



The 4th European Working Condition Survey: workplace stress

Minds and hearts conference, Brussels 21 March 2007

Greet Vermeylen

European Foundation for the Improvement of living and working conditions



About the European Working Conditions survey(s)

- 1991 – prototype questionnaire. EU-12. 20 questions.
- 1995 – 50 questions and sub-questions. EU-15.
- 2000 – 80 questions. EU-15.
 - ▶ Extended to cover 10 new member states + BG/RO in 2001
 - ▶ Turkey, 2002
- 2005 – c.100 questions and subquestions. EU-25+BG/RO/HR/TR + CH/NO
- Broad thematic coverage: Working time, physical / psychosocial risks, work organisation, work satisfaction, work-related health outcomes / absenteeism, non-work activities (domestic care, education etc)....
- Principle: retain core questions unchanged where possible. Add new questions to reflect emerging issues or areas of survey where existing coverage is weak (eg (2005) Contactability outside work hours, ISCED, positive aspects of work)

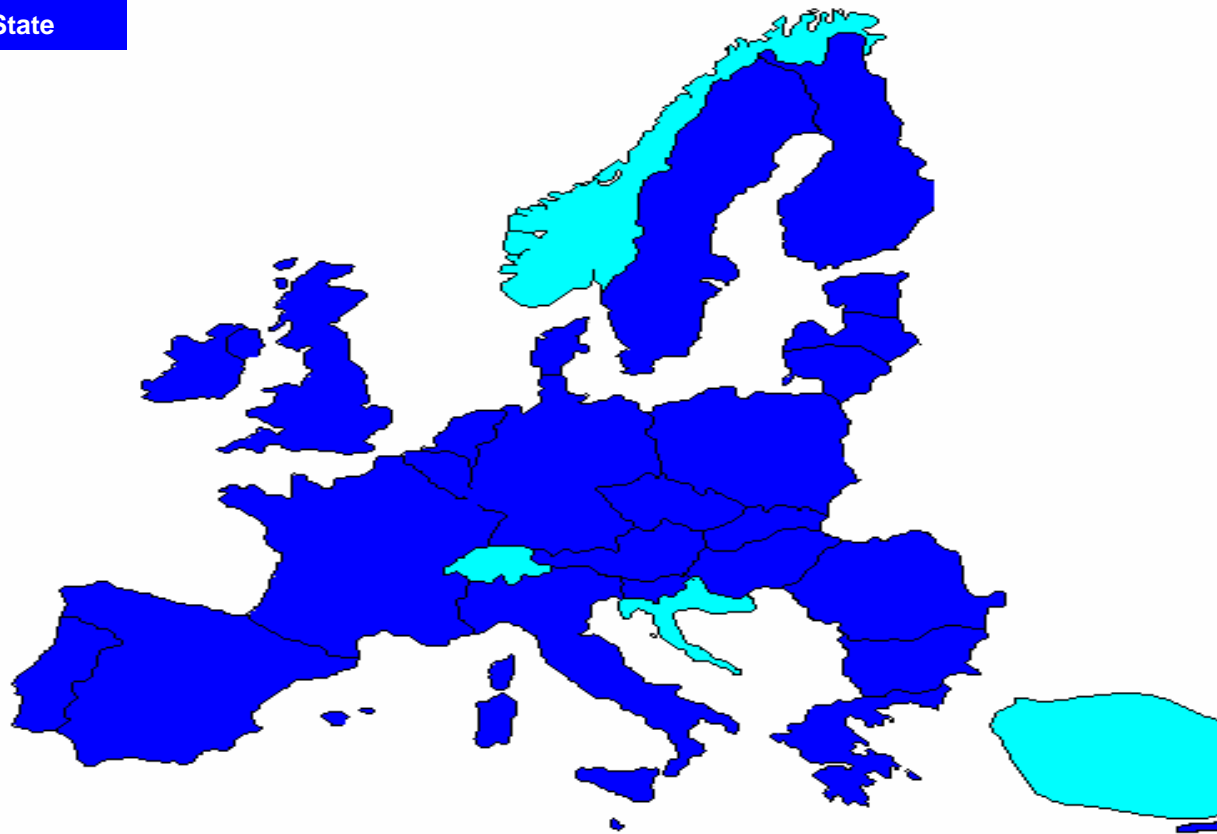




4EWCS: 31 countries covered in 2005

(30 000 employees and self-employed)

Member State





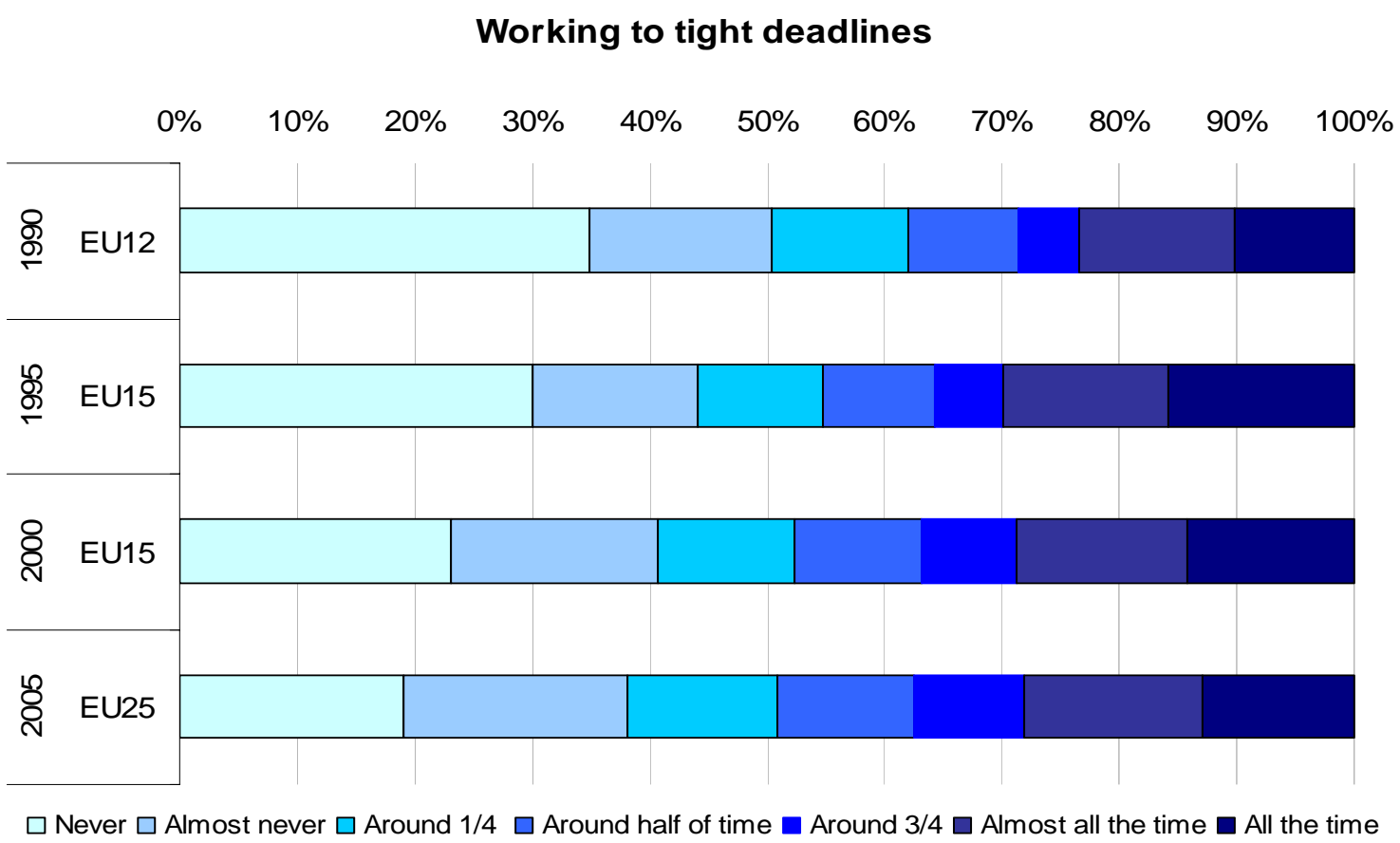
Work intensification

- Four proxy indicators of work intensity : increasing
 - ▶ working to tight deadlines,
 - ▶ at very high speed,
 - ▶ not having enough time to get work done,
 - ▶ regularity of interruptions
- An increasingly small % of workforce reports not / never being subject to such pressures
- Levels of exposure tend to be lower in older age groups
- Job autonomy high but not increasing
- Pace of work : direct demands, performance targets
- Weekly working hours decrease
- Social support from colleagues and boss : huge differences over countries



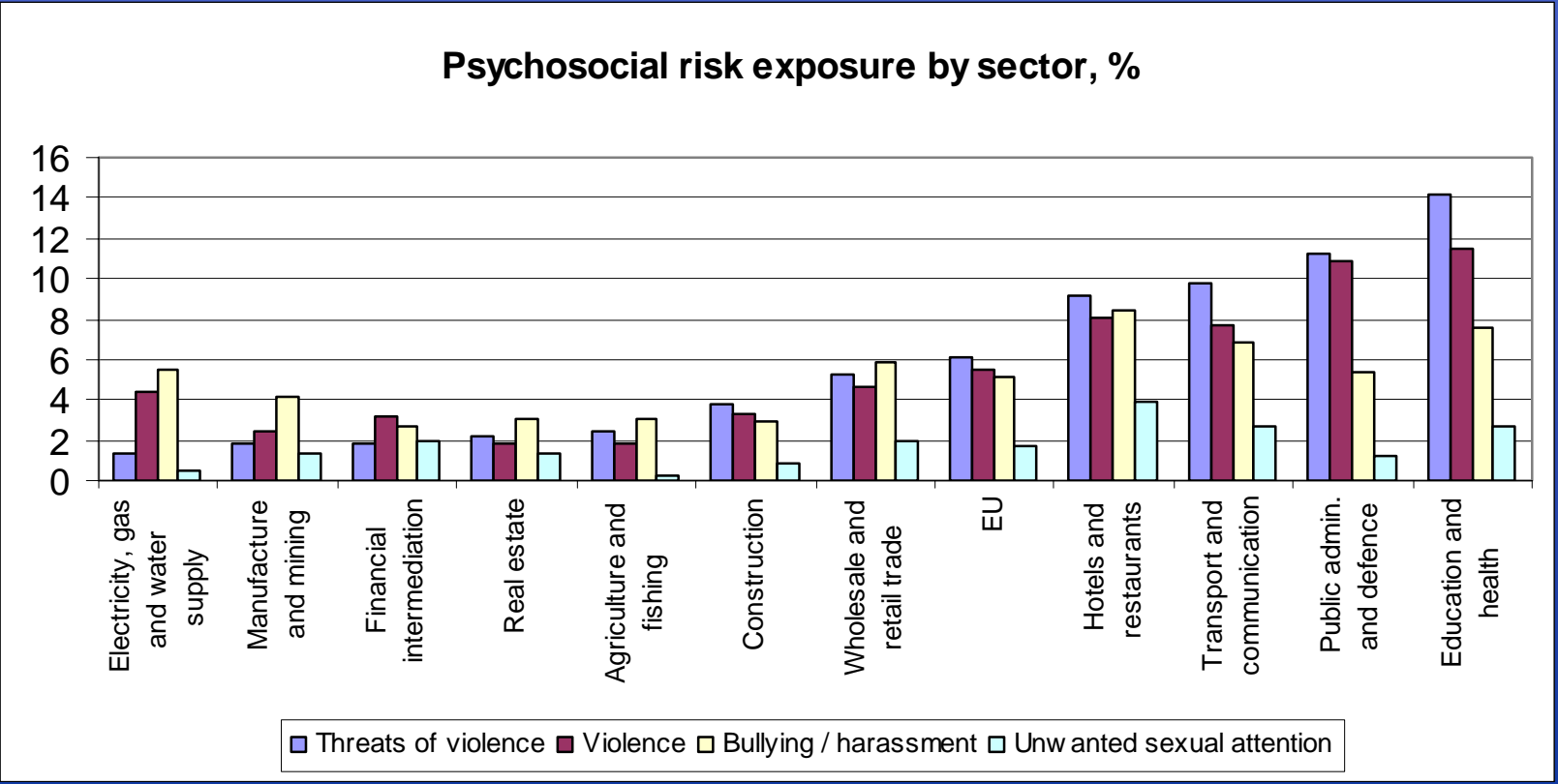


Working to tight deadlines





Violence and harassment by sector





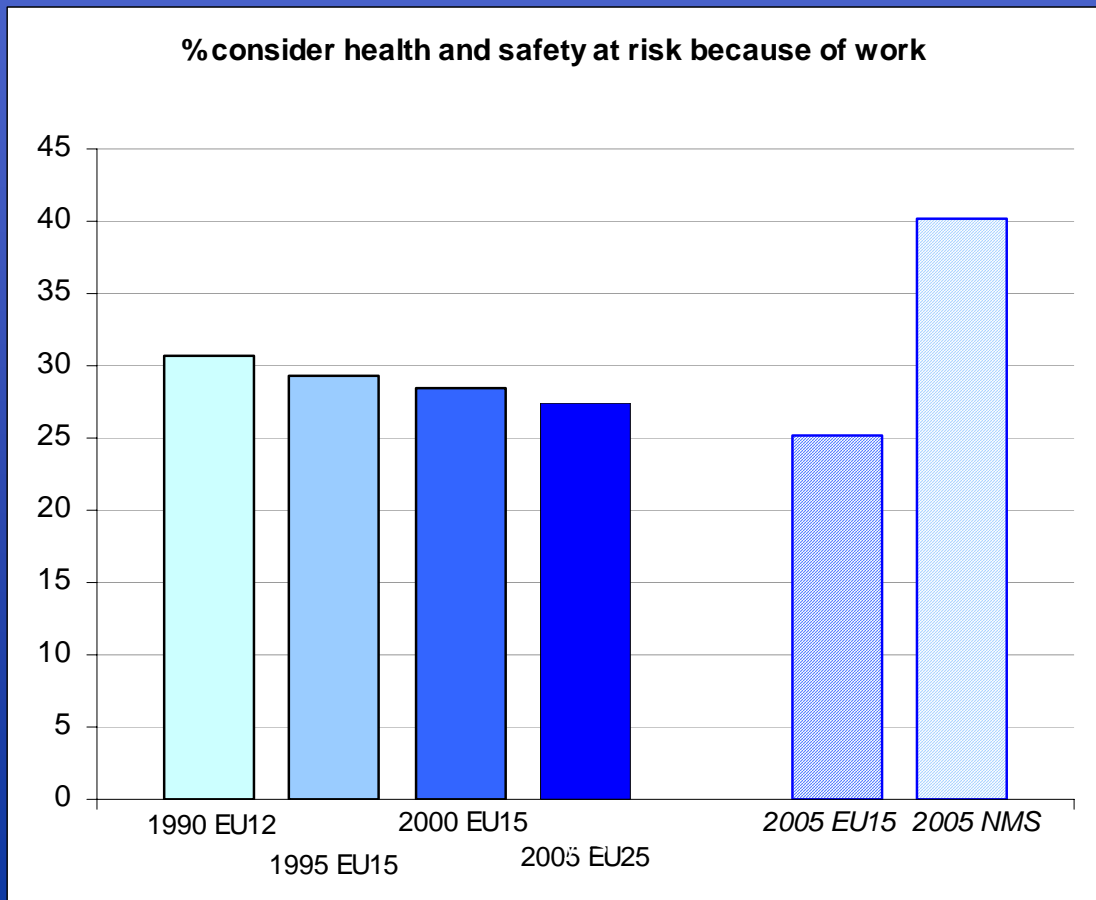
Health and safety at work

- One in three European workers say that their work affects their health
- Workers in the new member states report significantly higher risk levels than those in old member states
- The most reported physical risk factor is repetitive hand and arm movements (62% report being exposed at least one quarter of the time)
- Sectors where exposure to physical risks is high in general report lower levels of discrimination and violence ... though the opposite also tends to be true





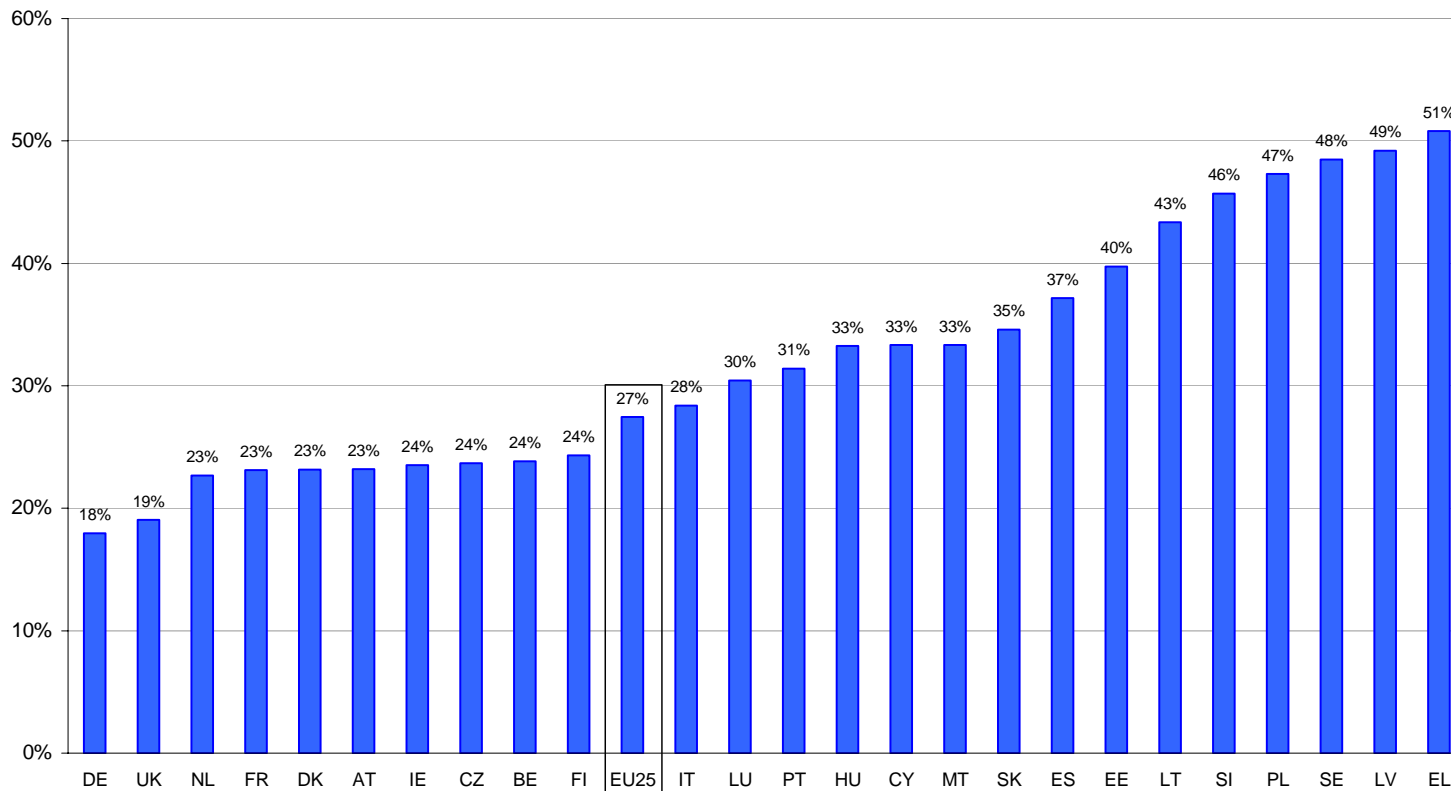
Perceived risks are decreasing consistently since 1990, but last enlargement made a big change...





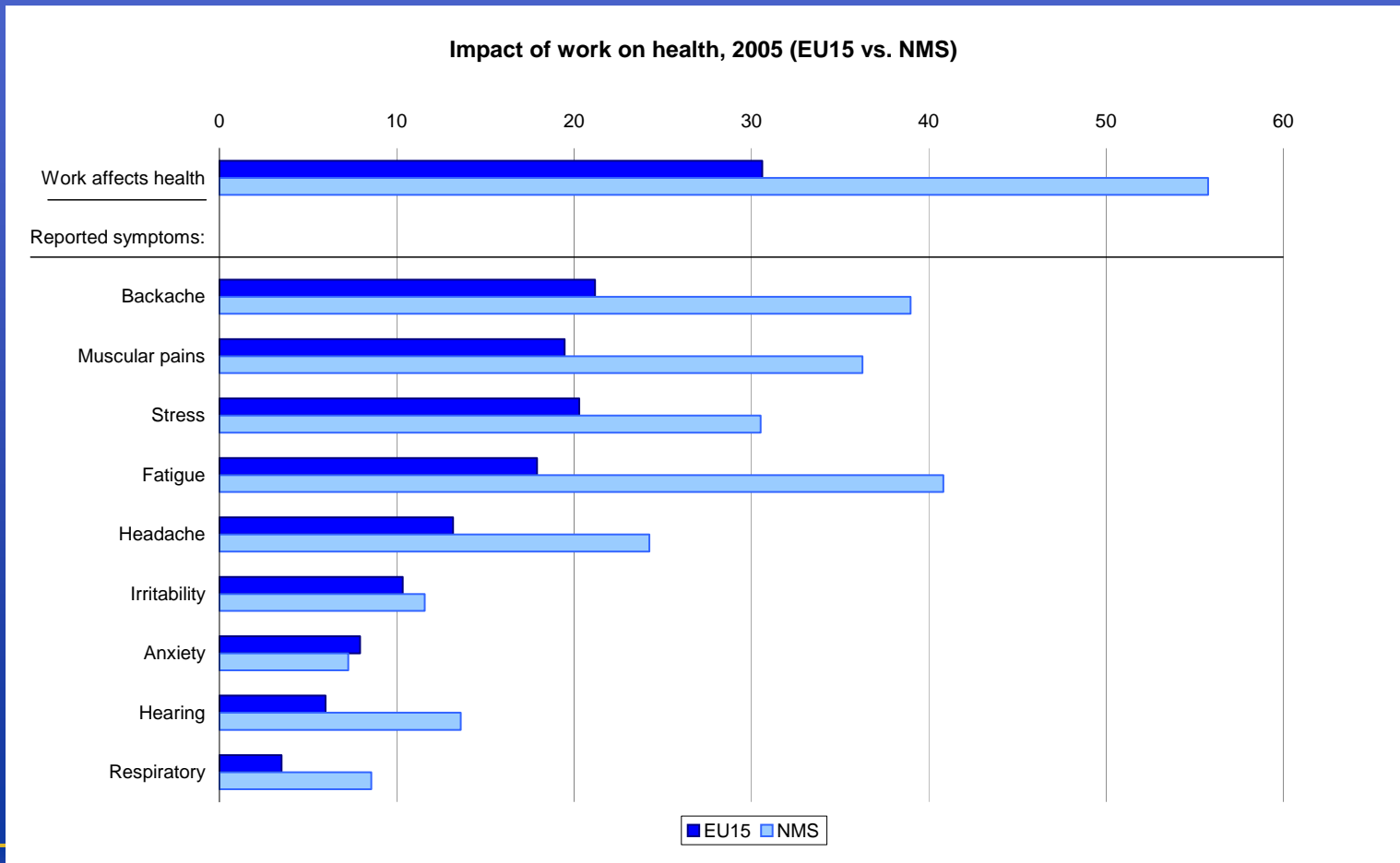
Differences by individual countries are really big

Do you think your health or safety is at risk because of your work? 2005 (EU25)





Very big differences in health outcomes between EU15 and NMS





Work-related health outcomes, % of workers reporting individual symptoms

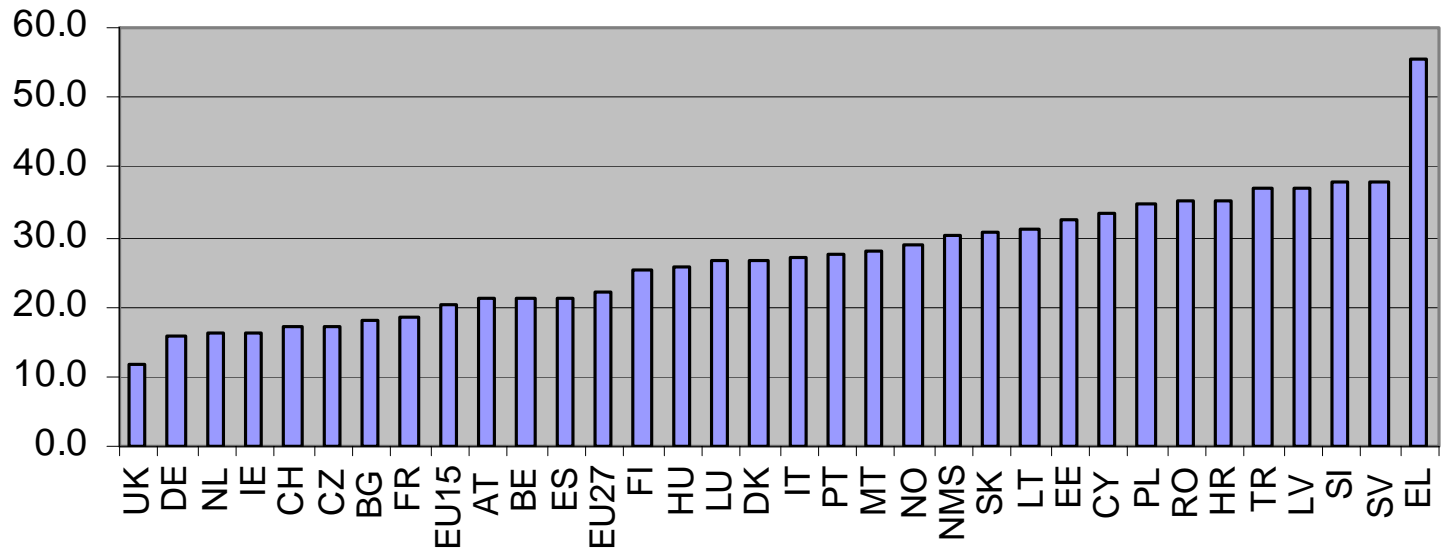
Symptom	
Backache	24.66%
Muscular pain	22.78%
Fatigue	22.55%
Stress	22.27%
Headache	15.49%
Irritability	10.48%
Injury	9.68%
Sleep	8.70%
Anxiety	7.84%
Vision	7.76%
Hearing	7.22%
Skin	6.56%
Stomach	5.83%
Respire	4.75%
Allergies	4.01%
Heart	2.41%
Other	1.55%





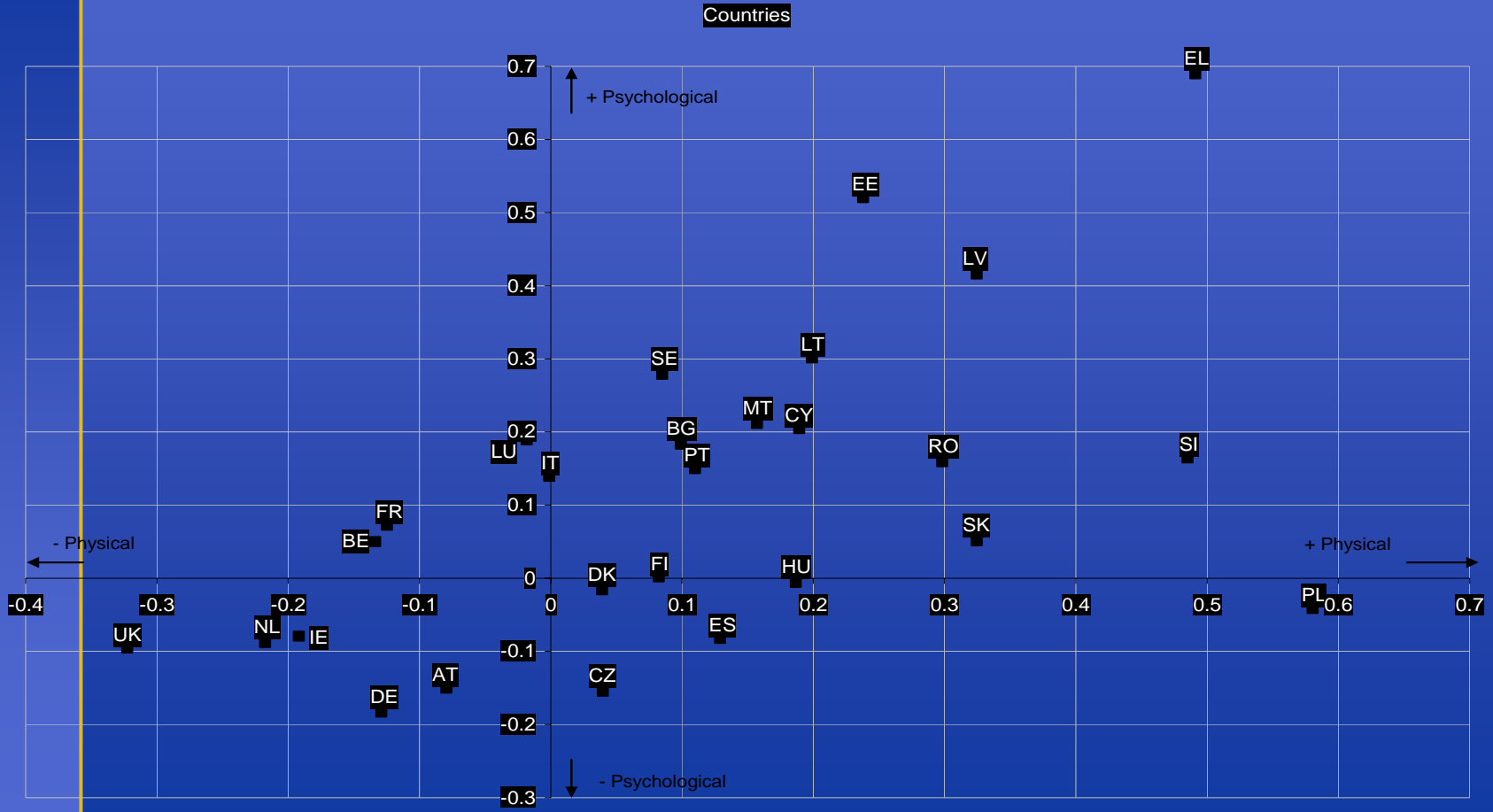
Stress by country

% reporting work-related stress by country





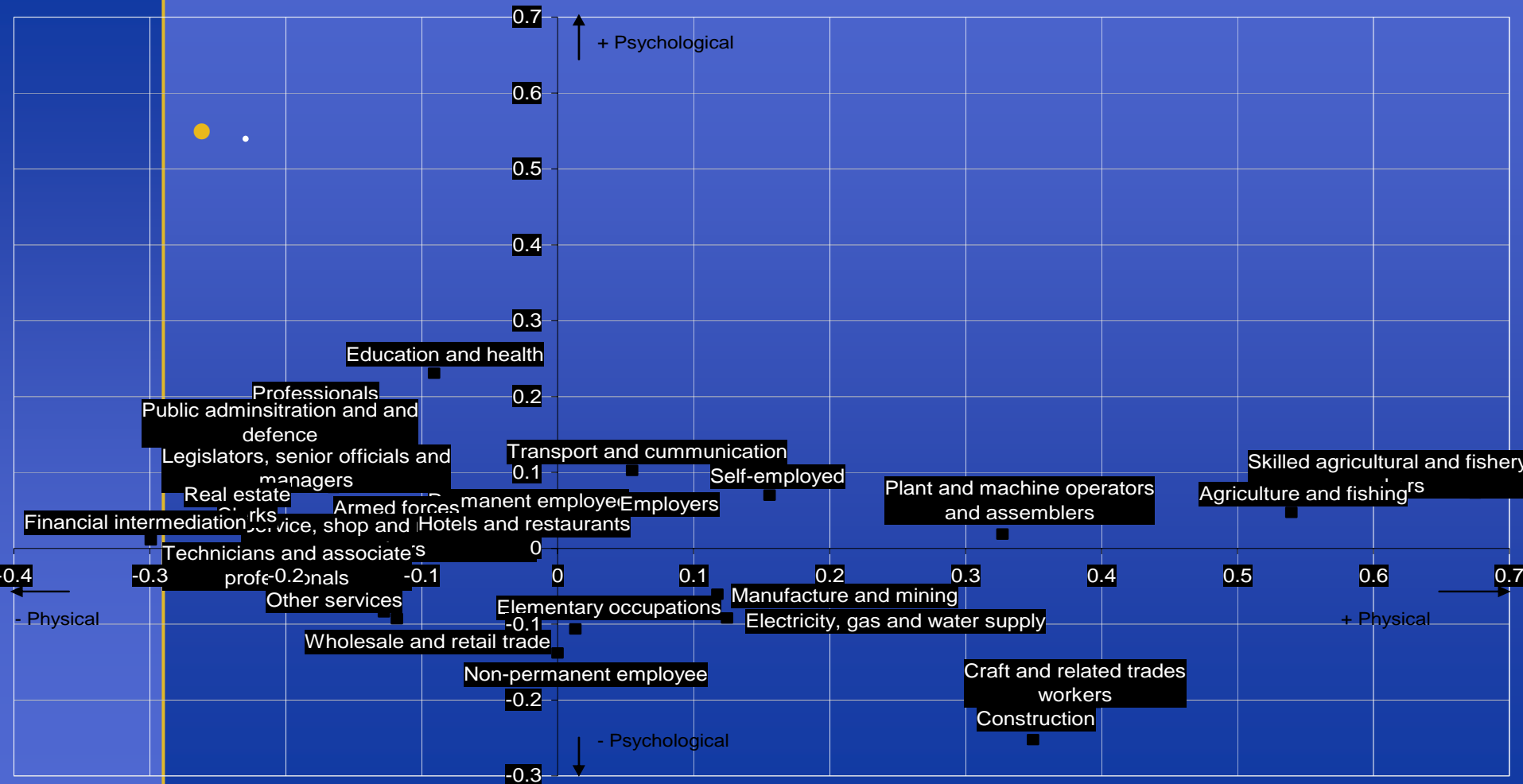
Countries / health outcomes





Sector / occupation / health outcomes

Sector, occupation and occupational status, EU27





Thank you

For more information, see

<http://www.eurofound.europa.eu/ewco/surveys/EWCS2005>

Contact: Sara Riso

Information Liaison Officer (Working Conditions)

sri@eurofound.europa.eu



Health problems related to working at very high speed

%	Backache	Stress	Muscular pains in neck and shoulders	Injuries
Working continuously at high speed	46	40	35	11
Never working at high speed	25	21	15	5



The European workforce : 15 years of changes

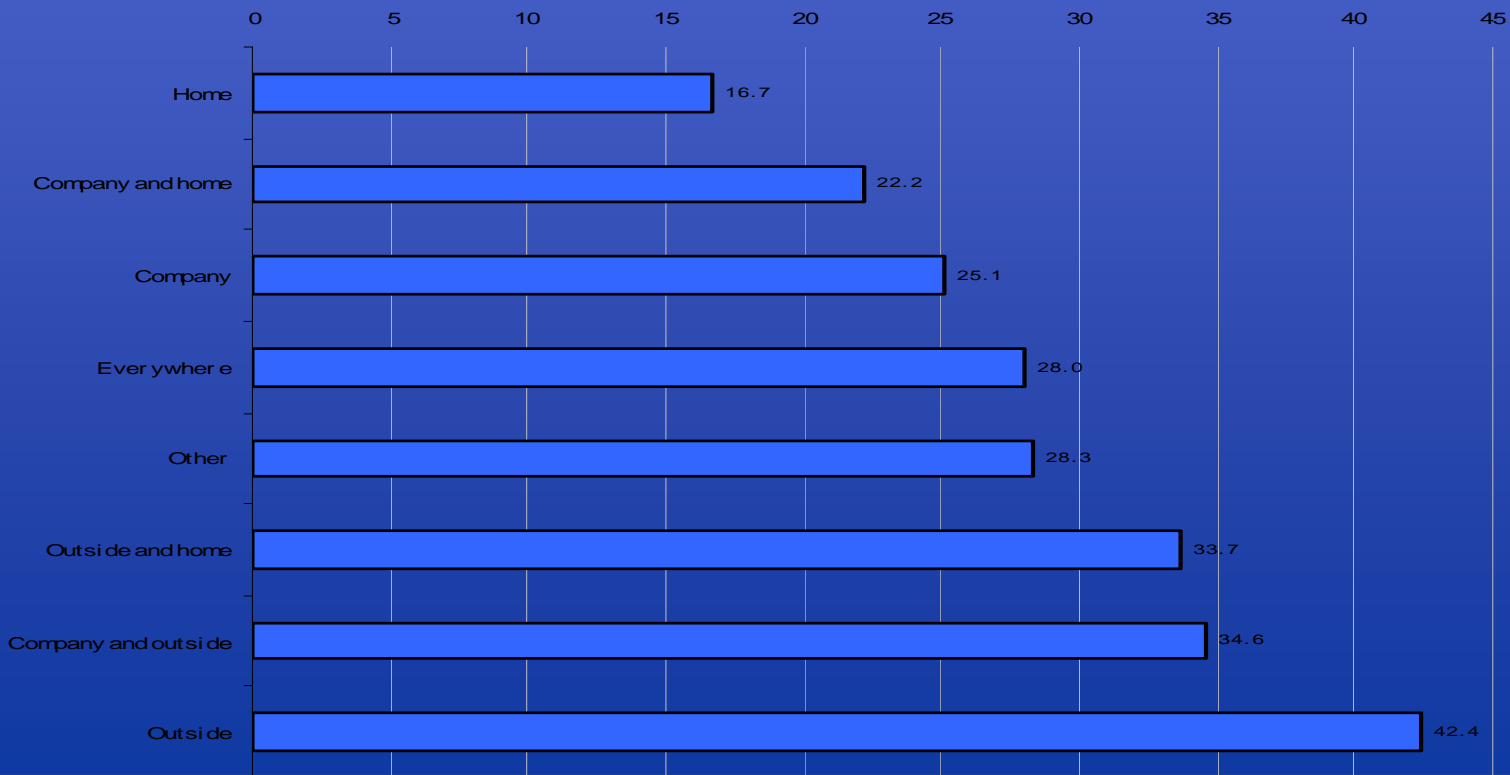
- More people at work in all sectors; however relative decline of the manufacturing industry and increase in the service industry
- More women at work (44.5% of the workforce)
 - ▶ but high segregation on the labour market (23% of gender mixed employment)
- More older workers : 15% to retire in the next 10 years
- More part-time work (18.5%), more temporary employment (14%), more second jobs (4%)
- More high skilled white collar : 38%
- 45% of European workers have achieved an upper secondary level of education





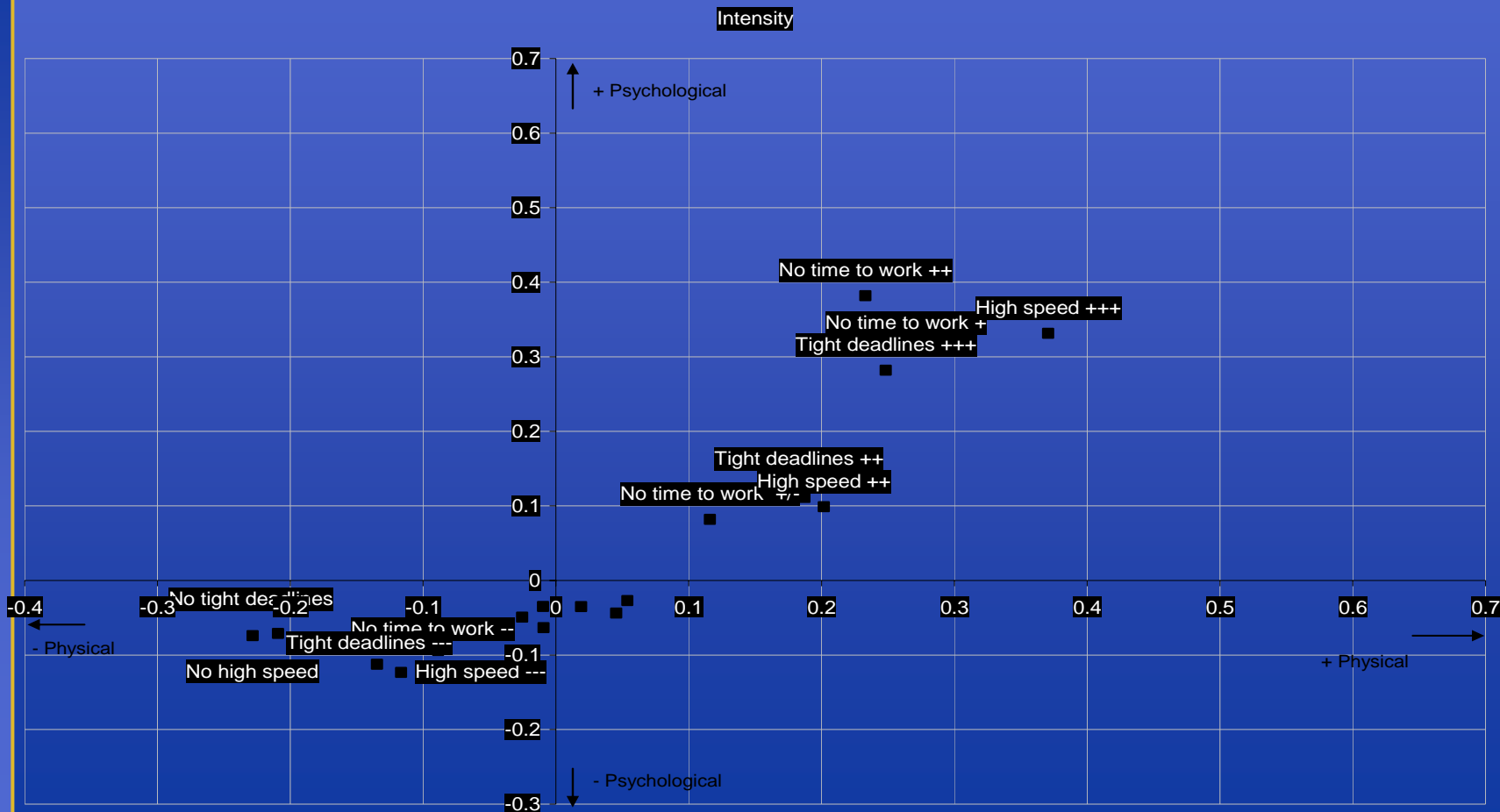
Place of work & health and safety at risk

Figure 5: % of workers who think that their health and safety is at risk because of work, by place of work (EU27)



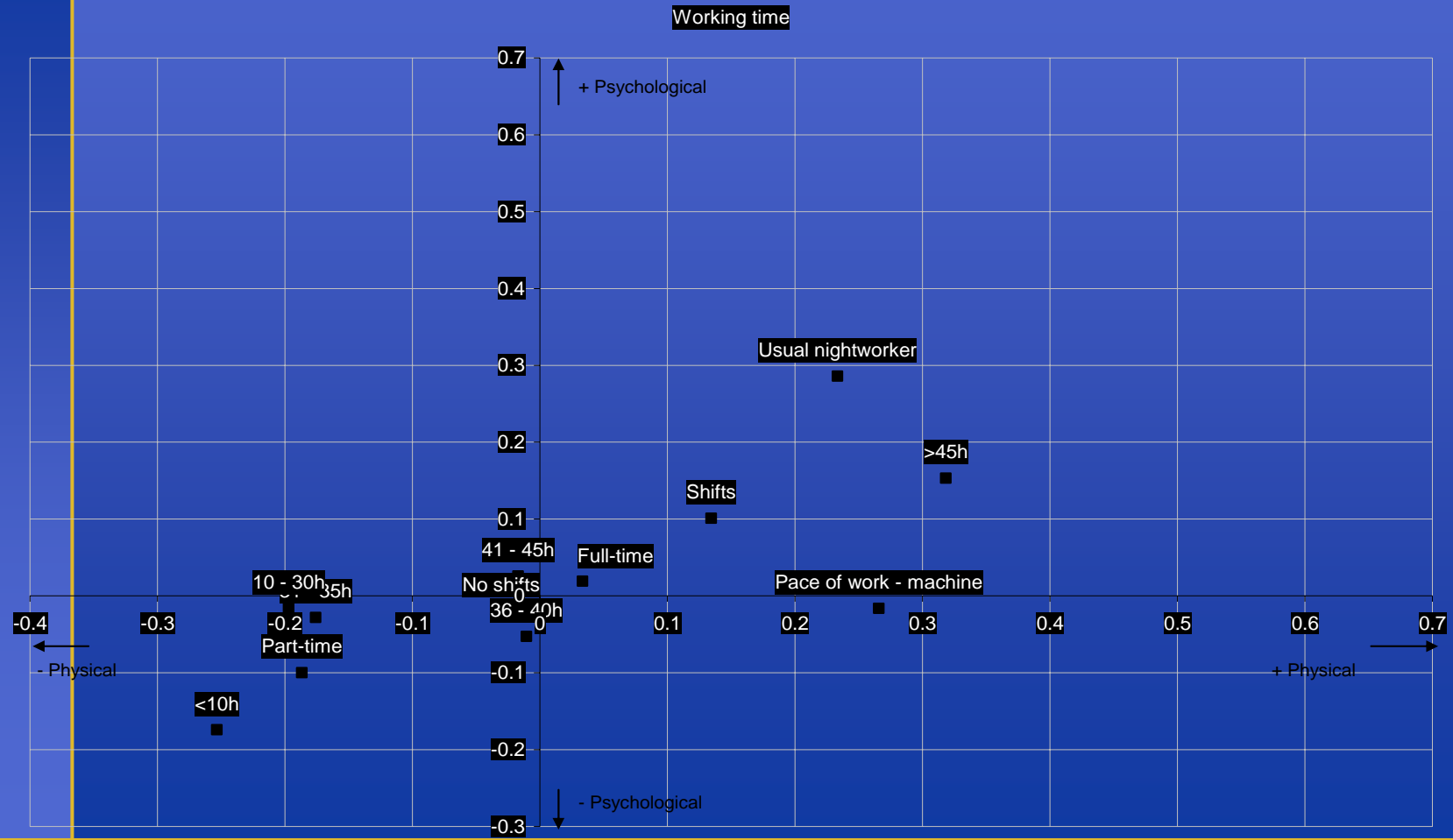


Relationship between intensity and health outcomes





Relationship working time / health outcomes





Social support

