



Eurofound

# Self-employed or not self-employed? Working conditions of 'economically dependent workers'

*Background paper*

[Click for contents](#)

## Contents

|  |   |
|--|---|
| Introduction   | 1 |
| Complex identification issue                         | 1 |
| Working conditions of economically dependent workers | 3 |
| Conclusion   | 6 |
| Annex  | 7 |

## Introduction

In recent years, practices such as outsourcing and contracting-out have increasingly blurred the boundaries between dependent employment and self-employment. A new group of workers has emerged, which comprises workers who are formally ‘self-employed’, but present some characteristics of employees.

These ‘economically dependent workers’ usually have a commercial contract (or ‘service contract’) rather than an employment contract; they are therefore registered as self-employed when in reality their working conditions have a lot in common with those of employees.

This development makes it difficult to distinguish (within those who are registered as self-employed) between people who are really self-employed and running their own business, and people who for example depend on a single employer for their income and thus have no real autonomy in running their ‘business’.

It is particularly important to distinguish between these situations as employment status affects access to social rights. Also because of differences in subordination, the working conditions of the self-employed are likely to differ from those of employees, the former being more likely to report autonomy.

In various respects, however, economically dependent workers are likely to be in a less favourable position than either self-employed people or employees. Having a commercial contract means that their rights are substantively different and somewhat reduced compared to employees, as far as participation and social rights are concerned.

Differences exist for example regarding representation, as economically dependent workers are not part of the company workforce and therefore are not counted to make up numbers for certain employees’ representation and participation rights. They also have to build up their own social contribution rights. Nevertheless, given the expense involved, many economically dependent workers do not insure themselves against illness or incapacity to work, and are not building up any pension entitlements. Hence, for some, a formal status of self-employed might be less favourable than an actual employment relationship.

The purpose of this short exploratory paper is to investigate the position of these economically dependent workers and to find out whether overall their working conditions are more similar to those of the self-employed or to those of employees. This exercise builds on data from the 2010 wave of the European Working Conditions Survey (EWCS).

## Complex identification issue

### Classification via the EWCS

Identification of economically dependent workers is not straightforward. The 2010 wave of the EWCS contains a question about the employment status of the respondent, which distinguishes between (1) self-employed without employees, (2) self-employed with employees, (3) employed and (4) other. A general presentation of the EWCS is included in the annex.

Given the characteristics associated with entrepreneurship – decision-making power regarding the business, financial autonomy and responsibility – those ‘self-employed with employees’ are considered as being by nature self-employed. The category of ‘self-employed without employees’ is more diverse and, in a way, ambiguous. The group of economically dependent workers belongs to this category.

The survey contains four questions that were designed to determine whether those respondents who indicated being 'self-employed without employees' are actually self-employed or are in reality economically dependent workers. Out of these four items, which ask about the characteristics of the respondent's firm, three (q6\_1A, 1C and 1D) will be used to distinguish between the economically dependent workers and the self-employed<sup>1</sup>:

- A. a self-employed person without employees should have more than one client to be considered really self-employed;
- C. a self-employed person without employees should be able to hire employees if necessary;
- D. a self-employed person without employees should be able to make the most important decisions about how to run their business.

A self-employed person without employees who complied with fewer than two of these three criteria was considered to be an economically dependent worker, and conversely those who complied with two or more were considered to be self-employed without employees. By recoding the self-employed without employees who did not comply with two or more of the aforementioned criteria, and deleting the category 'other' since this is of no substantive interest, we arrive at the following classification:

1. economically dependent workers;
2. self-employed without employees;
3. self-employed with employees;
4. employed.

By comparing the distributions of these groups on various substantive variables we are able to determine to what extent their situations differ from each other, and thus come to some understanding of the position of economically dependent workers.

It should be noted that the analysis is exploratory. This analysis focused on the then 27 Member States of the EU (EU27), and all tables are weighted for country size (except Table 1 in which percentages are given separately for each country). 'Economically dependent workers' is a category based on a subsample of the EWCS. The very small size of this subsample has implications regarding the outcomes and their potential interpretation. In some cases, differences may be the result of the sampling and may not reflect real differences. This may also affect the generalisation of the findings. This category may aggregate differentiated situations: average worker effects do not show the spread of differences between individual cases. These were not calculated in this exploratory analysis. Yet in the absence of better alternative sources available to analyse on a European comparative basis the working conditions of economically dependent workers, and in light of the emerging social debate on this issue, it was deemed relevant to carry out such exploratory analysis. Further work should be carried out to contribute more substantially to this topic, as deemed relevant.

---

<sup>1</sup> Further analysis on Item q6\_1B (being paid an agreed fee on a regular basis) has led to the conclusion that it should not be used to denote the economically dependent worker.

### Distribution of economically dependent workers

The overall proportion of economically dependent workers in the EU27<sup>2</sup> is low, at 0.9% of all workers. Between countries, there is a relatively high variation in the proportions of economically dependent workers. It seems that the highest proportions are found in southern countries (such as Italy, Cyprus, Greece and Portugal) and central and eastern European countries (such as Slovakia, the Czech Republic, Latvia, Romania, and to a lesser extent, Hungary and Bulgaria). The continental European countries generally have moderate shares of economically dependent workers, with proportions around 0.7%.

Looking at the distribution by sector (Table 2), it is clear that the proportions of respondents who are economically dependent workers vary little between sectors. The analysis did not include the agriculture sector as the situation of workers in agriculture is different. Also, this group is quite significant quantitatively. Hence, in order not to bias the analysis towards agricultural workers, it was decided to exclude all workers from the agricultural sector from the analysis.

The highest percentage is found in 'other services', followed by transport and construction. Economically dependent workers are least commonly found in public administration and defence, closely followed by education. Table 3 shows the distribution by occupation, in which the forestry and fishery workers have the lowest proportions, although this estimate might be unreliable because of the small group size due to the exclusion of the agricultural sector from the analysis. Besides this group, we see that economically dependent workers are most prevalent in the elementary occupations, services and sales workers and crafts and related trade workers. The proportions are relatively low for managers and clerical support workers. Considering gender differences, there is almost no difference in the proportion of economically dependent workers between men and women (Table 4).

### Working conditions of economically dependent workers

Some light should be shed on the profile of the economically dependent worker comparing their distribution on several variables (Tables 5–43 in the annex). This can also highlight whether they are more similar to other self-employed workers or, as we hypothesised in section 1, more similar to employees.

#### Organisation of work

##### *Working time*

Table 5 shows the mean weekly working hours, which clearly shows that the economically dependent worker (36 hours) is more similar to employees (37 hours) than to the self-employed without (42 hours) and with employees (48 hours). This is also reflected in the proportion of respondents who want to work fewer hours (Table 6), which at around 30% is relatively low for both economically dependent workers and the employed, as opposed to both self-employed categories. This confirms our expectation that, despite being labelled as 'self-employed', these economically dependent workers do not have the same working conditions as other self-employed workers, who often work long hours to run their businesses.

However, looking at the regularity of their working hours (Tables 7 and 8), the economically dependent workers have a very irregular schedule, much like the self-employed without employees and quite unlike the employees.

---

<sup>2</sup> Table 1 in the annex provides the size of these different groups separately by country and the weighted average for the EU27.

Table 11 shows that the economically dependent workers are much more autonomous than employees in setting their working time arrangements, but still distinctly less autonomous than the self-employed with and without employees.

### *Place of Work*

Regarding the place of work (Table 10), it can be clearly seen that the economically dependent workers are very similar to the self-employed without employees, both working at home or at the clients' premises far more often than employees and the self-employed with employees.

### *Autonomy*

In terms of autonomy, Tables 30–32 show that the economically dependent workers always rank in between the self-employed, who are most able to choose their own order, methods and speed of work, and the employees, who are least able to do so. The same is true for the ability to influence the decisions that are important for their work (Table 36), and for the ability to apply their own ideas in their work (Table 34).

### **Training and intrinsic rewards**

Table 37 shows that economically dependent workers are most similar to the self-employed when it comes to the proportion who have undergone training paid for by themselves (or the employer in the case of the employees), which is at a higher level than it is for employees. Regarding intrinsic rewards such as having the feeling of work well done or of doing useful work (Tables 33 and 35), the economically dependent workers report similar levels as the employees, which are lower than for the self-employed.

### **Health and Safety**

#### *Health and safety at work*

Table 13 shows the extent to which respondents feel that their health or safety is at risk because of their work, in which differences between the employment status groups are minimal. Larger differences are found regarding how well-informed respondents feel they are about the health and safety risks related to their job (Table 18), where the economically dependent workers are clearly much less informed than the other employment status categories.

The degree to which respondents feel that their work affects their health negatively (Table 17) is, interestingly enough, most similar between economically dependent workers and self-employed with employees, although the differences are small.

#### *Exposure to physical risk*

Table 15 shows the mean scores for the different employment status groups on three risk indices<sup>3</sup>. The ergonomic risk for the 'economically dependent' workers is in between that of employees and that of self-employed without employees. For biochemical risks and ambient risks the mean scores of economically dependent workers are most similar to those of self-employed without employees.

---

<sup>3</sup> Ergonomic risk index based on questions q23a (vibrations from hand tools), q24a (tiring or painful positions), q24b (lifting or moving people), q24c (carrying or moving heavy loads), q24d (standing) and q24e (repetitive arm or hand movements), indicating exposure to posture and movement related risks (EU average=100).

Biochemical risk index based on questions q23e (breathing in smoke, fumes, powder or dust), q23g (handling chemical substances) and q23i (handling infectious materials) indicating exposure to biological and chemical risks (EU average=100).

Ambient index based on questions q23b (noise), q23c (high temperatures) and q23d (low temperatures) indicating exposure to ambient risks (EU average=100).

### *Psychosocial risk factors*

Table 19 shows the proportion of respondents whose jobs involve working at very high speeds, which is lowest for the economically dependent worker, making them similar to the self-employed without employees. The same is the case for the proportion of respondents working to tight deadlines (Table 20), and for the proportion of respondents who indicate having enough time to get their tasks done (Table 9).

Looking at Tables 23 and 24, the pace of work for the economically dependent workers seems to be relatively independent of numerical production targets or the movement of automated machinery, quite unlike the case for the employees. However, the extent to which the pace of work is dependent on demands from external consumers (Table 22) is very similar between economically dependent workers and employees, especially compared to the much higher values for both categories of self-employed workers. Regarding the extent to which mistakes made by the respondent can lead to injuries for others, a possible cause of stress at work, this is lowest for the economically dependent workers (Table 25), making them very different from all other categories. When it comes to mistakes causing financial loss for the company (Table 26), economically dependent workers have the lowest value again, however this time it means that they are most similar to employees, both apparently having low levels of financial responsibility. This contrasts strongly with the high risk of financial losses caused by mistakes among the self-employed.

### **Well-being**

Table 12 shows that average mental well-being<sup>4</sup> is lowest for the economically dependent workers and that the employees are behind the self-employed, who have relatively high levels of well-being. The differences in terms of actual health status (Table 14) are very small.

Encapsulating the complexity of their situation, when asked if on the whole they are satisfied with their working conditions in their main paid job, the economically dependent workers are again in between the employees (the least satisfied) and the self-employed (Table 39).

### **Work–life balance**

The balance between working hours and family commitments (Table 27) is slightly better for economically dependent workers compared to the self-employed without employees, and roughly equal to that of employees. This might be explained by the fact that the self-employed with employees work more hours than the economically dependent workers, possibly causing their work–life balance to be slightly worse.

In terms of the prevalence of respondents working during their free time (Table 28), economically dependent workers are, once again, positioned between employees (who have the lowest prevalence) and the self-employed without employees (who have the second-highest prevalence after the self-employed with employees). Economically dependent workers, like both categories of self-employed workers, are relatively easily able to take an hour or two off to take care of personal matters (Table 29), as opposed to the employed who have more difficulty arranging this.

### **Income**

Table 40 shows clearly that the households of economically dependent workers have the most difficulty making ends meet, followed by the employed. This is reflected in the income distributions of the different employment status categories (Table 41), which clearly shows that the lowest income tertile is much more prevalent among the

---

<sup>4</sup> The well-being index is based on several questions (ef4a (felt cheerful and in good spirits), ef4b (felt calm and relaxed), ef4c (felt active and vigorous), ef4d (woke up feeling fresh and rested), ef4e (daily life filled with interesting things)) derived from the WHO-5 scale, showing whether the respondent is at risk of poor mental well-being.

economically dependent workers than among the employees, who in turn have slightly lower incomes than the self-employed without employees. When asked whether the respondent feels that they are well paid for the work they do (Table 43), economically dependent workers report low levels similar to those of employees. Additionally, out of all employment status groups, the economically dependent workers report most often that they might lose their job in the next six months, followed by employees.

### Career development

The economically dependent workers are least optimistic about the prospects for career development in their current job compared to the other groups (Table 38).

### Conclusion

On a 'working conditions scale', the position of economically dependent workers is not very straightforward: in several ways their working conditions are similar to those of the self-employed without employees, in some ways they are similar to those of employees and in other cases they are positioned in between.

First of all, economically dependent workers do not work long hours, making them very similar to employees. However, they are more flexible than employees in terms of setting their working times, and report a relatively good balance between work and private life. Economically dependent workers do, however, have irregular working hours, much like the self-employed without employees.

In terms of health and safety at work, exposure to risks for economically dependent workers is generally midway between that of employees and that of the self-employed. They do not feel that their health and safety is at risk because of their work, nor do they feel that their work affects their health negatively. Nevertheless, they are much less well informed about health and safety risks than the other categories of workers. Finally, one main concern might be that mental well-being is slightly lower for economically dependent workers compared to the other groups.

Regarding work intensity, they are similar to the self-employed in the sense that their work pace is not dependent on numerical targets or the speed of machinery, and they generally have enough time to get their job done. Moreover, they are in a better position than the other groups in that they report least often having to work to tight deadlines, or at high speeds. In terms of the level of work-related autonomy, economically dependent workers are consistently placed between employees and the self-employed.

However, the largest difference between economically dependent workers and the other groups lies in their financial situation. Their incomes lie in the lowest tertile of their country disproportionately often, and their households have a correspondingly high level of difficulty making ends meet. At the same time, they have the lowest level of job security, and fewest opportunities for career advancement.

The complexity of the implications of this status could indicate that in many instances economically dependent workers are exposed to worse situations than both groups they are compared to and hence constitute a vulnerable group. An in-depth study of developments concerning this category of workers, especially during the years of the crisis, is therefore needed to better understand the place and role they play in the increasing diversification of statuses in labour markets.

**Adriaan Oostveen, Isabella Biletta, Agnès Parent-Thirion, Greet Vermeylen**



## Annex: Tables

Table 1: Number of cases in and relative sizes of the different employment status groups, per country, and weighted EU27 average.

|                | Employment status             |             |                                      |             |                              |             |          |              |
|----------------|-------------------------------|-------------|--------------------------------------|-------------|------------------------------|-------------|----------|--------------|
|                | Economically dependent worker |             | Real self-employed without employees |             | Self-employed with employees |             | Employed |              |
|                | Count                         | %           | Count                                | %           | Count                        | %           | Count    | %            |
| Belgium        | 18                            | 0.5%        | 306                                  | 8.2%        | 216                          | 5.8%        | 3,186    | 85.5%        |
| Bulgaria       | 9                             | 1.0%        | 40                                   | 4.4%        | 34                           | 3.7%        | 823      | 91.0%        |
| Czech Republic | 16                            | 1.7%        | 106                                  | 11.6%       | 54                           | 5.9%        | 740      | 80.8%        |
| Denmark        | 1                             | 0.1%        | 39                                   | 3.7%        | 50                           | 4.8%        | 949      | 91.3%        |
| Germany        | 10                            | 0.5%        | 110                                  | 5.4%        | 94                           | 4.6%        | 1,825    | 89.5%        |
| Estonia        | 6                             | 0.7%        | 53                                   | 5.5%        | 33                           | 3.4%        | 867      | 90.4%        |
| Greece         | 16                            | 1.8%        | 169                                  | 18.8%       | 59                           | 6.5%        | 656      | 72.9%        |
| Spain          | 4                             | 0.4%        | 73                                   | 7.8%        | 40                           | 4.2%        | 817      | 87.5%        |
| France         | 22                            | 0.8%        | 218                                  | 7.7%        | 92                           | 3.3%        | 2,496    | 88.2%        |
| Ireland        | 12                            | 1.3%        | 77                                   | 8.1%        | 48                           | 5.1%        | 804      | 85.5%        |
| Italy          | 28                            | 2.0%        | 180                                  | 12.8%       | 82                           | 5.8%        | 1,113    | 79.3%        |
| Cyprus         | 25                            | 2.5%        | 89                                   | 9.2%        | 56                           | 5.8%        | 802      | 82.5%        |
| Latvia         | 13                            | 1.5%        | 21                                   | 2.3%        | 28                           | 3.0%        | 855      | 93.3%        |
| Lithuania      | 3                             | 0.4%        | 46                                   | 5.1%        | 24                           | 2.7%        | 816      | 91.8%        |
| Luxembourg     | 1                             | 0.1%        | 54                                   | 5.7%        | 46                           | 4.9%        | 839      | 89.2%        |
| Hungary        | 10                            | 1.1%        | 54                                   | 5.9%        | 41                           | 4.4%        | 820      | 88.6%        |
| Malta          | 6                             | 0.6%        | 64                                   | 6.6%        | 49                           | 5.0%        | 856      | 87.8%        |
| Netherlands    | 7                             | 0.7%        | 94                                   | 10.0%       | 30                           | 3.2%        | 812      | 86.1%        |
| Austria        | 6                             | 0.7%        | 50                                   | 5.3%        | 48                           | 5.1%        | 840      | 88.9%        |
| Poland         | 1                             | 0.1%        | 119                                  | 9.8%        | 40                           | 3.3%        | 1,045    | 86.7%        |
| Portugal       | 13                            | 1.5%        | 83                                   | 9.3%        | 30                           | 3.4%        | 770      | 85.9%        |
| Romania        | 10                            | 1.4%        | 31                                   | 4.4%        | 20                           | 2.9%        | 640      | 91.3%        |
| Slovenia       | 5                             | 0.4%        | 58                                   | 4.7%        | 79                           | 6.4%        | 1,086    | 88.4%        |
| Slovakia       | 17                            | 1.8%        | 80                                   | 8.7%        | 25                           | 2.7%        | 794      | 86.7%        |
| Finland        | 10                            | 1.0%        | 66                                   | 6.9%        | 23                           | 2.5%        | 858      | 89.7%        |
| Sweden         | 0                             | 0%          | 53                                   | 5.8%        | 21                           | 2.3%        | 839      | 91.9%        |
| United Kingdom | 12                            | 0.8%        | 117                                  | 8.1%        | 52                           | 3.6%        | 1,274    | 87.5%        |
| <b>EU27</b>    | <b>-</b>                      | <b>0.9%</b> | <b>-</b>                             | <b>8.1%</b> | <b>-</b>                     | <b>4.2%</b> | <b>-</b> | <b>86.9%</b> |

## Self-employed or not self-employed? - Working conditions of 'economically dependent workers'

Table 2: Number of cases in and relative sizes of the different employment status groups, by sector

| Nace Rev2                                 | Employment status             |      |                                      |       |                              |      |          |       |
|---|-------------------------------|------|--------------------------------------|-------|------------------------------|------|----------|-------|
|   | Economically dependent worker |      | Real self-employed without employees |       | Self-employed with employees |      | Employed |       |
|   | Count                         | %    | Count                                | %     | Count                        | %    | Count    | %     |
| Agriculture                               | n.a.                          | n.a. | n.a.                                 | n.a.  | n.a.                         | n.a. | n.a.     | n.a.  |
| Industry                                  | 41                            | 0.7% | 260                                  | 4.4%  | 166                          | 2.8% | 5,494    | 92.2% |
| Construction                              | 29                            | 1.1% | 367                                  | 13.7% | 167                          | 6.2% | 2,119    | 79.0% |
| Wholesale, retail, food and accommodation | 48                            | 0.8% | 665                                  | 10.3% | 479                          | 7.4% | 5,244    | 81.5% |
| Transport                                 | 23                            | 1.2% | 140                                  | 7.1%  | 57                           | 2.9% | 1,756    | 88.9% |
| Financial services                        | 12                            | 0.8% | 119                                  | 8.8%  | 64                           | 4.7% | 1,164    | 85.6% |
| Public administration and defence         | 3                             | 0.2% | 16                                   | 0.8%  | 11                           | 0.5% | 2,112    | 98.6% |
| Education                                 | 11                            | 0.4% | 106                                  | 3.8%  | 25                           | 0.9% | 2,649    | 94.9% |
| Health                                    | 21                            | 0.6% | 191                                  | 5.4%  | 104                          | 3.0% | 3,189    | 91.0% |
| Other services                            | 90                            | 1.7% | 742                                  | 13.8% | 273                          | 5.1% | 4,272    | 79.4% |

Table 3: Number of cases in and relative sizes of the different employment status groups, by occupation

| ISCO 08  | Employment status             |      |                                      |       |                              |       |          |       |
|--|-------------------------------|------|--------------------------------------|-------|------------------------------|-------|----------|-------|
|  | Economically dependent worker |      | Real self-employed without employees |       | Self-employed with employees |       | Employed |       |
|  | Count                         | %    | Count                                | %     | Count                        | %     | Count    | %     |
| Managers   | 11                            | 0.4% | 358                                  | 14.4% | 521                          | 21.0% | 1,593    | 64.2% |
| Professionals                                      | 44                            | 0.8% | 577                                  | 10.5% | 214                          | 3.9%  | 4,654    | 84.8% |
| Technicians and associate professionals            | 47                            | 0.9% | 323                                  | 6.1%  | 120                          | 2.3%  | 4,815    | 90.8% |
| Clerical support workers                           | 18                            | 0.6% | 49                                   | 1.5%  | 45                           | 1.4%  | 3,096    | 96.5% |
| Service and sales workers                          | 56                            | 1.0% | 493                                  | 8.8%  | 201                          | 3.6%  | 4,824    | 86.5% |
| Skilled agricultural, forestry and fishery workers | 0                             | 0.2% | 13                                   | 14.5% | 7                            | 7.7%  | 68       | 77.5% |
| Craft and related trades workers                   | 47                            | 1.0% | 522                                  | 11.4% | 181                          | 4.0%  | 3,832    | 83.6% |
| Plant and machine operators, and assemblers        | 18                            | 0.7% | 138                                  | 5.4%  | 36                           | 1.4%  | 2,346    | 92.4% |
| Elementary occupations                             | 38                            | 1.4% | 122                                  | 4.4%  | 23                           | 0.8%  | 2,574    | 93.4% |

Table 4: Gender differences

| Gender | Employment status             |      |                                      |      |                              |      |          |       |
|--------|-------------------------------|------|--------------------------------------|------|------------------------------|------|----------|-------|
|        | Economically dependent worker |      | Real self-employed without employees |      | Self-employed with employees |      | Employed |       |
|        | Count                         | %    | Count                                | %    | Count                        | %    | Count    | %     |
| Male   | 143                           | 0.8% | 1,667                                | 9.5% | 912                          | 5.2% | 14,747   | 84.4% |
| Female | 136                           | 0.9% | 939                                  | 6.4% | 435                          | 2.9% | 13,249   | 89.8% |

Table 5: Working time

| Employment status                    | q18. How many hours do you usually work per week in your main paid job? |
|--------------------------------------|---|
|                                      | Mean  |
| Economically dependent worker        | 36  |
| Real self-employed without employees | 42  |
| Self-employed with employees         | 48  |
| Employed                             | 37  |

Table 6: Working time preferences

| Employment status                    | Hrs_pref index. Provided that you could make a free choice regarding your working hours, would you like to work more hours, less hours or the same amount of hours? |                      |            |
|--------------------------------------|---|----------------------|------------|
|                                      | Fewer hours   | Same amount of hours | More hours |
| Economically dependent worker        | 29.4%   | 53.2%                | 17.4%      |
| Real self-employed without employees | 38.1%   | 48.6%                | 13.3%      |
| Self-employed with employees         | 50.5%   | 43.0%                | 6.5%       |
| Employed                             | 27.6%   | 58.1%                | 14.2%      |

Table 7: Working hours

| Employment status                    | q37d Do you work – Fixed starting and finishing times? |       |
|--------------------------------------|--|-------|
|                                      | Yes  | No    |
| Economically dependent worker        | 32.3%  | 67.7% |
| Real self-employed without employees | 29.9%  | 70.1% |
| Self-employed with employees         | 34.3%  | 65.7% |
| Employed                             | 69.3%  | 30.7% |

Table 8: Regularity of working hours

| Employment status                    | Regularity of working hours (4 = very regular, 0 = very irregular) |           |                          |         |              |
|--------------------------------------|--|-----------|--------------------------|---------|--------------|
|                                      | Very irregular   | Irregular | Not regular or irregular | Regular | Very regular |
| Economically dependent worker        | 34.9%  | 18.4%     | 5.5%                     | 15.3%   | 25.9%        |
| Real self-employed without employees | 35.0%  | 22.5%     | 8.8%                     | 12.5%   | 21.2%        |
| Self-employed with employees         | 25.6%  | 26.5%     | 13.3%                    | 12.2%   | 22.4%        |
| Employed                             | 8.3%   | 13.4%     | 11.9%                    | 15.7%   | 50.7%        |

Table 9: Sufficient time

| Employment status                    | q51g_1. Enough time to get job done |           |                 |
|--------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|-----------|-----------------|
|                                      | Always or most of the time          | Sometimes | Rarely or never |
| Economically dependent worker        | 84.9%                               | 6.7%      | 8.4%            |
| Real self-employed without employees | 85.7%                               | 9.6%      | 4.7%            |
| Self-employed with employees         | 76.7%                               | 16.6%     | 6.7%            |
| Employed                             | 74.1%                               | 16.0%     | 9.8%            |

Table 10: *Place of work*

| Employment status                    | q26 Where is your main place of work?   |                   |                          |                 |             |       |
|--------------------------------------|---|-------------------|--------------------------|-----------------|-------------|-------|
|                                      | My employers 'my own business' premises | Clients' premises | A car or another vehicle | An outside site | My own home | Other |
| Economically dependent worker        | 41.6%                                   | 23.4%             | 6.7%                     | 6.6%            | 17.3%       | 4.4%  |
| Real self-employed without employees | 45.7%                                   | 23.4%             | 5.5%                     | 6.3%            | 15.4%       | 3.7%  |
| Self-employed with employees         | 74.9%                                   | 10.3%             | 2.1%                     | 4.6%            | 4.9%        | 3.3%  |
| Employed                             | 79.7%                                   | 8.2%              | 4.3%                     | 5.8%            | 1.0%        | 0.9%  |

Table 11: *Setting working time*

| Employment status                    | q39 How are your working time arrangements set?                            |   |  |  |
|--------------------------------------|--|---|--|--|
|                                      | They are set by the company / organisation with no possibility for changes | You can choose between several fixed working schedules determined by the company/organisation | You can adapt your working hours within certain limits | Your working hours are entirely determined by yourself |
| Economically dependent worker        | 20.2%  | 11.0%   | 14.6%  | 54.2%  |
| Real self-employed without employees | 8.0%   | 2.4%  | 10.4%  | 79.2%  |
| Self-employed with employees         | 12.4%  | 5.4%  | 12.0%  | 70.3%  |
| Employed                             | 69.2%  | 8.6%  | 16.9%  | 5.4%   |

Table 12: *Mental well-being*

| Employment status                    | WHO 5 – Well-being index <sup>5</sup> |
|--------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
|                                      | Mean                                  |
| Economically dependent worker        | 64.2                                  |
| Real self-employed without employees | 68.2                                  |
| Self-employed with employees         | 68.8                                  |
| Employed                             | 66.2                                  |

Table 13: *Health or safety risks*

| Employment status                    | q66_1. Do you think your health or safety is at risk because of your work? |       |
|--------------------------------------|--|-------|
|                                      | Yes  | No    |
| Economically dependent worker        | 77.4%  | 22.6% |
| Real self-employed without employees | 74.1%  | 25.9% |
| Self-employed with employees         | 81.2%  | 18.8% |
| Employed                             | 76.4%  | 23.6% |

<sup>5</sup> Index ranging from 0 to 100, based on questions ef4a (felt cheerful and in good spirits), ef4b (felt calm and relaxed), ef4c (felt active and vigorous), ef4d (woke up feeling fresh and rested), ef4e (daily life filled with interesting things), which were derived from the WHO-5 scale, showing whether the respondent has a poor mental well-being.

Table 14: *Health status*

| Employment status                    | q68. How is your health in general? |       |
|--------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|-------|
|                                      | Good                                | Bad   |
| Economically dependent worker        | 77.9%                               | 22.1% |
| Real self-employed without employees | 80.0%                               | 20.0% |
| Self-employed with employees         | 79.9%                               | 20.1% |
| Employed                             | 79.2%                               | 20.8% |

Table 15: *Risk indices*

| Employment status                    | Ergonomic risk scale indicating exposure to ergonomic risks | Biochemical risk scale indicating exposure to biochemical risks | Ambient risk scale indicating exposure to ambient risks |
|--------------------------------------|---|---|---|
|                                      | Mean  | Mean  | Mean  |
| Economically dependent worker        | 2.76  | 1.71  | 1.91  |
| Real self-employed without employees | 2.82  | 1.72  | 1.88  |
| Self-employed with employees         | 2.68  | 1.67  | 1.86  |
| Employed                             | 2.73  | 1.66  | 1.97  |

Table 16: *Work sustainability*

| Employment status                    | q75 Do you think you will be able to do the same job you are doing now when you are 60 years old? |                      |                    |
|--------------------------------------|---|----------------------|--------------------|
|                                      | Yes, I think so   | No, I don't think so | I wouldn't want to |
| Economically dependent worker        | 53.3%   | 24.5%                | 22.1%              |
| Real self-employed without employees | 68.9%   | 17.5%                | 13.5%              |
| Self-employed with employees         | 75.6%   | 17.0%                | 7.3%               |
| Employed                             | 57.6%   | 25.8%                | 16.6%              |

Table 17: *Negative health effects*

| Employment status                    | q67. Work affects health negatively |       |
|--------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|-------|
|                                      | No                                  | Yes   |
| Economically dependent worker        | 78.8%                               | 21.2% |
| Real self-employed without employees | 75.8%                               | 24.2% |
| Self-employed with employees         | 77.7%                               | 22.3% |
| Employed                             | 75.4%                               | 24.6% |

Table 18: *Information on health and safety risks*

| Employment status                    | q30 Regarding the health and safety risks related to performance of your job, how well informed would you say you are? |               |                        |                          |
|--------------------------------------|--|---------------|------------------------|--------------------------|
|                                      | Very well informed   | Well informed | Not very well informed | Not at all well informed |
| Economically dependent worker        | 29.3%  | 57.6%         | 11.2%                  | 1.8%                     |
| Real self-employed without employees | 48.4%  | 42.4%         | 6.8%                   | 2.4%                     |
| Self-employed with employees         | 52.1%  | 44.0%         | 3.0%                   | 0.9%                     |
| Employed                             | 45.3%  | 44.5%         | 7.6%                   | 2.5%                     |

Table 19: *High speed*

| Employment status                    | q45a_1 Job involves working at very high speed |                                 |
|--------------------------------------|--|---------------------------------|
|                                      | Less than a quarter of the time                | Less than a quarter of the time |
| Economically dependent worker        | 50.1%  | 46.1%                           |
| Real self-employed without employees | 47.4%  | 39.7%                           |
| Self-employed with employees         | 34.3%  | 30.3%                           |
| Employed                             | 39.2%  | 36.9%                           |

Table 20: *Tight deadlines*

| Employment status                    | q45b_1. Job involves working to tight deadlines |                                 |
|--------------------------------------|---|---------------------------------|
|                                      | Less than a quarter of the time                 | Less than a quarter of the time |
| Economically dependent worker        | 46.1%   | 53.9%                           |
| Real self-employed without employees | 39.7%   | 60.3%                           |
| Self-employed with employees         | 30.3%   | 69.7%                           |
| Employed                             | 36.9%   | 63.1%                           |

Table 21: *Pace of work – colleagues*

| Employment status                    | q46a_2. Pace of work dependent on work done by colleagues |       |
|--------------------------------------|---|-------|
|                                      | No  | Yes   |
| Economically dependent worker        | 79.4%   | 20.6% |
| Real self-employed without employees | 88.0%   | 12.0% |
| Self-employed with employees         | 66.4%   | 33.6% |
| Employed                             | 56.3%   | 43.7% |

Table 22: *Pace of work – demands*

| Employment status                    | q46b_2 Pace of work dependent on direct demands from people such as customers, passengers, pupils, patients, etc. |       |
|--------------------------------------|---|-------|
|                                      | No  | Yes   |
| Economically dependent worker        | 36.6%   | 63.4% |
| Real self-employed without employees | 15.3%   | 84.7% |
| Self-employed with employees         | 12.3%   | 87.7% |
| Employed                             | 33.0%   | 67.0% |

Table 23: *Pace of work – targets*

| Employment status                    | q46c_2 Pace of work dependent on numerical production targets or performance targets |       |
|--------------------------------------|--|-------|
|                                      | No   | Yes   |
| Economically dependent worker        | 70.5%  | 29.5% |
| Real self-employed without employees | 72.1%  | 27.9% |
| Self-employed with employees         | 62.1%  | 37.9% |
| Employed                             | 58.5%  | 41.5% |

Table 24: *Pace of work – machine speed*

| Employment status                    | q46d_2. Pace of work dependent on automatic speed of a machine or movement of a product |       |
|--------------------------------------|---|-------|
|                                      | No  | Yes   |
| Economically dependent worker        | 93.7%   | 6.3%  |
| Real self-employed without employees | 89.6%   | 10.4% |
| Self-employed with employees         | 84.3%   | 15.7% |
| Employed                             | 81.6%   | 18.4% |

Table 25: *Mistakes – physical injuries*

| Employment status                    | q52a_1. Mistakes made could cause physical injuries for others |           |                 |
|--------------------------------------|--|-----------|-----------------|
|                                      | Always or most of the time                                     | Sometimes | Rarely or never |
| Economically dependent worker        | 12.9%  | 14.1%     | 73.0%           |
| Real self-employed without employees | 18.5%  | 11.5%     | 69.9%           |
| Self-employed with employees         | 17.1%  | 13.3%     | 69.6%           |
| Employed                             | 18.5%  | 13.5%     | 68.1%           |

Table 26: *Mistakes – financial loss*

| Employment status                    | q52b_1. Mistakes made could cause financial loss for company/organisation |           |                 |
|--------------------------------------|---|-----------|-----------------|
|                                      | Always or most of the time  | Sometimes | Rarely or never |
| Economically dependent worker        | 29.6%   | 12.5%     | 58.0%           |
| Real self-employed without employees | 51.1%   | 20.4%     | 28.6%           |
| Self-employed with employees         | 56.3%   | 20.1%     | 23.7%           |
| Employed                             | 33.2%   | 21.1%     | 45.6%           |

Table 27: *Work–life balance*

| Employment status                    | q41. In general, do your working hours fit in with your family or social commitments outside work very well, well, not very well or not at all well? |       |               |                 |
|--------------------------------------|--|-------|---------------|-----------------|
|                                      | Very well  | Well  | Not very well | Not at all well |
| Economically dependent worker        | 36.4%  | 43.5% | 19.0%         | 1.1%            |
| Real self-employed without employees | 33.4%  | 43.8% | 17.5%         | 5.3%            |
| Self-employed with employees         | 25.7%  | 46.3% | 20.7%         | 7.2%            |
| Employed                             | 29.8%  | 52.3% | 14.1%         | 3.8%            |

Table 28: *Working in free time*

| Employment status                    | q42 Over the last 12 months how often has it happened to you that you have worked in your free time in order to meet work demands? |                      |                       |            |       |
|--------------------------------------|--|----------------------|-----------------------|------------|-------|
|                                      | Nearly every day   | Once or twice a week | Once or twice a month | Less often | Never |
| Economically dependent worker        | 7.9%   | 15.4%                | 16.1%                 | 20.6%      | 40.0% |
| Real self-employed without employees | 11.9%  | 20.9%                | 22.3%                 | 18.5%      | 26.5% |
| Self-employed with employees         | 15.9%  | 24.0%                | 23.4%                 | 20.2%      | 16.5% |
| Employed                             | 3.8%   | 8.2%                 | 14.6%                 | 21.4%      | 52.0% |

Table 29: *Arranging time off*

| Employment status                    | q43. Would you say that for you arranging to take an hour or two off during working hours to take care of personal or family matters is ... ? |                   |                    |                |
|--------------------------------------|---|-------------------|--------------------|----------------|
|                                      | Not difficult at all  | Not too difficult | Somewhat difficult | Very difficult |
| Economically dependent worker        | 47.0%   | 24.9%             | 19.1%              | 9.0%           |
| Real self-employed without employees | 52.8%   | 25.7%             | 14.9%              | 6.6%           |
| Self-employed with employees         | 47.2%   | 28.5%             | 16.4%              | 7.9%           |
| Employed                             | 28.8%   | 33.0%             | 22.1%              | 16.2%          |

Table 30: *Order of tasks*

| Employment status                    | q50a_1 Can choose or change the order of tasks |       |
|--------------------------------------|--|-------|
|                                      | No   | Yes   |
| Economically dependent worker        | 23.0%  | 77.0% |
| Real self-employed without employees | 11.0%  | 89.0% |
| Self-employed with employees         | 13.0%  | 87.0% |
| Employed                             | 38.0%  | 62.0% |

Table 31: *Methods of work*

| Employment status                    | q50b_1. Can choose or change the methods of work |       |
|--------------------------------------|--|-------|
|                                      | No   | Yes   |
| Economically dependent worker        | 22.6%  | 77.4% |
| Real self-employed without employees | 10.0%  | 90.0% |
| Self-employed with employees         | 10.8%  | 89.2% |
| Employed                             | 36.7%  | 63.3% |

Table 32: *Rate of work*

| Employment status                    | q50c_1 Can choose or change the speed or rate of work |       |
|--------------------------------------|---|-------|
|                                      | No  | Yes   |
| Economically dependent worker        | 18.8%   | 81.2% |
| Real self-employed without employees | 9.0%  | 91.0% |
| Self-employed with employees         | 14.4%   | 85.6% |
| Employed                             | 33.8%   | 66.2% |

Table 33: *Job satisfaction*

| Employment status                    | q51h_1 Feeling of work well done |           |                 |
|--------------------------------------|----------------------------------|-----------|-----------------|
|                                      | Always or most of the time       | Sometimes | Rarely or never |
| Economically dependent worker        | 83.6%                            | 11.9%     | 4.5%            |
| Real self-employed without employees | 93.2%                            | 5.1%      | 1.7%            |
| Self-employed with employees         | 91.8%                            | 6.8%      | 1.4%            |
| Employed                             | 82.1%                            | 12.8%     | 5.0%            |



Table 34: *Applying own ideas*

| Employment status                    | q51i_1. Able to apply own ideas |           |                 |
|--------------------------------------|---------------------------------|-----------|-----------------|
|                                      | Always or most of the time      | Sometimes | Rarely or never |
| Economically dependent worker        | 71.0%                           | 15.0%     | 14.0%           |
| Real self-employed without employees | 89.2%                           | 6.6%      | 4.2%            |
| Self-employed with employees         | 89.0%                           | 6.2%      | 4.8%            |
| Employed                             | 50.1%                           | 21.6%     | 28.4%           |

Table 35: *Doing useful work*

| Employment status                    | q51j_1 Feeling of doing useful work |           |                 |
|--------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|-----------|-----------------|
|                                      | Always or most of the time          | Sometimes | Rarely or never |
| Economically dependent worker        | 83.5%                               | 10.0%     | 6.4%            |
| Real self-employed without employees | 93.2%                               | 5.5%      | 1.3%            |
| Self-employed with employees         | 91.5%                               | 6.6%      | 1.9%            |
| Employed                             | 82.4%                               | 12.0%     | 5.6%            |

Table 36: *Influence on decisions*

| Employment status                    | q51o_1. Influence decisions that are important for work |           |                 |
|--------------------------------------|---|-----------|-----------------|
|                                      | Always or most of the time                              | Sometimes | Rarely or never |
| Economically dependent worker        | 53.9%   | 16.7%     | 29.4%           |
| Real self-employed without employees | 86.8%   | 8.9%      | 4.3%            |
| Self-employed with employees         | 89.0%   | 5.9%      | 5.0%            |
| Employed                             | 31.9%   | 28.6%     | 39.4%           |

Table 37: *Paid training*

| Employment status                    | q61a_1. Training in past year paid by employer (or self if self-employed) |       |
|--------------------------------------|---|-------|
|                                      | No  | Yes   |
| Economically dependent worker        | 77.7%   | 22.3% |
| Real self-employed without employees | 75.1%   | 24.9% |
| Self-employed with employees         | 75.4%   | 24.6% |
| Employed                             | 62.9%   | 37.1% |

Table 38: *Advancement*

| Employment status                    | q77c_1. My job offers good prospects for career advancement |       |
|--------------------------------------|---|-------|
|                                      | No  | Yes   |
| Economically dependent worker        | 71.4%   | 28.6% |
| Real self-employed without employees | 65.0%   | 35.0% |
| Self-employed with employees         | 52.9%   | 47.1% |
| Employed                             | 68.2%   | 31.8% |

## Self-employed or not self-employed? - Working conditions of 'economically dependent workers'

Table 39: *Satisfaction with working conditions*

| Employment status                    | q76. On the whole, are you very satisfied, satisfied, not very satisfied or not at all satisfied with working conditions in your main paid job? |           |                    |                      |
|--------------------------------------|---|-----------|--------------------|----------------------|
|                                      | Very satisfied  | Satisfied | Not very satisfied | Not at all satisfied |
| Economically dependent worker        | 31.7%   | 51.3%     | 14.6%              | 2.5%                 |
| Real self-employed without employees | 36.5%   | 51.6%     | 9.8%               | 2.2%                 |
| Self-employed with employees         | 44.2%   | 48.3%     | 6.5%               | 1.0%                 |
| Employed                             | 23.5%   | 60.9%     | 13.0%              | 2.6%                 |

Table 40: *Making ends meet*

| Employment status                    | ef6 Thinking of your household's total monthly income, is your household able to make ends meet...? |               |                      |                         |
|--------------------------------------|---|---------------|----------------------|-------------------------|
|                                      | (Very) easily   | Fairly easily | With some difficulty | With (great) difficulty |
| Economically dependent worker        | 30.1%   | 27.7%         | 27.9%                | 14.3%                   |
| Real self-employed without employees | 34.7%   | 32.9%         | 23.2%                | 9.2%                    |
| Self-employed with employees         | 46.7%   | 29.2%         | 18.8%                | 5.2%                    |
| Employed                             | 31.6%   | 30.8%         | 26.2%                | 11.4%                   |

Table 41: *Income distribution*

| Employment status                    | inc_3_eu27 Income tertiles based on the distribution of income across Europe (distinguishing EU27 and non-EU) |        |       |
|--------------------------------------|---|--------|-------|
|                                      | Low   | Medium | High  |
| Economically dependent worker        | 36.4%   | 32.8%  | 30.8% |
| Real self-employed without employees | 21.3%   | 35.9%  | 42.8% |
| Self-employed with employees         | 9.5%  | 24.9%  | 65.6% |
| Employed                             | 26.1%   | 37.7%  | 36.2% |

Table 42: *Job security*

| Employment status                    | q77a_1. I might lose my job in the next 6 months |       |
|--------------------------------------|--|-------|
|                                      | No   | Yes   |
| Economically dependent worker        | 81.0%  | 19.0% |
| Real self-employed without employees | 88.2%  | 11.8% |
| Self-employed with employees         | 92.1%  | 7.9%  |
| Employed                             | 83.1%  | 16.9% |

Table 43: *Pay satisfaction*

| Employment status                    | q77b_1. I am well paid for the work I do |       |
|--------------------------------------|--|-------|
|                                      | No                                       | Yes   |
| Economically dependent worker        | 58.5%                                    | 41.5% |
| Real self-employed without employees | 54.9%                                    | 45.1% |
| Self-employed with employees         | 48.0%                                    | 52.0% |
| Employed                             | 58.7%                                    | 41.3% |