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Title:	White Book – European Doctors and Job Satisfaction – FEMS survey		
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Introduction

Doctors' job satisfaction is important to the public health service to ensure commitment, effective training and education, service provision and retention. A good satisfaction at work influences the possibility of suffering from burnout or psychosocial risks. Furthermore, job satisfaction matters to doctors for their personal happiness, fulfilment, patient dedication and duty to employers; if doctors do not achieve a level of satisfaction with their work, that is appropriate for their level of commitment, the health service may risk of losing their valuable expertise to other countries or other careers, particularly in the private sector.

This survey, carried out by FEMS, is the first of its kind on a European level. Its purpose goes way beyond the award of "best workplace" but it is a mean to understand how doctors feel about their work, their social role and professional experience. Those elements must be considered on a policy level to mitigate any shortcomings and , on a union level, to implement organisational solutions.

As an [annex](#), you can find a Dutch survey, carried out in the same period, about similar topics and questions. It offers a picture that complements data collected so far.

The survey was commissioned in spring 2020 and concluded in spring 2021, with data collection taking place in autumn/winter 2021.

The aim: to survey doctors' job satisfaction in Europe. For this, **four topics** were identified:

- **Financial satisfaction;**
- **Professional satisfaction** (*i.e. recognition within the hospital of individual professionalism, how much the individual is allowed to develop and recognition of the social role of the profession*);
- **Satisfaction with well-being in the workplace** (*i.e. work/life balance*);
- **Satisfaction with access to career opportunities** (*i.e. job mobility, and therefore how easy it is to change jobs, to resign and switch from being a salaried doctor to private practice, or to change hospitals*).

As healthcare systems are organised differently, it was necessary to find a common format for the questions in order to make them easier to respond to. For the same reason, the questions were written and designed to be as simple as possible.

In total, 12 countries took part:

- Austria (which processed the data on its own account and did not answer question 4)
- Cyprus
- Croatia
- France
- Germany
- Italy
- Portugal
- Romania (11 doctors, so not a particularly representative sample, but one nevertheless included in the survey)
- Slovenia
- Slovakia
- Spain

- Sweden
- Czech Republic (1 doctor, so an unrepresentative sample, and therefore not included in the survey).

Total responses

In total, 13,461 doctors responded to the survey, of which 7,447 were women and 6,014 were men. Interestingly, the majority of respondents in all countries were women, except Germany (where the majority was 86% male, with 180 men and 30 women), Italy (very slight majority with 1,642 men and 1,640 women) and Romania (small majority with 6 men and 5 women).

Age groups

Respondents were divided into four age groups:

25-35 years old

36-49 years old

50-60 years old

Over 60 years old

The main age group to take part in the survey was the 36-49 age group (75% in 9 of the 12 countries). Here too, the main exceptions were Germany and Romania (prevalent age group 50-60 years old) and Slovakia, where the majority of respondents were 25-35 years old.

Participation

The country with the highest participation rate:

1. Italy with 3,282 responses (1,642 men and 1,640 women);
2. Slovakia with 2,066 responses (850 men and 1,216 women);
3. Croatia with 1,940 responses (659 men and 1,281 women);
4. Austria with 1,623 responses (779 men and 844 women);
5. Sweden with 1,335 responses (666 men and 669 women);
6. Spain with 1,059 responses (506 men and 553 women);
7. Portugal with 697 responses (240 men and 457 women);
8. France with 587 responses (257 men and 330 women);
9. Slovenia with 571 responses (190 men and 381 women);
10. Germany with 210 responses (180 men and 30 women);
11. Cyprus with 79 responses (39 men and 40 women);
12. Romania with 11 responses (6 men and 5 women).

Topics

A total of 24 questions were asked. Of these, three were multiple choice, and the remainder required a single answer. There were also three questions on the Covid-19 emergency (the survey was launched during the first phase of the pandemic, in spring 2020) and a more general one on possible future public health emergencies. The first three questions were on the country of origin, gender and age of the participants. The remaining questions (18) focused on various aspects.

Quality of the profession and facilities: If you had to describe the medical profession today, which adjectives would you use? (multiple choice question with a list of adjectives).

How do you rate the quality of the services provided by healthcare facilities in your country, hospitals in your country, hospitals in your region and outpatient services in your country?

Professional development and career opportunities.

Financial aspects (how you view your pay).

Evaluation of your work as a salaried doctor and degree of satisfaction with certain issues (distribution of workload, job prospects, career prospects, organisation of work, part-time opportunities, training and continuing education, relations with management and patients).

Possibility of balancing work and private life.

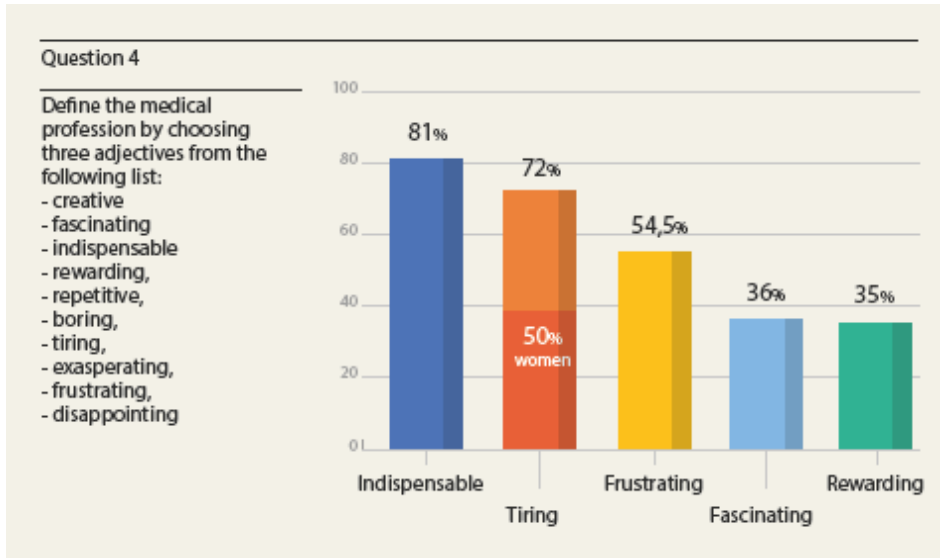
Relations with work colleagues.

DATA ANALYSIS

Question 4 M

If you had to describe the medical profession today using three adjectives, which of the following would you choose: creative, fascinating, indispensable, rewarding, repetitive, boring, tiring, exasperating, frustrating, disappointing?

For 81% of doctors, the profession is indispensable, and it is often the youngest who think of it as such.
For 72%, it is tiring (and here there is no gender distinction, with 50% of women choosing this adjective).
For 54%, it is frustrating.
Other adjectives chosen were fascinating (36%) and rewarding (35%).



Question 5.1

In general, how do you rate the quality of services provided by the national healthcare facilities in your country?

Not very satisfactory 50% (among these, 33% are women)
Satisfactory 41%
Unsatisfactory 9% (Austria)

Question 5.2

In general, how do you rate the quality of services provided by hospitals in your country?

Satisfactory 75%
Not very satisfactory 25%

Question 5.3

In general, how do you rate the quality of services provided by hospitals in your region?

Satisfactory 84%
Not very satisfactory 16% (Austria and Cyprus)

Question 5.4

In general, how do you rate the quality of services provided by outpatient services in your country?

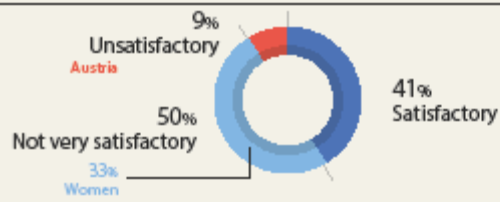
Satisfactory 59%
Not very satisfactory 41% (Austria, Cyprus, Italy, Slovakia and Sweden)

Question 5

How do you consider the quality of the services provided?

5.1

By healthcare facilities in your country



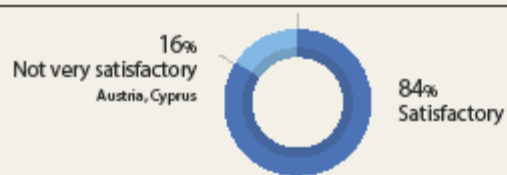
5.2

By hospitals in your country



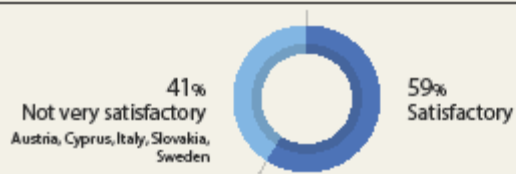
5.3

By hospitals in your region



5.4

By outpatient services in your country



Question 6

How do you rate the quality of the service in the healthcare facility where you work?

Here, the response was unanimous: 100% considered it satisfactory.

This is particularly true for the two most extreme age groups, i.e. the youngest and the over 60s.

Question 6

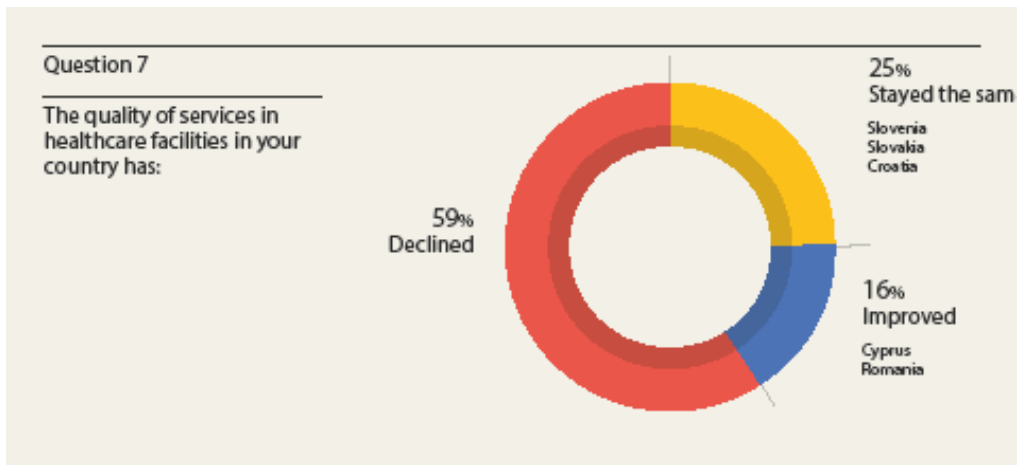
How do you rate the quality of the service in the healthcare facility where you work?



Question 7

In your opinion, in the last 10 years, the quality of services in healthcare facilities in your country has:

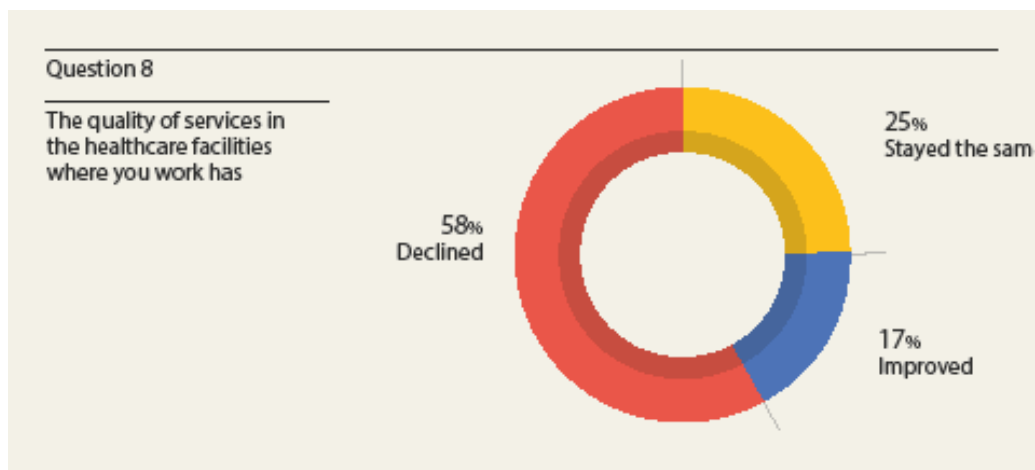
Declined 59% (Austria, France, Germany, Italy, Portugal, Spain, Sweden)
Improved 16% (Cyprus, Romania)
Stayed the same 25% (Slovenia, Slovakia, Croatia)



Question 8

The quality of services in the healthcare facilities where you work has

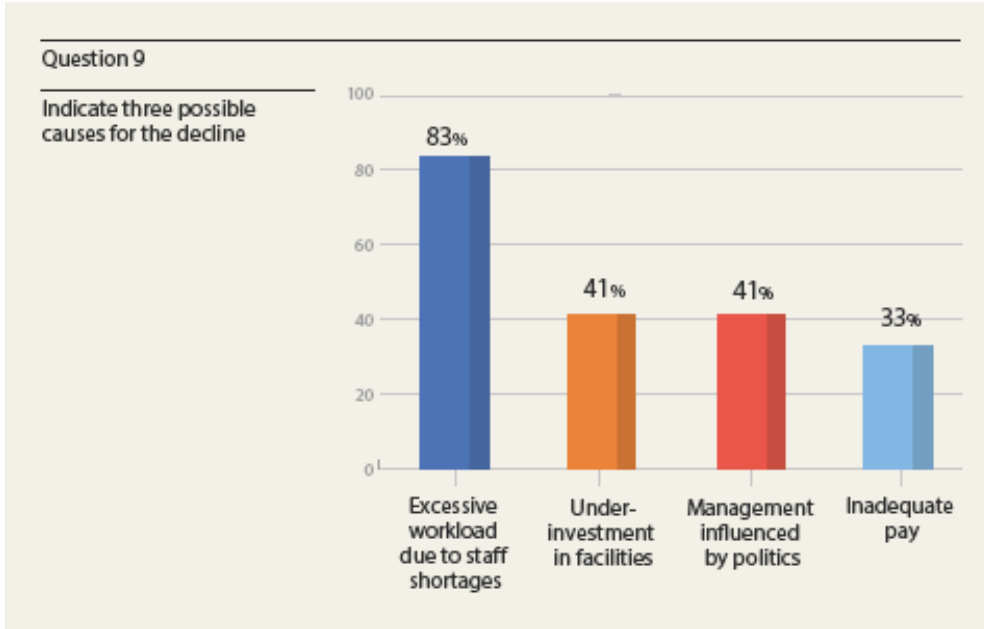
Declined 58%
Stayed the same 25%
Improved 17%



Question 9 M

If it has declined, indicate the main reasons in your view (three answers possible)

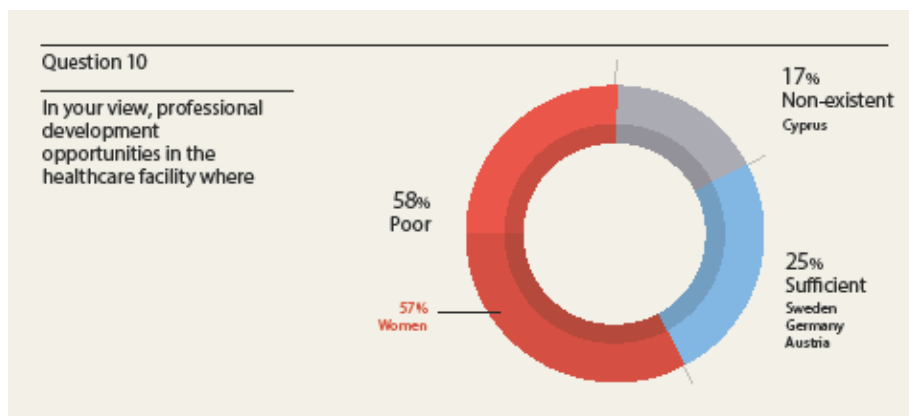
- Excessive workload due to staff shortages 83% (30% women)
- Underinvestment in facilities 41%
- Management influenced by politics 41%
- Inadequate pay 33%



Question 10

In your view, professional development opportunities in the healthcare facility where you work are:

- Poor 58% (women who complain about it: 57%)
- Sufficient 25% (Sweden, Germany, Austria)
- Non-existent 17% (Cyprus)

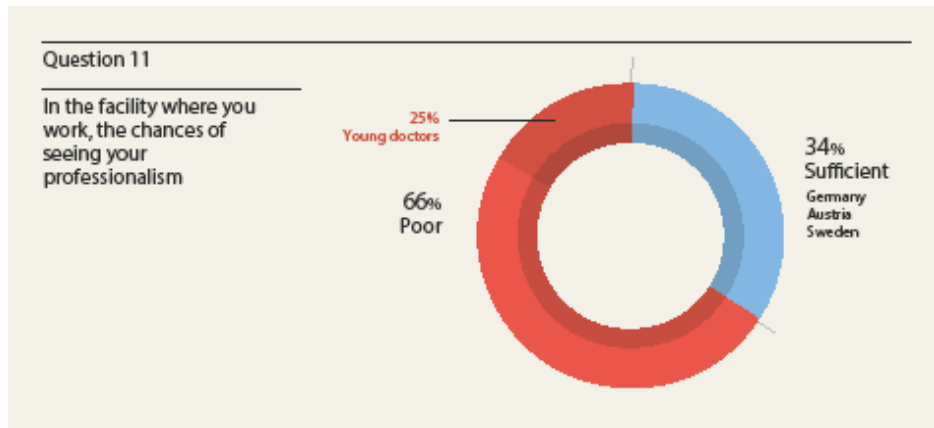


Question 11

In the healthcare facility where you work, the chances of seeing your professionalism recognised are:

Poor 66% (25% of these are the youngest)

The remaining 34% answered sufficient (doctors in Germany, Austria and Sweden).



Question 12 M

If you had to rate each of the following aspects in relation to how it affects the quality of healthcare services, what score would you give?

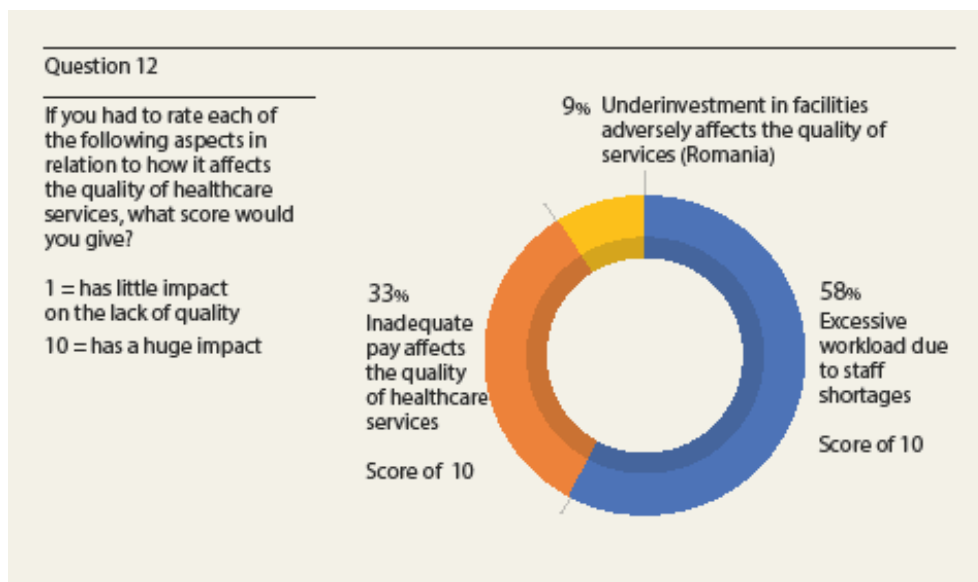
(1 = has little impact on the lack of quality; 10 = has a huge impact)

Excessive workload due to staff shortages; Excessive workload due to organisational problems; Underinvestment in facilities; Underinvestment in research; Lack of flexibility in the organisation of work; Less preparation for doctors; Less dedication among doctors; Excessively frequent shifts and on-call duties; Inadequate pay; Relations with management; Management influenced by political factors; Manager competence.

58% of respondents answered that their workloads are excessive due to staff shortages, giving it the maximum score of 10.

33% answered that inadequate pay affects the quality of healthcare services (again with a maximum score).

Finally, 9% felt that the quality of services is adversely affected by underinvestment in facilities.



Question 13.1

Please indicate to what extent you agree with the following opinions expressed by other doctors working in healthcare facilities:

Financial compensation is not commensurate with the commitment required of salaried doctors

Totally agree 83%

Agree 9% (Sweden)

Disagree 8% (Germany)

Question 13.2

Working in a healthcare facility means giving up your private life

Agree 50%

The remaining 50% disagree

Question 13.3

The role of the salaried doctor has little recognition in society

Agree 33%

Fully agree 41%

Disagree 26% (Germany, Austria, Sweden)

Question 13.4

Salaried doctors have little involvement in health and management policy

Agree 50%

Totally agree 50%

Question 13.5

Individual doctors are too dependent on professional and administrative hierarchies

Totally agree 59%

Agree 33%

Disagree 8% (Austria)

Question 13.6

Many regulations aimed at improving safety and quality of care are actually means of reducing costs.

Totally agree 66%

Agree 25%

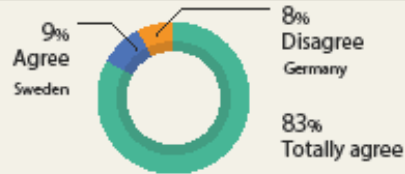
Disagree 9% (Slovenia)

Question 13

Do you agree with those who say that:

13.1

Financial compensation is not commensurate with the commitment required of salaried doctors?



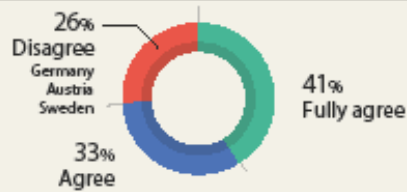
13.2

Working in a healthcare facility means giving up your private life?



13.3

The role of the salaried doctor has little recognition in society?



13.4

Salaried doctors have little involvement in healthcare and management policy?



13.5

Individual doctors are too dependent on professional and administrative hierarchies?



13.6

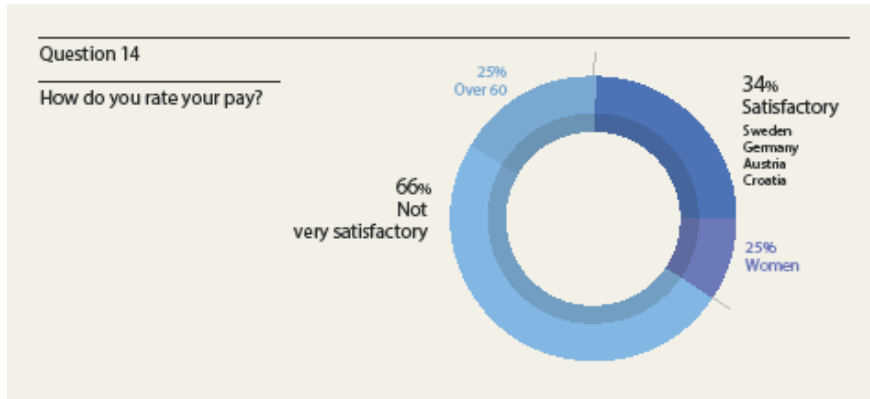
Many regulations aimed at improving safety and quality of care are actually means of reducing costs?



Question 14

How do you rate your pay?

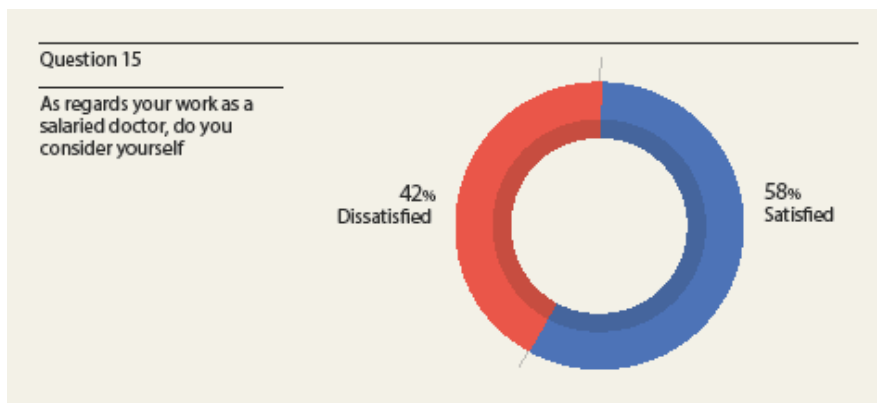
33% consider it satisfactory (25% of these are women), particularly in Sweden, Germany, Austria and Croatia. The remaining 66% consider it not very satisfactory (25% of these are over 60, especially in Cyprus and Spain).



Question 15

As regards your work as a salaried doctor, do you consider yourself

Satisfied 58%
Dissatisfied 42%



Question 16.1

Please indicate how satisfied you are with each of the following aspects of the job:
Distribution of workload

Satisfied 43%
Dissatisfied 57%

Question 16.2

Job prospects

Dissatisfied 41%
Satisfied 59% (28% of these are over 60; 14% are in the 25-35 age group)

Question 16.3

Career prospects

58% are dissatisfied (37% are women)
42% are satisfied (40% are over 60 and 20% are among the youngest)

Question 16.4

Organisation of work

Dissatisfied 75%
Satisfied 25% (particularly in Germany, Slovakia and Sweden, where however 37% of women are less satisfied)

Question 16.5
Work flexibility

Dissatisfied 75%
Satisfied 25%

Question 16.6
Possibility of going part-time

Very satisfied 10%
Satisfied 33%
Dissatisfied 33%
Extremely dissatisfied 16%
Don't know 8%

Question 16.7
Training and continuing education

Dissatisfied 58% (including Sweden)
Satisfied 42%

Question 16.8
Quality of healthcare facilities

Satisfied 42% (Austria, Germany, Sweden, Slovenia)
Dissatisfied 58%

Question 16.9
Relations with the management

Dissatisfied 50%
Satisfied 41%
Extremely dissatisfied 9%

Question 16.10
Relations with patients

Satisfied 83%
Very satisfied 17%

Question 16.11
Technological equipment

Satisfied 58%
Dissatisfied 33%
Extremely dissatisfied 9%

Question 16

Please indicate how satisfied you are with each of the following aspects of the job

16.1

Distribution of workload



16.2

Job prospects



16.3

Career prospects



16.4

Organisation of work



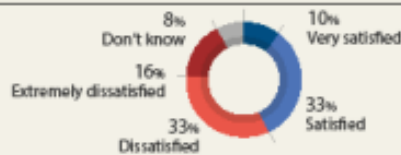
16.5

Work flexibility



16.6

Possibility of going part-time



16.7

Training and continuing education



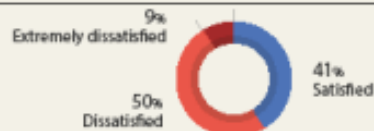
16.8

Quality of healthcare facilities



16.9

Relations with the management



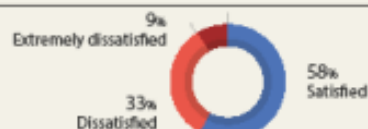
16.10

Relations with patients



16.11

Technological equipment

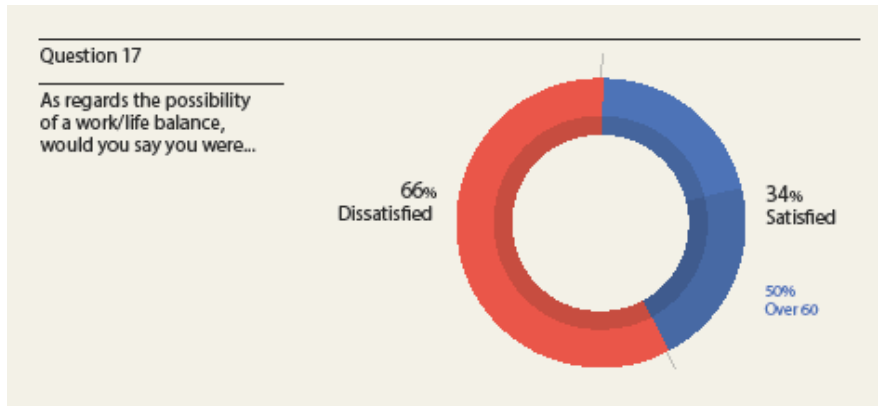


Question 17

As regards the possibility of a work/life balance, would you say you were...

Dissatisfied 66%

Satisfied 34% (among these, 50% are over 60)



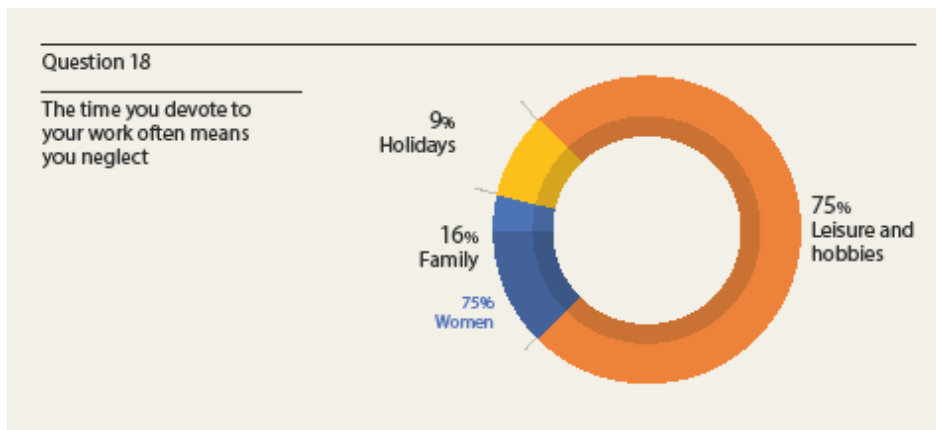
Question 18

The time you devote to your work often means you neglect

Leisure and hobbies 75%

Family 16% (specifically, 75% of women complain about this)

Holidays 9%



Question 19.1

Now evaluate certain aspects of your work and indicate for each one how feasible and easy it is to implement changes:

Change hospital

Difficult 41%

Very difficult 34%

Easy 25% (Germany, Austria and Sweden)

Question 19.2

Change type of job or role

Difficult 67% (particularly for German women, 70%)

Very difficult 33%

Question 19.3

Be transferred to another department

Difficult 50%

Very difficult 40%

Very easy 10% (Austria)

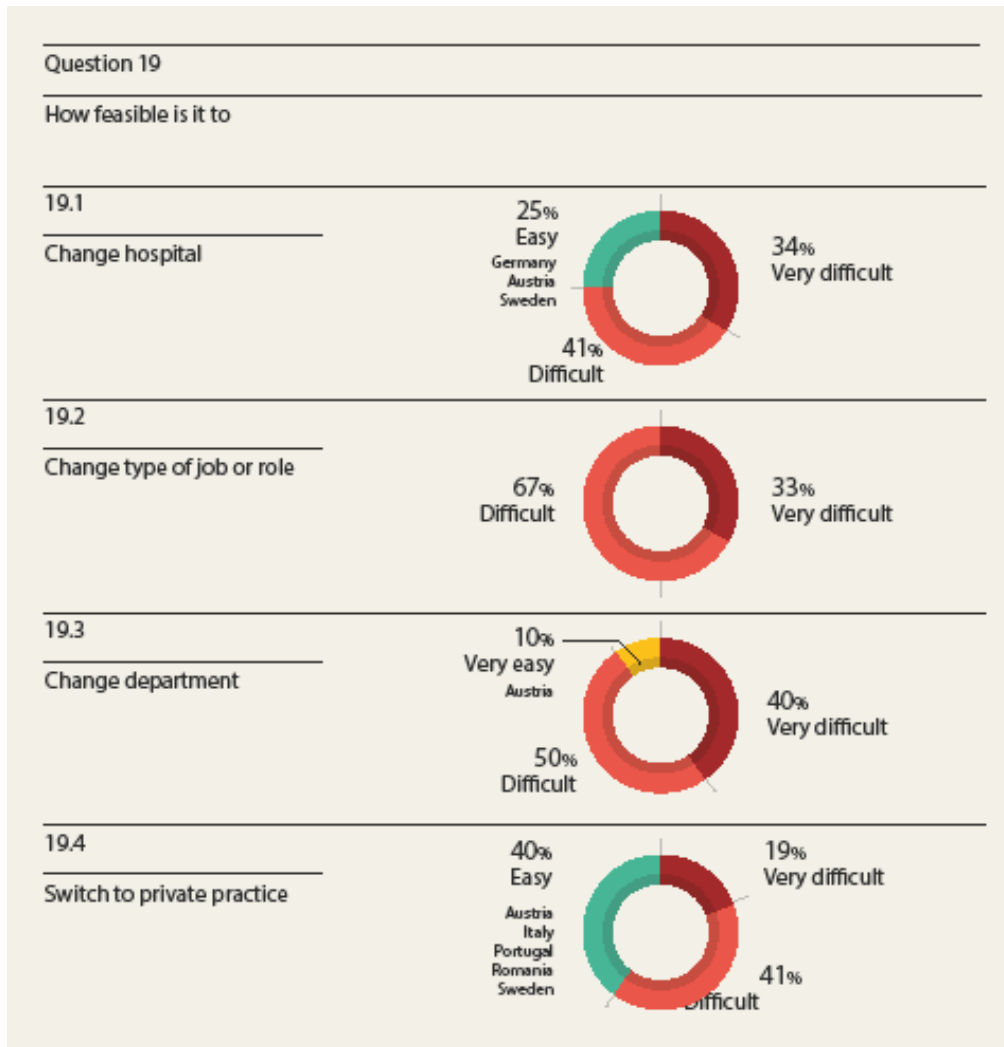
Question 19.4

Switch from employment to private practice

Easy 40% (Austria, Italy, Portugal, Romania, Sweden)

Difficult 41%

Very difficult 19%



Question 20.1

You would define your relations with your work colleagues in terms of working environment as

Good 84%

Very good 8%

Moderate 8%

Question 20.2

You would define your relations with your work colleagues in terms of cooperation as

Good 91%

Very good 9%

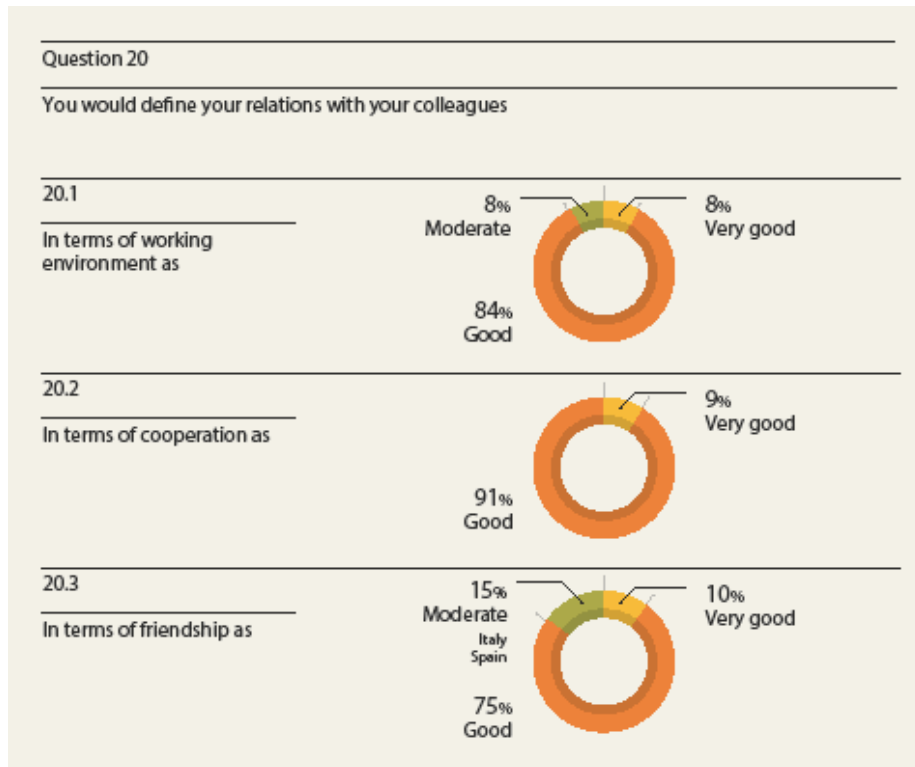
Question 20.3

You would define your relations with your work colleagues in terms of friendship as

Good 75%

Moderate 15% (Italy and Spain)

Very good 10%



Question 21.1

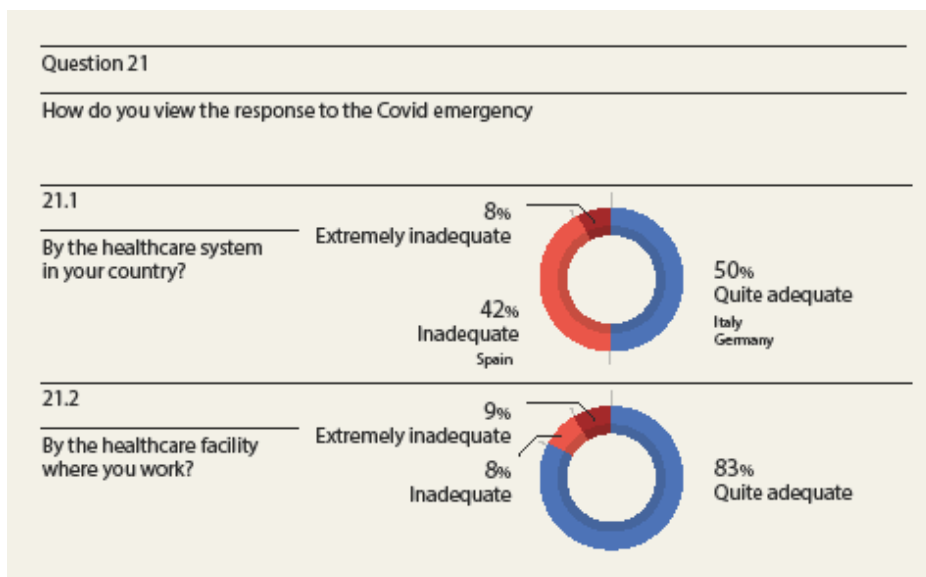
Do you believe that the healthcare system in your country responded to the Covid-19 emergency in a manner that was...

- Inadequate 42% (Spain)
- Quite adequate 50% (including Italy and Germany)
- Extremely inadequate 8%

Question 21.2

Do you believe that the healthcare facility where you work responded to the Covid-19 emergency in a manner that was...

- Quite adequate 83%
- Extremely inadequate 9%
- Inadequate 8%



Question 22.1

During the Covid-19 emergency, do you feel...
that your work played an important role

Quite important 75%
Very important 17%
Not very important 8%

Question 22.2

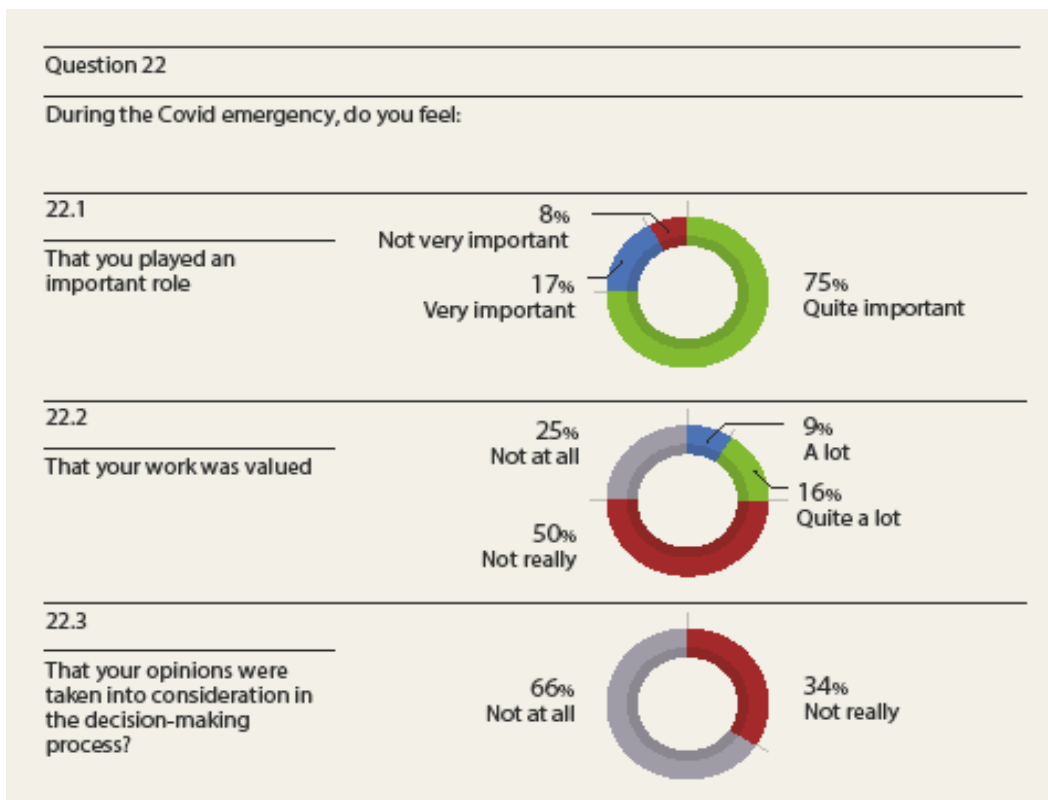
that your work was valued

Not really 50%
Not at all 25%
Quite a lot 16%
A lot 9%

Question 22.3

that your opinions were taken into consideration in the decision-making process

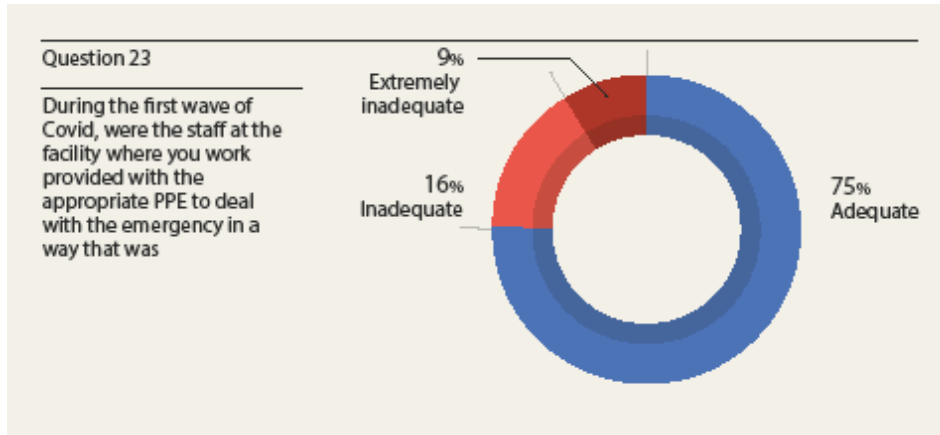
Not at all 66%
Not really 34%



Question 23

During the first wave of Covid, were the staff at the facility where you work provided with the appropriate PPE to deal with the emergency in a way that was

Adequate 75%
Inadequate 16%
Extremely inadequate 9%



Question 24 M

In the event of another public health emergency, which aspects do you think should be improved?

As this is a multiple choice question, the responses are different. However, it is clear that in most countries, survey respondents expressed the need for more healthcare staff, i.e. nurses (75%) and doctors (66%). In addition, 58% believe it is necessary to invest in prevention and 41% call for an increase in intensive care beds. 25% recommend investment in facilities. 16% call for outpatient services to be improved.

