



European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions

# Impact of training on people's employability

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This report is available in electronic format only.

*Data from national working conditions surveys and other sources reveal that fixed-term and temporary agency contract holders in the European Union are at a disadvantage in terms of access to both training and competence development in companies. A number of relevant indicators in the surveys highlight this fact. Such national data tend to confirm the research findings of the European Working Conditions Surveys, carried out by the European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions in 1990, 1995 and 2000-1, and offer further insights into this issue. This study examines the issue of training and employability, focusing on those workers on fixed-term and temporary agency contracts.*

## **Introduction**

### **Focus of the report**

[Skills development](#) and [career and employment security](#) form two dimensions of the four key elements of [quality of work and employment](#), as highlighted in a Foundation paper on the subject.

Fixed-term and temporary agency work is of particular relevance in analysing the evolution of quality in work, as job security and employment stability are key determinants of both job satisfaction and job quality. In relation to quality in work, the situation regarding fixed-term and temporary agency employment is ambivalent. On the one hand, these contracts can potentially be a stepping stone into a longer employment relationship of a higher quality but, on the other, they often put the worker at a significant disadvantage in terms of training, competence development and job security.

The central question of this report is the interrelationships between employment status, access to training, competence development, and employability. A worker's employment status can determine access to training measures and skills development provided by the company. At the same time, qualifications gained through continuous training and development of professional skills play a role in access to permanent or non-permanent employment contracts.

The report concentrates on training during working time for those who have completed their formal initial education, and looks specifically at company-related training initiatives. This includes both courses organised externally or internally and also learning on-the-job. The [Continuing Vocational Training Survey \(CTVS2\) - 1.4Mb pdf](#) distinguishes between different types of training provided by companies for their employees. These can consist of continuing vocational training through external and internal courses, or other training initiatives. External courses are courses designed and managed by organisations which are not part of the enterprise. Internal courses are those designed and managed by the enterprise itself. Other forms of continuing vocational training can include, for example, job rotation or learning/quality circles.

While the main focus of the report is on training, it also takes into account the broader field of skills and competence development. The central questions are whether skills and qualifications are built up to a sufficient level to allow fixed-term and temporary agency workers perform the job adequately and develop long-term employability.

### **Methodology**

The report is based on European-level research, and analyses and contributions by national correspondents from 12 EU Member States involved in the [European Working Conditions Observatory](#) (EWCO): Austria, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, Portugal, Spain and Sweden. The correspondents were asked to provide data based on national working conditions surveys, training surveys, or other surveys or databases. As survey data are limited on some of the issues, other sources and research results have been included.

In some of the national contributions based on national working conditions and other sources at national level, the distinction between workers on a fixed-term and on a temporary agency contract created difficulties. Temporary

agency workers are often included in the group of fixed-term contract holders, in so far as they have an employment relationship of limited duration. In some countries, temporary agency workers are mainly employed on a permanent basis by a temporary work agency. There is no clear distinction in the data for temporary agency workers on a fixed-term or a permanent contract, either at European or national level, with the exception of Germany.

The report and gathering of national data is also designed as a mapping exercise, i.e. to find out about the availability of data and the way national working conditions surveys or other data sources deal with the question of training for fixed-term and temporary agency contract holders. This implies enormous differences in the data provided. The limitations in the data availability and comparability are also considered as an opportunity to learn from national statistical approaches. However, it should be noted that data on training according to employment status are seldom gathered or provided.

The availability of data, based on national working condition surveys, training surveys, and other surveys or databases, varies among the countries. Some of the national correspondents do not have access to the raw data. In general, more data for fixed-term workers was provided than for temporary agency workers. In most of the countries involved, the proportion of temporary agency workers is low. In the smaller countries, the number of temporary agency workers included in the surveys is very small and, therefore, the data provided are not statistically reliable.

With regard to data on training provided by companies, mostly only very general figures are available. It is often unclear whether the employer pays for training, and information on the form and content of training is often missing. Some working conditions surveys provide information on whether training takes place during working hours.

## ***Training and non-permanent employment***

### **Distinction between fixed-term and temporary agency workers**

Fixed-term contracts are contracts of a limited duration, unlike permanent, or indefinite, contracts. In the [framework agreement](#) on fixed-term work ([Council Directive 1999/70/EC](#)), 'fixed-term workers' are defined as persons:

... having an employment contract or relationship entered into directly between an employer and a worker, where the end of the employment contract or relationship is determined by objective conditions such as reaching a specific date, completing a specific task, or the occurrence of a specific event.

Temporary agency work is understood as a triangular relationship between the temporary agency worker, the temporary work agency, and the user firm. In the [amended proposal \(147Kb pdf\)](#) for a Directive on working conditions for temporary agency workers (COM(2002) 701 final) temporary agency workers are defined as:

Workers with a contract of employment or an employment relationship with a temporary agency, who are posted to a user, undertaking to work temporarily under their supervision.

The statistical analysis of temporary agency work is complicated by the fact that such contracts can be either fixed-term or permanent contracts. In most countries, temporary agency workers are recruited on the basis of a fixed-term contract. In Sweden and Germany, permanent contracts are the norm, in other countries, fixed-term contracts may be converted into permanent contracts under certain conditions. In the Netherlands, the contracts are regarded as permanent as soon as a temporary agency worker has been employed for over 18 months by the same user firm, or more than 36 months by a temporary work agency. (Proposal for a Directive on working conditions for temporary workers [COM 2002, 149 final - 270Kb pdf](#) )

The legal situation differs considerably between the countries in terms of the periods of assignment. In some countries, the duration for hiring out a temporary agency worker is limited, as, for example, in Denmark, France,

the Netherlands and Portugal. In other countries, there are no restrictions, as, for example, in Austria, Estonia, Germany, Spain or the United Kingdom. (Zachert, 2004)

In the report [Temporary agency work in the European Union](#) , Storrie (2002) summarised the situation as:

'Temporary agency work is necessarily temporary, only in that the tasks performed at a particular firm are of a temporary nature.'

### **EU-level policy framework**

The framework agreement on fixed-term work lays down that:

in respect of employment conditions, fixed-term workers shall not be treated in a less favourable manner than comparable permanent workers solely because they have a fixed-term contract or relation, unless different treatment is justified on objective grounds .... As far as possible, employers should facilitate access by fixed-term workers to appropriate training opportunities to enhance their skills, career development and occupational mobility.

Temporary agency workers are explicitly excluded from the framework agreement on fixed-term work.

With the aim of improving access to permanent quality employment, the [proposal \(270Kb pdf\)](#) for a Directive of the European Parliament and the Council on working conditions for temporary agency workers provides for suitable measures to:

- improve temporary workers' access to training in the temporary agencies, even in the periods between their postings, in order to enhance their career development and employability;
- improve temporary workers' access to training for user undertakings' workers.

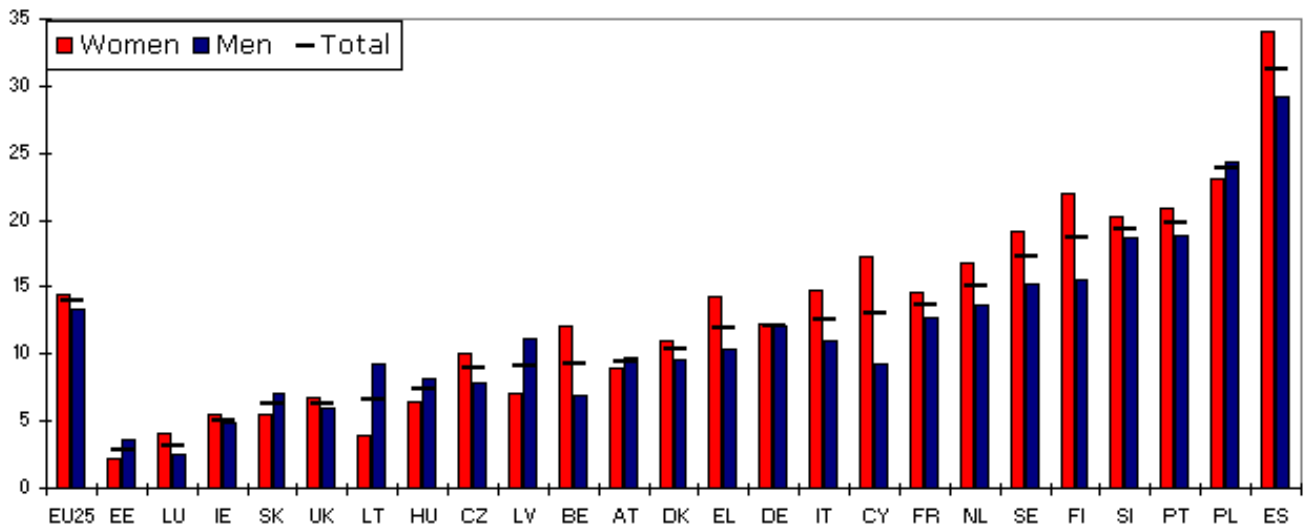
It is relevant to observe the tension, as reflected in the different national experiences, between applying the equal treatment principle and taking into account companies' flexibility demands. Non-permanent employment is to the fore in endeavours to achieve a balance between flexibility and security.

### **Incidence of non-permanent employment**

Neither the [Continuing vocational training survey \(1.4Mb pdf\)](#) (CVTS2) nor the structural indicator on [lifelong learning](#) provide data in relation to employment status.

In the third quarter of 2004, 13.9% of employees in the EU25 were on fixed-term contracts (Figure 1). The proportion of women (14.5%) was slightly higher than men (13.3%). The share of fixed-term employment differs considerably between the countries, ranging from 31.2% in Spain and 23.8 % in Poland, to 2.9% in Estonia and 3.2% in Luxembourg. (Eurostat, *Statistics in focus* , Theme 3, 3/2005)

**Figure 1: Proportion of employees with fixed-term contracts, by countries and sex, 3rd quarter 2004 (%)**



**Source: Eurostat, Statistics in focus, 3/2005, based on LFS.**

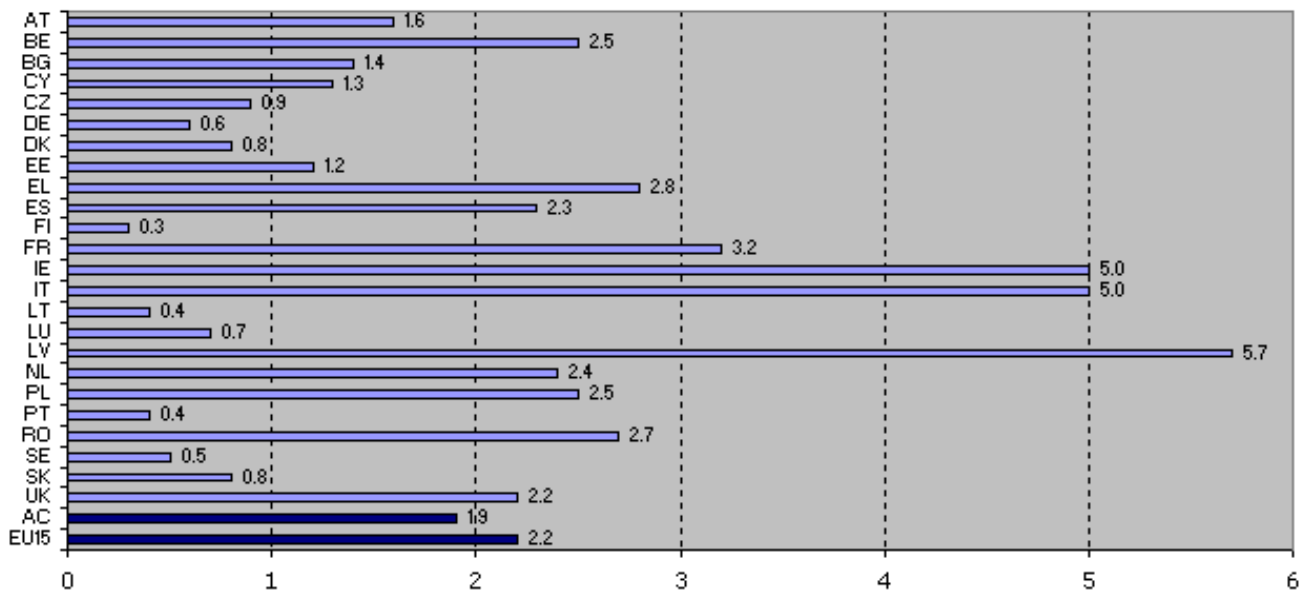
**Note: DE, EL, LU data from 3rd quarter 2003. EE data by sex unreliable due to small sample.**

Across the EU Member States, fixed-term contracts concern migrants more than the national population. In 2001, over 20% of non-EU nationals were employed on fixed-terms contracts, compared with 13% of EU nationals ([Industrial relations in the EU, Japan and USA, 2003-4](#)). Research from Sweden (Walette, 2004) found that people with a foreign background are more likely to remain in non-permanent employment than native Swedes.

While it is easy to find statistics on workers with a fixed-term employment contract, data on temporary agency workers is not gathered systematically at EU level.

The key source of European-wide data on temporary agency work are the European Working Conditions Surveys (Figure 2).

**Figure 2: Temporary agency work in 2000/1 (%)**



Source: EWCS 2000/1. Note: No data for HU or SI.

### Contract status

Companies have varying reasons for employing people on the basis of a fixed-term contract or for hiring workers from a temporary work agency. The employment and working conditions of these two groups differ also. Therefore, the analysis clearly distinguishes between these two groups. The assumption is that there is a difference too in the training measures provided.

The group of non-permanent workers is very heterogeneous. This is true both for those on fixed-term and those on temporary agency contracts. One feature they share is that the majority of workers in non-permanent employment are not voluntarily in such an employment status. The EWCO report [Temporary agency work in the European Union](#) (2004) emphasises that the main reason for employees to engage in temporary agency work is to find permanent employment.

Table 1 outlines reasons for fixed-term work in the EU25. In 2003, 4.4% of people in employment in the EU25 were working on the basis of a fixed-term contract because they could not find a permanent job. The percentage of men is slightly higher than that of women.

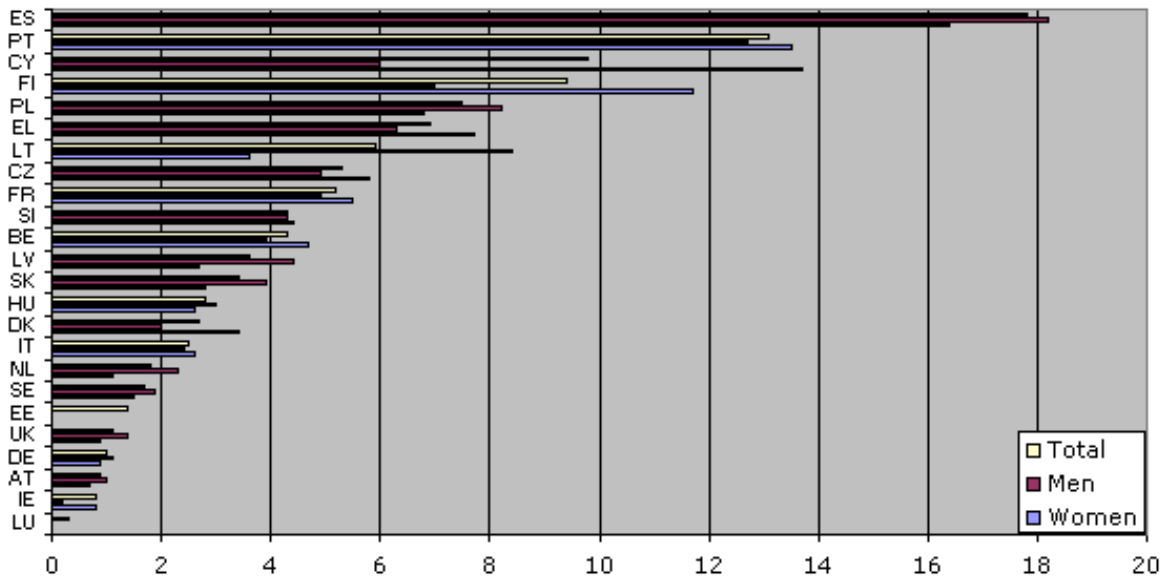
**Table 1: Reasons for fixed-term work, EU25 (%)**

Reasons	Women	Men	Total
Education or training	1.8	1.9	1.9
Could not find permanent job	4.1	4.6	4.4
Did not want permanent job	0.6	0.7	0.7
Probationary period	0.5	0.8	0.7
No reason	1.6	2.1	1.9

Source: Indicators for monitoring the Employment Guidelines 2004-2005 Compendium, Update: 15 April 2005;

Figure 3 indicates that, in some Member States, involuntary fixed-term work is widespread. In Spain and Portugal 17.8% and 13.1% respectively of those in employment are involuntarily on a fixed-term contract. In Cyprus, Portugal and Finland high percentages of women work involuntarily on fixed-term contracts.

**Figure 3: Employees on a fixed-term contract because a permanent job could not be found, as % of total employment (2003)**



Source: Indicators for Monitoring Employment Guidelines, 2004-5 compendium, update 15/4/05, based on LFS.  
 Note: EE and LU: Figures for total uncertain due to low sample size. Data by sex not indicated.

### Investment in training

As training and competence development in companies is an investment in human resources, companies must have an interest in such interventions.

In the case of temporary agency work, the triangular relation of temporary agency, temporary agency worker and user company plays a huge role in access to training and competence development. This ‘divided employer’ situation is a key characteristic of temporary agency work, and can explain a lack of incentives to give further training to temporary agency workers.

In its [final report \(2.2Mb pdf\)](#), the German [Expert Commission on Financing Lifelong Learning](#) discusses the situation of temporary agency workers. Lower participation in further training impacts negatively on their employability in the long term. The experts discuss the potential interest of the user companies in investing in the training of temporary agency workers. Depending on the duration of employment of the temporary agency workers in the company, it is questionable for these companies whether the investment in further training pays off. In the triangle of temporary agency worker, temporary agency and user company, it is not clear who benefits from the training. Often, investments in further training only take place if the return flows to the investor. Additionally, the opportunities for further training are restricted, due to the frequently changing places of operation and time demands. In the periods when the worker is not hired out, the employment relationship often ends.

In the report [Temporary agency work in the European Union](#), Storrie (2002) argues in a similar way, referring to the human capital theory. The fact that the temporary agency workers will work for the user firm only for a limited time means that there is little interest in providing much training. Therefore any training that is given is generally provided by the agency.

As the function of the temporary agency is to provide several user firms with labour, it is obvious that the skills

supplied are not firm specific. Indeed, the concept of agency work is based on transferable skills traded in an occupational labour market. According to the human capital theory, firms will not be prepared to pay for investment in non firm-specific human capital, since - given that the worker is free to leave to go to another firm - they cannot ensure a return on their investment. (Storrie, 2002)

The proposal for a Directive on working conditions for temporary agency workers similarly alludes to the fact that user undertakings and temporary work agencies have little incentive to give temporary workers vocational training, as the assignment at the undertaking is of a temporary nature. ([COM\(2002\) 149 final - 270Kb pdf](#) )

### **Training and competence development**

The lifelong learning and competence development approach aims at equipping the workforce with the necessary knowledge and skills. Rapidly changing work processes necessitate both the capacity and opportunity to adapt to such processes.

Two interrelated key aspects determine employability in the long run:

- training measures;
- competence development.

Competence and on-the-job skills development can be measured by a number of indicators. Key indicators, besides investment by the companies in additional training, relate to the job content. These are the ability to learn by being allocated to challenging work or being allocated to work that matches personal abilities.

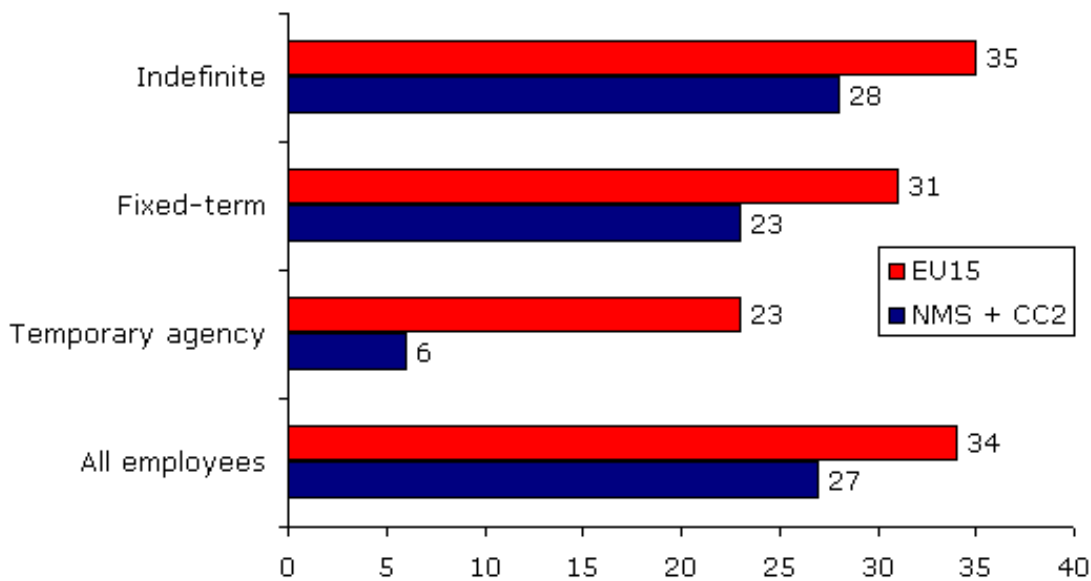
The European social partners' [agreement](#) on lifelong learning emphasises competence development over and above the acquisition of qualifications. Competencies are defined as '... the knowledge, skills, and know-how applied and mastered in a given work situation.'

Qualifications are defined as '... a formal expression of the vocational or professional abilities of the employee.'

For permanent employees, competence development plans - embedded in broader human resource development strategies - are the basis for targeted training measures and interventions. The assumption is that fixed-term or temporary agency workers are not, or are less, involved in such plans, yet these are probably more crucial for employability than short-term training measures which enable them to fulfil the tasks of the current job.

Data from the [European Working Conditions Survey](#) (EWCS) 2000-1 illustrate different kinds of access to training provided by the employing company, according to the workers' contractual status (Figure 4).

**Figure 4: Access to training - % of employees receiving training from their company over the past 12 months, by contract type**



Source: EWCS 2000/1

An EIRO comparative study in the EU15 on non-permanent employment ([TN0202101s](#)) reports that there are fewer training opportunities for employees on non-permanent contracts.

The EWCO report [Temporary agency work in the European Union](#) provided evidence, based on national sources, that temporary agency workers have less access to supplementary training measures and to participation in long-term competence development, than workers with permanent contracts. However, the report also points to different research findings. Swedish case study research, for example, shows that, on a short-term basis, the level of learning and competence development is quite high for the workers, and changing jobs can extend their work experience. Nonetheless, the case studies showed that temporary agency workers participate less in long-term competence development than do permanent workers. Training measures tend to focus on the acquisition of skills required for the existing job situation rather than on developing new skills in relation to other fields. Temporary agency workers also have less job control in terms of control over the order of tasks, pace of work and work methods, and have low job demands.

Training of temporary agency workers can take place:

- before service in a user company, by the temporary work agency;
- in periods without assignment;
- during service in the user company.

Both the [Code of Practice](#) and the [Charter](#) of the [International Confederation of Temporary Work Businesses](#) (CIETT) emphasise the importance of providing vocational training for temporary agency workers.

In the case of temporary agency workers, there seem to be conflicting influences regarding skills and competence development. Temporary agency workers are frequently faced with new work situations and environments. Experience in different companies has the potential to broaden skills and competencies. However, temporary agency workers do not have access to targeted training measures and interesting tasks in the user companies. Therefore, the crucial question is how the potential for learning is used in practice, and what is the interest of the temporary work agency or the user company in providing targeted training and competence development within the complex triangular relationship.

[Goudswaard and Andries \(2002\)](#) describe the cumulative differences between permanent and non-permanent

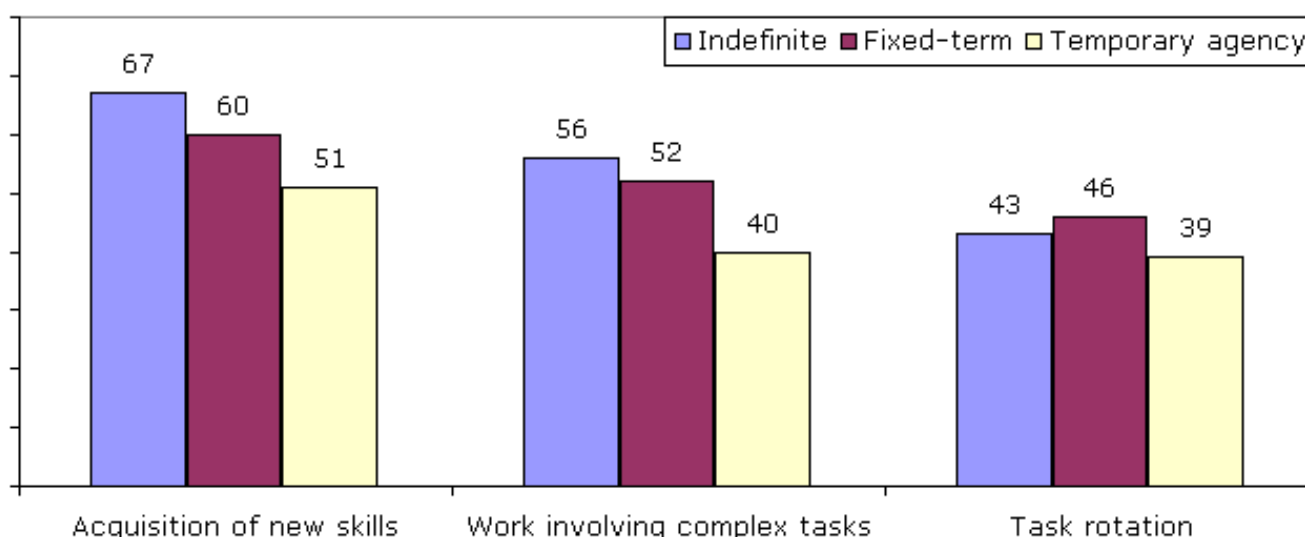
employees with regard to skills development, related to the content of the job and characteristics such as solving problems, performing complex tasks and learning new things in work. Employees with permanent contracts perform more skilful jobs than employees with non-permanent contracts.

Another aspect of skills development through the work content is task flexibility, i.e. being involved in task rotation or working in teams. There are no significant differences between permanent and non-permanent employee in terms of the incidence of task flexibility, but there are differences with regard to the amount of task rotation: non-permanent employees are less involved in the latter.

A further aspect is the match between personal ability and level of skill demands. Differences between permanent and non-permanent employees are significant: employees working in non-permanent contracts more often work in jobs where the demands are too low and unchallenging. Non-permanent employees perform tasks with less skills involved in the job (lack of skills) than permanent employees.

The study by Goudswaard and Andries (2002) is based on data from the third EWCS, carried out in 2000-1. Data for the new Member States (NMS), Bulgaria and Romania, taken from the first [Survey on working conditions in the acceding and candidate countries](#) (2001) give a similar picture with regard to the potential for competence development on the job, according to employment status (Figure 5).

**Figure 5: Content and characteristics of jobs and competence development, % employees, NMS, Bulgaria and Romania, 2001**



Source: EWCS 2000/1

### Newcomers on non-permanent contracts

Goudswaard and Andries (2002) explain that a significant proportion of non-permanent contracts are filled by newcomers in jobs. In their study, newcomers are understood as people who are in their first year of employment. The concept of 'newcomers' does not necessarily apply only to the first job in working life. Other important groups of newcomers in jobs can be, in particular, employees who have been unemployed and are returning to employment based on a fixed-term or temporary agency contract, or people returning from family-related leave.

Data from the European Labour Force Survey (LFS) demonstrate that young people, in particular, are subject to non-permanent employment. In the EU25, 37.9% of employees with fixed-term contracts in their main job were aged 15-24 years old in the second quarter of 2004. The figures are almost the same for women (37.2%) and men (38.5%). ([Annual review of working conditions in the EU 2004-2005](#))

## Training and employability

Training can be aimed at (short-term) company needs or at general skills and competence development. In the perspective of future employability, the key challenge is how to equip people better for change in both current and future jobs.

The German Institute of Employment Research's (IAB) glossary (Werner et al, 2004) explains that:

'employability is a broad concept and means adaptable and updated competencies and labour market-oriented behaviour for every person participating in the workforce; most usually, employability policies combine training, further training, re-training, career advice, placement and incentives/subsidising programmes.'

In general, employability entails the following main aspects:

- access to (permanent) employment;
- advancement within employment;
- sustainable employment.

For the vulnerable group of non-permanent workers, key factors for employability include the impact on career development, in terms of a transition into permanent employment, occupational mobility and employment security. To open up opportunities for transition into permanent employment, targeted training and competence development are required.

A study (Forrier and Sels, 2003) found that temporary workers in Belgium have fewer opportunities to enhance their employability than do permanent employees.

Data from the European Community Household Panel (ECHP) allow an analysis of transition trends, by type of contract, for the countries covered by the panel (Table 2).

**Table 2: Transition of fixed-term contract holders from 2000 to 2001 (%)**

Fixed-term to:	Permanent	Fixed-term	Education/training	Self-employed	Unemployed
EU15	32	42	3	2	22
AT	37	41	0	3	19
BE	40	52	1	0	7
DE	32	37	3	2	25
DK	41	26	4	3	26
EL	22	55	0	3	19
ES	30	46	1	1	21
FI	25	44	1	2	28
FR	19	52	2	1	27
IE	31	31	9	2	28
IT	28	48	4	3	17
LU	62	27	2	1	7
NL	37	24	17	0	23
PT	49	44	0	0	6
UK	47	32	0	1	20

Source: Indicators for monitoring the Employment Guidelines 2004-2005 compendium, Update: 15 April 2005; Key indicator 15: Diversity of contractual and working arrangements; based on Eurostat, European Community Household Panel (ECHP)

The [Employment in Europe 2004 \(2.7Mb pdf\)](#) report looks at the in-work transitions of employees on a fixed-term employment contract. The analysis is based on data from the [European Community Household Panel](#).

The probability of moving to permanent employment increases from 31% in a one-year transition to 55% after six years. However, around 37% are still in precarious employment, or moving in and out of employment after this time span. Their chances of moving into stable employment decrease over time.

The research reveals that on-the-job training is strongly correlated with opportunities to move from temporary to permanent employment. The data show a different impact of on-the-job training and training courses with regard to one-year and long-term transitions: training courses are more important for the latter transition, while on-the-job training impacts more strongly on the former.

An [OECD analysis](#) of training and employment performance indicates that policies aimed at enhancing workers' skills contribute to an improvement in employment performance ([EU0410NU01](#)). The analysis shows a positive link between upgrading skills and overall labour force participation. At an individual level, there is a strong association between training histories and employment outcomes.

### Legal regulations regarding training for non-permanent workers

The principle of non-discrimination for fixed-term contract holders, and the rule that employers should facilitate access to appropriate training opportunities, is laid down in the social partners' framework agreement.

With regard to the precarious situation of fixed-term or temporary agency contract holders, legal regulations or collective agreements provide measures to give these workers access to training. Table 3 gives an overview for fixed-term workers and Table 4 for temporary agency workers.

The regulations for fixed-term workers in several countries explicitly exclude temporary agency workers on contracts of limited duration.

**Table 3: Legal regulations regarding training for fixed-term workers**

Country	Regulation
Austria	There are no specific legal regulations or obligations concerning training measures for employees on fixed-term contracts.
Czech Republic	In order to facilitate changing a fixed-term employment contract into a permanent contract, Section 18 (2) (i) of Act no. 46/2004 Coll. - i.e. the Labour Code amendment - obliges employers to inform employees about vacancies for permanent positions that would be suitable for those working on fixed-term contracts.
Denmark	In 2002, the government approved a law that prevents discrimination of short-term employees. According to Law 370 on short-term employment, from 28 May 2003, employers are encouraged to facilitate greater access for employees on fixed-term contracts to appropriate education in order to improve their employability and mobility. Law 370 does not include temporary agency workers.
Estonia	The Estonian Employment Contracts Act specifies that employers must not discriminate between employees,

	including access to training and in-house training. There are no specific provisions regarding training of employees on fixed-term contracts.
Finland	The Employment Contracts Act contains no specific section concerning access to training for fixed-term employees. According to Section 1, Chapter 2 of the Employment Contracts Act, the employer shall ensure that employees are able to carry out their work even when the enterprise's operations, the work to be carried out, or the work methods are changed or developed. The employer shall strive to further the employees' opportunities to develop themselves according to their abilities so that they can advance in their careers. According to Section 2, Chapter 2 of the Employment Contracts Act, without proper and justified cause, less favourable employment terms than those applicable to other employment relationships must not be applied to fixed-term employment relationships.
France	The institutional system for vocational training was set up by the law of 16 July 1971, amended in 1984. Employers of 10 workers or more must spend a certain percentage of their wage bill on employee training, or pay the equivalent amount to the government or an Authorised Collecting Organisation held by the social partners (OPCA). Since 1992, the sum has been set at 1.5% of the wage bill (except for temporary work, see below), split in three parts: applied training, training plan, individual training leave. In September 2003, an interprofessional agreement was signed by the social partners, introducing some changes in this framework. The minimal contribution increased to 1.6% (and from 0.25% to 0.4%, and 0.55% in 2005, for employers with fewer than 10 workers). The agreement also establishes the principle of an individual right to training, under the form of a 20-hour training credit a year, which can be accumulated over six years, as training (outside work) for which the employer has given his agreement. For permanent workers, this entitlement begins after one year in the company, and for fixed-term workers after four months (the credit is calculated pro rata).
Germany	According to Section 19 of the law on part-time work and fixed-term labour contracts (Gesetz über Teilzeitarbeit und befristete Arbeitsverträge - 23Kb pdf; in German) the employer has to ensure that employees on fixed-term contracts can participate in appropriate education and further training measures in order to promote occupational development and mobility, as long as these are not in conflict with urgent company-related reasons or interests of other employees in education and further training. This provision does not give an entitlement to education and further training. It provides for equal treatment of employees on fixed-term contracts with regard to the selection of participants in such measures.
Italy	There are no specific legal provisions on the training of fixed-term employees. In 2001, implementation of the

	<p>EU directive on fixed-term work abolished the priority entitlement for experienced fixed-term workers, but hundreds of company-level collective agreements re-introduced this right, sometimes in stronger terms. In some cases, they give priority to fixed-term employees when hiring for a permanent post.</p>
Netherlands	<p>The Law on Equal treatment of fixed-term and permanent contracts is applicable for different flexible contracts, but not for temporary agency work. This law forbids employers to make a distinction in employment conditions between employees with a non-permanent and a permanent contract, unless the difference can be justified objectively. Justification for an exclusion from long-term training plans can be made on several grounds, for example, when a measure has no use because of the short-term employment relation; or will be implemented after the contract ends; or concerns a longer term obligation of the employer that exceeds the duration of the contract; or would result in unjustified high costs for the employer. The Dutch Labour Inspection analyses the content of Collective Agreements on a regular basis. In 2003, attention was paid to special agreements on company policy on employability directed towards special groups (Arbeidsinspectie, 2003). The Inspection concluded that there are many agreements directed towards the employability of groups of unemployed people with low qualifications (32 agreements), but only a few directed towards employees on a fixed-term contract (two agreements).</p>
Portugal	<p>The Portuguese Government recently introduced a new Labour Code, Law N° 99/2003 of 27 August (entered into force on 1 December 2003). In this law, a specific article refers to training for employees on fixed-term contracts (Article 137). It states that the employer should give professional training to the employee on a fixed-term contract whenever the contract period exceeds a time limit of six months. The law also establishes a minimum training hour limit corresponding to the contract duration: if the contract period is less than a year, the training hours should correspond to 1% of the normal working period; if the contract duration is between one and three years, the training hours should be equal to 2% of the normal working period; and if the contract period is over three years, the training hours should be equal to 3% of the normal working period. Regarding legal provisions of permanent employees' professional training, Article 125 of the Labour Code states that employers are obliged to promote competencies and on-the-job skills development for all employees. A minimum of training hours per year for each permanent employee is guaranteed: up to 2006, it is set at a minimum of 20 hours a year and, from 2006 onwards, this minimum will be 35 hours a year.</p>
Spain	<p>The Spanish Social Security requires that 0.7% of the</p>

	salary be devoted to funding continuing training activities: employers contribute 0.6% and workers the remaining 0.1%. It should be noted that 0.35% is targeted at training for unemployed people while the remaining 0.35% focuses on training initiatives for all salaried employees, including fixed-term contract workers, but not temporary agency workers. The Spanish Tripartite Foundation for Training in the Workplace (Fundación Tripartita para la Formación en el Empleo) is the public body in charge of continuing training.
Sweden	There are no specific legal provisions on training for fixed-term workers.

Source: EWCO national reports, 2005

**Table 4: Legal regulations regarding training for temporary agency workers**

Country	Regulation
Austria	The conditions under which hiring-out of labour is allowed are laid down in the Hiring-Out of Labour Act (Arbeitskräfteüberlassungsgesetz - AÜG). The Act aims at protecting temporary agency workers in terms of employment contract, health and safety at work and social security, and at avoiding negative labour market developments for them. But, although the Act covers crucial working conditions aspects, such as payment, holidays, working time, notice periods, etc, it does not include training measures. There are no specific legal regulations or obligations concerning training measures for employees on temporary agency contracts. Also, the collective agreement for temporary agencies, which aims at guaranteeing basic social security for temporary agency workers, does not include any regulations concerning training opportunities.
Czech Republic	The temporary work agency and the hiring company are obliged under Section 38b (5) of the Labour Code to ensure that the temporary worker's work and pay conditions are no worse than those of a comparable employee. If they are, the agency is obliged, upon request by the temporary worker or without any such request if the agency otherwise learns of the conditions, to ensure equal treatment. Temporary workers are entitled to demand a satisfactory outcome from the agency concerning their claim.
Denmark	Law 370 on short-term employment of 28 May 2003 does not include temporary agency workers.
Estonia	Labour law does not restrict the use of temporary agency contracts. There are no specific legal provisions on training of agency employees.
Finland	No information provided.
France	The interprofessional agreement of 24 March 1990 on

	<p>fixed-term and temporary agency work was brought into law on 12 July 1990. It set out the compulsory contribution of temporary work agencies, with more than 10 employees, towards vocational training, at a higher percentage than the standard (2% instead of 1.5%). At least 50% of this sum must be used for the training of temporary workers. The compulsory contributions to the training fund are 0.4% of the wage bill for the applied training of young workers who leave school without certification; 0.3% for individual training leave and competencies assessment; 1.3% for a training plan; the temporary work agency may manage directly most of this amount (up to 85%), as it sees fit. Beyond these contributions, the agencies also have to pay 0.2% of their wage bill to the FPE-TT (Fonds Professionnel pour l'Emploi du Travail Temporaire - Professional fund for employment of temporary work), which was created in 1996 to improve the work integration of temporary workers.</p>
Germany	<p>The Law on temporary agency work (40Kb pdf; in German)(Gesetz zur Regelung der gewerbsmäßigen Arbeitnehmerüberlassung - AÜG) does not include any specific provisions on training measures. In Section 11, 6, the Law on temporary agency work states that the occupational health and safety obligations for the user company apply to the temporary agency worker, regardless of the obligations of the temporary work agency. The user company has to inform the temporary agency worker about health and safety risks and measures and facilities to prevent risks, before taking up work and in the case of changes in the working area. In addition, the user company has to inform the temporary agency worker on the need for particular qualifications or occupational skills or special medical surveillance, as well as about particular risks of the workplace. The collective agreements on temporary agency work do not include any provision on training. Public Personnel Service Agencies (PSA) are obliged to provide further training for the temporary agency workers they employ. These public employment agencies have the task of bringing unemployed people into employment, and concluding employee contracts with interested companies.</p>
Italy	<p>Forma.temp , the bilateral fund built up by agency representative associations and trade unions for the training of temporary agency workers, was instituted in 1999. It manages the 4% part of the wage bill devoted to training, according to the 1997 labour market reform (the so-called 'Treu package') which introduced temporary agency work in Italy. Some incentives in offering training or financial support, through sharing certain training costs, are provided by bilateral institutions, such as Forma.temp for agency workers and local-level bilateral institutions and companies in commerce, tourism, construction and crafts. These institutions collect funds from companies and workers on the basis of collective agreements, both at national</p>

	and at local level, in order to provide some services or financial support in training, innovation and further welfare measures, both to eligible workers and companies applying for them.
Netherlands	The Collective Agreement for Temporary Agency Work provides for training measures for employees with a flexible contract. Temporary agency work in the Netherlands is organised in a phase system. The workers enter their employment status in phase A and - if applicable - can pursue their career as a temporary agency worker on a fixed-term contract with the agency (phase B) and, finally, on a permanent contract (phase C). Temporary agencies are therefore also regular employers, with the ensuing legal obligations. According to the Collective Agreement, a personal training budget is set up from the 27th week of temporary agency work (phase A) onwards. This budget can be used in phase B. All workers go through these phases if they work long enough in a certain phase. They could, however, remain in the first phase, if the work as a temporary worker is discontinuous. There are certain rules for the duration of the work and any career breaks.
Portugal	In 1996 and 1999, new legislation (Laws 39/96 and 146/99) introduced changes to the Decree Law 358/89. Regarding professional training, Article 8 - Duties of the temporary-employment agencies - ruled that the temporary work agencies are obliged to contribute at least 1% of total annual revenue to temporary worker training. Non-fulfilment of this obligation is considered a serious administrative offence, and liable to a fine.
Spain	Regulations on training measures are included in the: Law 14/1994, from 1 June 1994, on temporary work agencies (Ley de Empresas de Trabajo Temporal), which was later modified by the Law 29/1999, from 16 July 1999 (Ley de Modificación de la Ley 14/1994); and in the National Collective Agreements of temporary work agencies (Convenio Colectivo Estatal de Empresas de Trabajo Temporal). The Fourth Agreement, signed on 14 April 2004 is currently in force, until 31 December 2005. Article 12.2 of the Law 14/1994, states that Temporary Work Agencies have to put in place a compulsory reserve of 1% of salary for investment in training activities for temporary workers. Since the Third National Collective Agreement of Temporary Work Agencies, of 19 October 2000, an additional 0.25% budget is recommended, aimed at training on workplace health and risk prevention. However, this is not compulsory.
Sweden	There are no specific legal provisions on training for temporary agency work.

Source: EWCO national reports, 2005

## Fixed-term workers

### Extent and structure of fixed-term work

Figure 1 illustrated the level of fixed-term work in different EU countries in the third quarter of 2004, based on Eurostat data. The national surveys confirm a different incidence rate of fixed-term contracts across countries (Table 5).

**Table 5: Extent of fixed-term contract holders, according to national working conditions surveys**

	%	National survey/source*	Year
Austria	4.5	Austrian LFS	2003 (3rd qr)
Czech Republic	9.1	LFS	2004 (4th qr)
	17.9	Measuring Quality of Working life	2004
Denmark	10	Danish LFS	2004 (1st qr)
Estonia	23	WLB	2002
Finland	14	FQWLS	2003
France		No data available	
Germany	11.5	GSOEP	2003
	11.6	BIBB/IAB	1999
Italy	7.2	Istat	2002
Netherlands	3.5	CBS Workforce Survey	2004
Portugal	15.1	INE Employment survey	2004
Spain	30.6	Spanish LFS	2004
Sweden	15.2	Statistics Sweden (taken from Holmlund and Storrie, 2002)	2002

Source: EWCO national reports, 2005; \*See Appendix for further details on national surveys

A tendency towards an increase in fixed-term contracts - with some fluctuations - can be observed across the countries.

The [Employment in Europe 2004](#) report describes the relative employment change, by type of employment contract, in the EU15. Table 6 shows that, following a considerable increase in fixed-term employment in the period 1997 to 2000, a fall may be seen in the period 2000 to 2003.

**Table 6: Relative employment changes 1997-2000 and 2000-2003, by type of employment contract, EU15**

	Relative change in employment between 1997 and 2000 (as % of 1997 employment level)	Relative change in employment between 2000 and 2003 (as % of 2000 employment level)
Fixed-term	18.8	-2.7
Permanent	5.5	4.4

Source: Employment in Europe 2004; Estimates based on LFS, spring results

## Gender

In most of the countries, fixed-term contracts concern more women than men. In Portugal, the difference in the incidence of fixed-term contracts between women and men increased from 1.3% to 4% between 1993 and 2002. However, in Austria and Estonia, the rate of men working under a fixed-term contract is higher than that of women.

## Age

Across all countries, predominantly the younger age groups are concerned by fixed-term contracts. In Portugal, 80% of fixed-term workers are under 34 years of age. In Germany, 59% are between 15 and 25 years, and 74% are less than 30 years old (Table 7).

**Table 7: Fixed-term contract holders, by age group**

	Age groups	%	Survey/Source	Year
Austria	15-34	58	Austrian LFS	2003 (3rd qr)
Czech Republic	20-34	45	LFS	2004 (4th qr)
Estonia	under 30	31	WLB	2002
Finland	15-34	53	FQWLS	2003
Germany	15-25 ; 15-30	59 ; 74	Microcensus	2003
Portugal	under 25 ; under 34	36 ; 80	INE Employment survey	2004
Spain	16-29	52	Spanish LFS	2004

Source: EWCO national reports, 2005

In the two new Member States, the Czech Republic and Estonia, older workers are also working more often under fixed-term contracts, according to the data from some national surveys.

## Qualifications

The data provided in the national reports are rather diverse concerning the level of school and occupational qualifications among fixed-term contract holders, and portray a mixed picture. As a general trend, fixed-term contract holders are more present both in groups with lower basic degrees and with higher degrees. Fixed-term contracts are quite common among highly qualified staff in universities and research institutes.

## Occupation and sector

A comparison of the national data is difficult because the data are aggregated very differently. Overall, no clear dominance of sectors or occupations is visible in the data. The distribution differs considerably between the countries and surveys.

## Company size

The national data provided reveal a higher rate of fixed-term contract holders in smaller companies, and a lower rate in large companies, compared with permanent contract holders.

## Company training initiatives

The national correspondents were asked to provide data:

- on the extent of training provided by the company, and a profile of the workforce receiving such training measures;
- on the duration, form and place of training measures;
- on the purpose and content of training measures;
- on training on health and safety issues.

The European Working Conditions Surveys include the following question: ‘Over the past 12 months, have you undergone training paid for or provided by your employer to improve your skills, or not? If yes, for how many days?’

Throughout the EU25 and in the candidate countries Bulgaria and Romania, those on fixed-term contracts received less training than those on indefinite contracts (Table 8).

**Table 8: Employees who have received training over the past 12 months, by contract (%)**

	Fixed-term contract	Indefinite contract
EU15	31	35
NMS, Bulgaria and Romania	23	28

Source: Paoli and Merllié 2001; Paoli and Parent-Thirion 2003, based on EWCS 2000/1

Some national surveys use questions in line with the questions in the EWCS. Others have completely different questions regarding occupational training.

For example, the German BIBB/IAB survey conducted in 1998/1999 gives detailed information on education and training. However, there was no question on the financing of training, or whether the training took place within the last 12 months.

Table 9 gives an overview of the extent of training, according to contractual status. With the exception of Austria, the data show generally lower rates of participation in training measures for fixed-term contract holders than for permanent workers across the countries and across the surveys.

**Table 9: Training provided, according to contractual status (national surveys)**

	%	Survey/Source - Time/financing reference	Year
Austria	fixed-term: 11.2 ; all gainfully employed: 8.1	Austrian LFS - participation in training four weeks preceding the survey	2004
	fixed-term: 29.8 ; permanent: 24.2	LFS special programme lifelong learning - past 12 months	2003
Czech Republic	fixed-term: 20.7 ; permanent: 32.4	Working conditions - past 12 months, provided by employer	2000
Denmark	no data access	Question in DWECS : Have you within the past 12 months, while being employed at your current	

		workplace, attended courses or in-service training?	
Estonia	fixed-term: 26.0 ; permanent: 29.0	WLB - Within last 12 months	2002
Finland	fixed-term: 39.0 ; permanent: 56.0	FQWLS - within past 12 months, provided by employer	2003
France	fixed-term: 28.5 ; permanent: 46.5	Formation continue survey - training of at least three hours within past 14 months	2000
	fixed-term: 60.0 ; permanent: 87.0	Paid for by the employer	
Germany	fixed-term: 35.3 ; permanent: 38.9	BIBB/IAB - participation in training courses within last five years	1999
	fixed-term: 47.7 ; permanent: 61.9	GSOEP 2000 module on further training : courses held by employer	2000
	fixed-term: 52.7 ; permanent: 72.7	Financial support for training measures by employer	
Netherlands	fixed-term: 34.0 ; permanent: 35.5	Temporary agency work - participation	1999
	fixed-term: 54.3 ; permanent: 45.9	Training paid for by the employer	
Portugal	fixed-term: 16.0 ; permanent: 33.4	Survey on working conditions - training provided by employer	2000
Spain	fixed-term: 13.9 ; permanent: 26.2	Survey on life quality in the workplace - training provided by employer	2003

Source: EWCO national reports, 2005

The Finnish Quality of Work Life Surveys and the Spanish Survey on Life Quality in the Workplace provide data on access to training, according to the duration of the fixed-term contract (Table 10). The data clearly illustrate that, the longer the duration of the contract, the higher is the rate of participation in training paid for by the employer. The data for Finland show an increase in training for all clusters of contract duration between 1997 and 2003.

**Table 10: Participation in training paid for by the employer, according to duration of contract, in Finland and Spain (%)**

Duration of contract	%
Finland	
three months or less	26
4-6 months	34

7-12 months	40
over 12 months	54
Spain	
less than one month	0.0
1-6 months	9.0
7-12 months	23.0
13-18 months	25.1
19-24 months	21.4
over 24 months	36.7

Source: Quality of Work Life Survey 2003 (Finland); Survey on Life Quality in the Workplace, 2003 (Spain)

The German BIBB/IAB survey investigates where occupational skills have been attained, besides schools, apprenticeships, university, etc. Table 11 provides data on the attainment of occupational skills after the initial vocational training.

**Table 11: Attainment of occupational skills, by contract type, Germany (%)**

Attainment of occupational skills	Fixed-term contract	Permanent contract
Primary source:		
Instruction, training at the current workplace	29.0	20.1
In-company further training and retraining	3.6	4.1
External company further training and retraining	3.4	2.8
Attainment of skills in the work process	13.2	13.8
Secondary source:		
Instruction, training at the current workplace	23.5	21.9
In-company further training and retraining	6.7	10.3
External company further training and retraining	4.3	4.8
Attainment of skills in the work process	40.0	38.2

Source: BIBB/IAB 1998/99 Scientific Use File; own calculations

Data on training initiatives by employers according to structural features is limited in the national reports. Some data was provided on gender and educational attainment level.

## Gender

In Finland, more women (60%) than men (51%) in permanent employment receive training provided by the employer in 2003. The contrary is true for fixed-term contract holders. In this group, 41% of men and 38% of women have access to training measures.

In contrast, the German BIBB/IAB Survey shows a higher degree of women (35.3%) than men (31.5) on a fixed-term contract participating in training courses. More male (40.7%) than female (38.9%) permanent workers are involved in training.

## Educational attainment

The Finnish Quality of Work Life Survey finds that, in 2003, both permanent and fixed-term contract holders with higher levels of education receive more training than those with lower education levels. In all educational categories, permanent workers receive more training than fixed-term workers do.

## Duration, type and place of training

Data from the Survey on Life Quality in the Workplace in Spain and from Working Conditions 2000 in the Czech Republic reveal that most of the training measures provided are short and last only one to five days both for employees on fixed-term and on permanent contracts. However, fixed-term contract holders receiving training are more likely to receive such short training measures (Table 12).

**Table 12: Number of training days, provided by the employer, over the past 12 months, in the Czech Republic and Spain**

	1-5 days	6-10 days	11-20 days	21+ days
Spain				
Fixed-term	56.1	17.0	14.1	12.8
Permanent	44.0	26.4	17.4	12.2
Czech Republic				
Fixed-term	68.4	10.5	-	21.1
Permanent	65.5	18.5	10.0	6.0

Source: Survey on Life Quality in the Workplace, 2003 (Spain); Working Conditions 2000 (Czech Republic)

The Finnish Quality of Work Life Surveys provide data on the average number of training days. In 2003, the average number of days was 5.9 for permanent and 5.1 for fixed-term contract holders. This is an overall decrease on the 1997 survey, when the corresponding figures were 6.2 for permanent and 5.5 for fixed-term contract holders. Men on fixed-term contracts receive a higher average number of training days (6.7) than do male permanent employees (6.3). The average number of training days for women, at 4.2 days for those on fixed-term contracts and 5.4 for those on permanent contract, is considerably lower than for men.

The German GSOEP Specific module on further training in 2000 reveals that permanent employees receive training measures during working hours more often than employees on fixed-term contracts. This is true both for women and for men. Men in both fixed-term and permanent employment receive more training during working hours than women (Table 13).

**Table 13: Training during working hours, Germany (%)**

	During working hours	Partly	Outside of working hours	No answer

Fixed-term	55.8	13.0	28.2	3.0
Women	42.4	10.0	38.2	2.4
Men	67.3	9.5	19.6	3.5
Permanent	64.8	11.6	21.5	1.9
Women	55.7	13.3	28.7	2.3
Men	72.2	10.3	16.0	1.6

Source: GSOEP 2000, Scientific Use File; own calculations

The Spanish Survey on Life Quality in the Workplace 2003 gives a similar picture regarding the provision of training during working hours (Table 14).

**Table 14: Training during working hours, Spain (%)**

	Fixed-term contract	Permanent contract
Always	29.1	29.9
Frequently	11.6	14.7
Sometimes	23.0	25.8
Hardly ever	14.5	9.2
Never	21.8	20.5

Source: 2003 Survey on Life Quality in the Workplace

The Dutch TAS 2000-2002 surveys present data on participation in internal and external training in the past two years (Table 15).

**Table 15: Internal and external training measures, Netherlands (%)**

	Internal training in the past two years	External training in the past two years
Fixed-term contract	34	23
Permanent contract	59	48

Source: TAS 2000-2002

### Purpose and content of training

The German GSOEP 2000 investigated the reasons for work-related training. Some of these are shown in Table 16. Fixed-term contract holders mention more often the aim of becoming acquainted with new subjects, whereas those on permanent contracts have slightly higher percentages with regard to reacquiring professional skills and adjusting to constant changes.

**Table 16: Reasons for participation in further training and training for work, Germany, 2000 (%)**

Reasons	Fixed-term	Permanent
Reacquire professional skills	32.5	38.8

Women	35.7	40.1
Men	29.9	37.8
Adjust to constant changes	52.8	55.7
Women	53.6	53.7
Men	52.1	57.2
Become acquainted with new subjects	36.3	26.8
Women	35.3	26.3
Men	37.2	27.1

Source: GSOEP 2000, Scientific Use File; own calculations

One question in the GSOEP further training module focuses on course attendance in the last three years. A sub-question investigates the reason for this instruction, as shown in Table 17. The purpose concerning adjusting to new demands in the current job is considerably lower among fixed-term contract holders than for permanent workers.

**Table 17: Purpose of instruction in courses attended, Germany (%)**

Purpose of instruction	Fixed-term contract	Permanent contract
Introduction to a new job	2.4	1.7
To qualify for promotion	8.4	9.0
To adjust to new demands in current job	12.6	24.0

Source: GSOEP 2000, Scientific Use File; own calculations

The Dutch national report offers information on the types of training, according to contractual status. The data provide a diverse picture. Equal numbers of permanent employees and fixed-term contract holders participate in training related to job content. Permanent employees receive more training on the use of ICT and customer service skills, and fixed-term employees receive more training on social and managerial skills (Table 18).

**Table 18: Type of training according to contractual status, Netherlands, 1999 (%)**

Type of training	Fixed-term contract	Permanent contract
Job content	45.7	45.9
Use of ICT	25.7	29.5
Social skills	25.7	16.4
Customer service	14.3	18.0
Managerial skills	17.1	9.8
Other	37.1	32.8

Source: Dutch report, based on Miedema and Klein Hesslink, 2002

The Spanish Survey on Life Quality in the Workplace 2003 and the further training module of the German GSOEP in 2000 both investigated the usefulness of the training measures and the newly acquired skills in terms of their work (Spain) or for a new job (Germany). Both in Spain and in Germany, a higher percentage of fixed-term than permanent work contract holders found the training ‘useless’ or only ‘useful to a limited extent’. However, the proportions of those who find the training quite or completely useful are similar for both groups in both countries (Table 19).

**Table 19: Usefulness of training and newly acquired skills in a new job, Spain and Germany (%)**

Usefulness of training or acquired skills	Fixed-term contract	Permanent contract
Spain (2003): for their work		
Useless	2.5	1.7
A little useful	7.5	6.9
Average	7.9	8.0
Quite useful	55.5	55.0
Very useful	26.6	28.5
Germany (2000): in a new job		
Not at all useful	6.9	7.6
Only to a limited extent	27.0	25.9
Useful for the most part	37.4	39.7
Completely useful	27.2	25.8
No answer	1.5	1.0

Source: 2003 Survey on Life Quality in the Workplace Spain; GSOEP 2000, Scientific Use File (Germany)

According to the Czech Republic’s survey on Measuring the Quality of Working Life 2004, 36.2% of fixed-term, and 55.1% of permanent, contract holders strongly agree or agree that the organisation they currently work for provides good training opportunities for improving skills.

### **Training on health and safety issues**

Estimates from the Spanish Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs on accident data show that having a fixed-term contract increases accident probability by five percentage points. The research found that there is a systematic difference between the accident rates of fixed-term and permanent contract holders that is not just the result of a compositional or a reporting effect. The study was based on a sectoral panel with 32 industrial branches, over 11 years (Guadalupe, 2002).

Due to the short-term nature of their employment or the fact of their being new in the job or company, employees on fixed-term contracts are particularly at risk. For this reason, information on training on workplace health and safety issues provided by the company was specifically included as part of this study.

In the Czech Republic, Section 133 (f) of the Labour Code (Act no. 65/1965 Coll. as amended) obliges employers to ensure that, in particular, employees on a fixed-term contract are sufficiently well-informed and instructed about occupational health and safety (OHS). This information should take the form of acquainting them with risks, with the results of risk assessment, and with measures adopted to prevent such risks, which mainly concern their work and their workplace. Employers are obliged to provide this information and these instructions, particularly when

hiring and introducing any changes in working conditions, procedures, resources and technologies. Employers must keep records of training information and instructions, and bear the costs associated with ensuring occupational health and safety.

The German BIBB/IAB survey 1998/99 provides data on OHS training, according to contract status. Some 88.2% of fixed-term contract holders receive OHS training, a slightly higher percentage than for permanent workers (87.3%). The same survey investigates how workers assess the risk of occupational accidents. More fixed-term than permanent workers feel that they are now more exposed to risk (Table 20).

In comparison, as will be discussed later, temporary agency workers receive less OHS training and consider the risk of occupational accidents to be much higher than do fixed-term and permanent workers.

**Table 20: Training on OHS and assessment of risk of occupational accidents, by contract status, Germany 1998/99 (%)**

	Fixed-term contract	Permanent contract
Training on OHS	88.2	87.2
Assessment of risk of occupational accidents:		
Increased	10.0	7.6
Same	58.5	63.2
Decreased	7.6	7.2
Does not apply	23.9	22.0

Source: BIBB/IAB 1998/99 Scientific Use File; own calculations

The Finnish Quality of Work Life Survey provides data on workers' knowledge of OHS, by contract status. Knowledge of occupational safety regulations and guidelines differs considerably between fixed-term (66%) and permanent (76%) employees, and is greater among women than men.

### Newcomers to the job

The Portuguese working conditions survey 2000 reveals that, in the case of employees with less than one year in the company, 13.1% of non-permanent, compared with 33.2% of permanent, employees receive training.

In the Finnish Quality of Work Life Survey, newcomers are defined as persons employed by the same employer for less than 12 months. Newcomers employed with an indefinite contract receive more training than those on fixed-term contracts. This is true for both women and men. The difference increases with the level of education (Table 21). For all groups of newcomers, the proportion of those receiving training increased from 1997 to 2003.

**Table 21: Training paid for by the employer among newcomers, by contract type, sex and education, Finland (%)**

	Fixed-term contract	Permanent contract	Fixed-term contract	Permanent contract
	1997		2003	
Total	20	35	28	43
Women	25	35	28	46
Men	13	35	29	41

Education level:				
Basic	11	23	15	16
Upper secondary	19	34	24	36
Tertiary	36	52	45	74

Source: Finnish report, based on Finnish Quality of Work Life Survey

Data about newcomers is provided in the Danish Work Environment Cohort Study . The survey investigates the level of education of newcomers and the businesses they work in, whether they can use their competence and skills in their work, and to what extent they participate in in-service training.

Data relating to people re-entering the labour market were not provided in any of the national reports.

### Job-skills match

The EWCS reveal a gap in the job-skills match between those on fixed-term and indefinite contracts (Table 22).

**Table 22: Job-skills match by contract (%)**

	Fixed-term contract	Indefinite contract
EU15	77	84
NMS, Bulgaria and Romania	84	91

Source: EU15: EWCS 2000 (own calculations); NMS, Bulgaria and Romania: Paoli and Parent-Thirion 2003, based on EWCS 2000/1

Across all countries, the match of skills and job is considerably higher for permanent workers (Table 23).

**Table 23: Match of skills and job demands (%)**

Contract status	Demands too high	Match	Demands too low	Source/Year
Czech Republic: Match: Skills-demand				WC 2000
Fixed-term	8.7	82.6	8.7	
Permanent	10.1	88.4	1.6	
Estonia: Match: Educational level-Job				LFS 2003
Fixed-term (under one year)		72		
Permanent		85		
Finland : Match: duties-present skills				FQWLS 2003
Fixed-term		57		
Permanent		60		

Germany: Match: Skills-demand				BIBB/IAB 1998/99
Fixed-term	4.1	82.8	13.0	
Permanent	2.9	90.0	7.1	
Netherlands: Match: Skills-demand				Work in the information society 2002
Fixed-term	20.8	73.8	5.4	
Permanent	9.8	80.0	10.2	
Spain: Match: education-job requirements				Survey on Life Quality in the Workplace 2003
Fixed-term	0.7	66.4	31.8	
Permanent	1.4	81.6	16.1	

Source: EWCO national reports, 2005

Data from Finland and Germany provide a gender breakdown (Table 24).

**Table 24: Match of skills and demands at work, by sex, Finland and Germany (%)**

Contract status	Women	Men	Source/Year
Finland:			FQWLS 2003
Fixed-term	56.0	59.0	
Permanent	59.0	61.0	
Germany:			BIBB/IAB 1998/99
Fixed-term	82.6	83.1	
Permanent	89.2	90.6	

Source: EWCO national reports, 2005

The German BIBB/IAB survey investigates the job-skills match with several further variables, such as use of knowledge, opportunities to apply skills, and the extent to which employees carry out tasks they have never been trained in (Table 25).

**Table 25: Job-skills match - further variables, Germany (%)**

	Fixed-term contract	Permanent contract
Use of knowledge:		
Great deal	27.1	34.9
Quite a lot	16.8	19.6
Certainly some	16.5	18.2

Little	11.4	9.7
Very little	28.2	17.7
Opportunities to apply skills:		
Very satisfied	17.0	20.8
More or less satisfied	55.0	63.6
Rather unsatisfied	20.3	13.0
Very unsatisfied	7.8	2.6
Carrying out tasks not trained for:		
Virtually always	1.8	1.0
Frequently	6.7	5.2
From time to time	18.8	16.3
Rarely	26.6	29.4
Hardly ever	46.1	48.1

Source: German report; based on BIBB/IAB survey 1998/99 Scientific Use File; own calculation

## Competence and on-the-job skills development

### Involvement in the company's competence development plans

The involvement of workers in competence development plans and discussions in the company impacts on their long-term employability, and can be of more importance than short-term training measures. Being excluded from these aspects of human resources development in companies creates a strategic disadvantage for non-permanent workers.

The Measuring Quality of Working Life Survey 2004 in the Czech Republic offers data on involvement in personnel development initiatives (Table 26). In the case of career planning and providing information and assistance, managers with a permanent contract play a more active role than do managers with a fixed-term contract.

**Table 26: Involvement in development of personnel, Czech Republic (%)**

	Strongly agree and agree	Neither	Disagree and strongly disagree
Manager plays an active role in career planning			
Fixed-term contract	22.8	31.1	46.1
Permanent contract	33.9	30.3	35.9
Provision of information and assistance to manage			

one's career			
Fixed-term contract	31.6	37.7	30.7
Permanent contract	44.4	34.0	21.6

Source: MQWL, 2004

### Current job in line with profession and education level

In Portugal, 23.1% of non-permanent workers report that their current job is not in line with their qualifications, in contrast to 18.3% of permanent workers, according to the working conditions survey 2000.

### Opportunities to learn new things

The EWCS and some national working conditions surveys (for example, the Danish DWECS ) include questions on whether the job involves learning new things.

In the EU15, between 1995 and 2000, the proportion of employees on fixed-term contracts who had the opportunity to learn new things at work increased from 69% to 73%, while the proportion of those on indefinite contracts decreased from 75% to 72% (Paoli and Merllié, 2001). In 2001, 60% of those on fixed-term, and 67% on indefinite contracts, had such opportunities (Paoli and Parent-Thirion, 2003).

The Dutch TAS 2000-2002 surveys offer data on the relationship between employment status and job content, based on several relevant scales (skill scope job autonomy and cognitive demands). Table 27 shows a higher degree of skill scope, job autonomy, and cognitive demands for permanent employees.

**Table 27: Employment status and job content, % responding 'yes', Netherlands**

	Fixed-term	Permanent
Skill scope (scale)	61	71
1. work requires competence	71	89
2. work is varied	68	84
3. work demands learning new things	49	54
4. work requires creativity	68	71
5. opportunities in work to develop competencies	50	59
Job autonomy (scale)	57	74
1. can decide for oneself	61	78
2. can decide sequence of tasks	59	76
3. can decide when to perform tasks	48	68
4. work method is not prescribed	61	76
5. able to choose own work method	58	72
Cognitive demands (scale)	63	75
1. work requires intensive thinking	53	65
2. have to retain information for a	44	56

long time		
3. work requires full concentration	85	92
4. work requires a lot of attention	74	85
5. have to keep track of several things	62	78

Source: TAS 2000-2002

According to the German BIBB/IAB 1998/99 survey, the work of fixed-term contract holders is more often predetermined in detail, and they are assigned repetitive tasks more often than are permanent employees. With regard to new tasks, the percentages of those who ‘virtually always’, and those who ‘hardly ever’ are faced with new tasks is higher for fixed-term workers (Table 28).

**Table 28: Competence development, by contract status, Germany (%)**

	Virtually always	Frequently	From time to time	Rarely	Hardly ever
Fixed-term					
Work is predetermined in detail	19.7	20.0	16.1	22.6	21.5
Repetitive tasks	22.5	28.2	20.3	14.8	14.3
New tasks	8.0	24.1	27.6	21.5	18.8
Permanent					
Work is predetermined in detail	14.0	18.2	17.6	24.7	25.6
Repetitive tasks	16.5	29.2	22.7	16.6	15.0
New tasks	7.0	25.6	31.9	21.1	14.5

Source: BIBB/IAB 1998/99 Scientific Use File; own calculations

In Finland, 58% of those on fixed-term and 67% of those on permanent contracts have a say in planning their own work (FQWLS 2003). At 69.6%, a higher proportion of Spanish permanent than fixed-term contract holders (62.4%) always or often carry out different tasks that require varying knowledge and skills (2003 Survey on Life Quality in the Workplace).

In Germany, 45.9% of fixed-term contract holders, compared with 35% of permanent employees, use training periods for a new job to acquire new occupational skills. Special tasks are used by 20% of fixed-term and 23.7% of permanent workers to learn new occupational skills. This latter method of acquiring new skills is used more often by men than women, regardless of contractual status (BIBB/IAB survey 1998/99).

### Complex tasks

In the Czech Republic, the job involves complex tasks for 41.8% of fixed-term and 57.5% of permanent contract holders, according to the Working Conditions 2000 survey. Data from the MQWL 2004 reveal that the jobs of 47.5% of fixed-term, compared with 63% of permanent employees, involve creative thinking.

In the Netherlands, the TAS 2000-2002 surveys portray a significantly lower level of cognitive demands for fixed-term contract holders (see Table 27 above).

According to the German BIBB/IAB survey 1998/99, a higher proportion of permanent employees feel that work has become more varied (Table 29).

**Table 29: Level of varied work, by contract status, Germany (%)**

	Increased	Steady	Decreased	Does not apply
Fixed-term contract	24.1	58.7	11.0	6.2
Permanent contract	25.9	66.6	5.1	2.4

Source: BIBB/IAB 1998/99 Scientific Use File; own calculations

### Task rotation and team work

Work organisation practices such as task rotation, team work or quality circles contribute to competence development of the workforce involved. Data from a number of national surveys show that employees on fixed-term contracts participate to a lesser extent in such processes than do permanent staff members. Table 30 illustrates the disadvantage facing fixed-term contract holders in terms of: involvement in task rotation and team work in the Czech Republic; team work in Finland; and quality circles in Germany.

**Table 30: Involvement in task rotation, team work, quality circles (%)**

	Fixed-term contracts	Permanent contracts
Czech Republic		
Rotating tasks	45.7	55.4
Team work (all or part of work)	53.3	66.3
Finland		
Working in a permanent work group or team	58.0	61.0
Germany		
Participation in measures such as quality circles	13.6	22.6
Women	14.0	19.6
Men	13.3	24.9

Source: WC 2000 (Czech Republic); FQWLS 2003 (Finland); BIBB/IAB 1998/99 (Germany)

### Career prospects

Across the Czech Republic, Finland, Germany and Spain, fixed-term contract holders believe they have lower prospects for promotion than permanent workers (Table 31).

**Table 31: Perceived career prospects in the current job/company (%)**

	Fixed-term contract	Permanent contract
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Czech Republic		
Opportunities for career development (strongly agree and agree)	26.5	41.8
Finland		
Good advancement opportunities in current workplace	10.0	10.0
Women	8.0	9.0
Men	12.0	12.0
Germany		
Perception of promotion prospects		
Very satisfied	5.1	7.5
More or less satisfied	41.0	57.2
Rather unsatisfied	36.0	28.1
Very unsatisfied	17.9	7.2
Spain		
Perceived promotion chances if they participate in further education		
Many	8.8	8.5
Quite a lot	11.9	15.7
Some	16.4	18.6
Few	15.3	18.2
None	47.7	38.9

Source: WC 2000 (Czech Republic); FQWLS 2003 (Finland); BIBB/IAB 1998/99 (Germany); Survey on Life Quality in the Workplace 2003 (Spain)

The Finnish FQWLS includes the question: 'What will happen once the current fixed-term contract ends?' The data differentiate between those who had received training and those who had not (Table 32).

**Table 32: Impact of training on perceived career prospects of fixed-term contract holders, Finland (%)**

	Fixed-term workers who ...	
	had received training	had not received training
Fixed-term contract will be renewed	54	42
Permanent contract at current work	8	5
A new job somewhere else	13	11

Become unemployed	8	13
Does not want a new job	1	5
Does not know yet	16	24

Source: FQWLS 2003

### Prospects for further training

Table 33 summarises the perceived opportunities for further training in the Czech Republic, Finland and Germany. In all surveys, permanent employees have a higher perception of their training prospects than do fixed-term contract holders.

**Table 33: Perceived opportunities for further training in the current job/company (%)**

	Fixed-term contract	Permanent contract
Czech Republic		
Good opportunities for continuous learning to improve skills (strongly agree and agree)	38.6	49.2
Finland		
Good opportunities for training to improve professional skills	32.0	42.0
Women	28.0	43.0
Men	29.0	41.0
Germany		
Perception of prospects of further training		
Very satisfied	13.5	13.8
More or less satisfied	45.7	56.8
Rather unsatisfied	28.2	23.3
Very unsatisfied	12.6	6.2

Source: WC 2000 (Czech Republic); FQWLS 2003 (Finland); BIBB/IAB 1998/99 (Germany)

The Italian report includes data on workers taking the initiative to receive training and filling training needs not linked to the current job (Table 34).

**Table 34: Training opportunities, by contractual status, Italy, 2002 (%)**

	Fixed-term contract	Permanent contract
Yes, my company offers good opportunities	22.8	23.4
Yes, but I have to manage by myself	34.4	38.2

Training needs not linked to current job	22.5	16.9
No opportunities	17.0	18.0
No answer	3.4	3.4

Source: Italian report; based on Carrieri, Damiano and Ugolini (eds), 2005; with further elaborations

The Italian report also provides data on the link between the opportunity to use one's education in the job and job security, as perceived by the workers. Those who feel that their education is very useful are the most confident about job security; perhaps surprisingly, this is the case for 32.5% of fixed-term contract holders and a slightly lower 31.4% of permanent employees (Carrieri, Damiano and Ugolini, 2005).

### Training, competence development and employability

National working conditions surveys provide data on training and employability, perceived job security and opportunities to find a new job, threat of dismissal, and the risk of unemployment. Overall, the perception of employment opportunities and job security is more positive among permanent staff.

The MQWL 2004 in the Czech Republic shows that the percentage of employees who feel that they receive training to improve their employability within and outside the company is markedly higher among permanent employees (48%) than fixed-term employees (31%).

In the Italian DS (Democratici di Sinistra) survey, employability is described as the opportunity to find a - more or less - equivalent job. Although the feeling of job security is positively related to company training opportunities for fixed-term workers, the percentage of those employees receiving training who assume they will find a new job within a few weeks is higher for permanent (28.2%) than for fixed-term employees (25.4%) (Carrieri, Damiano and Ugolini, 2005).

According to the German GSOEP 2003, 23.4% of fixed-term contract holders, compared with 16.2% of permanent employees, assume that it is difficult to find a new job. Equally, 23.9% of fixed-term contract holders have more worries about job security compared with 14.8% of those on indefinite contracts.

The MQWL 2004 in the Czech Republic reveals that 48.9% of permanent workers are satisfied with job security, compared with 27.3% of fixed-term workers.

The Finnish FQWLS 2003 investigates the perceived likelihood of getting a new job in relation to level of training received (Table 35).

**Table 35: Likelihood of getting a new job, in relation to training received and contract type, 2003, Finland (%)**

	Good	Reasonable	Poor	Don't know
Fixed-term				
Has received training	45	38	16	0
Has not received training	34	43	22	1
Permanent				
Has received training	32	38	29	1

Has not received training	27	36	37	1
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Source: Finnish report; based on FQWLS 2003

Fixed-term contract holders experience the threat of unemployment more often (56%) if they have not received training than those who participated in training (51%). The corresponding figures for permanent workers, at 18% for those without training and 12% for those with training, are significantly lower.

The German BIBB/IAB 1998/99 survey includes a question to permanent employees with regard to the threat of dismissal, and to fixed-term employees regarding the threat that their contract will not be extended. The differences according to contractual status are remarkable (Table 36).

**Table 36: Threat of dismissal or contract not renewed, Germany (%)**

	Very high	High	Rather low	No threat
Fixed-term contract	32.6	23.6	33.4	10.4
Permanent contract	3.1	8.8	55.5	32.5

Source: BIBB/IAB 1991/92 and 1998/99 Scientific Use File; own calculations

The same survey reveals that a considerably higher percentage of fixed-term (42%) than permanent (20.6%) workers feel that the risk of becoming unemployed has increased (Table 37).

**Table 37: Risk of becoming unemployed, Germany (%)**

	Increased	Steady	Decreased	Does not apply
Fixed-term contract	42.0	43.1	6.5	8.3
Permanent contract	20.6	55.1	10.9	13.4

Source: BIBB/IAB 1998/99 Scientific Use File; own calculations

## **Temporary agency workers**

### **Extent and structure of temporary agency work**

Figure 2 illustrated the relatively low level of temporary agency work across the EU15 (2.2%) and the NMS, Bulgaria and Romania (1.9%), according to the EWCS 2000-1.

Across all countries for which data on the extent of temporary agency work were provided in the national reports, the percentage of such employment contracts is low (Table 38).

**Table 38: Extent of temporary agency work**

	%	Number	Survey/Source	Year
Austria	1.5	53,700	LFS	2004
Czech Republic	0.7		Working Conditions	2000
	0.4		Measuring Quality of Working Life	2004

Denmark	1.1	30,656	Statistics Denmark	2001
Estonia	1.2		EWCS	2001
France	2.5	2,000,000(= 600,000 fulltime jobs)	UNEDIC	2002
Germany	2.9	319,299	GSOEP	2003
	1.1		GSOEP	2002
	1.2		Official statistics on TAW by the Federal Employment Office	2002
Italy	0.3	74,629	Isfol, QWS	2002
Netherlands	2.5	157,000	CBS Workforce Survey	2004
Portugal		21,000	DETEFP	2003 2nd qr
Spain	5.1	551,357	Ministry of Labour	2003
Sweden	Less than 1		Nyström	2001

Source: EWCO national reports 2005

Most surveys or statistics on temporary agency work do not differentiate between administrative staff within the agency and staff who are hired out to other companies. The German GSOEP, which has included a question regarding temporary agency work since 2001, altered the question in the 2003 panel in order to identify those employees leased to other companies.

All of the national reports show a rapid and constant increase in the number of temporary agency workers, although the proportion of such contracts among the working population is still low. The Netherlands is the only country showing some fluctuation and even a decrease: the highest rate of temporary agency work peaked at 3.8% in 1997 and 1998.

### Type of contract

Data in Germany from the GSOEP and the BIBB/IAB reveal that the majority of German temporary agency workers are employed on the basis of permanent contracts (Tables 39 and 40). According to the BIBB/IAB 1998/99 survey, 60.6% of temporary agency workers had a permanent contract and, according to the GSOEP in 2001, this proportion was 70.3%.

**Table 39: Temporary agency workers, by contractual status, Germany (%)**

	Fixed-term contract	Permanent contract
Temporary agency contract	39.4	60.6
Total workforce	10.5	89.5

Source: BIBB/IAB 1998/99 Scientific Use File; own calculations

**Table 40: Temporary agency workers, by work contract, Germany, 2001 (%)**

Labour contract	Temporary agency workers	Total economy
Fixed-term	16.0	7.1

Indefinite	70.3	79.1
No work contract	13.8	13.7

Source: DIW Wochenbericht 46/2003, based on: GSOEP, Survey 2001.

In Sweden, most employees in the temporary work agencies work on a permanent contract (Swedish report, based on: Andersson and Wadensjö, 2004).

### Gender

In all countries, the majority of temporary agency workers are male. The only exception is Sweden, where 58% of temporary agency workers are female.

### Age

Although the picture is less clear than in the case of fixed-term contract holders, temporary agency workers are strongly over-represented in the younger age groups in most of the countries included in this study. In Sweden, the average age of temporary agency workers is 34.5 years, compared with 41.3 years for the total working population.

### Qualifications

Temporary agency workers tend to have a lower level of school-leaving and vocational qualification than is the case among permanent workers. In particular, the percentage of those without a school-leaving certificate and vocational qualification is much higher across all countries.

### Sectors

The available sectoral data indicate that construction is a core area of employment for temporary agency workers. In Austria, in 2004, the proportion in the manufacturing and crafts sector was almost equal to that in the service sector. In Portugal, the hotel and restaurant sector employs a high percentage of temporary agency workers.

### Company size

Data according to company size was provided only in the German report, based on the BIBB/IAB 1998/99 survey. The highest percentages of temporary agency workers are found in companies with 10-49 employees (38.3%) and with 100-499 employees (26.9%). The German IAB Company Panel shows the highest use in companies with 499 and more employees (Table 41).

**Table 41: Extent of temporary agency work in companies, by company size cluster, Germany (%)**

Number of employees	Use of temporary agency work
1-49	1.6
50-499	16.5
499 and more	35.7

Source: ([IAB-Betriebspanel 2002 - 112Kb pdf; in German](#) )

### Company training initiatives

Data from the EWCS 2000-1 reveal a considerably lower degree of participation in training on the part of temporary agency workers. This gap is significantly wider than was found for fixed-term workers (see Table 8).

**Table 42: Employees who have received training over the past 12 months, by contract type (%)**

	Indefinite contract	Temporary agency contract
EU15	35	23
NMS, Bulgaria and Romania	28	6

Source: Paoli and Merllié, 2001; Paoli and Parent-Thirion, 2003, based on EWCS 2000/1

Table 43 gives an overview of information from national sources on training for temporary agency workers. None of the surveys specify whether the training is provided by the temporary work agency or by the user company.

**Table 43: Training provided to temporary agency workers**

	%	Survey/Source	Year
Austria	Too few data	Austrian LFS. Time frame: participation in training past 12 months. Response for TAW under 4,000. TAW was not included in the 2003 LFS special programme on lifelong learning	2004
Czech Republic	Too few observations	Working Conditions. TAW included. Past 12 months	2000
France	34.5	Formation Continue survey. Training of at least three hours within past 14 months	2000
	69.0	Paid for by the employer	
Germany	26.6	BIBB/IAB. Participation in training courses within last five years	1999
Italy	14.7	Regione Emilia-Romagna Training provided by agency or user company	2004
Netherlands	Phase A: 27.4 / Phase B: 35.7 / Phase C: 22.6	Training paid for by the employer: 29.3 / 43.5 / 14.3	1999

Source: EWCO national reports 2005

In France, the percentage of temporary agency workers receiving training is higher (34.5%) than for fixed-term workers (28.5%), but lower than for permanent staff (46.5%).

In Germany, the percentage of temporary agency workers receiving training is lower (26.6%) than for both fixed-term (35.3%) and permanent workers (38.9%).

According to the German BIBB/IAB survey, a higher proportion of temporary agency workers than permanent workers attain their occupational skills primarily through instruction, training at the current workplace, while in the

work process and by external company training and retraining. The proportion of those who attained their occupational skills primarily through in-company training and retraining is lower (Table 44).

**Table 44: Attainment of occupational skills, by contract type, Germany (%)**

Attainment of occupational skills	Temporary agency contract	Permanent contract
Primary source:		
Instruction, training at the current workplace	31.5	20.1
In-company further training and retraining	3.2	4.1
External company further training and retraining	3.6	2.8
Attainment of skills in the work process	18.1	13.8
Secondary source:		
Instruction, training at the current workplace	19.6	21.9
In-company further training and retraining	2.6	10.3
External company further training and retraining	4.3	4.8
Attainment of skills in the work process	46.0	38.2

Source: BIBB/IAB 1998/99 Scientific Use File; own calculations

The Portuguese report refers to research (Santana and Centeno, 2002) revealing that one of the main disadvantages of temporary agency work is the limited access to training provided by the company. Among 16 temporary work agencies interviewed, only seven provided training for temporary agency workers. Only one agency funded a training course of a long duration (15 days), while the others promoted short-term training courses (one to three days). Almost two thirds (65%) of temporary agency workers participated in training provided by the user companies. However, priority for training measures is given to the company's own staff. The content of the training for the temporary agency workers was oriented towards the job they were going to do.

The EWCO national correspondent from the Czech Republic gathered information on the basis of telephone interviews with the major private temporary work agencies. Although this information is not representative, it provides some idea of training measures available to temporary agency workers. In the case of temporary agency work, by law (Section 38b (5) of the Labour Code), temporary work agencies are obliged, along with the user company, to ensure that the temporary agency worker has the same working conditions as the comparable employee would have. According to the information given by agencies in the telephone survey, they and the user company also ensure the same access to training and courses.

Temporary work agencies provide training and courses in cooperation with the user company. However, most agencies merely offer basic training on occupational safety, as required by Act no. 65/1965 Coll., Labour Code, in the form of written material, sometimes combined with a brief lecture.

Some agencies organise courses and training as part of their business. By agreement with the user company, an employee can participate in a course organised by the agency and receive training of a general nature in a particular

area, or specifically for a job.

The type of training provided by the user company differs, according to the actual position and job description. Typically, it takes the form of an initial training to ensure that the temporary agency worker is qualified to perform the work assigned to her or him. The length of this training usually ranges from half a day to three days. The training is jointly financed by the agency and user company. Longer training courses are rare, partly due to the fact that most temporary agency workers are hired out for a short period.

The French report explains that, although the general access rate of temporary agency workers to training is lower than for the average, there are sizeable differences within the group of temporary agency workers. The most 'regular' temporary agency workers - i.e. those with high qualifications and frequently assigned for long periods - have the best opportunities to receive training. In contrast, the rate of access to training for women, older or disabled workers is lower than their share in the population of temporary agency workers.

Training also depends on the size of the temporary work agency. Workers employed in small agencies have less access to training than those in large and medium-sized agencies. Temporary work agencies employing more than 2,000 workers (representing 80% of the workers in the sector) provide 90% of the vocational training. The rate of access to training is 2.5 times lower in temporary work agencies with fewer than 500 employees than in agencies with more than 2,000 employees.

The Swedish report finds that many temporary work agencies provide training for their employees. However, this training often only takes place before the first assignment (Andersson and Wadensjö, 2004).

According to the German BIBB/IAB Survey 1998/99, more female (26.6%) - compared with male (24.1%) - temporary agency workers participated in training courses.

### Duration, type and place of training

The Dutch TAS 2000-2002 surveys present data on participation in internal and external training over the past two years. Temporary agency workers clearly participate less than other workers in both internal and external training. The gap is significant in the case of external training courses (Table 45).

**Table 45: Internal and external training measures, Netherlands (%)**

Contract type:	Internal training in the past two years	External training in the past two years
Temporary agency	26	9
Permanent	59	48

Source: TAS 2000-2002

The type of training provided differs between permanent and temporary agency workers, but also between the different groups of temporary agency workers (Table 46).

**Table 46: Type of training, by contractual status, Netherlands, 1999 (%)**

Type of training	Temporary agency work Phase A	Temporary agency Fixed-term Phase B	Temporary agency Permanent Phase C	Permanent
Job content	38.2	19.6	42.9	45.9
Use of ICT	24.8	34.8	14.3	29.5
Social skills	12.7	2.2	14.3	16.4
Customer service	10.2	4.4	0.0	18.0

skills				
Managerial skills	10.2	2.2	0.0	9.8
Other	41.4	50.0	42.9	32.8

Source: Dutch report, based on Miedema and Klein Hesslink, 2002

The Italian report provides data on the training of temporary agency workers, according to the workers involved per project, the average duration in hours and the hourly costs per worker (Table 47).

**Table 47: Training for agency workers, Italy, 2003**

Type of training:	Number of workers per project	Average duration (hours)	Hourly cost per worker involved
Basic and geared towards job	9.0	10.6	€10.59
Continuous training	9.5	58.7	€17.35
Continuous through a voucher system	1.0	40.6	€15.53
Training on-the-job	1.1	31.0	€16.12

Source: Ministry of Welfare, 2004 report on continual training to the Parliament

The regional survey for Emilia-Romagna offers data on training activities for temporary agency workers. Short training courses are more common (Table 48).

**Table 48: Training activities for agency workers in Emilia-Romagna, by sex, 2001 (%)**

	Men	Women	Total
Short training courses	51.3	43.0	47.8
Long training activities	30.5	40.8	34.8
Training activities outside the company	36.0	38.7	37.2
Trained agency workers	15.7	13.6	14.7

Source: Region of Emilia-Romagna, 2004

In France, most of the training provided in the temporary agency sector is aimed at adapting the worker to the specific job in the assignment. It is estimated that 80% of the training measures organised in the temporary work agency sector have an average duration of less than 40 hours. Long training schemes (more than 40 hours) are mainly developed in the framework of individual training leave and applied training. In 2000, a limited number of temporary agency workers (6,000) benefited from these long training schemes.

### **Purpose and content of training**

As mentioned before, data from Portugal, Sweden and France reveal that training of temporary agency workers is strongly related to the tasks performed during the assignment.

According to the Swedish report, research suggests that training is of a more general nature, transferable to other jobs/employment, and mainly occurs before the first assignment (Andersson and Wadensjö, 2004).

The report on the training of temporary agency workers in Emilia-Romagna provides some information regarding the content of training (Table 49).

**Table 49: Content of training for agency workers in Emilia-Romagna, by sex (%)**

	Women	Men	Total
Labour contract regulations	24.5	23.5	23.9
Work organisation	23.1	25.0	24.2
Health and safety	48.3	60.0	55.1
Basic ICT	23.8	19.5	21.3
'Shadowing' a colleague (i.e. following and learning by watching and copying what they do)	9.8	18.5	14.9
Use of machinery - to certificate level	21.7	35.0	29.4
Use of machinery - refresher level	12.6	16.0	14.6
Problem-solving techniques	4.9	5.5	5.2
Communication techniques	24.5	17.0	20.1
Social skills	17.5	12.5	14.6
New qualifications	21.0	20.0	20.4
n.a.	1.4		0.6
Other	1.8		0.6

Source: Region of Emilia-Romagna, 2004

### Training on health and safety issues

Employees on temporary agency contracts are particularly at risk due to the short-term duration of their employment, or to being new in the job or company. In France, the ratio of accidents resulting in sick leave in 2000 was 58.1 in the temporary agency work sector, while the national ratio was 24.6. According to data from the Berufsgenossenschaft (compulsory occupational accident insurance fund) in Germany, the accident ratio of temporary agency workers was 48.3 per 1,000 insurance cases in 2000, considerably higher than the average ratio of 17.8 for workers in the Verwaltungsberufsgenossenschaft (insurance fund for the private service sector).

The Third National Collective Agreement of Temporary Work Agencies in Spain sets out that 0.25% of total salary should be voluntarily committed to training on workplace health and risk prevention. This percentage is in addition to the compulsory 1% for training activities.

In the Czech Republic, according to information gained in telephone interviews with temporary work agencies, such agencies provide training on safety at work, according to the legal requirement.

The German [Law on temporary agency work \(40Kb pdf; in German\)](#) (Gesetz zur Regelung der gewerbsmäßigen

Arbeitnehmerüberlassung - AÜG) obliges the user company to inform the temporary agency worker of health and safety risks and measures, and strategies to prevent risks, before taking up the work and in the case of changes to the workplace. In addition, the user company has to inform the temporary agency worker of the need for particular qualifications or occupational skills, as well as of increased risks in the workplace.

According to the German IAB/BIBB survey 1998/99, temporary agency workers receive less occupational health and safety (OHS) training, and consider the risk of occupational accidents to be much higher than is the case with fixed-term and permanent workers (Table 50).

**Table 50: Training on OHS and assessment of risk of occupational accidents, by contract status, Germany 1998/99 (%)**

	Temporary agency contract	Permanent contract
Training on OHS	77.6	87.2
Assessment of risk of occupational accidents:		
Increased	21.3	7.6
Equal	61.0	63.2
Decreased	5.6	7.2
Does not apply	12.0	22.0

Source: BIBB/IAB 1998/99 Scientific Use File; own calculations

Data based on the German GSOEP 2001 survey indicate that more agency workers than the average worker feel a high risk of accidents at work (Table 51).

**Table 51: Perception of high risk of accidents at work, according to temporary agency workers, Germany (%)**

	Applies	Applies partially	Does not apply
Agency workers	23.5	35.3	41.2
Total economy	15.7	19.6	64.7

Source: DIW Wochenbericht 46/2003, based on: GSOEP, Survey 2001

### Newcomers to the job

Unlike in the case of fixed-term contract holders, the national reports were not able to provide useful data on this issue for temporary agency workers. It would have been interesting to get information not only on persons in their first job but also on the re-entry of previously unemployed people to the labour market, based on a temporary work agency contract.

### Jobs-skills match

Data from the EWCS 2000-1 show a higher degree of mismatch between job demands and skills in the case of temporary workers.

**Table 52: Job-skills match (%)**

	Temporary agency contract	Indefinite contract
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EU15	75	84
NMS, Bulgaria and Romania	85	91

Source: EU15: EWCS 2000 (own calculations); NMS, Bulgaria and Romania: Paoli and Parent-Thirion 2003, based on EWCS 2000/1

Only the German report provides data on the job-skills match of temporary agency workers (Table 53). Some 78.1% of temporary agency workers feel that their skills match the demands of their jobs, compared with 90% of permanent workers. Temporary agency workers are less satisfied with the opportunities to apply skills. On the other hand, they more often carry out tasks they have never been trained in. Almost two out of three temporary agency workers (63.8%) state that their job could be performed by a person with a lower qualification, compared with 41.3% of permanent workers.

**Table 53: Job-skills match - further variables, Germany (%)**

	Temporary agency contract	Permanent contract
Match: Skills-demands		
Demands too high	7.2	2.9
Skills match	78.1	90.0
Demands too low	14.7	7.1
Satisfaction with opportunities to apply skills		
Very satisfied	8.9	20.8
More or less satisfied	56.0	63.6
Rather unsatisfied	24.2	13.0
Very unsatisfied	10.9	2.6
Carrying out tasks never trained in		
Virtually always	2.4	1.0
Frequently	12.7	5.2
From time to time again	20.6	16.3
Rarely	28.2	29.4
Hardly ever	36.1	48.1
Job could be performed by a person with a lower qualification		
Yes	63.8	41.3

Source: German report; based on BIBB/IAB survey 1998/99 Scientific Use File; own calculations

### Competence and on-the-job skills development

### **Involvement in the company's competence development plans**

The national reports did not provide any information on this crucial aspect of long-term employability.

### **Current job in line with professional and educational level**

In Italy, only 7.6% of temporary agency workers, compared with 23.1% of permanent workers, find their education useful, while 33.5% state that their education is not required for the job (Table 54).

**Table 54: Perceived use of education, Italy (%)**

	Temporary agency contract	Permanent contract
Yes, very useful	7.6	23.1
Yes, partly or indirectly	22.2	33.8
Not required by the job	33.5	19.8
No, educated for a different job	20.3	12.2
No, low education	15.8	10.3
n.a.	0.6	0.8

Source: Italian report, based on Carrieri, Damiano and Ugolini (eds), 2005, with further elaborations

Analysis based on the German GSOEP 2001 reveals that only 41.9% of temporary agency workers work in the profession for which they had studied, compared with 58.6% in the total economy (Table 55).

**Table 55: Temporary agency workers working in their chosen profession, Germany, 2001 (%)**

Working in the profession for which worker had studied	Temporary agency worker	Total economy
Yes	41.9	58.6
No	40.3	35.1
No profession	17.9	6.3

Source: DIW Wochenbericht 46/2003, based on: GSOEP, Survey 2001

### **Opportunity to learn new things**

In the EU15, the proportion of employees on temporary agency contracts who have opportunities to learn new things at work increased from 58% to 60% between 1995 and 2000, and decreased from 75% to 72% for those on permanent contracts (Paoli and Merllié, 2001). In the NMS, Bulgaria and Romania, 51% of workers on temporary agency and 67% on indefinite contracts had the opportunity to learn new things in 2001 (Paoli and Parent-Thirion, 2003).

The Dutch TAS 2000-2002 surveys provide data on the relationship between contractual status and job content, based on several relevant scales (skill scope, job autonomy and cognitive demands). The data reveal that employees with a temporary agency contract have lower skill discretion in their jobs, lower autonomy and lower cognitive demands than permanent employees have (Table 56). These levels are also lower than those for fixed-term contract holders (Table 27).

**Table 56: Employment status and job content, % responding 'yes', Netherlands**

	Temporary agency contract	Permanent contract
Skill scope (scale)	43	71
1. work requires competence	47	89
2. work is varied	50	84
3. work demands learning new things	37	54
4. work requires creativity	46	71
5. opportunities in work to develop competencies	37	59
Job autonomy (scale)	44	74
1. can decide for oneself	50	78
2. can decide sequence of tasks	46	76
3. can decide when to perform tasks	38	68
4. work method is not prescribed	45	76
5. able to choose own work method	40	72
Cognitive demands (scale)	50	75
1. work requires intensive thinking	33	65
2. have to retain information for a long time	37	56
3. work require full concentration	76	92
4. work requires a lot of attention	53	85
5. have to keep track of several things	53	78

Source: TAS 2000-2002

In Germany, the work of temporary agency workers is more often predetermined in detail, and they are assigned repetitive tasks more often than are permanent workers, according to the BIBB/IAB 1998/99 survey (Table 57).

**Table 57: Competence development, by contract status, Germany (%)**

	Virtually always	Frequently	From time to time	Rarely	Hardly ever
Temporary agency					
Work is predetermined in detail	29.8	26.2	15.9	16.3	11.9
Repetitive tasks	29.4	32.5	16.7	13.1	8.3
New tasks	7.6	24.4	25.2	24.8	18.0

Permanent					
Work is predetermined in detail	14.0	18.2	17.6	24.7	25.6
Repetitive tasks	16.5	29.2	22.7	16.6	15.0
New tasks	7.0	25.6	31.9	21.1	14.5

Source: BIBB/IAB 1991/92 and 1998/99 Scientific Use File; own calculations

Some 47.8% of temporary agency contract holders, compared with 35% of permanent employees, use training periods in a new job to acquire new occupational skills; while 22.2% of temporary agency workers and 23.7% of permanent workers engage in special tasks to learn new skills (BIBB/IAB survey 1998/99).

### Complex tasks

The Dutch TAS 2000-2002 surveys reveal a notably lower level of cognitive demands in the case of temporary agency contract holders (see Table 56 above).

Fewer temporary agency workers than permanent workers feel that their work has become more varied, according to the German BIBB/IAB 1998/99 survey (Table 58).

**Table 58: Variety of work, by contract status, Germany (%)**

	Increased	Steady	Decreased	Does not apply
Permanent contract	25.9	66.6	5.1	2.4
Temporary agency contract	21.1	54.3	12.6	12.1

Source: BIBB/IAB 1998/99 Scientific Use File; own calculations

### Task rotation and team work

In Germany, only 7.8% of temporary agency workers, compared with 22.6% of permanent workers, participate in company measures such as quality circles (Table 59).

**Table 59: Participation in company measures such as quality circles (%)**

	%
Temporary agency contract	7.8
Women	6.7
Men	8.3
Permanent contract	22.6
Women	19.6
Men	24.9

Source: BIBB/IAB 1991/92 and 1998/99 Scientific Use File; own calculations

## Career and further training prospects

A study by the [German Institute for Economic Research \(DIW\)](#), using data from the German GSOEP 2001, reveals notable differences between temporary agency workers and a statistically comparative group in the total economy regarding career prospects and opportunities for further training (Table 60). Only 36.5% expect that they will participate in further training, compared with 48.2% in the comparative group.

**Table 60: Career prospects as perceived by temporary agency workers, Germany, 2001 (%)**

Probability within the next two years of...	Temporary agency worker	Comparative group in the total economy	Difference
Losing job	38.2	43.9	-5.7
Looking for a new job (own initiative)*	58.2	43.1	15.1
Leaving the current occupation and new start in another occupation	34.5	24.3	10.2
Self-employment, freelancing	11.0	8.2	2.8
Occupational promotion within the current company	16.2	20.6	-4.4
Occupational relegation within the current company	16.3	12.2	4.1
Further training by courses	36.5	48.2	-11.8

Source: DIW Wochenbericht 46/2003, based on: GSOEP, Survey 2001. Note: Mean of information given on a scale from 0 (definitely not) to 10 (definitely yes). \*Differences between the temporary workers and members of the comparative group are statistically significant on a 10% level.

The BIBB/IAB 1998/99 survey finds very different degrees of satisfaction with occupational prospects for promotion or further training (Table 61).

**Table 61: Career prospects, as perceived by workers, Germany (%)**

Satisfaction with ...	Very satisfied	More or less satisfied	Rather unsatisfied	Very unsatisfied
Temporary agency contract				
Prospects of promotion	2.7	31.6	41.3	24.4
Further training	6.7	40.0	33.8	19.6
Permanent contract				
Prospects of promotion	7.5	57.2	28.1	7.2
Further training	13.8	56.8	23.3	6.2

Source: BIBB/IAB 1998/99 Scientific Use File; own calculations

The BIBB launched a research project on [competence development in temporary agency work \(23Kb pdf; in German\)](#) . The results are not yet available.

Only 11.4% of Italian temporary agency workers see good opportunities for training, in contrast to 23.4% of permanent employees (Table 62).

**Table 62: Training opportunities, by contractual status, Italy (%)**

	Temporary agency contract	Permanent contract
Yes, my company offers good opportunities	11.4	23.4
Yes, but I have to manage by myself	39.9	38.2
Training needs not linked to current job	28.5	16.9
No opportunities	15.2	18.0
n.a.	5.1	3.4
Total	0.8	76.8

Source: Italian report; based on Carrieri, Damiano and Ugolini (eds), 2005; with further elaborations

### **Training, competence development and employability**

The French report describes positive experiences with training schemes for the temporary work agency sector. Training schemes of an extended duration clearly improve the temporary worker's opportunities to get a stable job. After a period of individual training leave, 32.2% of temporary workers find a permanent job, and those who are still in temporary work get jobs requiring better qualifications.

Through the 'applied training system', the rate of access to permanent contracts increases dramatically, from 7.2% to 51.5% (Young Qualification Contract) or from 2% to 33% (Young Temporary Worker Training Mission Contract). The respective performance of these two types of contracts is shown in Table 63.

**Table 63: Changing professional situation of trainees in vocational schemes, France (%)**

Training scheme	Before training	Six months after training	One year after training
Young Qualification Contract			
Temporary agency contract	46.2	36.1	21.2
Permanent contract	7.2	31.6	51.5
Fixed-term contract	10.7	22.4	10
Unemployed	35.4	9.9	17.3
Young Temporary Worker Training Mission Contract			
Temporary agency contract	87	72	35

Permanent contract	2	13	33
Fixed-term contract	3	8	9
Unemployed	8	7	23

Source: FAF-TT April 2002 survey

Whereas access to training frequently correlates to the level of qualifications, these extended training schemes mainly benefit workers with low qualification levels in the temporary agency work sector. Young workers, in particular, benefit from the training efforts in this sector, compared with the national average.

As a result, the temporary agency work sector contributes significantly to the integration of workers. According to the research, some 59% of temporary workers were unemployed before they started working in this sector; only 7% of them are unemployed one year later.

According to research carried out for the Italian Ministry of Welfare (2004), 17% of companies use agencies as a recruitment tool, with a view to permanent hiring. More than half of these companies (55%) have hired temporary agency workers on a permanent contract. Of the temporary agency workers, 27% were later employed by the user company.

A recent report for the [Ministry of Welfare \(2005\) - 1Mbb pdf: in Italian](#), based on a new database, CLAP (a longitudinal sample of workers and retired people), reveals that most temporary agency workers are offered a fixed-term contract if they become employed. Ichino, Mealli, and Nannicini (2003) find that the probability for temporary agency workers of moving to a permanent job after 18 months is 28%, which is almost the same figure as for other non-permanent workers moving to a permanent situation. The report on training needs for agency workers in Emilia-Romagna shows that training has a marginal impact on improving employability.

In a report carried out by Oxford Research in 2003 concerning temporary agencies in Denmark, the agencies were asked to provide information with regard to how often a temporary agency job leads to permanent employment. According to the agencies, about 10% of all temporary agency workers are offered permanent employment (Oxford Research, 2003).

In Denmark, temporary agency workers can be laid off with one day's notice and therefore have very little job security. Some agency workers, especially those who are employed for a short period, feel that they are under pressure to perform well. They feel that they cannot be too demanding or question what they are asked to do. They cannot afford to have an 'off-day' because it may jeopardise their opportunity for permanent employment.

The German GSOEP 2003 finds that temporary agency workers are significantly more concerned about job security than permanent workers (Table 64).

**Table 64: Worries about job security, 2003, Germany (%)**

	Permanent contract	Temporary agency contract
Very concerned	14.8	23.1
Somewhat concerned	41.4	33.0
Not concerned at all	41.7	34.8
No answer	2.1	9.0

Source: GSOEP, Scientific Use File; own calculations

The BIBB/IAB 1998/99 survey also demonstrates that temporary agency workers experience the threat of dismissal - or that their employment contracts will not be extended if they are on fixed-term contracts - to a much greater degree than those on permanent contracts. Some 44.1% of temporary agency workers feel that the risk of becoming

unemployed has increased, in contrast to 20.6% of permanent workers.

**Table 65: Threat of dismissal and risk of unemployment, Germany (%)**

	Temporary agency contract	Permanent contract
Threat of dismissal		
Very high	14.7	3.1
High	26.8	8.8
Rather low	46.8	55.5
No threat	11.7	32.5
Risk of becoming unemployed		
Increased	44.1	20.6
Steady	42.4	55.1
Decreased	6.5	10.9
Does not apply	6.9	13.4

Source: BIBB/IAB 1998/99 Scientific Use File; own calculations

## ***National initiatives and company best practices***

### **Austria**

In Austria, the social partners negotiated the Hiring-out of Labour Act (1998) to regulate this form of employment. Temporary agency work is promoted as a means of re-integrating unemployed people into the labour market. For this purpose, several non-profit work agencies were established by community bodies, in cooperation with the labour market service. These non-profit work agencies offer training courses and skills development to their employees. To user companies, they offer the chance to test candidates by means of a temporary agency work contract. The rate of reintegration into a permanent employment ranges from 45% to 52%.

The national report for Austria describes the case of Flexwork - one of the largest of the non-profit temporary work agencies - as a best practice example for training initiatives and competence development. Flexwork is part of WAFF (Wiener ArbeitnehmerInnen Förderungs Fonds), a Fund set up by the social partners (Community of Vienna, Chamber of Labour, Austrian Trade Union Federation, Vienna Economic Chamber, Public Employment Service). Flexwork tries to combine temporary agency work with social responsibility, by integrating unemployed people into employment (with a special focus on long-term unemployed and older unemployed people, who make up 50% of Flexwork's employees).

Flexwork's results for 1997-2004 were as follows: 3,679 unemployed persons were employed by Flexwork. Some 1,531 of them moved on to a permanent contract in another company. By the end of 2004, Flexwork still employed 321 temporary agency workers. In 2004, the agency invested €37,064 in training activities in different fields (foreign languages, IT courses, technical and electronic courses) for 80 participants. Training courses were offered in advance of the job assignment, as well as during employment intervals between two assignments, to further improve skills. The combination of support for training, competence development and temporary agency work aims at increasing the chances of reintegration into the regular labour market and strengthening employability.

### **Czech Republic**

In the Czech Republic, an amendment of the Labour Code no. 46/2004 Coll., which took effect on 1 March 2004, is intended to prevent repeated signing of fixed-term contracts with the same employee. The maximum total duration of successive fixed-term employment contracts is two years.

Temporary agency work is affected by the new Employment Act no. 435/2004 Coll., applicable since 1 October 2004. The amendment of Labour Code no. 436/2004 Coll., which also took effect in October, specifies the conditions under which it is possible to perform temporary agency work. Unlike previous amendments, only work agencies, i.e. organisations established and licensed to broker work, are able to hire out employees to client companies.

The relationship between the state's social policy and new work forms is defined in the National Action Plan for Employment for 2004-2006. It states that the social partners should strive to incorporate all legally admissible forms of flexible work into collective agreements.

## **Estonia**

The national report for Estonia suggests that the reason for the relatively low level of temporary agency work in this country could be that employers use other means to achieve flexibility in employment relationships, and also that many firms may not even be aware of the possibility of such arrangements. Current labour legislation does not limit the use of temporary agency contracts in any way.

## **Finland**

Mainly due to the high educational level of fixed-term contract holders in Finland, there is little discussion regarding a lack of training for this group. In the past decade, however, there has been some debate, particularly focusing on very short fixed-term employment relationships, due to the strong growth of such contracts.

## **France**

In France, the social partners of the temporary work sector set up the first element of a specific vocational training system for temporary workers. The key points of the national agreement of 9 June 1983 were:

- to establish an appropriate body - *Organisme paritaire collecteur agréé* (OPCA) - for the sector (FAF-TT: Fond d'Assurance Formation - Travail Temporaire),
- to define a status for the temporary worker in training: during training, temporary workers have a contract that guarantees them a status and an income, generally based on the one received before the training.

Since then, vocational training has taken up a great part of the collective negotiations in the sector (more than one quarter of the national agreements concluded in the sector deal with this issue). Rather than adapting the existing systems to temporary work, the social partners have defined specific training modalities. Agreements give temporary agency workers access to some industry qualifications. Other agreements provide training for people who face difficulties in integrating into work life. These negotiations have been strongly supported by the government through the extension of agreements and legislation.

Training in the framework of the training plan is usually of short duration, and mainly aimed at adaptation (or re-adaptation) to the job. An agreement from 2000 stipulated that such training can also take place within the user companies. However, the trainers must be authorised by the FAF-TT and the training cannot take place while on-the-job. SETT, the confederation of the temporary work sector companies, estimates that 220,000 training activities were conducted in 2001 within this framework, amounting to an investment of €143 million.

The French report explains that temporary work agencies have invested in training as a means towards developing the sector. The large and medium-sized agencies have developed a strong network of training centres. This reflects a new direction for temporary agency work, spurred on by two factors:

- user companies frequently demand workers with qualifications that will enable them to operate in a function on a short-term basis;
- temporary work agencies are trying to evolve their traditional activity to develop into a global human

resources management consulting service.

## Germany

Germany experienced a rapid liberalisation in the legal and institutional operation of temporary agency employment with the revision of the Temporary Employment Act ([Arbeitnehmerüberlassungsgesetz - AÜG](#)). From 2004, restrictions on temporary agency work have been abolished regarding the time limit of assignments up to 24 months, as is the ban on re-employment and synchronisation, formerly laid down in the Temporary Agency Act. At the same time, the equal pay and equal treatment principle has been implemented. This requires the same pay and employment condition for temporary agency workers that apply to permanent staff in the user company.

In 2002, the so-called Hartz-Commission (named after the head of the Commission, the [Labour Director](#) of Volkswagen) proposed the introduction of so-called [Personnel Service Agencies \(PSA\) - 81Kb pdf; in German](#) , functioning along the same principles as temporary work agencies. The concept provides for the establishment of a PSA at any employment office. The task is to employ unemployed people, with the aim of bringing them into employment in user companies. Contracts for the operation of a PSA are given to registered temporary work agencies. Collective agreements for temporary agency workers have to be observed.

An analysis of the operation of the PSA scheme has been published by the [IAB](#) in two studies. The [first report \(230Kb pdf; in German\)](#) investigates its implementation. The [second report \(185Kb pdf; in German\)](#) looks at the first experiences and the profile of employees. Parallels to traditional agency workers, as well as differences, are highlighted. PSAs tend to place their agency workers predominantly in the processing industry as unskilled workers. Service occupations are relatively rare. Almost 36,000 unemployed people had been contracted between April and October 2003, and 9,000 left the PSA.

The revised Temporary Employment Act only allows deviation from the equal pay and equal treatment principle on the basis of collective agreements. This resulted in negotiations of collective agreements for the temporary agency work sector, at the particular initiative of the employers. In February 2003, the Federal Association of Temporary Employment Agencies (BZA), and representatives of all trade unions affiliated to the German Federation of Trade Unions (DGB), signed a landmark agreement laying the cornerstone for a number of national cross-sector collective agreements ([DE0303202N](#) ). The [agreements](#) do not include any provisions on training measures.

With the [Law on Part-time and Fixed-term Work \(23Kb pdf; in German\)](#) , which came into effect on 1 January 2001, the EU Directive on fixed-term work ([Council Directive 1999/70/EC - 578Kb pdf](#) ) was implemented in German legislation. The law led to a modification of the legal basis of fixed-term work. The law stipulates that a fixed-term contract requires an objective justification if it is to be extended for more than two years. An exception applies to employees older than 58 years. For this group, no restrictions are in place with regard to justifying the contract duration.

## Italy

In Italy, temporary agency work was introduced in 1997. The 2003 reform of the labour market (the so-called *Legge Biagi* ) set aside most constraints. The main specific measures in favour of training for fixed-term or temporary agency workers are the national-level agreements that regulate the bilateral institution, Forma.temp, which manages the 4% of the wage bill devoted to training.

Two company training examples are outlined for Italy . In the case of the Ente Bilaterale del Turismo dell' Area Veneziana (EBT-AV, Bilateral Association of Tourism in Venice), training courses are offered to permanent and non-permanent workers in the local tourism companies in order to increase their competencies.

Aprilia, a motorcycle company based close to Venice, used to offer a three-day preliminary training course to all newly hired seasonal workers. A 2001 informal agreement with the works council set out that the company could use agency workers on a two-week contract, in order to provide preliminary training, both external and on-the-job, with the aim of recruiting them as fixed-term seasonal workers with priority rights: to employment in the following years, and then to permanent jobs.

## Netherlands

A relevant issue in the Netherlands is that temporary work agencies are concentrating on improving their image and promoting themselves as good employers. The agencies emphasise that they act according to the Law on Temporary Agency Work and provide their workers with good employment conditions (including training). One of the quality aspects promoted is the fact that they make use of appropriately skilled workers.

The temporary agencies have also become involved in the re-entry of unemployed or disabled people into the labour market.

## **Portugal**

In accordance with the National Action Plan for Employment in Portugal, the Government began revising the legal provisions on temporary agency work in 2004. The amendment should facilitate the use of temporary agency work by companies, and improve the situation for temporary agency workers with the aim of promoting the quality of employment. In June 2004, a report on the legislation surrounding temporary work was presented by the Ministry of Labour and Social Security, to be discussed by the social partners (within the Permanent Committee of Social Dialogue - *Comissão Permanente de Concertação Social*). This legislative project includes a specific article aimed at professional training (article 43), obliging temporary work agencies to provide professional training for temporary agency workers whose contract period exceeds three months, or for those whose fixed-term contract periods equal, altogether, three months in one year. It also sets out the requirement to provide a minimum of eight hours of professional training for the worker.

## **Spain**

In Spain, the National Collective Agreements of Temporary Work Agencies focus on the equal treatment of temporary agency workers. An additional 0.25% of the wage bill for OHS training was introduced.

## **Sweden**

In Sweden, legislation on temporary agency work changed completely in 1993. The deregulation led to an expansion of temporary agency work, although its share in the labour market is still low. The national report finds a contradiction between the changes regarding temporary agency work, and corresponding regulations, and the increasing number of employees concerned who see their specific needs, such as training, disregarded in official policies and legislation.

## **Commentary**

The data presented clearly show that non-permanent contract holders, on average, lag behind in terms of participation in training and involvement in competence development.

Within the group of non-permanent contract holders, temporary agency workers receive even less training and competence development than fixed-term contract holders, according to available data from the national working conditions surveys. The impact of temporary agency work on employability appears to be unclear from the data analysis.

With regard to temporary agency workers, it would be valuable to develop a framework within which the potential of numerous work assignments and related work experiences could be optimised for long-term employability.

In particular, the clear differences found in the skills-job demands match show that non-permanent contract holders have fewer opportunities to use and, thus, to develop their career potential.

The positive correlation between participation in training and the non-permanent workers' perception of their employability reflects the importance of training experiences, and the need for training and skills development.

Against the background of a considerably higher percentage of occupational accidents found among temporary agency workers, the results of the working conditions surveys point to less training in occupational health and

safety for this group. This demonstrates the need to improve the provision of such training measures, an argument which is further underlined by data on the risks of accidents at work, as perceived by temporary agency workers.

Regarding data availability and analysis on temporary agency workers, the inclusion of specific questions targeted at this group should be considered in future working conditions surveys. In particular, the joint nature of the responsibility for training, positioned between the temporary work agency and the user company, is almost impossible to capture by questions focusing on standard employment relationships.

*Author:* Anni Weiler, AWWW GmbH ArbeitsWelt - Working World

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## **Appendix: Survey sources**

### **EU level**

#### **European Working Conditions Surveys**

European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions Surveys: 1990/1, 1995/6 and 2000 in the EU15; 2001/2 in the then acceding and candidate countries.

Survey 2000: interviews with over 21,500 workers (1,500 in each Member State, except Luxembourg: 500). Questionnaire-based, comprising over 80 questions in face-to-face interviews conducted outside the workplace.

Survey 2001/2: a total of 11,000 workers were interviewed.

#### **European Labour Force Survey (LFS)**

The 2003 LFS was conducted by Eurostat in the 25 Member States of the EU, three EFTA countries and two candidate countries. The LFS is a large household sample survey, providing quarterly results on the labour participation of people aged 15 and over, and on people outside the labour market.

#### **European Community Household Panel (ECHP)**

The [European Community Household Panel \(ECHP\)](#) is an annual survey of representative panel households and individuals, carried out by Eurostat. It is based on a standardised questionnaire, covering a wide range of topics: income, health, education, housing, demographic and employment characteristics, etc.

It was initiated in 1994 in the then 12 Member States. The first survey covered 60,500 nationally represented households, i.e. approximately 130,000 adults, aged 16 years and over.

Key features of the ECHP are:

- multi-dimensional and simultaneous coverage of a range of topics;
- standardised methodology and procedures across the countries;
- longitudinal or panel design, in which information on the same set of households and persons is gathered, to study changes over time at a micro level.

### **Continuing vocational training survey (CVTS) 2000**

Data on continuing vocational training in enterprises.

The survey was conducted in 1999 in the EU15, Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Norway, Poland (Pomorskie region only), Romania and Slovenia.

The survey covered enterprises with 10 or more employees in the NACE sectors C-K and O.

### **Austria**

### **Mikrozensus yearly results 2003**

The Mikrozensus survey started in March 1968 and is carried out on a quarterly basis. The survey focuses on topics such as population, qualifications, education, professional position and working time.

The sample of the supplementary programme 'Labour Force Survey 2003' encompassed 33,500 households, and interviewed people in 22,500 households. In all, the programme provides extrapolated data on 7,932,000 people. As the survey focuses on labour issues, 6.6 million people, aged 15 years and over, are covered by the supplementary programme.

### **Czech Republic**

### **Working Conditions 2000 (WC 2000)**

Carried out by the [Research Institute for Labour and Social Affairs](#) .

National representative survey, using the methodology and questionnaire of the EWCS of the European Foundation for Improvement of Living and Working Conditions. Additional questions concern the organisation of the work day and atypical forms of employment.

Methodology and sample characteristics:

- Interviews carried out face-to-face at peoples' homes;
- 2,031 employees and self-employed people included;
- Sample size: 1,029 interviews fully completed;
- Multistage random probability sampling;
- Sample is representative according to sex, age, NACE, ISCO and NUTS2 codes;
- Response rate is 62%.

### **Measuring the Quality of Working Life 2004 (MQWL 2004)**

Carried out by the Research Institute for Labour and Social Affairs.

Methodology and sample characteristics:

- Interviews carried out face-to-face at peoples; homes;
- Sample size: a total of 2,007 complete interviews were conducted;
- Survey population consisted of persons aged 15 to 69 who were employed and had worked for their current employer for a minimum of three months.

### **Young People's Access to Training and their Occupational Experiences 2002/2003**

Carried out by the National Institute of Technical and Vocational Education ([NUOV](#)) and Economics Institute of the Academy of Sciences.

2,500 respondents aged 20-29 were surveyed.

### **Denmark**

#### **The Labour Force Survey**

Carried out by Statistics Denmark.

Based on quarterly interviews of 15,000 people from the Danish population, aged 15-66 years. Each person participates for two quarters in one year and one quarter a year later. Those who cannot be reached by telephone are asked to fill out a written questionnaire sent to them by mail.

#### **The Danish Work Environment Cohort Study 2000**

Carried out by the National Institute of Occupational Health.

Ongoing national interview survey, carried out in 1990, 1995 and 2000.

The interviewees are chosen at random. In 1990, 8,664 participated. For 1995 and 2000, the figures were 8,583 each year.

### **Estonia**

#### **Labour force surveys (LFS)**

Conducted by the Statistical Office of Estonia.

#### **Adult training in enterprises (Täiskasvanute koolitus ettevõtetes)**

Conducted by the Statistical Office of Estonia.

The company survey analyses data from 2000 gathered from 1,662 companies, and provides data on training issues regarding occupation, size of enterprise, number of workers, etc.

#### **Working life barometer (WLB)**

The survey was conducted twice (in 1998 and 2002) at the initiative of the Finnish Ministry of Labour (Antila and Ylostalo, 1999, 2003).

Based on nationally representative sample of around 1,000 individuals.

## **Analysis of life-long learning needs (Elukestva õppe vajaduste analüüs)**

Conducted in 2001.

### **Finland**

#### **Finnish Quality of Work Life Surveys (FQWLS)**

Carried out by Statistics Finland.

Personal face-to-face interviews.

Surveys in 1977, 1984, 1990, 1997 and 2003, involving each time between 3,000 and 6,000 employees.

The number of answers received in the latest survey was 4,104, a response rate of 78%.

Includes questions on the physical, mental and social work environment and the employees' experiences relating to it, as well as questions on work experience, position in the labour market, conditions of employment, occurrence of physical and psychological symptoms, work motivation, job satisfaction, career development, and experiences relating to gender equality and fair treatment.

### **France**

#### **Formation Continue survey 2000**

Carried out by CEREQ, INSEE. Supplement to the Labour Force survey.

### **Germany**

#### **BIBB/IAB Survey 1998/1999**

The surveys have been conducted jointly by the [Federal Institute for Vocational Education and Training \(BIBB\)](#) and the [Institute for Employment Research \(IAB\)](#), operating as the [Federal Employment Services](#), research institution. The surveys have been funded by the [Federal Ministry for Education and Research](#).

Representative survey of 34,000 people employed.

Surveys carried out in 1979, 1985, 1992 1999.

In the last survey, the [Federal Institute for Occupational Safety and Health](#) (German acronym BAuA) also participated.

The survey gathered detailed information on qualification profiles and occupational developments, as well as the organisational, technological and qualification framework in the working place.

A new [BIBB/BAuA survey \(20Kb pdf; in German\)](#) will be conducted in 2005/2006. The IAB plans to establish a new panel on developing competences over the life course.

New features of the BIBB/BAuA 2005/2006 survey are:

- CATI (computer assisted telephone interviews) instead of CAPI (computer assisted personal interviews)

survey;

- 15,000 instead of 34,000 people employed.

### **Socio-Economic Panel (GSOEP) 1984-2003**

Carried out by the German Institute for Economic Research (DIW).

Annual survey, Households panel. The panel was started in 1984.

In 2003, a sample of more than 12,000 households, and nearly 24,000 people were involved.

The GSOEP is a wide-ranging representative longitudinal study of private households in Germany. It provides broad information on diverse aspects relating to household composition, occupational biographies, employment, earnings, health and satisfaction indicators.

Subjects covered in topical modules of the survey are personal values, preferences and expectations, social security, education and training (in 2000), and allocation of time.

### **IAB-Company panel**

The survey has been conducted since 1993 by the Institute for Employment Research (IAB). It is a representative survey of employers involving about 16,000 companies. It focuses on questions concerning employment.

### **Microcensus**

Conducted by the Federal Statistical Office.

The Microcensus is the official representative statistical survey of the population and the labour market, involving each year 1% of all households in Germany (continuous household sample survey). The total number of households participating in the Microcensus is about 370,000 (820,000 persons).

The purpose of the Microcensus is to provide statistical information on the economic and social situation of the population, as well as on employment, the labour market and education. The European Union Labour Force Sample Survey is integrated into the Microcensus.

### **Bundesagentur für Arbeit: Arbeitnehmerüberlassungsstatistik**

Official statistics on temporary agency workers by the Federal Employment Office ([Bundesagentur für Arbeit](#)). Data have been gathered since 1973.

## **Italy**

### **Quarterly Labour Force Survey**

Carried out by Istat (Italian statistics bureau).

As part of a European survey, in 1999, Istat carried out a survey on training activities, which was published in 2002.

### **Quality of work survey (QWS)**

Carried out by Isfol (National agency for training policies and evaluation).

Involves a multistage random sample, and 2,000 interviews were conducted, according to the CATI technique.

## **DS (Democratici di Sinistra) inquiry**

This survey was carried out in 2001, without sample design, by means of the organisation's newspaper, websites, meetings, and directly in some hundreds of workplaces.

## **The Netherlands**

### **Labour Force Survey**

Carried out by the Central Bureau of Statistics (CBS).

The Labour Force Survey started in 1987 and was held annually. In 1999, there was a major change in methodology. Before 2000, the Labour Force Survey was a face-to-face interview with workers, but since then, interviewers with laptops target more than 8,000 households every month. More than half of the people who are approached tend to respond. Respondents are interviewed face-to-face, but are also approached by telephone again on four consecutive occasions at intervals of three months each (i.e. covering one whole year; response about 90%).

In total 390,000 interviews are held every year.

### **TNO Working Situation Survey (TAS)**

The TNO Working Situation Survey (TAS) survey was initiated in 2000. It is intended to be carried out every second year, and has now delivered information from two representative samples of the Dutch workforce, one in 2000 and one in 2002.

The number of workers (employees and self-employed) in the sample is, on average, about 4,000, with a response rate of 53% (2000) and 45% (2002).

This survey touches on more work topics than the CBS survey, and measures most concepts with scales, rather than using only one or two items. However, since there is not much trend information as yet, the TAS is only used to supplement the CBS data.

### **Work in the Information Society**

The TNO survey on 'Work in the Information Society' was carried out in 2002 in all business sectors (i.e. excluding the public administration and health care sector). The sample comprised 1,353 employees. They were approached by their employer who participated in a study. In total, 539 employers participated, and distributed questionnaires in their organisation. Questionnaires were received from 13% of all organisations that were potentially available (1,020).

## **Portugal**

### **Survey on workers' working conditions**

Inquérito de Avaliação das Condições de Trabalho dos Trabalhadores

Carried out by the labour statistics division (Departamento de Estatística do Trabalho, Emprego e Formação Profissional (DETEFP)) of the Labour and Solidarity Ministry (MTSS)

The survey was conducted for the first time between 1999 and 2000.

It was based on a sample of 5,000 workers from a population of 2,346,031 (workers of all economic activities except sections L, P and Q of NACE: public administration and defence; compulsory social security; other

services).

Some 4,252 employees were included in the data (85% response rate). The interviews were carried out in the workplace, face to face.

The survey questionnaire considered several subjects, such as: occupational safety and health (OSH) management, exposure to physical agents (noise, radiation, vibration, etc.), exposure to chemical agents, exposure to biological agents, safety at the workplace, occupational and health outcomes.

A new survey on working conditions is currently being prepared, to be launched in 2005.

### **Survey on Structured Employment**

Inquérito ao Emprego no Sector Estruturado

Carried out by the [Direcção-Geral de Estudos, Estatística e Planeamento](#) - DGEEP (formerly named Departamento de Estatística do Trabalho, Emprego e Formação Profissional, DETEFP) of the Labour and Social Solidarity Ministry (MTSS)

The survey on structured employment, carried out within the formal sector of the economy, is mainly intended to evaluate, in the short term, employment trends, employment composition, flows of personnel in and out of employment, as well as to provide forecasts.

All sectors of economic activity are covered, except sections A, L and P of NACE: agriculture; public administration; defence and compulsory social security, as well as households with domestic staff.

This sample survey is carried out every three months in the establishments of the structured economic sector, which includes companies and other entities legally established (and which deliver personnel lists). It is carried out by post, and covers a sample of about 10,000 establishments.

### **Employment survey**

Conducted by the [Instituto Nacional de Estatística - INE](#) (National Institute of Statistics)

The main objectives of this survey are: to provide employment and unemployment trends; to assess several aspects of the labour market, such as employment, unemployment and working hours; and to provide annual structural data regarding employment and unemployment levels.

The information is obtained by face-to-face interviews, using the CAPI system.

## **Spain**

### **Fifth National Survey on Working Conditions**

(V Encuesta Nacional de Condiciones de Trabajo)

Carried out by the Spanish National Institute of Safety and Hygiene in the Workplace (subsidiary body of the Spanish Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs).

Surveys were conducted in: 1987, 1993, 1997, 1999 and 2003.

Surveyed population: Businesses with more than one employee and across all activity sectors (except agriculture and mining).

Sample: 9,290 interviews were carried out: 4,054 with managers and 5,236 with workers.

There are two questionnaires: a 'company' one, to be completed by someone from management, and a 'worker' one, to be completed by an employee (or two, for businesses with more than 250 employees).

All interviews were carried out in person, in the workplace.

### **Survey on Life Quality in the Workplace**

(Encuesta de Calidad de Vida en el Trabajo)

Carried out by the Spanish Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs.

The survey is conducted annually since 1999. The last survey was in 2003.

Surveyed population: Working people, both employed and self-employed, aged 16 and above, living in family households.

Sample: 6,020 surveyed people.

Interviews are carried out in person (not by telephone), at the households of the surveyed workers.

### **Sweden**

#### **Work Environment Survey (AMU)**

Carried out by Statistics Sweden (SCB).

The survey has been conducted biannually since 1989. The 2003 survey was conducted on behalf of the Swedish Working Environment Authority (SWEA).

The purpose of the surveys is to describe the work environment (both physical and psychological) of the population in employment between the ages of 16 and 64 years.

The 2003 Work Environment Survey is based on a sample of just over 14,000 members of the employed population.

The survey is carried out by means of supplementary questions to Statistics Sweden's regular labour force surveys, which are conducted by means of telephone interviews. Those who have taken part in the interview survey and answered the supplementary questions then receive additional questions in a postal questionnaire.

The Work Environment survey is linked to the Labour Force survey, thus enabling further analysis on the backgrounds of individuals who have responded.

#### **Swedish Labour Force Survey**

Carried out by Statistics Sweden (SCB).

The surveys are carried out every month through telephone interviews with a representative sample of 17,000 persons in the 16-64 age group. Each individual is interviewed eight times over a two-year period.

**EF/05/110/EN**