

Euregio Study EWCS The compatibility of Private life and work in the Euregio



Foreword by the Euregio Board

The European Region Tyrol-South Tyrol-Trentino is characterised by the fact that it is equally supported and constantly developed by politics, social partners, associations and citizens. After the launch within the framework of the Tyrolean Euregio Presidency 2019-2021, thanks to the cooperation of the Euregio with the Chamber of Labour Tyrol, the South Tyrolean Employment Promotion Institute AFI and the Employment Agency of Trentino, a new platform for euroregional cooperation was created in the course of the implementation of the European Working Conditions Survey (EWCS), thus implementing an important labour policy project. With this survey, we are pioneers in Europe: never before has a European region conducted such a survey in all its parts.

Professional conditions and the labour market are constantly changing. It is therefore all the more important to find out to what extent workers perceive this change, what their needs are and "where the shoe pinches". This study is intended to provide an answer to these questions. Special thanks go to the partners who analysed the important issue of work-life balance in this study edition.



The Board of the EGTC European Region Tyrol-South Tyrol-Trentino (from left): **Arno Kompatscher** (Governor of South Tyrol), **Maurizio Fugatti** (Governor of Trentino and President of the EGTC European Region Tyrol-South Tyrol-Trentino), **Anton Mattle** (Governor of Tyrol).

Foreword by the Presidents of the Institutes

In the European region Tyrol-South Tyrol-Trentino, the employment rate has returned to a high level after the strong, corona-related slump. This means that many people have a job. But do they also have a good job? It is precisely this aspect, namely the quality of working conditions, that this study takes a closer look at. In order to place the results in the European context, the questionnaire used by Eurofound, the European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions, for the European Working Conditions Survey (EWCS) was adopted unchanged. This report addresses the issue of reconciling work and family life.

and private life and contains, in particular, information on the burden of family obligations, the impact of work on private life and on the desired working time, which depends on the need for reconciliation. This is the third in-depth study on working conditions in the European Region. The studies on physically and mentally stressful working conditions and on working hours have already been published. All three reports are based on the data set elaborated by the project partners on the basis of 4,500 telephone interviews with employees in the European Region (1,500 interviews per part of the country).



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For better readability, the masculine and feminine forms are not used simultaneously. All personal designations apply equally to both genders.



Introduction

This report is part of a series of publications on labour issues in the European Region Tyrol-South Tyrol-Trentino, some of which have already been published.

This report is about work-life balance and comparing the situation in the three parts of the country. As with all publications in this series, the data in this case comes from the EWCS survey (European Working Conditions Survey). This is a survey conducted by the European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions Eurofound in Europe¹. The survey has been running for several years now and is now being conducted by the EGTC.

"Europaregion Tirol-Südtirol-Trentino" was repeated for the three parts of the macroregion². The interviews were conducted in 2021 and covered a total of 4,500 workers in accordance with Eurofound's methodological criteria. The advantage of a format used across Europe is that the collected data can be compared with each other. The advantage of using a Europe-wide format is that the data collected can be compared with each other, which in turn allows the three parts of the country to be ranked at the international level.

However, the main target group of the analysis remains in any case the European region. The general aim of the publications is to assess the weaknesses and strengths of the three parts of the country and to provide corresponding suggestions in the sense of a uniform and attractive labour market in the entire macro-region.

In this sense, the study of common information is particularly useful. It allows for a more detailed analysis and provides more tools to support active labour market policies in the three parts of the country.

¹ Eurofound has been promoting the EWCS survey at the European level since 1990. Over time, the number of participating countries has increased and now includes some non-EU countries. The last survey included 27 EU countries and nine other countries: the United Kingdom, Norway, Switzerland, Albania, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Kosovo, Montenegro, Northern Macedonia and Serbia.

² The partners of the project in the European Region are the Chamber of Labour Tyrol, the Institute for the Promotion of Labour from Bolzano (AFI-IPL) and the Employment Agency of the Autonomous Province of Trento.

1. The compatibility of private life and profession

1.1 Why are we talking about this topic?

In recent decades, the issue of work-life balance has become more and more of a focus. Crucial to this interest are the social changes within the population in industrialised countries. More and more measures to promote work-life balance (Gaiaschi and Mallone, 2017: 93-107) and procedures to certify the quality of organisational processes related to the aforementioned measures have become widespread in companies as part of the company social benefits for employees - such as the 'Audit FamilieundBeruf' in South Tyrol or the 'Family Audit', which was tested in Trentino and subsequently adopted at the national level (cf. Prandini et al. 2019). The Corona emergency exacerbated the tension between paid and unpaid work (Del Boca et al. 2020: 1001- 1017), which in turn drew society's attention to the problems related to the relationship between private life and work and spurred institutional change through a series of emergency measures and legislative reforms regarding financial aid for children, parental leave and services (Sabatinelli et al. 2021: 305- 326). Recent studies confirm that the priorities of employees have changed. Today, the need for reconciliation is even more pronounced than it was a few years ago (cf. Ambrosini 2020). According to the main findings of the 6th Censis- Eudaimon Report on Workplace Social Benefits (various authors, 2023: 14), 79.2 per cent of the

workers want employment relationships that allow for better reconciliation; in percentage terms, the same number of workers want to receive income supplements for buying food.

1.2 The right to compatibility

In Italy and in many other European countries, the problem of "reconciliation" became an issue at the end of the 1970s, when women gradually entered the labour market and the transition took place from the Male breadwinner family model, which was based on the separation of gender roles and reserved for men the exclusive responsibility for earning a living and for women the family care work, to a dual-earner model, in which both partners have a paid job (cf. Quadrelli 2012). Although social change has occurred in all European countries, state measures to support families differ greatly in the various countries: for example, they are very generous in Scandinavia and in France, but extremely sparse in Italy and other Mediterranean countries. In Austria and the other countries of continental Europe, they are average (Saraceno and Keck, 2010: 675-696).

The term compatibility is defined by the European Commission as follows:

"the introduction of parental leave schemes, care facilities for children and the elderly, and the creation of a working environment whose structure and organisation make it easier for women and men to reconcile work and family and household responsibilities" (European Commission 1998: 54).

The importance of the issue was confirmed in 1998 with the introduction of compatibility protection in the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union (Article 33, paragraph 2), which included fundamental entitlements such as the prohibition of maternity-related dismissal and the

right to parental leave after the birth of a child is guaranteed.

Over the years, the growing participation of women in the labour market has also fostered the emergence of a new movement, which eventually led to state reforms focused on reconciliation as a tool for gender inclusion in the labour market (cf. Oliva 2020).

With this in mind, the European Parliament and the Council of the European Union adopted Directive (EU) 2019/1158 on work-life balance for parents and carers. The standard has prescribed individual entitlements to paternity and parental leave and flexible working arrangements for workers who are parents.

Italy transposed the Directive with Legislative Decree No. 105 of 30 June 2022, which readjusted the previous state regulation regarding paid leave. Similarly, Austria adapted the existing standards on maternity protection in 2022 and the provisions on paternity leave in 2020 to the European Directive.^{3,4}

2. The variables studied

Many factors influence the ability to reconcile professional life with private life. The EWCS questionnaire, which looks at all aspects of the respondents' professional situation, asks a number of questions on this topic that may not be exhaustive, but nevertheless allow an assessment of the phenomenon. The survey specifically asks about the reconciliation of times and also includes various questions that have been used in this report for an overall picture on the topic under study (Tab. 1).

Table 1

The compatibility topics covered in the EWCS questionnaire

- Compatibility of working hours with family or social obligations
- Work in free time to complete professional tasks
- Possibility to take one or two hours off during normal working hours for personal or family matters
- Caring for and/or bringing up children or grandchildren
- Caring for elderly or disabled family members
- Cooking and running the household
- Too exhausted after work to do anything around the house
- Professional worries in private life
- Difficulty concentrating at work because of family responsibilities

In presenting the results, an attempt has been made to differentiate the answers regionally, thus highlighting similarities and differences within the European Region. Given the nature of the topic, responses have also been analysed by respondent gender where possible.

3. The development of the labour market in the Euregio

Before moving on to the issue of reconciliation, we provide an overview of the profiles of workers in the European Region based on the main characteristics that emerge from the respondents' answers. This is necessary because the responses regarding the possibility of reconciling work and private life are

Employed persons in the euro- pare region by gender, part of the country and characteristics (data in per cent)	Men	Women	Tyrol	South Tyrol	Trentino	Europe region as a whole
Private sector	75	58	63	73	66	67
Public service	17	33	22	22	29	24
Other	8	9	15	5	5	8
Agriculture	6	3	4	7	4	5
Manufacturing industry	19	8	14	13	14	14
Construction	12	3	9	7	9	8
Trade	14	15	17	18	8	14

³Maternity Protection Act 1979 - MSchG, Federal Law Gazette No. 221/1979 as amended by Federal Law Gazette I No. 87/2022

⁴Väter-Karenzgesetz - VKG), Federal Law Gazette No. 651/1989 as amended by Federal Law Gazette I No. 153/2020

Hospitality	5	11	9	9	5	8
Education and teaching	7	16	10	10	14	11
Health and social care	4	16	12	9	8	10
Other sectors	39	32	30	34	43	36
Unemployed persons	80	87	87	80	81	83
Self-employed	20	13	13	20	19	17
Part-time	9	42	26	23	22	24
Full-time	91	58	74	77	78	76
Academic professions	22	27	25	27	29	27
Office workers and related professions	10	22	16	11	20	16
Service professions and salespersons	11	21	18	17	11	15
Technicians and professionals of equal rank	17	12	14	17	12	14
Craft and related trades	17	3	8	10	13	10
Other professions	24	16	19	18	15	17

(N=4564)
Source: EWCS Euregio 2021

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The number of employees who are able to agree on a work schedule varies depending on the occupational profile (Tab. 2). The differences between men and women working in the European region mainly concern working hours and economic sector. Women more often report working part-time and are more numerous in sectors that offer better opportunities for reconciliation (e.g. education or health), especially if they work in the public sector. Men are more employed in the secondary sector, especially in manufacturing and construction, and are also more likely to be self-employed. By part of the country, the differences are less pronounced: there is a greater importance of the public sector in Trentino and of the private sector

can be observed in South Tyrol. Trentino is characterised by a lower number of employed people in trade, while in Tyrol the share of self-employed is low.

4. The burden of family commitments

In private life, too, certain factors have an impact on reconciliation. This is especially true in relation to family responsibilities and the obligations that workers have to reconcile with paid working hours. In examining such a complex and

multifaceted topic such as the reconciliation of private life and work, possible prejudices should immediately be cleared out of the way and the answers evaluated on the basis of objective data. How is family care work distributed between men and women today? Are there significant differences between the three parts of the European region? In order to answer these questions, we use three different questions from the EWCS survey.

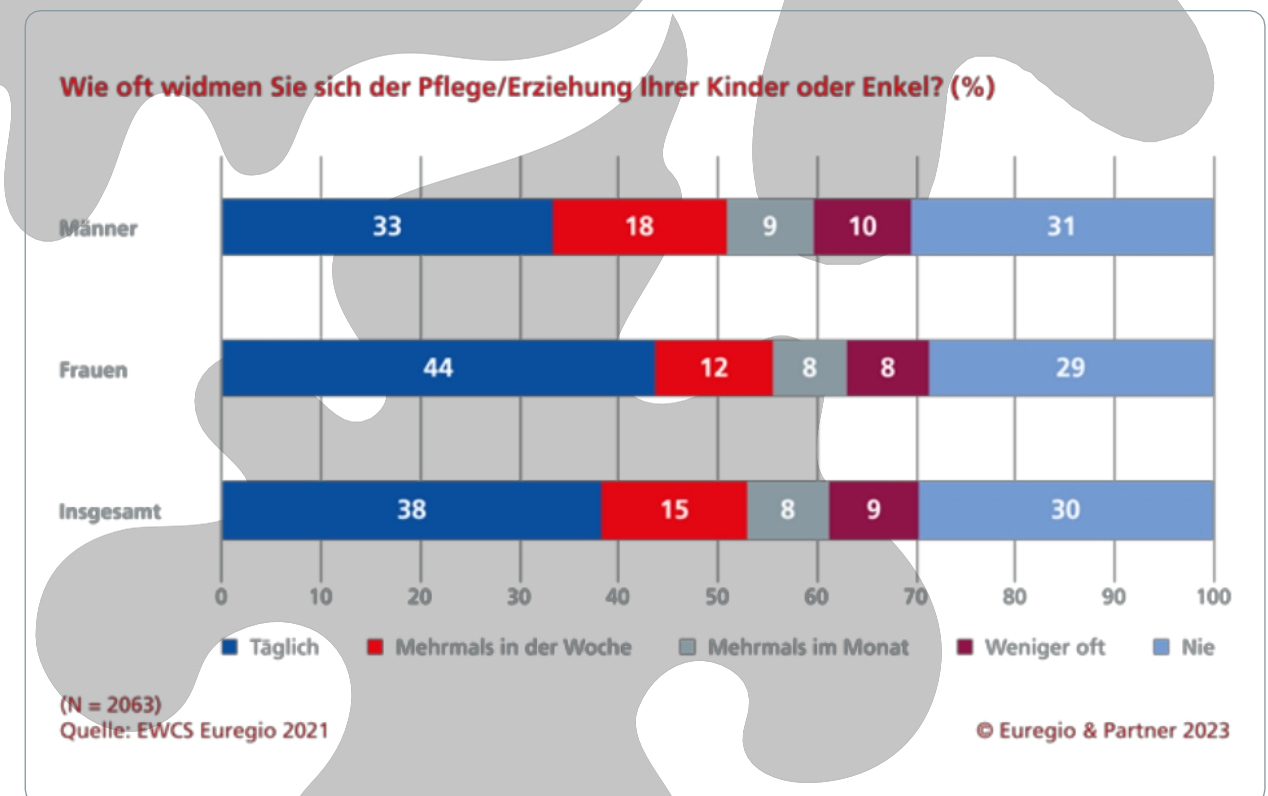
4.1 The care and upbringing of children and grandchildren

One question of the survey sheds light on the frequency of commitments to children and grandchildren, even if they do not live with the respondents (Fig. 1).

The main burden of these activities falls on women (in this case mothers or grandmothers), closely followed by men. The former devote 55 per cent of the time very often to the children ("daily" or "several times a week") compared to 51 per cent of the men. On the other hand, 37 per cent and 40 per cent of respondents do so "less often" or "several times a week".

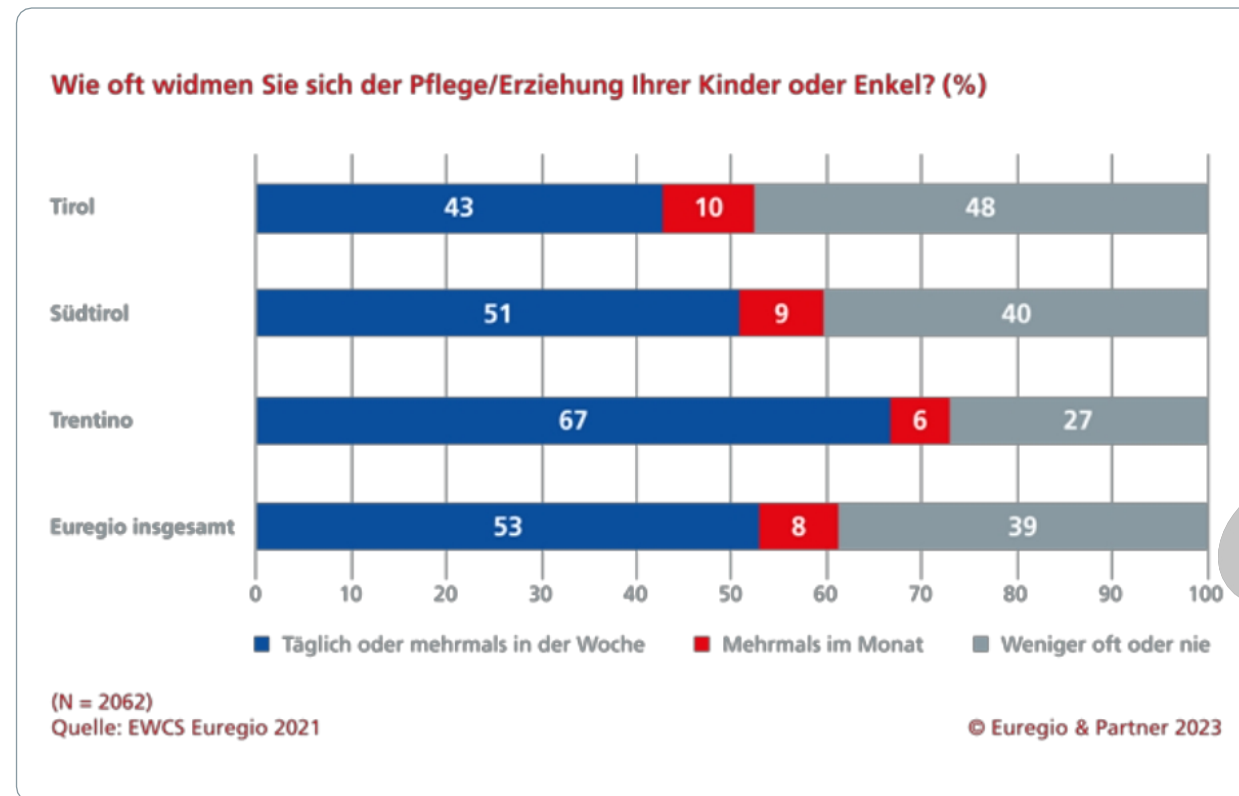
"never". Equal numbers of men and women, on the other hand, answered "several times per

Figure 1



Deviations from the total value of 100 are due to rounding.

Figure 2



Deviations from the total value of 100 are due to rounding.

month" was chosen. There is a notable difference in the area of constant commitment: 44 percent of women declare that they perform family care work on a daily basis. For men, the figure is 33 percent. The commitment grows in the 35-55 age group, where 68 per cent of women and 61 per cent of men devote themselves to care or parenting on a daily or weekly basis.

Significant differences seem to be linked to working hours: The share of persons who take care of the children every day or almost every day among part-time employees is 64 per cent, while among full-time employees it is 49 per cent. Among women, who are most often affected by part-time work, the gap is particularly wide: 68 per cent of female part-time workers devote themselves to childcare every day or almost every day; among female full-time workers, on the other hand, the corresponding share drops to 46 per cent.

A comparison of the individual parts of the European region also shows that

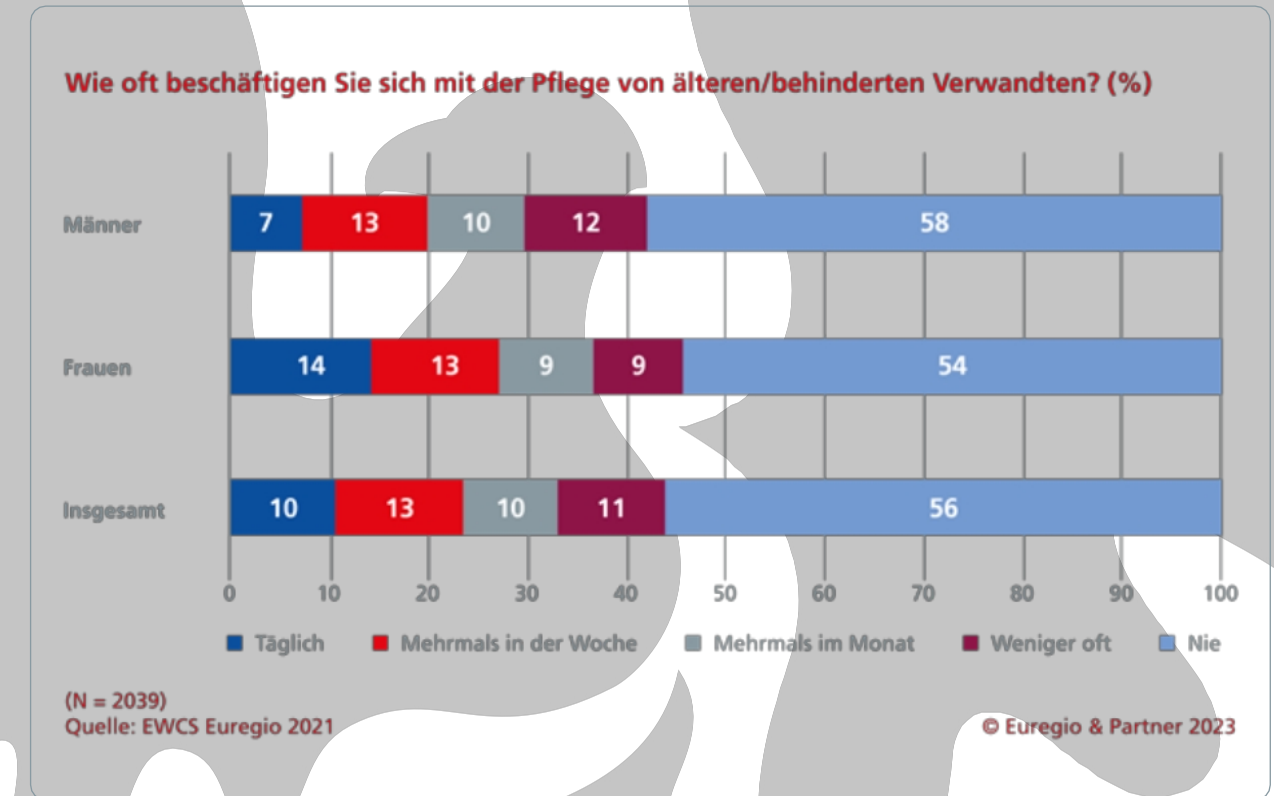
considerable differences (Fig. 2). The frequency with which employees devote themselves to the care or upbringing of their own children and/or grandchildren is very high in Trentino, where around two thirds of respondents fulfil this obligation "daily" or "several times a week". In South Tyrol and Tyrol, this percentage drops to 51 percent and 43 percent respectively.

4.2 Caring for elderly or disabled relatives

In the context of caring for family members, we also looked more closely at the answers to the question "How often do you deal with caring for elderly/disabled relatives?". In this case, too, relatives who do not live in the same household as the respondent were included (Fig. 3).

The cost of caring for such relatives is less than that of caring for and raising them

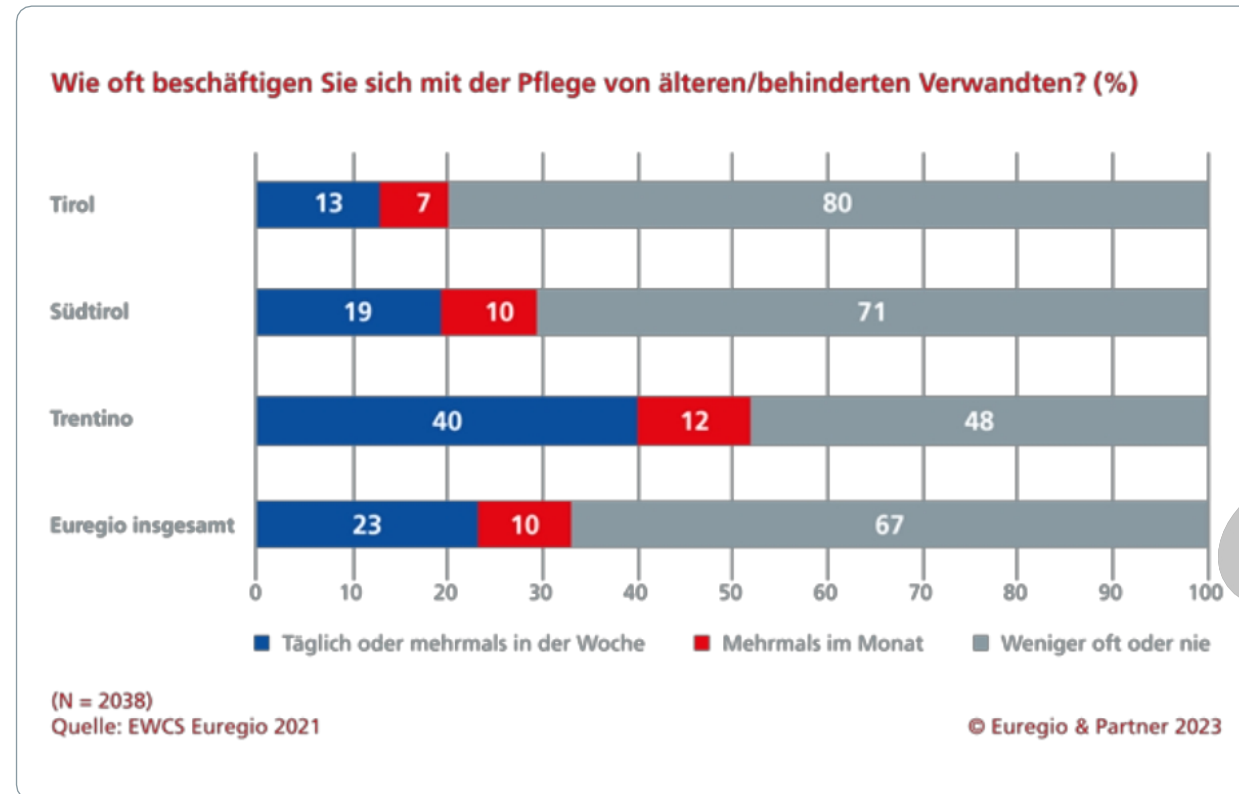
Figure 3



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Figure 4



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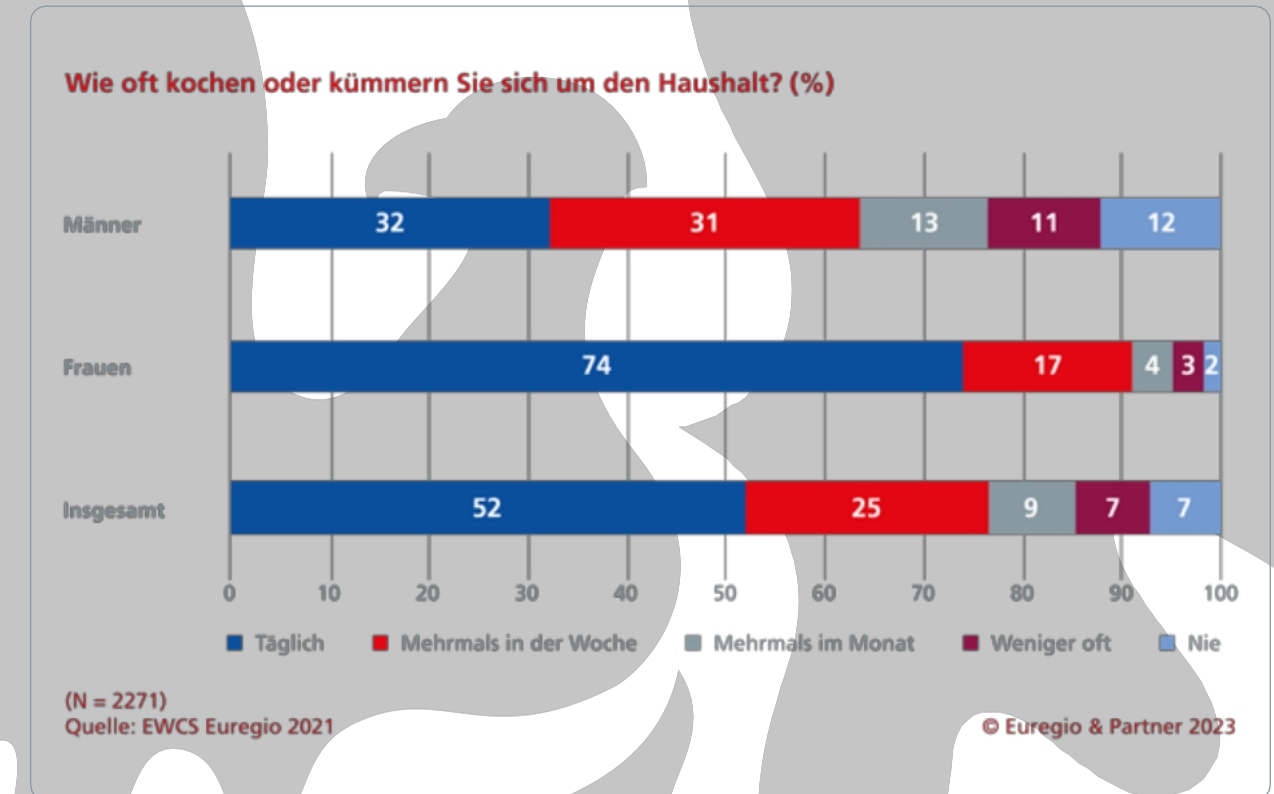
of the children; the majority of respondents answered that they never (56 percent) or rarely ("less often", 11 percent) take care of such persons. In this case, too, women play the main role: 27 percent of them have declared to take care of such relatives daily or several times a week, compared to 20 percent of men. The difference lies mainly in the daily care work, which was mentioned by 14 percent of the responding women and only by 7 percent of the male respondents. Considering the inevitable ageing of the population, these percentages will increase in the coming years. Higher life expectancy and the concentration of morbidity in old age mean that it is mainly those aged 35-55 (25 per cent) and those over 56 (27 per cent) who are responsible for the care of elderly relatives ("daily" or "several times a week") are responsible. According to the response, 29 per cent of part-time employees also provide daily or weekly care for senior citizens, but only

21 per cent of full-time employees, confirming the trend already evident in child rearing. As with childcare, significant territorial differences are also evident in the care of elderly or disabled relatives (Fig. 4). In Trentino, workers declared to devote themselves to this care on a daily or at least weekly basis in 40 per cent of the cases, compared to 19 per cent in South Tyrol and 13 per cent in Tyrol. Trentino is also the only area where the majority of respondents declared to care for elderly or disabled relatives on a daily or almost daily basis (52 percent).

4.3 The Housework

A third question related to family responsibilities concerned the time each respondent spends on cooking and household chores. These are activities that almost always occur on a daily basis.

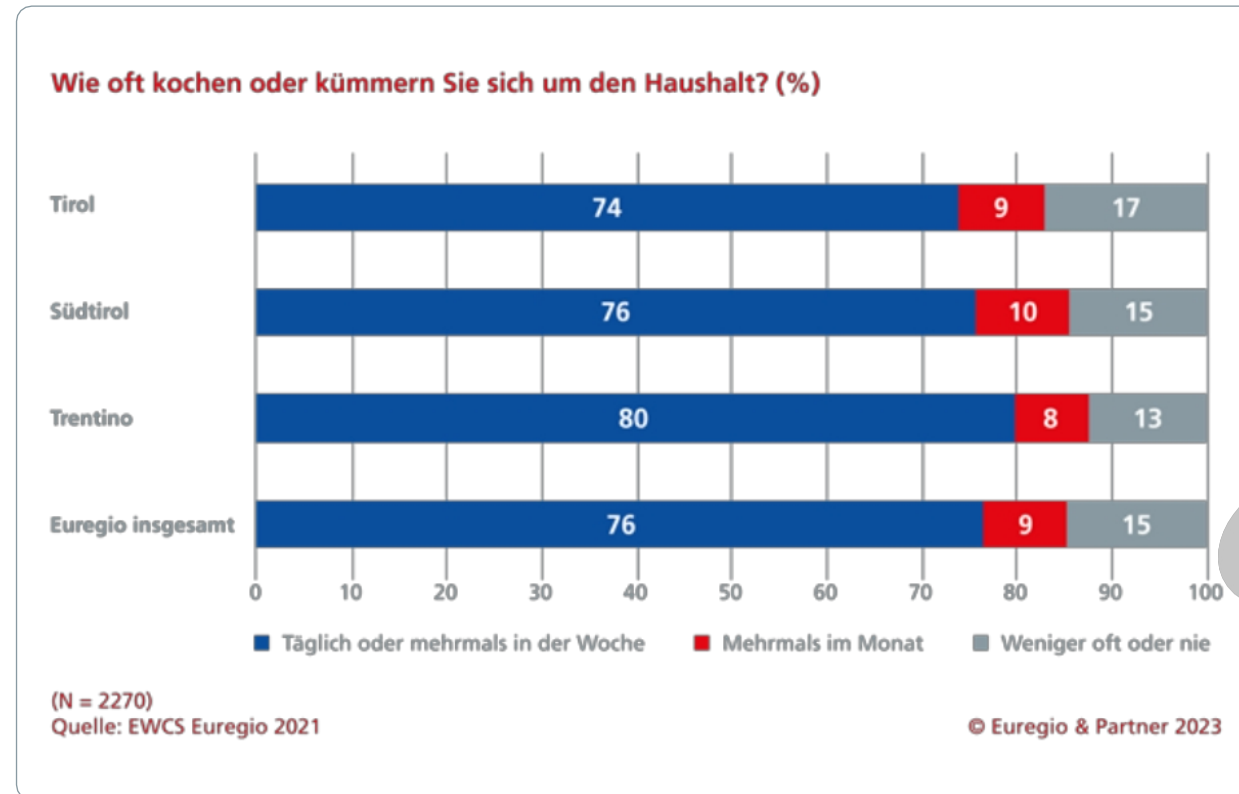
Figure 5



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Figure 6



Deviations from the total value of 100 are due to rounding.

Here the difference between men and women is clear: three out of four women do household chores every day, while among men it is only one in three. In addition, almost a quarter of the men declared that they never or only a few times a month devote themselves to household chores, which only applies to 5 per cent of the women's answers (Fig. 5).

The gap widens if the woman works part-time. In this case, 82 per cent of the women have declared that they devote themselves to housework every day. If we also add the answers "several times a week", this percentage rises to 96 per cent. Only one out of 100 part-time employed women declared that they never cook or do housework.

The breakdown by parts of the European region, on the other hand, does not reveal any particular differences. In all areas, three quarters of the respondents (in Trentino 80 per cent) declared that they do housework every day or at least several times a week. Tyrol has the largest share of people who do

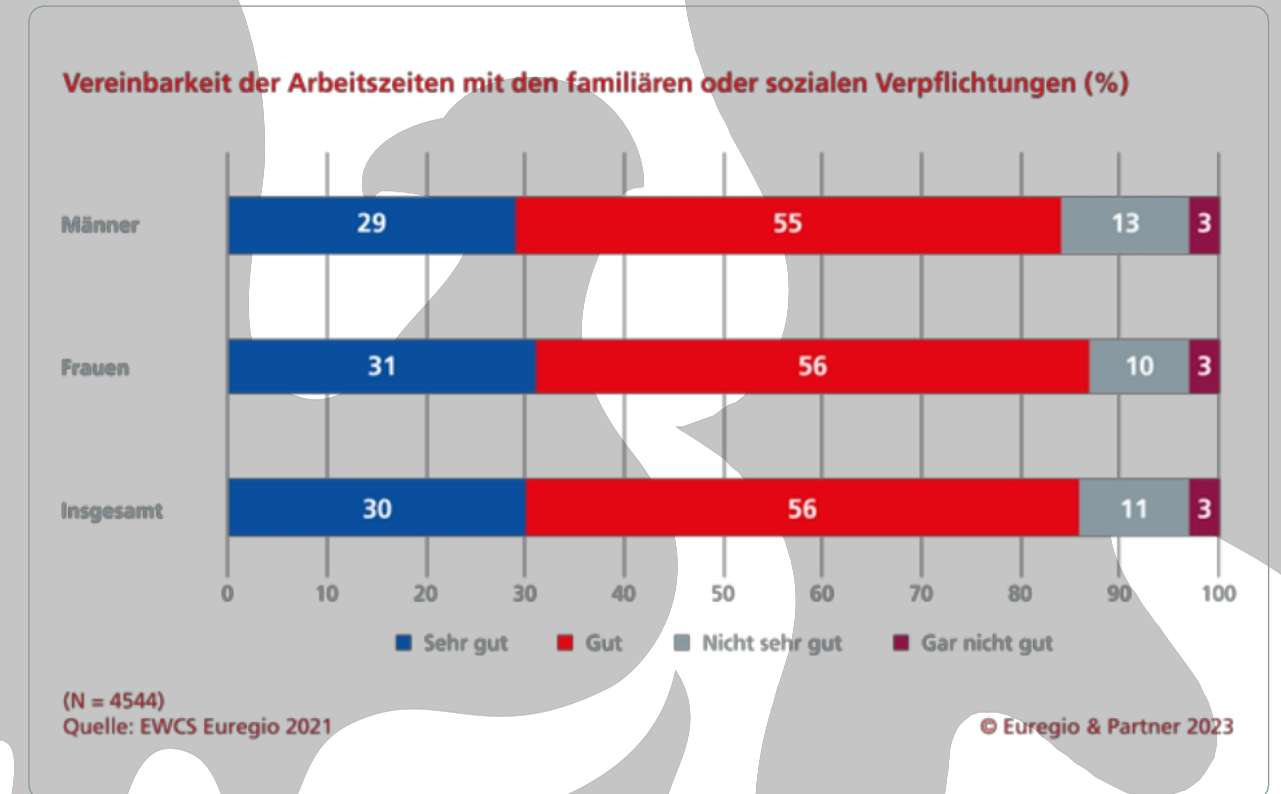
never or almost never devote themselves to this work (17 percent) (Fig. 6).

5. Compatibility of working hours with private life

The question that directly addressed the issue of reconciliation ("How do your working hours generally fit in with your family life or social commitments outside of



Figure 7



Deviations from the total value of 100 are due to rounding.

of work?"), was essentially answered positively: 30 per cent of workers in the European region chose the answer "very well" and 56 per cent "well". The remaining proportion stated that they could reconcile the two areas "not very well" (11 per cent of cases) or "not at all well" (3 per cent).

The differences by gender are rather small: 87 per cent of the women gave a positive answer ("very good" or "good"), among the men it was 84 per cent. The fact that the assessment on the part of women is more positive depends on various factors, which we will discuss later. The decisive factor is mainly due to the different division of paid working time, which serves the purpose of reconciliation with family and social obligations (Fig. 7). The assessment of compatibility in the European region Tyrol-South Tyrol-Trentino is above the European average. Overall, in the 27 EU countries, 81 per cent of those surveyed answered positively to this question

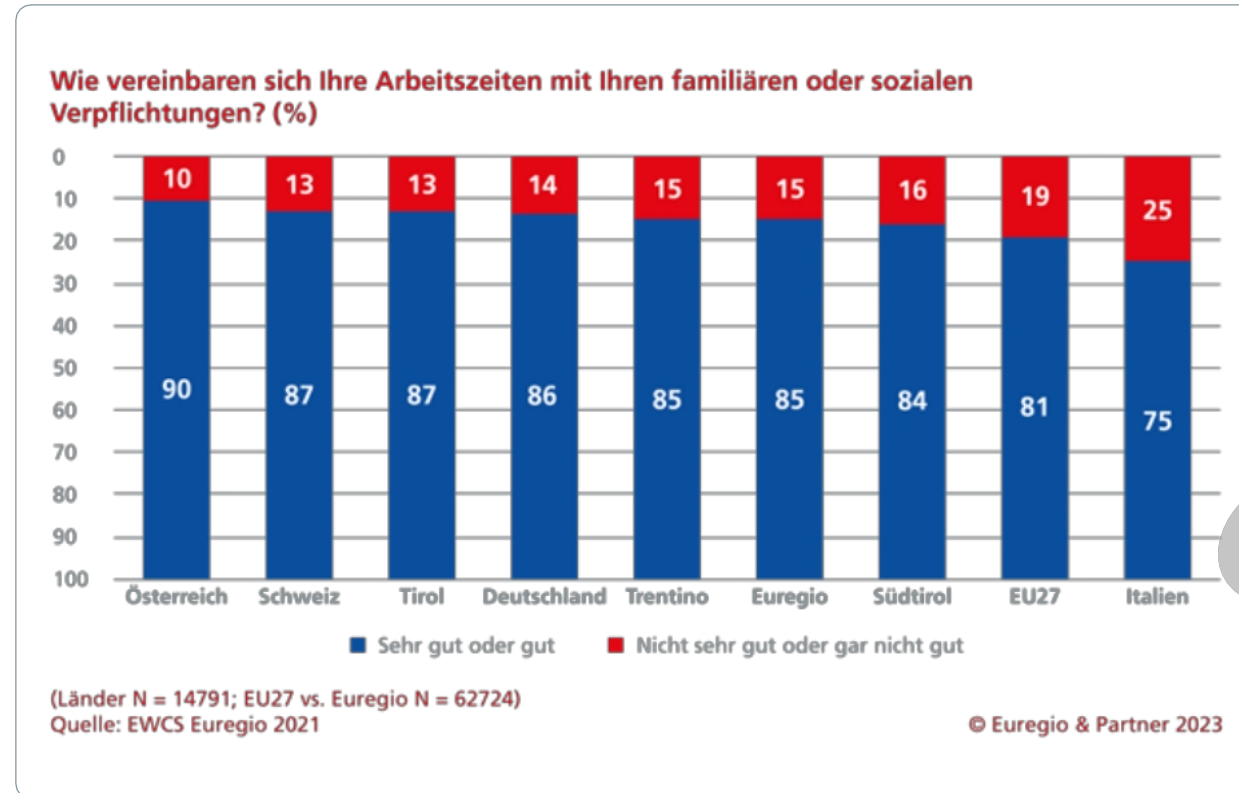
(i.e. with "very good" or "good"). This applies to 83 per cent of women and 80 per cent of men. Among the countries with which the European region directly compares itself, Austria in particular stands out positively: Nine out of ten respondents are of the opinion that the working time

"very well" or "well" with family and social obligations. A particularly critical situation, on the other hand, was recorded in Italy, where a quarter of respondents gave a negative answer.

The three parts of the European Region show very similar assessments of compatibility. In Tyrol, the positive answers amounted to 87 per cent, in Trentino to 85 per cent and in South Tyrol to 84 per cent (Fig. 8).

When it comes to work-life balance, age seems to be less important: The answers of younger workers hardly differ from those of older workers. However, it should be taken into account that the question on work-life balance also includes social obligations. Probably affect

Figure



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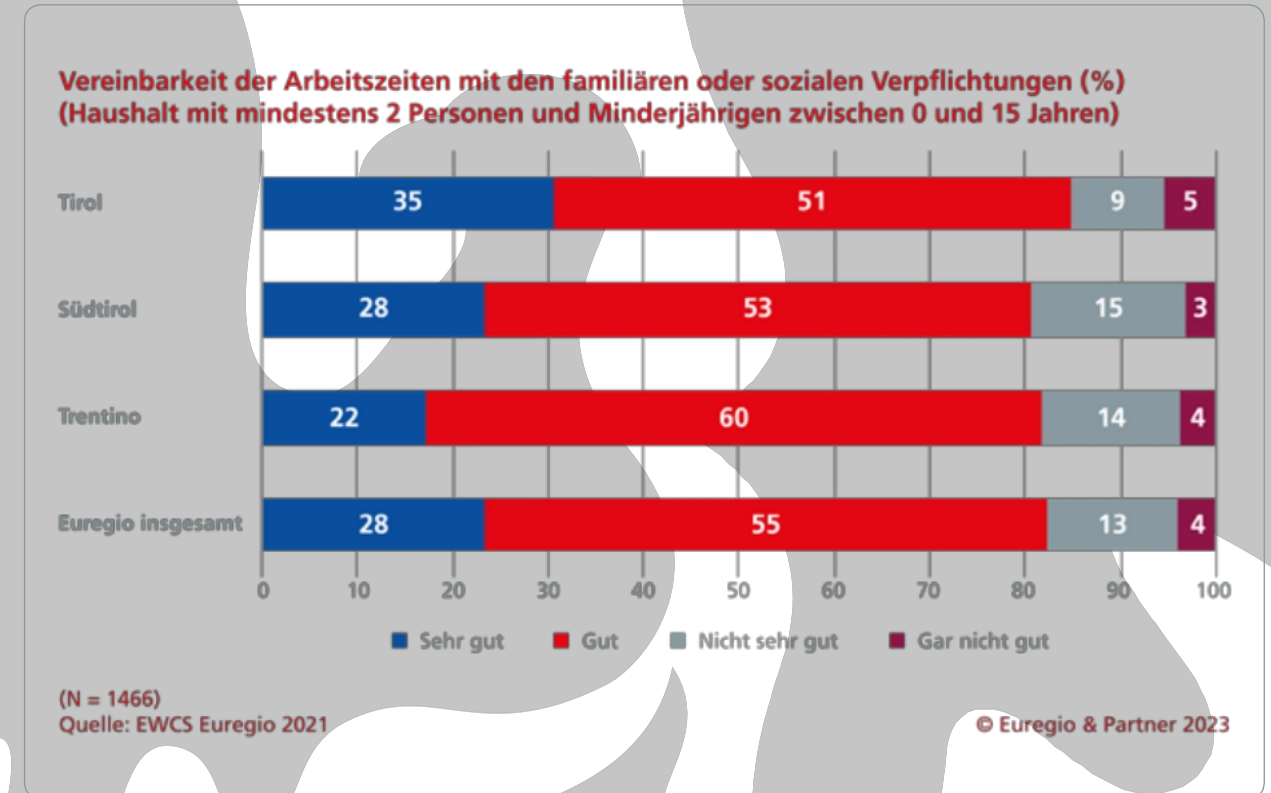
The latter mainly affect the younger age groups (15-34 year olds) and to some extent compensate for the lower family commitments, which are more serious for the middle-aged workers (35-55 year olds). The data do not allow us to distinguish between these two types of commitments, although it is likely that many respondents have both. In fact, 85 per cent of respondents in both age groups said they were able to reconcile the commitments "very well" or "well". In the category of over-55s, who are particularly often in part-time work (29 per cent), the proportion of positive answers even rises to 88 per cent⁵. The individual parts of the European region do not show any great differences, but in Tyrol there was a particularly high degree of

of compatibility among the over-55s, 92 per cent of whom answered positively. In what follows, we now attempt to sketch a realistic profile in terms of perceived compatibility; to this end, we focus on the responses of groups of workers with comparable characteristics. First of all, the answers have to be differentiated according to the composition of the household. Indeed, one has to assume that time spent with the family is strongly dependent on whether there are persons in the family in need of care or assistance. The EWCS questionnaire 2021 makes it possible to check this assumption with regard to the presence of minors aged 0 to 15 years⁶.

⁵It should be noted that only employed persons participate in the survey. This excludes all persons who are not gainfully employed due to retirement and therefore do not have to reconcile work and non-work obligations.

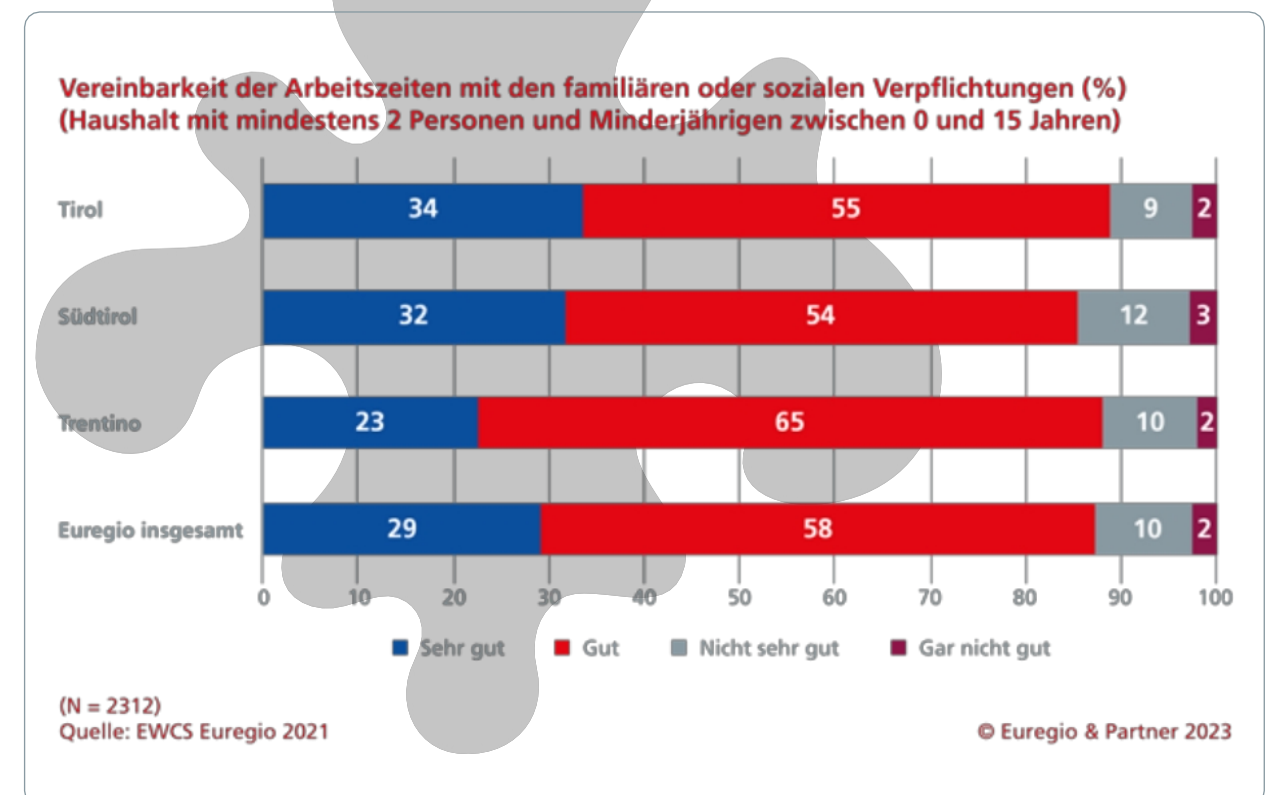
⁶The EWCS survey conducted in 2021 was severely affected by the simultaneous Corona pandemic. Thus, the number of questions in the aforementioned edition had to be reduced to allow for telephone interviews to be conducted instead of a face-to-face interview.

8Figure 9



Deviations from the total value of 100 are due to rounding

Figure 10

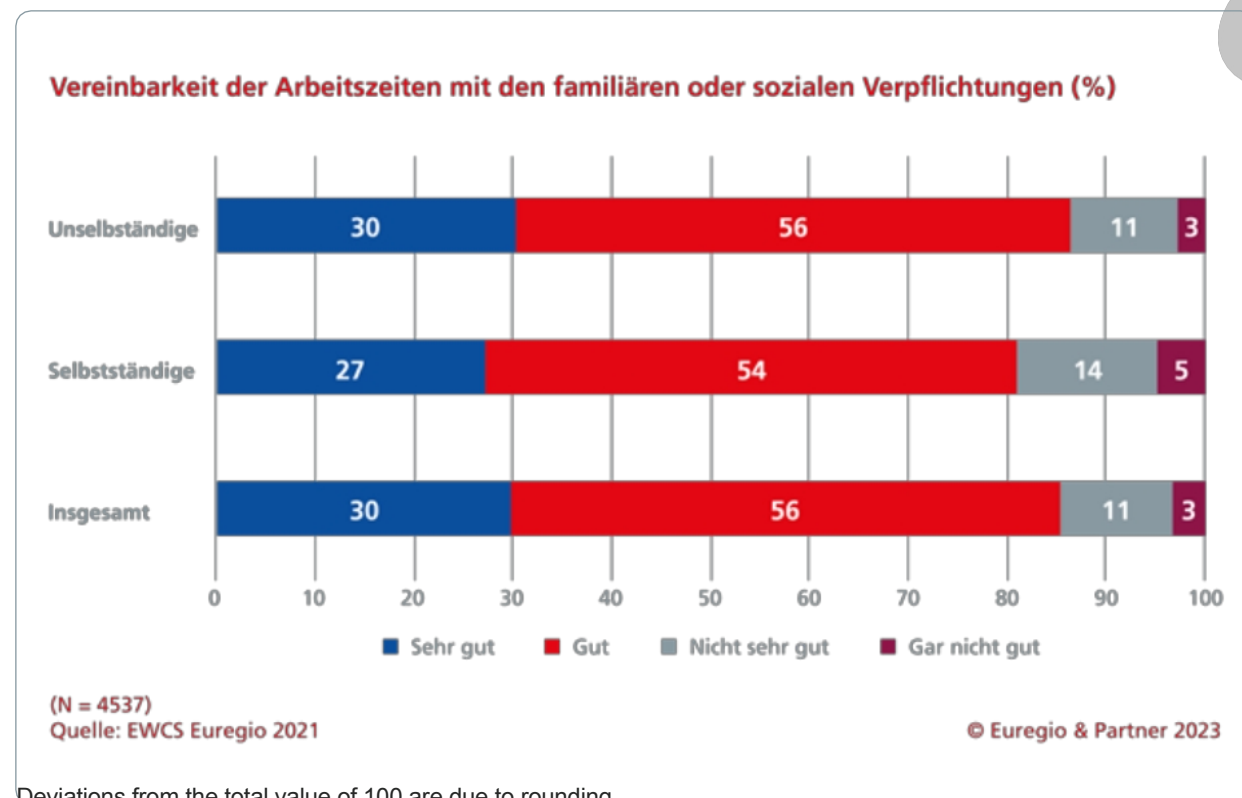


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From this point of view, the majority of respondents in both groups confirm a "good" time compatibility. Those who belong to a household where minors also live speak of an unsatisfactory reconciliation in 17 per cent of the cases, compared to 12 per cent in the other group (Figures 9 and 10). Differences at the geographical level are also evident: in Tyrol, the proportion of very satisfied workers is higher, regardless of the composition of the household. The results in South Tyrol are average,

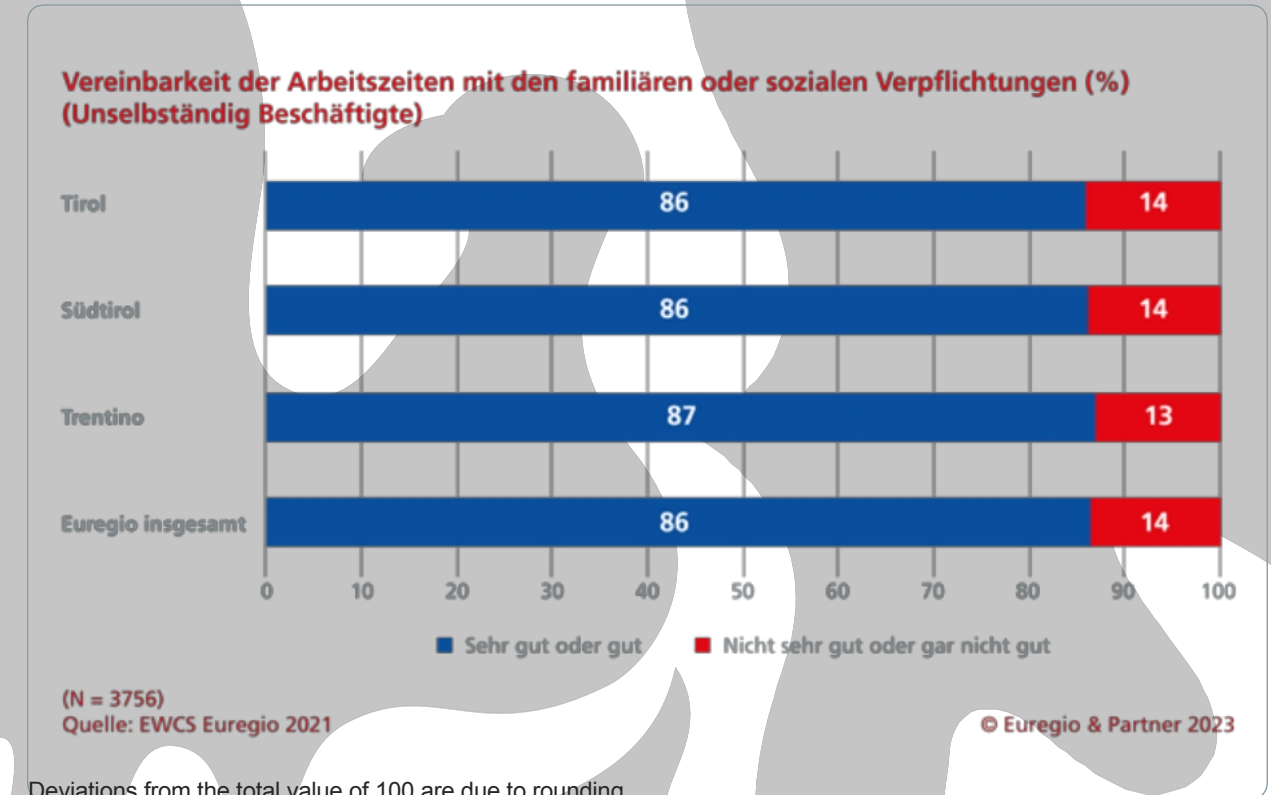
while Trentino reported a lower percentage of respondents who said they were able to combine working hours very well with family commitments. Several relevant factors can be identified with regard to the classification of work activity. One of them is the professional position, which can be employed or self-employed. Dependent work is characterised by more regular working hours and a range of contractual protections, and affords somewhat greater latitude in

Figure 11



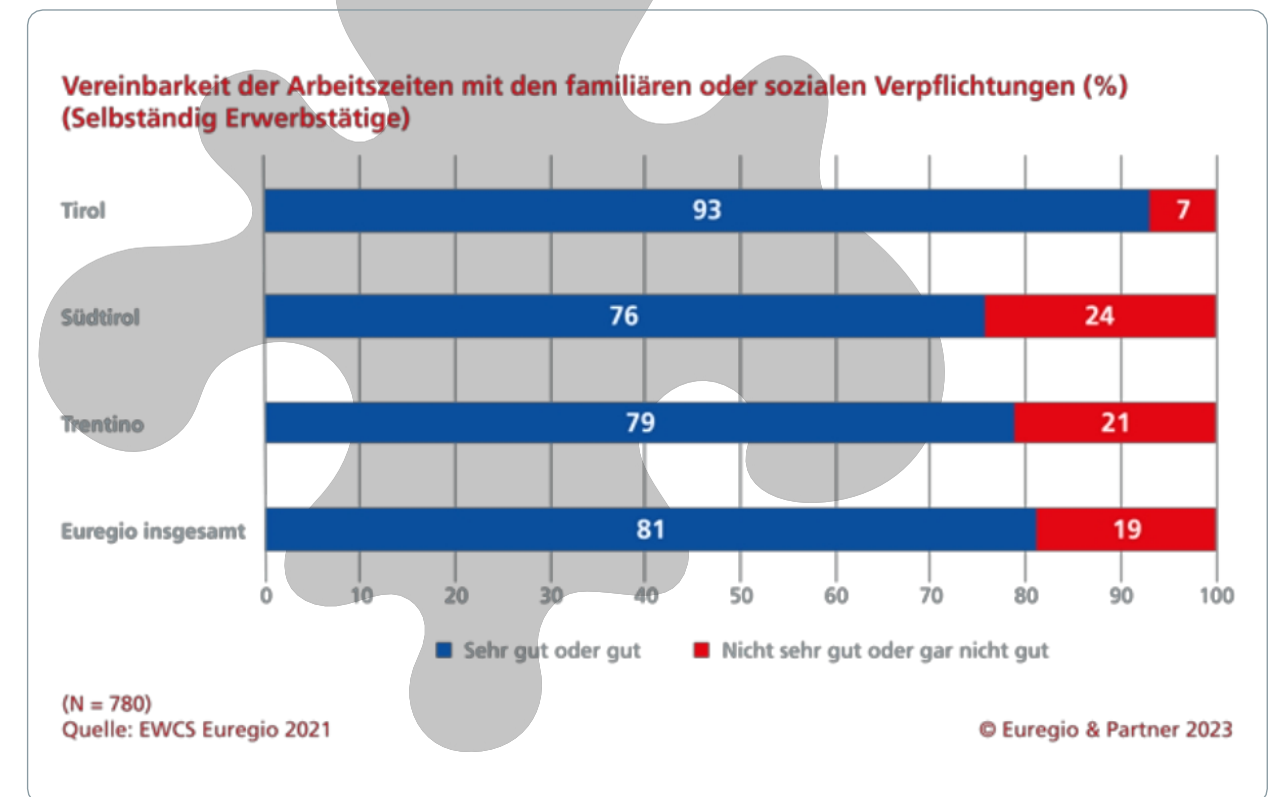
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Figure 12



Deviations from the total value of 100 are due to rounding.

Figure 13



Deviations from the total value of 100 are due to rounding.

of reconciliation. The self-employed gave a positive answer of 86 percent, and 81 percent of the self-employed (Fig. 11). The assessment of men seems to be somewhat more cautious, especially in the self-employed sector, where positive responses drop to 79 per cent. Women are more likely to express positive views (87 per cent for both occupational typologies). However, it should be noted that only 13 per cent of women were self-employed, compared to 20 per cent of men. The three parts of the country do not show any striking differences with regard to employed work and are all on average. If, on the other hand, we look at the self-employed, Tyrol has a significantly larger percentage of satisfied persons (Figures 12 and 13).

The comparison by economic sector of the employed also provides some food for thought. For example, the level of commitment required in some sectors causes particularly great difficulties in terms of reconciliation. The following sectors in particular stand out negatively: transport and storage, hotels and restaurants and agriculture. Although these are different activities, they are all characterised by longer working hours on average and require work in the evening, at night and at weekends. With an average of 38.5 hours worked per week, 40.9 hours are reported in transport, 42.5 hours in hotels and restaurants and 48.2 hours in agriculture (rising to 43.5, 48.9 and 49.3 hours for men respectively). The activities in the hospitality sector and in agriculture

also differ in the distribution of working hours over the week, which is unfavourable for reconciliation: In the hospitality sector, two-thirds of employees work six or even seven days a week, while in agriculture this applies to as many as three-quarters of employees. This situation is particularly burdensome for male workers, but also for women, whose working weeks are just as long (60 per cent in agriculture and 61 per cent in the hospitality sector). The most favourable ratings come from the public sector, such as public administration, law enforcement and social welfare. The education and training sector also reports positive data, even though

in certain cases, these are private sector activities (Fig. 14). In the national parts of the European region, the assessment already observed is essentially confirmed. An exception here is Tyrol, where an above-average proportion of agricultural workers express a positive assessment (91 percent).

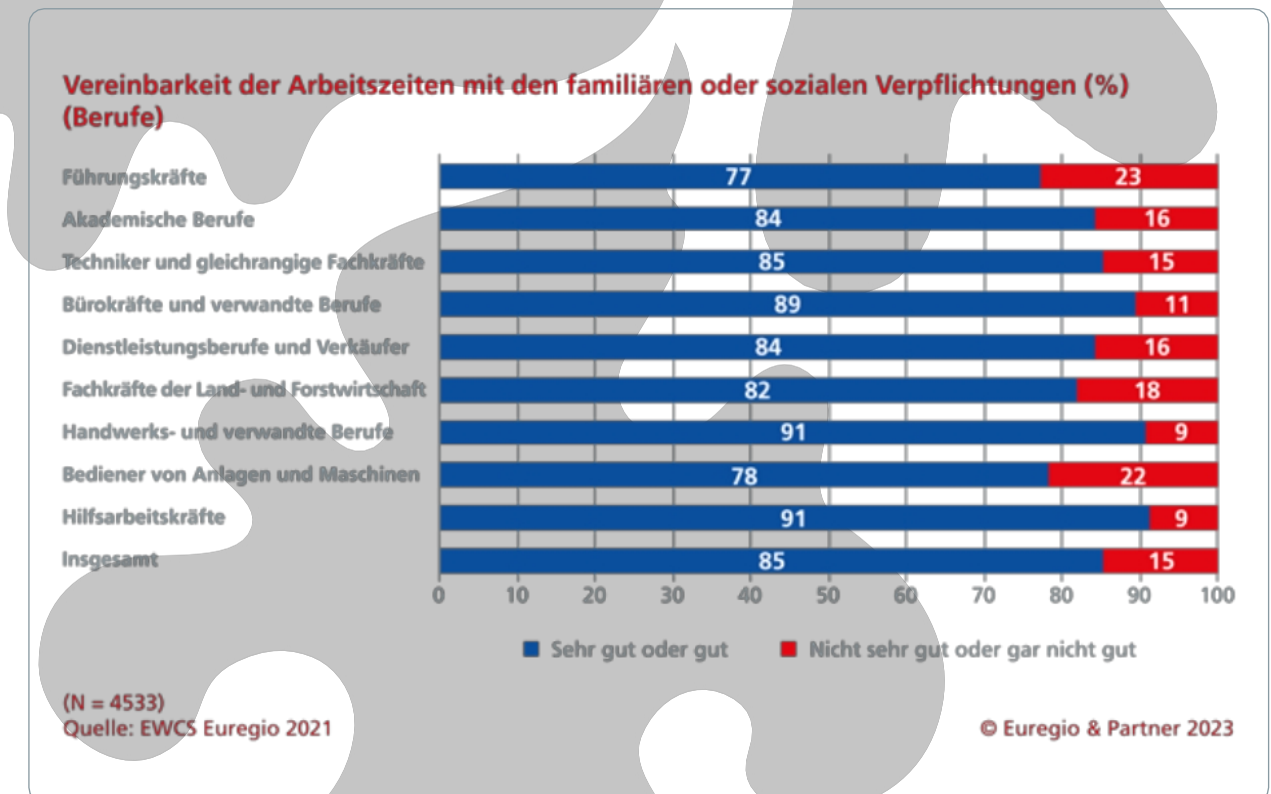
In terms of job profiles, the most critical responses come primarily from managers (23 per cent). They are followed by machine operators (22 per cent), which could be due to shift work hours. In contrast

Figure 14



Deviations from the total value of 100 are due to rounding.

Figure 15



Deviations from the total value of 100 are due to rounding.

to this, especially the occupations performed by craftsmen, skilled workers and non-skilled personnel ensure a better compromise between private life and work. Office workers are also above average with 89 per cent positive ratings (Figure 15).

In the group of managers and craftsmen, women report the greatest problems with reconciliation, while the assessment for all other job profiles is more positive.

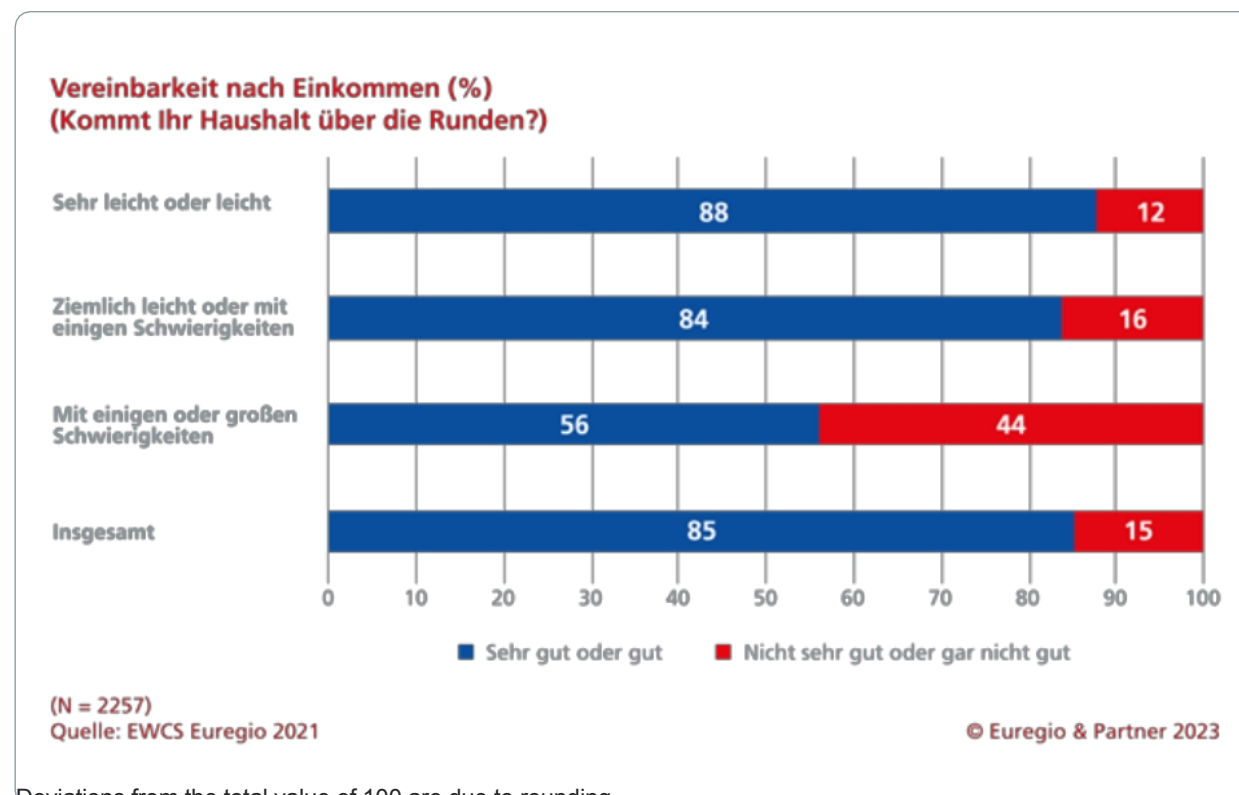
Finally, we examine the topic of income ("If you think about your total monthly household income, does your household [...] make ends meet?"), where not only income from work but also all other sources of income had to be considered.

The responses indicate a correlation between purchasing power and the ability to balance work and private life (Figure 16). Families with high or at least average resources

are more likely to be able to obtain private services to support domestic and care work, both at home (babysitters, domestic or care help) and outside (private day-care centres, laundry services, old people's homes). Interestingly, almost every second person who suffers from financial bottlenecks at the end of the month assesses their options in terms of arrangements negatively. However, there is a difference between women and men. The former assess the reconciliation positively in 64 per cent of the cases, even in financially difficult situations, while it is only 48 per cent for men.

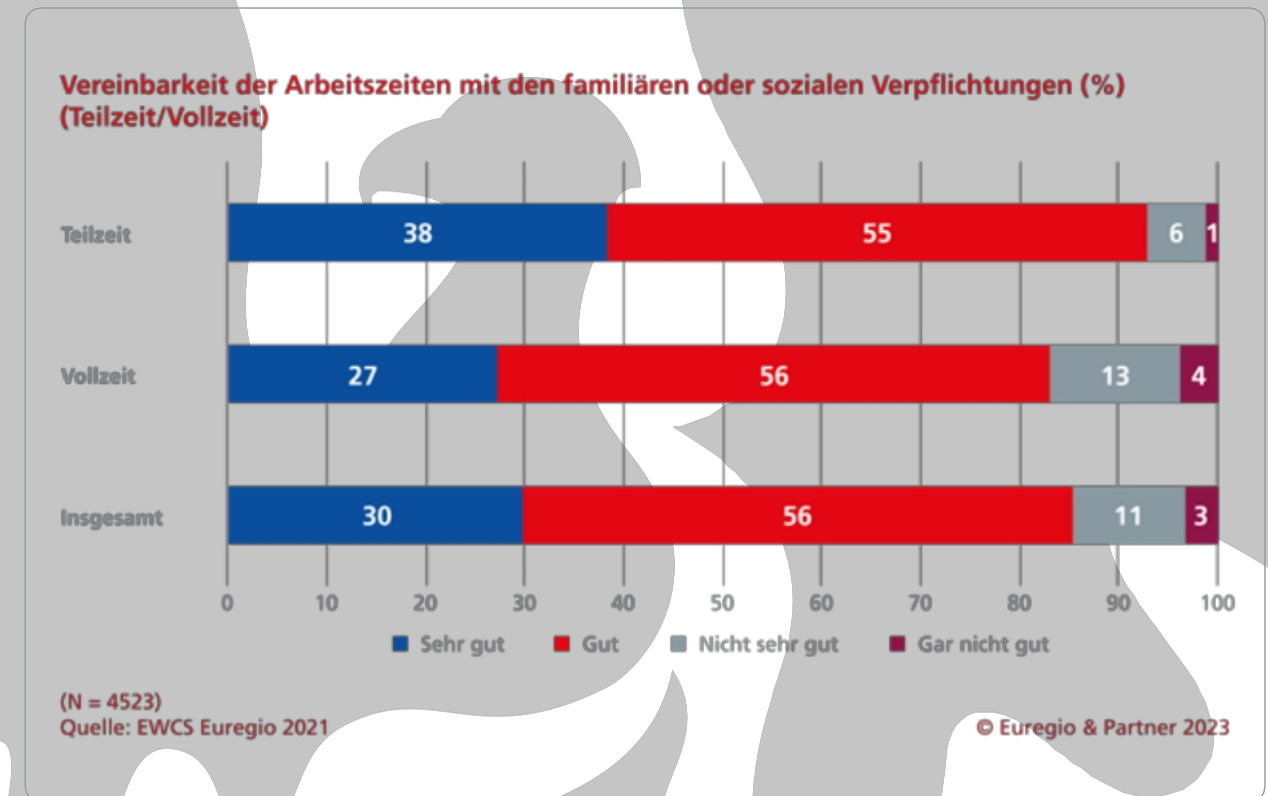
At the territorial level, the ratings are quite consistent, especially when there are no particular financial difficulties (respondents who "very easily" or "easily" make ends meet). In this case, eight out of ten respondents in South Tyrol and Trentino and more than nine out of ten respondents in Tyrol express positive opinions about the possible compatibility (good or very good).

Figure 16



Deviations from the total value of 100 are due to rounding.

Figure 17



Deviations from the total value of 100 are due to rounding.

6. The organisation of work

The EWCS survey sheds light on various factors that affect the company organisation and the working environment. The following aspects in particular have an impact on the perception of reconciliation: part-time work, the distribution of working time over the week, the need to work overtime; the possibility to be absent from work for a few hours due to private commitments.

A more decisive element is certainly part-time work if it is freely chosen by the employee; in this case, the reduction of working hours facilitates reconciliation. However, part-time employment also has its downsides, for example in terms of pay and professional career. This topic will not be discussed further here, however, as it is not the subject of this research.

The asymmetrical handling of this working model is still clearly visible today. In the European Union, part-time work is taken up by 17 per cent of workers on average; for women it is 23 per cent, for men only 10 per cent. These differences are even more pronounced in the European region, where 42 per cent of women and only 9 per cent of men work part-time, with an average of 24 per cent.

The differences between the individual countries are also relevant here: Part-time employment varies from 44 per cent in the Netherlands to 7 per cent in Romania⁷. Italy and Austria occupy a middle position here with 16 percent and 27 percent respectively. The distribution in the three parts of the Euregio, on the other hand, is more uniform, whereby the proportion in Tyrol is somewhat higher than in the Netherlands.

⁷The data in this paragraph come from the EWCS survey and not from the national statistical offices.

is higher (26 percent). It is followed by South Tyrol with 23 percent and Trentino with 22 percent.

The respondents' opinion on whether part-time work helps to better balance private life and work is illustrated in Figure 17.

The result is not surprising: the area that determines the perception of a "good compatibility" (very good or good) is more pronounced for part-time work (93 per cent compared to 83 per cent for full-time employees). The difference is particularly evident in the very positive responses. Here 38 per cent of part-time employees and only 27 per cent of full-time employees have a very good perception of reconciliation. Likewise, in the category of employees who are not at all satisfied with the reconciliation, there is a considerable difference, even though these are small numbers.

The comparison by gender again shows quite uniform ratings. The female workers correspond exactly to the overall picture just outlined with 93

percent positive responses in the first group and 81 percent in the second. Among men, on the other hand, the proportion of satisfied employees decreases slightly, but only among part-time employees, where it is 91 per cent. Also at the provincial level, the proportion of employees reporting good or very good reconciliation is about ten percent higher among part-time employees than among full-time employees, with minimal differences between the individual parts of the province. In the European region Tyrol-South Tyrol-Trentino, satisfaction with both working time models is higher than the EU average (Tab. 3).

In connection with the organisation of working time, we also checked how the perception of work-life balance changes according to the distribution of working time over the week. As a rule, many working days per week, such as six or even seven, cause even more difficulties in reconciling one's private life. Regardless of the number of hours worked

hours, the difference to a standard weekly model (with five working days a week) can cause coordination problems within the family, but also problems on a social level. As the number of working days increases, the percentage of respondents who say they can coordinate their working hours well or very well with family or social commitments decreases (Fig. 18).

The responses confirm that the ability to ensure a work-life balance follows exactly this dynamic. In particular, the percentage of dissatisfied workers among those who work seven days is twice as high as among workers who work five days a week. However, it should be noted here that only a small proportion of workers (about 5 per cent) work seven days and that only a few sectors of this

affected, including agriculture, hospitality, arts, sports and entertainment activities. Sometimes, but not always, this is also related to the seasonality of the work.

In most cases, no particular gender-specific differences in the assessments become apparent, even if the assessment of men is somewhat more critical with limited numbers of cases. This can be seen especially in the case of the division of working time over six or seven days, where the proportion of dissatisfied men rises to 26 per cent and 29 per cent respectively.

At the provincial level, the ratings in the provinces of Trento and Bolzano confirm the graduation already observed. Tyrol always assesses compatibility more positively than the average.

In the context of the "working time" factor, we would still like the answers according to necessity,

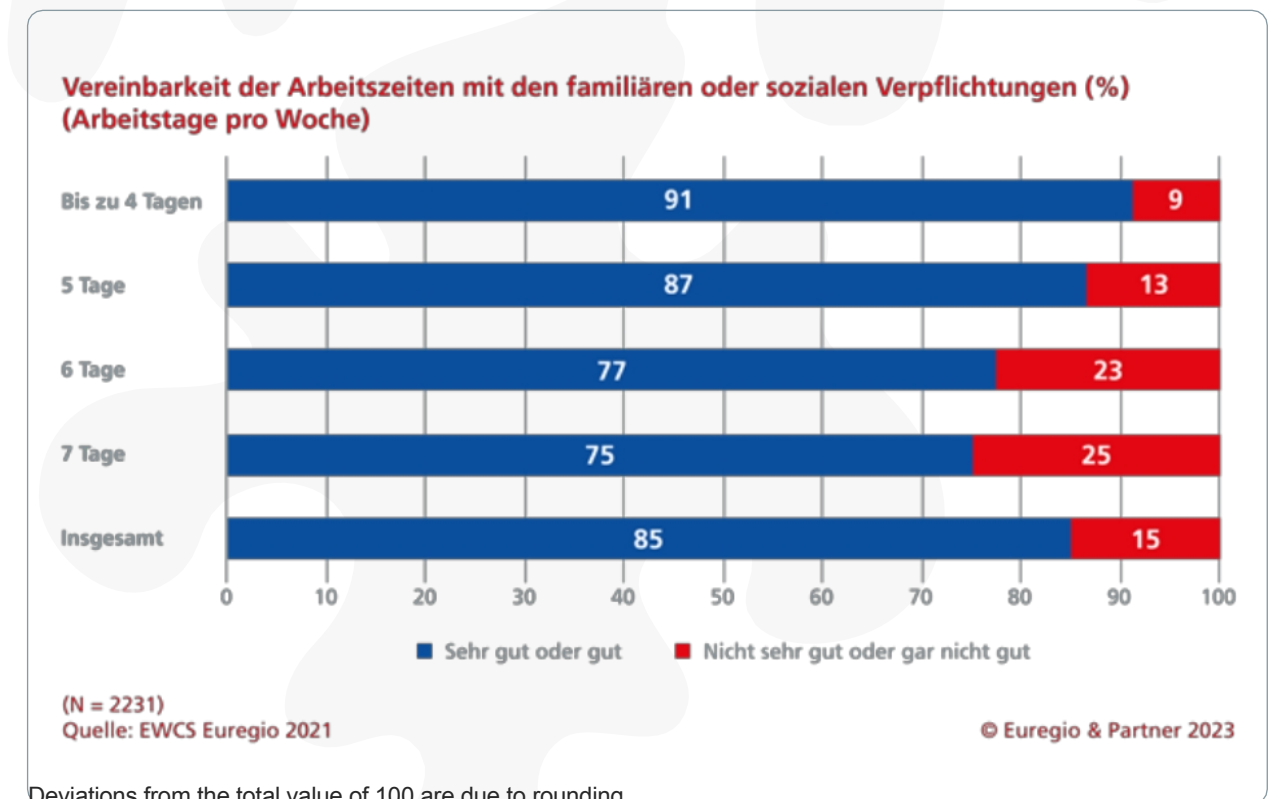
Table 3

Response: Very good or good	Part-time	Full-time	Total
Tyrol	93	85	87
South Tyrol	92	82	84
Trentino	94	83	85
European region	93	83	85
Germany	92	84	86
Austria	94	88	90
Italy	85	73	75
EU27	89	81	82
Switzerland	90	86	87

(Countries: N = 14739; EU27 + European Region: N = 62286)
2023 Source: EWCS Euregio 2021

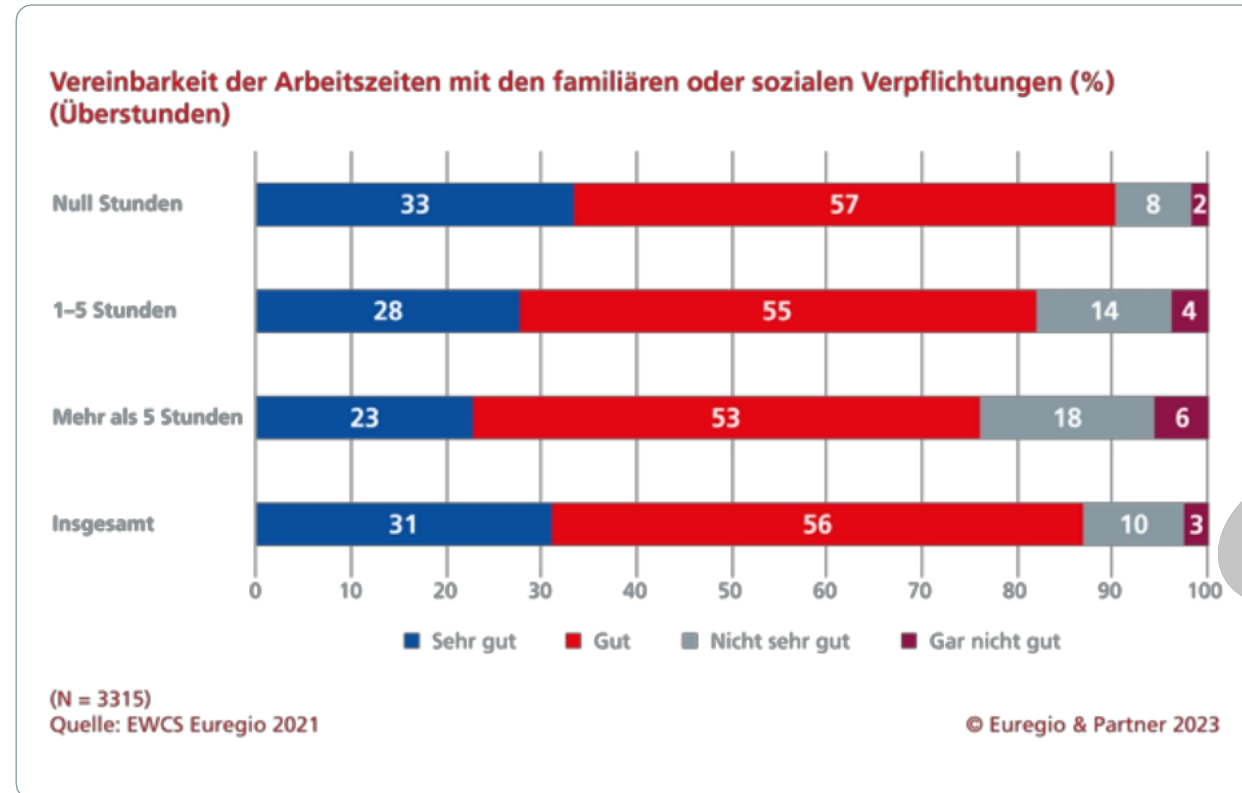
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Figure 18



Deviations from the total value of 100 are due to rounding.

Figure 19



Deviations from the total value of 100 are due to rounding.

to work overtime. This is because it must be taken into account that working beyond the contractual limit not only requires a greater investment of time, but can also affect the stability of the organisation of private life. Also in this case, the positive or negative rating changes depending on the number of overtime hours requested⁸. Positive ratings of the

Compatibility (90 per cent) are most common when no overtime is required. The percentage then drops to 82 per cent among workers who have to work an average of 1 to 5 hours of overtime and to 76 per cent among those who work more than 5 hours of overtime. The judgement of the men largely corresponds to the overall assessment in Figure 19, as men also work overtime more often. The only slight difference is seen in the particularly arduous working hours

(with more than five hours of overtime), where "only" 72 per cent of men rate the compatibility positively (with "very good" or "good") and the average is 76 per cent. The comparison between the parts of the country also reveals more similarities than differences, especially in the responses of workers who do not regularly work overtime (Tab. 4). In Trentino the need to work additional hours seems to be a greater burden, as the proportion of "very satisfied" is lower than in South Tyrol and Tyrol. Things look a little better in terms of "good" compatibility, but the positive answers are always fewer overall than elsewhere. This could also be related to the fact that overtime is less common in Trentino. 75 per cent of Trentino employees declare that they do not work any additional hours apart from their contractual working hours.

⁸ The data result from the difference between the contractually agreed working time and the usual working time and thus only refer to employed persons.

hours, compared to 68 per cent in Tyrol and 63 per cent in South Tyrol.

Another question was about work organisation, which is useful for assessing the profile of workers from a compatibility perspective, and was: "Would you say to take an hour or two off during your usual working hours to attend to personal or family matters

to do is for you ..." [Responses: from "very easy to arrange" to "very difficult to arrange"].

The question is relevant to our research because it directly concerns the relationship between work and the respondent's private sphere. On the one hand, a work environment that is considerate of the needs of (dependent) employees or that depends on good flexibility in the organisation of work (in

Table 4

Compatibility after working overtime (%)		Very good or good	Not very good or not good at all
Tyrol	With overtime	81	19
	Without overtime	90	10
South Tyrol	With overtime	82	17
	Without overtime	90	10
Trentino	With overtime	75	25
	Without overtime	91	9
Europe region as a whole	With overtime	80	20
	Without overtime	90	10

(N = 2282)
Source: EWCS Euregio 2021

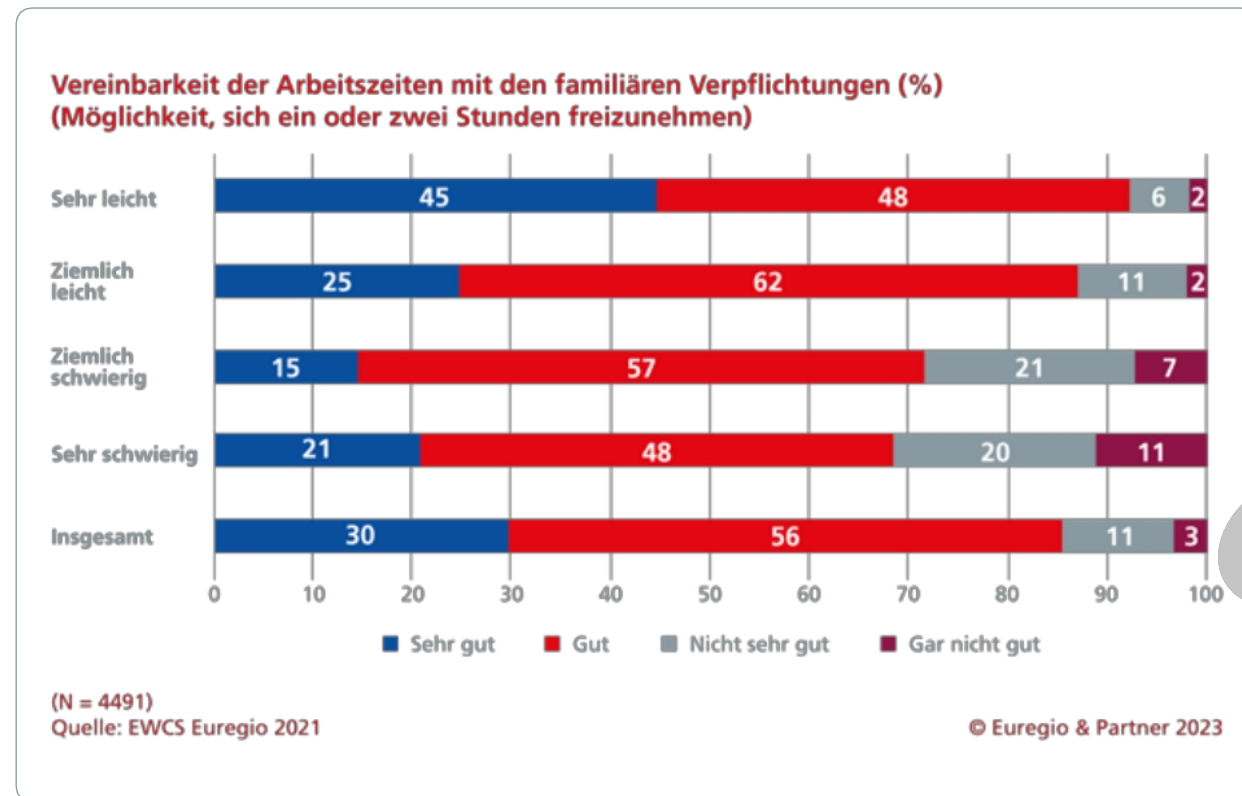
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The main challenge is to reconcile private life and work, which is characterised by a high degree of flexibility in paid and self-employed work. On the other hand, certain professions entail unalterable obligations. The responses surveyed show a correlation between flexibility and the degree of reconciliation. The "good" or "very good" compatibility is highest (92 percent) among workers who can easily take time off. In the other cases, the perception of compatibility gradually decreases to 68 percent for those, who can only stay away from the workplace with difficulty, even for short periods of time.

If the respondent is female, the satisfaction level is above average in all four categories. When the answers are broken down by area within the European region, it essentially emerges that the data for the two Italian areas are comparable. Here too, Tyrol differs from the others and shows a more positive picture overall. In particular, 93 per cent of workers who can easily get away from work give a positive rating ("good" and "very good"); these are

five points more than in the other two Euregio regions (Table 5).

Figure 20



Deviations from the total value of 100 are due to rounding.

7. The work after closing time

The question of the balance between professional and private life sometimes also depends on the fact that these two areas are not always strictly separated. Sometimes professional obligations do not remain

at work; on the other hand, private worries can also interfere with concentration on work. These aspects are explored in greater depth in the EWCS survey with four questions that we would like to examine here.



Table 5

Compatibility after possibility to take one or two hours off (%)		Very good or good	Not very good or not good at all
Tyrol	Very simple or fairly simple	93	7
	Quite difficult or very difficult	71	29
South Tyrol	Very simple or fairly simple	88	12
	Quite difficult or very difficult	68	32
Trentino	Very simple or fairly simple	88	12
	Quite difficult or very difficult	72	28
Europe region as a whole	Very simple or fairly simple	89	11
	Quite difficult or very difficult	70	30

(N = 4490)
Source: EWCS Euregio 2021

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7.1 Work at Free time

The employed and self-employed were asked how often they had worked in their free time in the previous 12 months to fulfil work requirements.

Women and men answered very similarly: 70 per cent of women and 65 per cent of men have "never taken work home". The people who answered in the affirmative, on the other hand, are predominantly male: 18 per cent of men and 14 per cent of women have worked at home after work every day or several times a week.

The data is quite similar for the different parts of the country, even though the South Tyrol has a higher percentage of people who have worked at home. There we also find the lowest proportion of people who have never worked in their free time (65 per cent) and the highest proportion of people who have worked at home "every day" or "several times a week" (Fig. 21).

One reason for this (slight) difference could be the higher proportion of self-employed

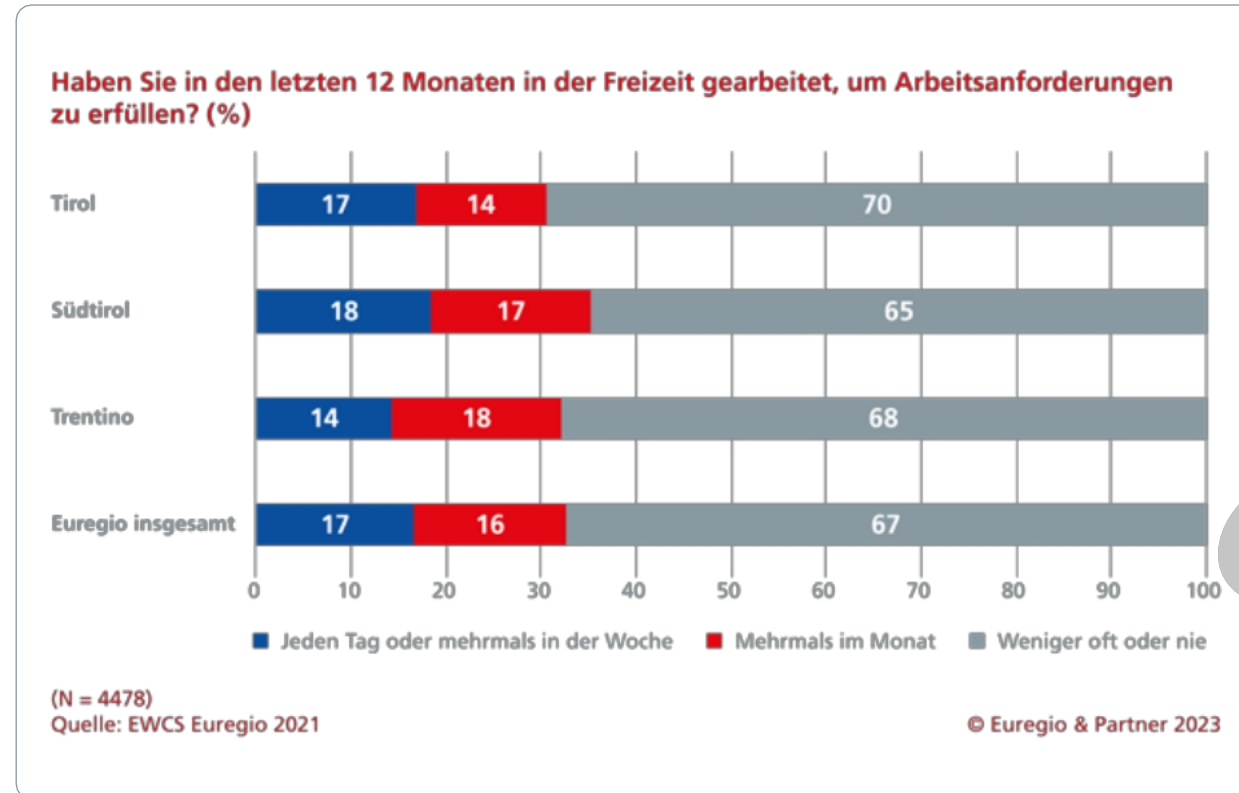
work in South Tyrol, since it is above all this employment group that complains about working during leisure time. In this category, the percentages of the answers "daily" or "daily" are as follows "several times a week" to 34 percent in Tyrol, to 42 percent in South Tyrol and to 33 percent in Trentino.

7.2 Tiredness after work

The "tiredness" factor can also be a negative effect of work that is transmitted to the family environment. To this end, the questionnaire provides a specific question: "In the last 12 months, how often have you felt so tired after work that you could not do some of the household work that should have been done?" (Fig. 22).

About one fifth of the respondents said they "often or always" felt too tired after work to devote time to the household. Although duties from paid work fall more on men, in this case they record only 16 per cent compared to 23 per cent of women. Presumably

Figure



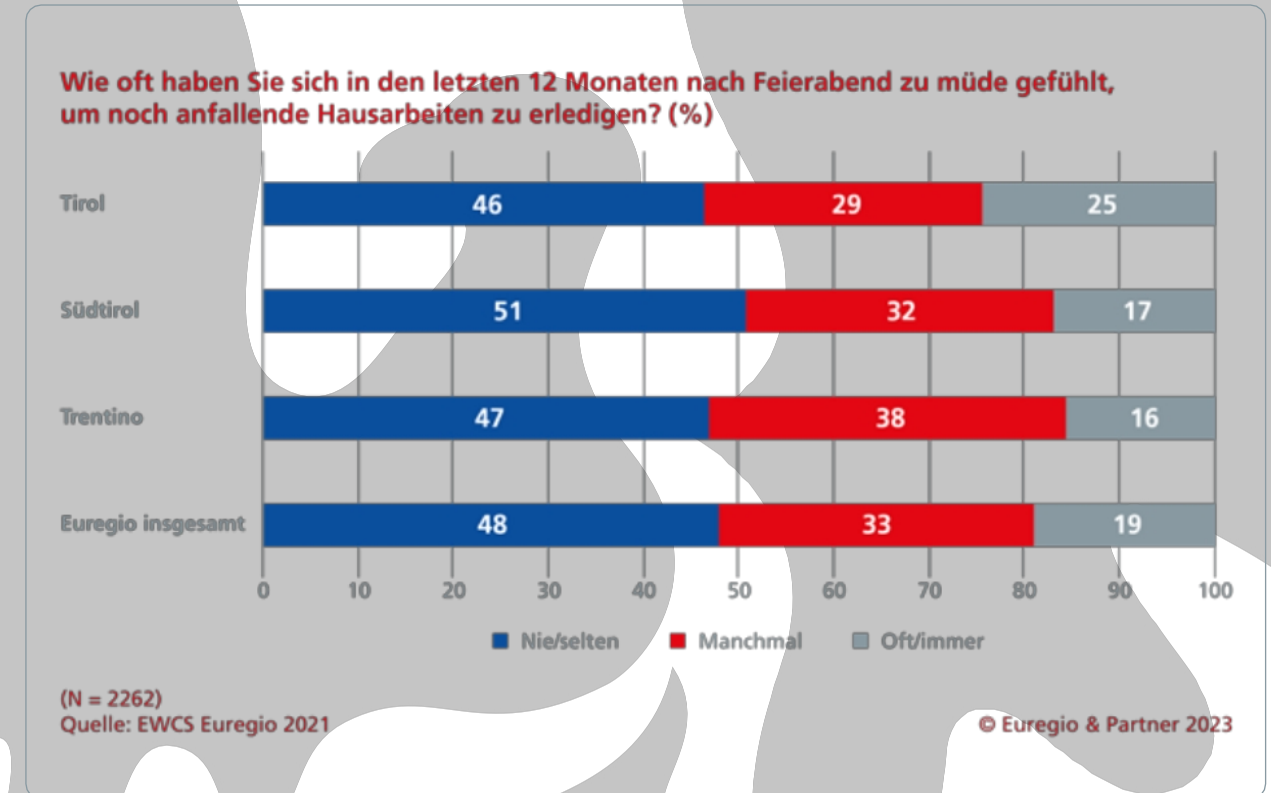
Deviations from the total value of 100 are due to rounding

the different perception between men and women of the duties in the household and in the care of children, the elderly and disabled family members plays a major role here. As we have seen, men are less affected by this than women. In South Tyrol, where the burden of work is rated particularly high, more than half of the respondents said they never or rarely feel too tired to do household chores. Tyrol stands out for exactly the opposite reason: a quarter of the workers often or always feel tired. In this regard, it should be noted that Tyrol stands out in the two categories that are particularly the "fatigue" are recorded in a high number of workers, namely among managers and salespersons. The proportion of managers, 24 percent of whom say they are always or often tired, is twice as high in Tyrol as in South Tyrol and three times as high as in Trentino.

7.3 Professional Worries

The impact of work is undoubtedly also felt on a psychological level. One factor that was examined during the survey is the frequency with which the worker worried about work during leisure time. Both men and women are hardly concerned ("never", "rarely", "sometimes"), as 81 percent of the male respondents and 79 percent of the female respondents stated. On the other hand, the data by part of the country are less uniform; for example, this problem seems to be perceived more strongly in the two Italian regions than in Tyrol (Fig. 23). In Trentino, a quarter of workers said they had often or always worried about work in the past 12 months, while another third were only sometimes worried. Here too, it is the self-employed who express the greatest discomfort.

21Figure 22



Deviations from the total of 100 are due to rounding



30 percent of them are always or often worried, in Trentino even 39 percent.

7.4 Concentration on the work

Extra-occupational dynamics are also often felt beyond the boundaries of private life. Experience teaches that private life anxiety also affects job performance. The survey is limited here to a question only about the impact of "family obligations" on concentration at work.

In general, this problem is hardly perceived. Almost three out of four respondents declare that they have only rarely or never suffered from lack of concentration in the last 12 months for family reasons (Fig. 24). Only 6 percent admit to having had difficulties "often or always".

The responses reveal a very similar profile for men and women. The female workers declare less often than

the men to have "never" had concentration problems. At the provincial level, a certain difference is found between the situation in Tyrol and that in the two Italian regions. For example, Tyrol reports an unusually high proportion (11 per cent) of workers who have recently suffered from problems with concentration. This circumstance does not seem to be related to any typical occupational profile of this area.

8. The desired working time and the compatibility of times

To conclude this overview of the degree of reconciliation perceived by workers in the European region, we present some summary data describing how respondents assess their working time. With this, we want to determine whether there is a correlation between the compatibility

and the desire to change the usual working hours.

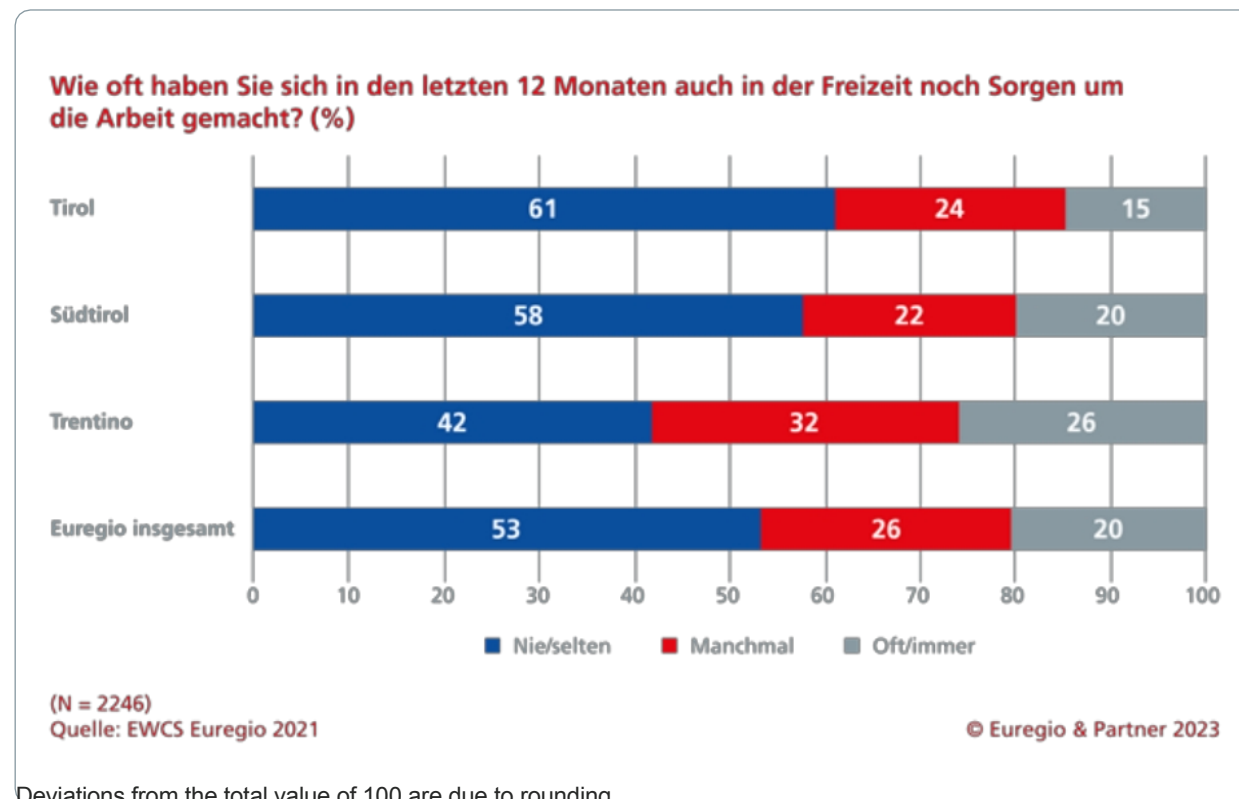
The questionnaire looks at the issue of working hours from different angles and also includes a specific question on desired working hours: "If you could freely decide how many hours you would like to work: How many hours per week would you currently prefer to work? Please include that you need to earn a living". We have grouped the answers into three categories (fewer hours than now, the same number of hours as now, more hours than now) to sketch a macro profile of respondents in terms of their desire to change their situation. The condition mentioned in the question ("Please include that you need to earn a living") ensures that the answers also take feasibility into account.

The majority of respondents (52 per cent) believe that the usual working hours meet their requirements, taking into account their income. It follows

a large proportion of workers (40 per cent) who would also work fewer hours, while only a very small proportion would increase the number of hours (9 per cent) (Fig. 25). Women are the most satisfied with their current working hours, probably because their working hours are already the result of finding a compromise, as we have already seen. Therefore, the proportion of women who would work less is also lower than that of men.

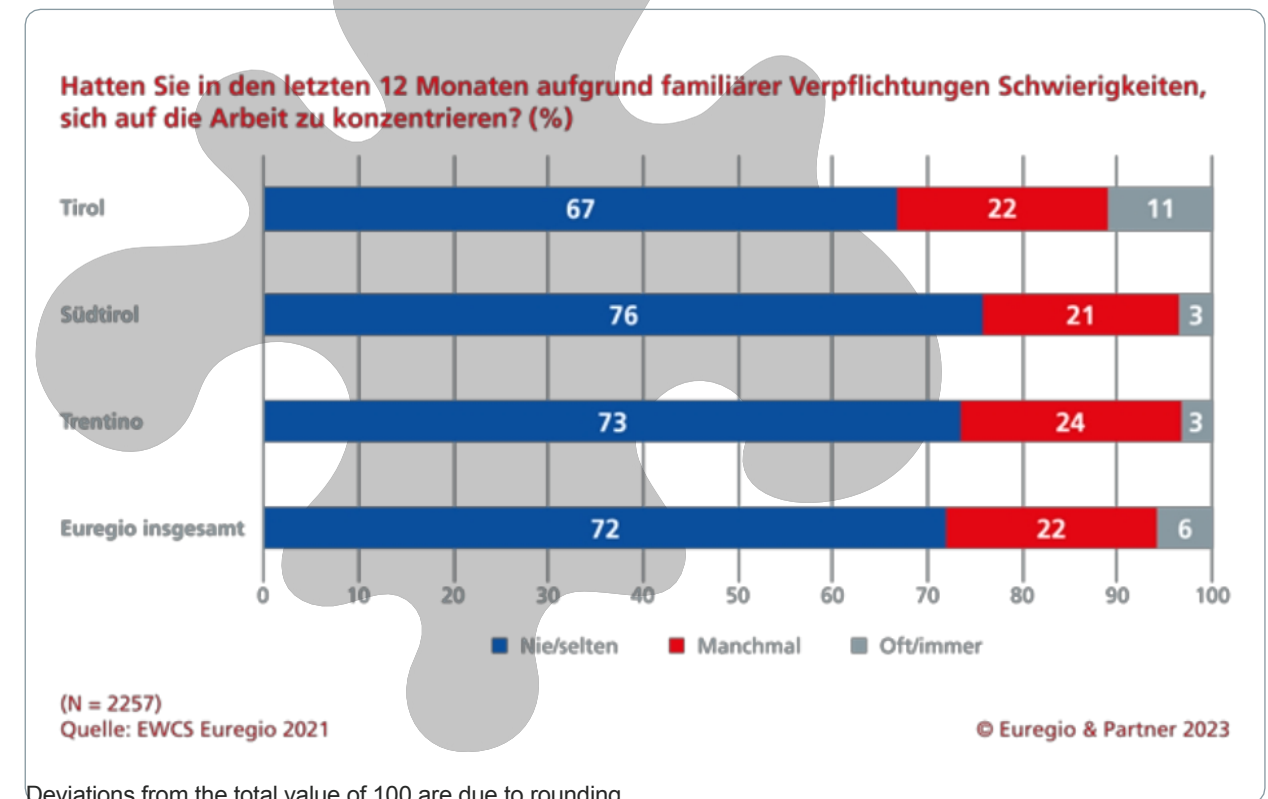
The highest proportion of people who would like to keep their current working hours is among part-time workers (63 per cent), with a peak among women (66 per cent). This is related to satisfaction with the work situation achieved, but should also be seen in conjunction with the extremely high proportion of people who would prefer to work more. 20 per cent of women working part-time (23 per cent if we also consider men) would like to work more hours. This makes it clear that part-time is not always a spontaneous decision. Among the

Figure 23



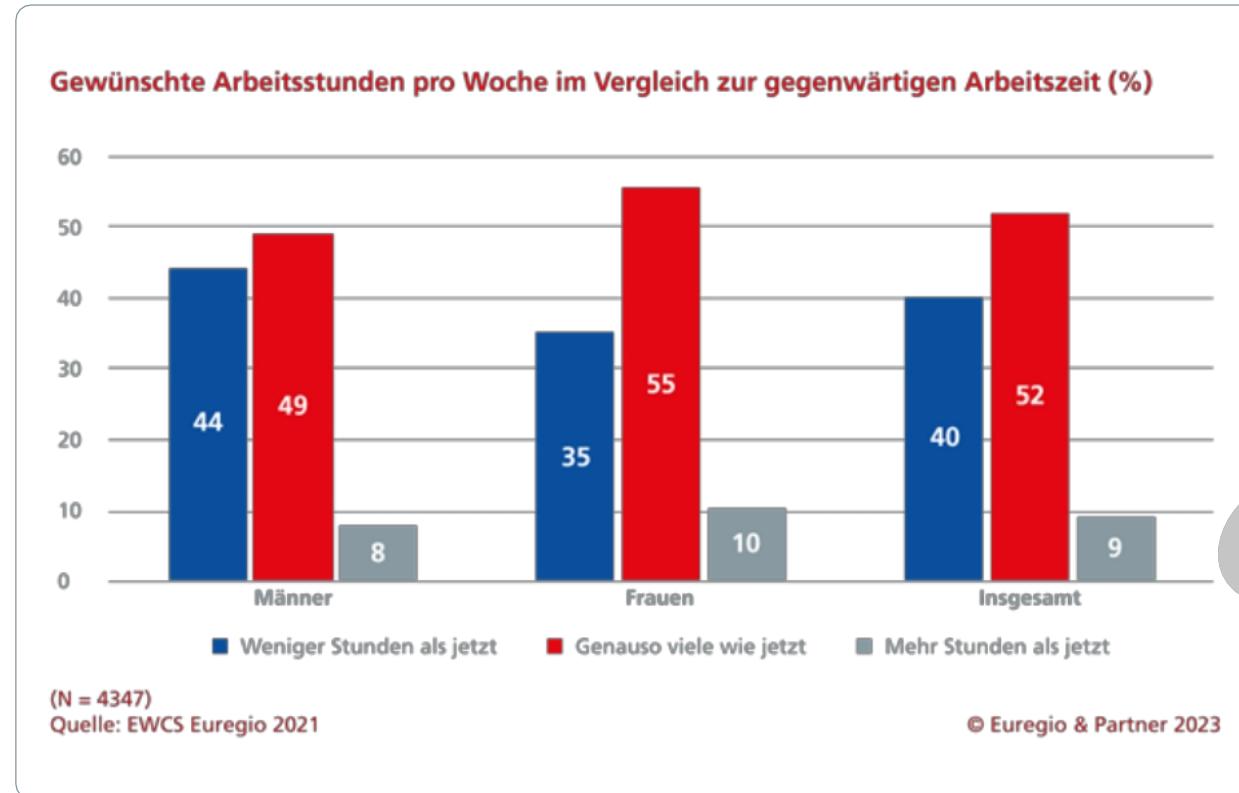
Deviations from the total value of 100 are due to rounding.

Figure 24



Deviations from the total value of 100 are due to rounding.

Figure



Deviations from the total value of 100 are due to rounding

Respondents who would prefer to work less stand out in particular among managers (61 per cent).

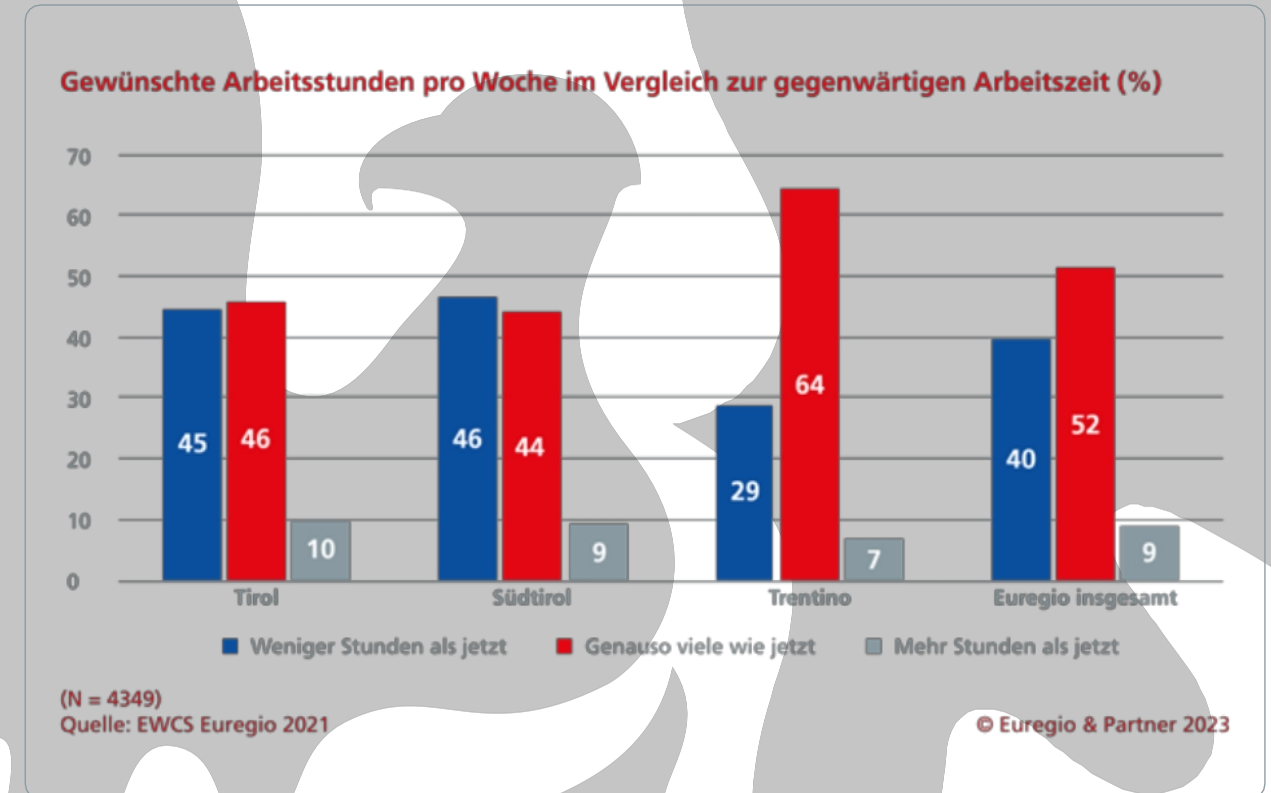
The answers vary from one part of the country to another (Fig. 26). In Trentino, two out of three workers say they would not change their working hours even if they had the opportunity to do so. This opinion is common to all sectors as well as to all occupations; the most likely to deviate are the hospitality industry (55 per cent) and managers (57 per cent). In Tyrol, the number of employees who would keep the same working hours is practically as high as the proportion of those who would like to work less. In South Tyrol, too, the two options balance each other out, although the desire for fewer hours is somewhat greater (in the transport sector it reaches 62 per cent).

The group of respondents who would like to extend their working hours has an average value of about 9 per cent with only minor differences.

If we compare these results with the data previously considered, we can see that a high level of compatibility corresponds to a low desire for changes in working time, and vice versa. In other words, if the usual working time allows a good compromise in terms of compatibility, it should not be changed.

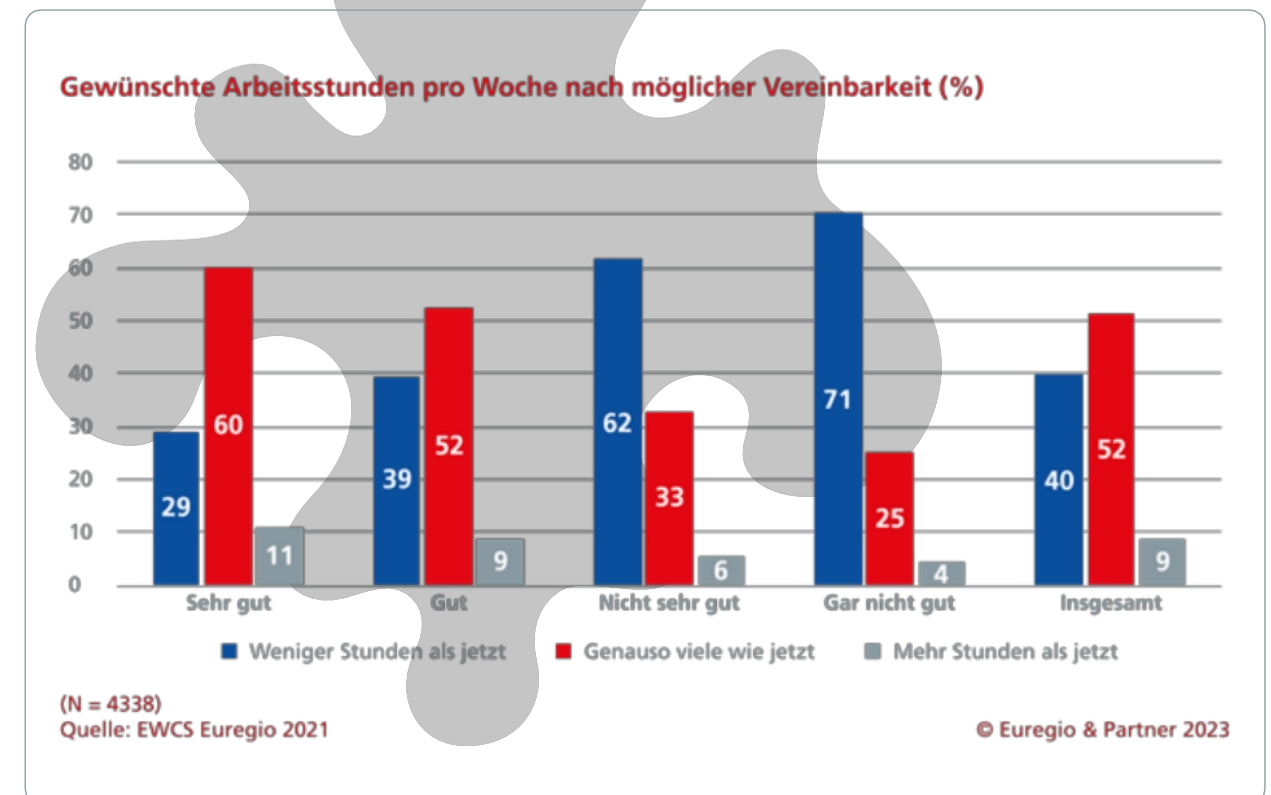
Figure 27 shows this consideration graphically, and the correlation between the two factors is very clear. The lower the satisfaction with compatibility, the greater the desire to change working hours in order to find a better compromise. This is evident both (especially) in the case of reducing working hours and (to a lesser extent) in the case of wanting to increase working hours.

25Figure 26



Deviations from the total value of 100 are due to rounding

Figure 27



Deviations from the total value of 100 are due to rounding.

Concluding remarks

The issue of work-life balance is the cause of a social debate that has been preoccupying the world of work on a global scale for many years. The new generations are increasingly of the opinion that work is not only "profitable", but must also serve the well-being of the person and be considerate of environmental resources. This conviction was undoubtedly consolidated by the pandemic, which promoted a reevaluation of people's private sphere.

The EWCS survey, which is also available for the first time for the provincial parts of the European region Tyrol-South Tyrol-Trentino, has also taken up this topic. We have examined the opinions of the respondents on this and formulated some conclusions that are relevant for apply to the entire macro-region.

Workers in the macro-region are generally satisfied with their compatibility

More than eight out of ten workers (85 per cent) give a positive verdict, a result that is above the EU average (81 per cent). Women are slightly more satisfied than men, and this despite the greater workload in the family. There are several reasons for this, one of which is the trade-off in terms of working hours: less time at work, more time for the family.

Tyrolean employees are the most satisfied when it comes to reconciliation: on average, 87 percent of the answers are positive.

Uneven division of family responsibilities

While men spend more time at work, they still participate in family responsibilities. However, they do not yet devote the same amount of time to caring for and raising children and looking after elderly family members as women do and, above all, are less likely to make a continuous contribution. Furthermore, there is still one area where gender participation shows a great imbalance: cooking and household chores represent for nine out of ten

women a daily obligation, for men only for six out of ten.

Part-time work in favour of reconciliation

Part-time work facilitates work-life balance from every point of view. Part-time workers, who account for a quarter of all workers in the European region, express a higher degree of reconciliation than full-time workers (93 per cent positive responses compared to 83 per cent). Nevertheless, the strain of part-time work is more asymmetrical than the EU average (42 per cent for women and 9 per cent for men).

More work, less compatibility

Generally speaking, the time devoted to work goes to the personal

commitments and interests are lost. A particularly heavy workload has an impact on private life, which is reflected in physical and mental fatigue. Certain professions or sectors are more likely to have to work overtime or even in their free time. Self-employed workers and managers who have very demanding jobs complain about this in particular.

Hospitality and agriculture are particularly critical sectors

All other factors being equal, the sector of the economy conditions the perception of reconciliation. Working in financial services or insurance or education ensures more scope for reconciliation than other sectors such as agriculture or hospitality. It is not only the workload itself that plays a role, but also the distribution of working hours over the days of the week, the possible flexibility and other factors.

Change working hours? It depends...

Perceived satisfaction with the compatibility in one's life influences the desire for different working hours. Six out of ten employees who have a

indicate very good perceptions of reconciliation would not change their working hours, three would prefer to work less and only one more. The desire to work less grows in proportion to the increasing dissatisfaction with reconciliation. Seven out of ten workers who do not feel able to reconcile would prefer to work less.

Can compatibility be improved?

This must be affirmed despite the satisfaction of workers in the European region. In the workplaces there should be a

further expansion of company services and audit experience to reorganise working hours and processes should be promoted. Regionally, the range of public services in favour of reconciliation can be expanded even more closely in order to reach a larger number of workers in peripheral areas. Awareness of the current cultural change must always be in the foreground: There is a growing desire to personalise the working relationship, which must be compatible not only with family obligations but also with private needs and interests.

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Appendix

Feature investigated	Chi-square x2	Freedom grade df	Significance p<
Figure 1: Care/education of children (%)	29,65	4,00	0,00
Figure 2: Care/education of children by part of the country (%)	114,31	8,00	0,00
Figure 3: Care of elderly or disabled relatives (%)	29,26	4,00	0,00
Figure 4: Care of elderly or disabled relatives by part of the country (%)	174,10	8,00	0,00
Figure 5: Homework (%)	417,74	4,00	0,00
Figure 6: Homework by part of the country (%)	30,13	8,00	0,00
Figure 7: Compatibility by gender (%)	11,71	3,00	0,01
Figure 8: Compatibility by part of the country - countries (%)	267,00	6,00	0,00
Figure 8: Compatibility by country area- EU27 + Euregio (%)	1116,68	29,00	0,00
Figure 9: Compatibility by households with minors (%)	28,47	6,00	0,00
Figure 10: Compatibility by households without minors (%)	33,32	6,00	0,00
Figure 11: Compatibility according to "dependent/self-employed" (%)	18,03	3,00	0,00
Figure 12: Compatibility by "dependent" and part of the country (%)	44,56	6,00	0,00
Figure 13: Compatibility by "self-employed" and part of the country (%)	42,25	6,00	0,00
Figure 14: Compatibility by economic sector (%)	60,84	30,00	0,00
Figure 15: Compatibility by profession (%)	72,12	27,00	0,00

Figure 17: Compatibility according to "part-time/full-time" (%)	90,71	3,00	0,00
Table 3: Compatibility by "part-time/full-time" and country part - countries (%)	176,98	1,00	0,00
Table 3: Compatibility by "part-time/full-time" and part of the country - EU + Euregio (%)	326,52	1,00	0,00
Figure 18: Compatibility by working days per week (%)	59,19	9,00	0,00
Figure 19: Compatibility after overtime (%)	86,01	6,00	0,00
Table 4: Compatibility with overtime by part of the country (%)	26,03	6,00	0,00
Table 4: Compatibility without overtime by part of the country (%)	32,88	6,00	0,00
Figure 20: Compatibility after paid free hours (%)	455,79	9,00	0,00
Table 5: Compatibility after paid free hours in Tyrol (%)	218,28	9,00	0,00
Table 5: Compatibility after paid free hours in South Tyrol (%)	144,91	9,00	0,00
Table 5: Compatibility after paid free hours in Trentino (%)	147,73	9,00	0,00
Figure 21: Working in leisure time by part of the country (%)	91,36	8,00	0,00
Figure 22: Tiredness after work by part of the country (%)	67,35	8,00	0,00
Figure 23: Worries at work by part of the country (%)	83,59	8,00	0,00
Figure 24: Concentration on work by part of the country (%)	146,67	8,00	0,00
Figure 25: Desired working hours per week by gender (%)	54,71	4,00	0,00
Figure 26: Desired working hours per week by part of the country (%)	156,91	8,00	0,00
Figure 27: Desired working hours per week for compatibility (%)	344,92	12,00	0,00

Figure 16: Compatibility by income (%)	216,24	15,00	0,00
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