respondent PL04 only referred to her main job and not all of her jobs together, while participant PL02 misinterpreted the question as referring to the flexibility of one's working hours and not the usual number of hours. Even though he was self-employed and stated in Q24 that he works a total of 50 hours a week, he indicated that he works in part time capacity and explained: "[...] as a self-employed person I can go on holiday or get away whenever I want" (PL02).

Summary:

- Most respondents had no problems answering this question.
- One German respondent misinterpreted the response option "at work and on child-care leave or other leave" as meaning being on leave while at the same time having another job.
- In Poland, one respondents only referred to her main job and one respondent misinterpreted the question as referring to the flexibility of one's working hours and not the usual number of hours.

Recommendations:

We recommend a simplification of the **response categories**:

- The first two response options should omit any reference to employment, self-employment or family members: "*At work full-time*" and "*At work part-time*"
- The response option "*At work and on child-care leave or other leave*" should be changed into "*On child-care leave or other leave*".
- The seventh category would be shortened to "*Full-time homemaker*"

We recommend deleting the **instruction**, which pertains to self-employed. Due to the changes in the response options, the instruction is no longer required.