THE VOICE OF 100,000 WORKERS

Results of a national study on the condition of Italian metalworkers

Edited By Eliana Como

Introduction by Giorgio Cremaschi

Vittorio Capecchi, Davide Dazzi, Francesco Garibaldo, Giovanni Mottura, Emilio Rebecchi, Gino Rubini and Antonella Stirati contributed to the creation of the study and analysis of the data.

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Italian version:

Editorial management: Stefania Frezza Meta Edizioni srl, corso Trieste 36 – 00198 Roma metaedizioni@fiom.cgil.it

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Introduction

The ideology of post-Fordism and the reality of modern exploitation

The study carried out by FIOM seems made to order to disprove most of the clichés which have devastated the awareness of the true working conditions in our country. Occasionally these emerge but only in the most extreme and dramatic moments. When workers of ThyssenKrupp are burned alive, we discover that workers exist and that in our country there are working conditions which seem to come directly from the new production facilities of the old third world. And yet these fragments of reality can't shatter an ideology which has established itself in the past few years which, when it doesn't deny visibility to working conditions, claims that harsh working conditions exist only as residual elements or under unusual situations. The underlying ideology is to present the great transformation of the economy and production as a process which would eliminate repetitivity, Taylorism, and authoritarian production models and move towards a system characterized by flexibility, quality and participation. Even among liberals, even those who feel and are close to workers both ideologically and physically, the ideology of post-Fordism (that is of the elimination of motives for conflict in the factory) dominates. Even those who do not deny the existence of uncertain job security, exploitation and loss of job identity (all unacceptable in a civilized society) tend to see this as the result of a new work system. A system which cancelled the old, destroying along with the evil conditions of the Fordist model the rights and protection which workers had gained under that system. It is believed that a new system of rights is necessary which will be more aligned with the current and profoundly changed organization of labor even at the cost of giving up important rights secured in the past.

The FIOM study disproves these fallacies. Under the current industrial model, in the most competitive and advanced industrial systems, the methods of the old Taylor system (repetitivity, highly fragmented division of responsibilities and increased working hours) and those required by the new system (changes in production rate, quality requirements, increased attention and participation required from workers), the old and the new are intertwined. The old working conditions do not disappear, they are transformed and further burdened by factors including worker fatigue (particularly for female workers). Thus the exhaustion caused by the old system is added to the stress, tension and social insecurity created by the new system. This study doesn't just shows that workers still exist – often a springboard for idle rhetoric. The reality that emerges from this study we feel is that because of the profound restructuring of the past 20 years of the industrial and labor system a new model is being imposed throughout society in which the dependence of people and the decrease in true autonomy are combined by an ever more fervent support by workers for the qualitative processes of industry. The aggregation of old and new, their contamination, produces a new work environment which is infinitely more stressful and tiring than the old one it replaced. If we leave the manufacturing industry this new weariness is exemplified by the condition of workers in call centers who are required to work with the pace of the old assembly lines and who are required to provide clients a qualitatively excellent service which is at the same time as personalized as possible. Many service industry jobs have these characteristics; repetition and authoritarian management are coupled with the requirement of personalized service. These requirements are also found in the steel and metals industries in which the requirements of an assembly line and a highly repetitive and fragmented division of labor in which the same movements are repeated thousands of times a day are coupled with increased qualitative demands both to increase product quality and to meet the requirements of increasingly diverse products.

If our hypothesis is true - and the results of our study indicate that it is – we can come to only one conclusion: the concept of a reduction of the old rights and protection of the Fordist model and the contemporaneous creation of new ones based on the new model of a flexible and fragmented work system is a recipe for catastrophe. This is because all workers need both the old and the new rights and protection; if the old ones are taken away, the new ones are useless.

The data show that a policy of exchanging flexibility and salaries has a negative impact on working conditions under which only 6% of interviewees show willingness to increase work hours and almost half would like to reduce them; where the pace of work in mass production is unbearable for the majority of workers. It is also senseless to think that there is a generation gap for salaries. A few days ago, the director of the daily "Corriere della Sera" said that according to a famous economist while Italian salaries would have decreased particularly for young people while those for workers over 50 Italian wages would be amongst the highest in Europe. This theory is unsubstantiated by the data of our study; on the contrary, our data demonstrate that for workers with the same position, age is almost irrelevant and that an older worker earns more or less the same low wage as when he or she was young. The real difference is between those who have a fixed term contract and those who have an open ended contract. And between men and women. Here there are considerable differences in salary but always 30% below those of the most advanced European countries. In effect, an exchange between the salaries of older and younger workers would not produce and significant social change.

In conclusion, the study shows how the idea that exchanging a national contract for one negotiated at the company level would improve working conditions, is baseless. Workers who responded to the survey are almost all from unionized companies. Just over half are union members but almost all of them work in the presence of union organizations and under a collective contract. Over 80% take advantage of performance bonus and collective bargaining for the most important aspects of working conditions. The results of the survey are significant because they come from companies where both levels of bargaining exist. The deficiencies, low salaries and difficult working conditions are all found in the most advanced (in terms of unionization) areas of the metalworkers industries. Let's imagine the rest of the universe of workplaces, which are even farther behind, given the choice of exchanging national bargaining with negotiations at the company level. The results would be at best nil and at worst negative as is demonstrated by the weakness of both levels of contracting where they

are present.

After this survey it seems even easier to us to sustain that exchanging salary or working conditions between generations, between old and new rights, between national and company bargaining would not produce any useful material results for workers. Each time there is an exchange of this type, an aspect of working conditions is lowered and pulls down with it part of what has been gained. For this reason in the past few years Italian workers have slid down in terms of salaries and living conditions with respect to the other advanced industrialized nations. Because rights and conquests, which were not old, and which were made to alleviate to poor working conditions which still exist (and are worsening), have been dismantled.

The FIOM survey is almost unique in terms of dimension and level of analysis on working conditions. 100.000 male and female workers have responded, over 15,000 white collar workers including management, over 3,000 immigrants and over 20,000 women, The size of this participation in union initiatives is in itself cause for reflection. It underlines a need for participation and visibility which is often seen in the workplace but which often finds neither a forum in which it can express itself nor the strength to do so. When we planned this survey we expected some tens of thousands of questionnaires which would have been a significant result. The 100,000 replies to a complex questionnaire which requires about an hours time to complete are a fact which confirm that when provided with a concrete way to show participation, participation will show itself. Vice-versa when these are denied and people become passive objects, subject to policies, decisions and choices of others, decision making, making choices and participation obviously decline. The need for participation today requires concrete tools to be achieved. As we have already stated, most of the survey was done in unionized companies; it could only be this way as the survey was promoted through the union organizations in factories in Italy. We can conclude that the data gathered represent a part of the more advanced segment in terms of working conditions. It's clear that those workers who are outside of unionized structures are usually worse off. From this point of view we can conclude that the results of this survey represent a view of working conditions which are better than those in many other cases. We do not claim that this survey presents a complete view of working conditions in general and in particular that of blue collar workers. However we point out that surveys, mass media research and many sociological studies rely on samples of a few hundred or thousand people. Here we have 100,000 workers in the flesh who have carefully described the details of their work conditions. Probably for some, the fact that there are 100,000 metalworkers' questionnaires filled out is a fact that amazes by itself: but how may metalworkers are there? It is important to remember that the blue collar and white collar metalworkers number about 2 million when those employed in artisanal companies are included. There are almost 5 million workers in the manufacturing industry in Italy to which we need to add those employed in housing and construction.

The metal working industry represents more than 40% of the workforce of the Italian industrial system. Therefore it has a central role and the working conditions which exist within the metal working industry can't be considered marginal; nor can its role in the manufacturing system of the country. Popular culture tends in fact to consider blue collar workers and industries a residue from the past. Obviously that is not the case and not just because every now and then the mass media discover blue collar workers, when they occupy railway stations in order get a contract or when they die burned alive at ThyssenKrupp. The main idea that we put forward is that these 100,000 questionnaires represent the tip of the iceberg of working conditions; conditions which are wide spread and are becoming more common. We also conclude that many of the theories which have augmented the culture of so called post-Fordism are not supported by reality. What we are suggesting is that when a survey of this dimension gives such clear answers to certain basic questions then it should be considered to represent the general state of affairs.

Either the conditions described in the survey represent a system that is disappearing - but many facts contradict this hypothesis - or it represents an equilibrium (a negative equilibrium for workers but an equilibrium none the less) which defines social and working conditions which are becoming more prevalent.
We maintain that the Fordist and Taylorist systems have not disappeared; but have been reorganized. The responsibilities workers bore under those systems have been added to other responsibilities and other demands of the work place. In a certain sense, metal workers today – and we think in general in the manufacturing and industrial system – are exposed to both the monotony and bitterness of Fordism and the demands and risks of post-Fordism.

We are confronted by a mixed condition in which personal freedoms are reduced while at the same time higher levels of responsibility are required. There is a deep and unsettling authoritarian potential which emerges from this type of work organization. The data which emerge are those of a braiding of old and new poisons, the heat of the furnace and poisonous waste together with damaged vision and nerves for those who use computers. There is also an authoritarian climate under which blue collar workers in particular find themselves but this climate also affects white collar workers, young workers and immigrants. More than 17% of blue collar workers in large companies say that they are subjected to intimidation in the work place; this percentage rises to 20% for blue collar workers in the South. On average almost one worker in ten – it reminds one of decimation as carried out in ancient times to maintain discipline in the military - is subject to intimidation or mobbing. These are data which must be pondered and which one can see in the sudden wave of disciplinary measures which strike workers after contract negotiations in particular in large companies and in the FIAT group. There is clearly a functionality of authoritarianism with respect to a work regime which implies, for a wide majority of workers, a series of repetitive movements and specific tasks. The new procedures for quality, the demand for collaboration and efficacy in addition to efficiency don't change the way work is done but add to the traditional model and become extra work. But the metal workers who spoke out in this survey have a profound sense of dignity of their roles in industry. They have both the conviction that they work under conditions that are harmful to their

health and that the realization that they are part of an important productive process. Is this not perhaps the sense of class even if it remains only potential and is not expressed clearly?

The survey does not go into detail on this point but basing ourselves on the inner meaning of many of the responses, we see a deep latent sense of class. Among other things, in many cases the blue collar and white collar workers' responses are remarkably similar despite differences in working conditions and wages. Evidently they find themselves in similar conditions.

The data most taken for granted is the catastrophic state of incomes. Not just individual incomes (1,246 Euro is the average monthly net income for all of the metal workers category), but also family incomes. The average metal worker family, in which both parents work and there are one or two dependent children on average live with 2,125 euro per month which means just over 600 Euro per month per family member. This statistic alone explains practically the entirety of the social condition in Italy and the incapacity of statistical systems to analyze the change in real income and to therefore explain the drop in purchasing power on a scientific basis. Just consider one statistic which emerges from our survey. Over 60% of the families use a significant portion of their income for housing expenses, either mortgage or rent. From this point of view, the official statistics, which claim that fewer than 20% of Italians rent housing and that the vast majority own their home is an example of the incapacity of explaining the social reality of the country. A country where the majority of blue collar and working families pays a significant portion of their income for their home. As we have already explained there are no significant differences with respect to seniority between workers with open ended contracts. It is fixed term contracts which lower wages. The differences in salaries between workers of different job descriptions or professional grades while significant in terms of average salary, are lower than the parameterization with which national contracts are made. Between the average and the highest wage of blue collar workers found in this survey (the highest wage being paid those workers who have a coordinating function) there is little more that a 400 Euro difference. It is a significant difference but between 1,200 and 1,600 Euro net we don't find the same gap of parameterization normally used in negotiating salaries in new contracts. This is a sign that the request for equal wage increases for all, which comes from workers, is motivated by the differences there are in real wages. Even for middle to high professional grades, wages are being pushed down.

Some try to solve this problem explaining that those who work more or perform better should be rewarded. It is important to repeat that only 6% of metal workers think they are able to work more and that the rest of the workers are equally divided between those who don't think they can increase working hours and those who think they must reduce working hours. Finally it is important to consider that more than half of female and male metal workers have an effective work day (considering their commute time) greater than 10 hours. And that women who work add at least 20 hours of household chores each week.
And in fact 60% of male and 62% of female blue collar workers state that they won't be able to continue their present job when they reach 60.

On the other hand the data on health indicate that 40% of workers believe their health to have been jeopardized by their jobs. This percentage is even higher for blue collar workers and even higher for women. Work rhythms are considered repetitive by the vast majority of blue collar workers and for half of white collar workers. Fewer than one in five workers reports that they have used company training programs. If we analyze problems dealing with merit, hierarchies, relationships with colleagues in detail, we find that we have a system that is for the most part traditional hierarchies in which, among other things, men give the orders even when women are in the majority and in general hierarchies make decisions on the basis of traditional Taylorist organizational schema. It is unclear what is meant by rewarding merit with these average salaries and this type of work organization if not reintroducing discriminatory rewards and work conditions. It is important to underscore that in these companies which – we repeat – are for the most part unionized, more that half of all workers state they have never had contact with and do not know the role, the function or even of the presence of, the RLS (worker representatives for safety). It is a horrifying fact that does not only implicates the capacity for initiative of the RLS and the union but more than anything points to an isolation and a de-structuring of working conditions and an automation of the relations between co-workers.

Dissatisfaction, bitterness about working conditions and low salaries are piled on top of a strong dose of uncertainty about the future. A good 30% of workers interviewed, with no significant differences between blue collar and white collar, see their future situations worsening while only 19% see a bettering. When we look at occupational hazards, the percentage of pessimists rises to 34%. One metal worker in three sees a dark future for all aspects of the survey and I believe this data alone explains the anger, dissatisfaction and discouragement which exist in many work places.

The data from the survey will be further analyzed in greater detail. What we have created is only an initial synthesis of what seemed most immediate and important. It is difficult for us as well. Because even considering the differences between industries and from company to company, we face data which can only be interpreted as deeply critical of the condition of unions today. When workers from the largest unionized companies give responses which indicate worse conditions than those in medium sized companies this can only be a sign of deep crisis in the role of unions.

There is much discussion today about how unions should return to the work place and be less concerned about big political themes. There is some truth to this affirmation but the survey shows that this in itself is not a solution to the problems. It is not just about strengthening the union presence in the work place, we need to decide what kind of presence we need to promote, what membership levels it should have with respect to real working conditions, what the starting point should be on salaries, working hours, rights; we need to construct and consolidate. Those who propose increasing salaries in exchange for greater productivity is proven completely wrong by our survey both on in terms of justice and efficacy. Never the less the alternative to an

unjust and inefficacious exchange has yet to be created and requires a union presence that understands the reality of working conditions; a presence that cannot be provided by the institutional presence of the RSUs (company workers' representatives). The conditions of metal workers that emerges from this survey demands that we ask ourselves: isn't it necessary to reconstruct an organization of union representatives which is closer to workers' daily needs? Call them department delegates, call them collectives or groups call them whatever you like; there is a need for something more than the institutional model whose weaknesses and absence is clearly seen today. These new instruments of democratic unionization are necessary because when, as in this case , 100,000 workers tell us about their working conditions, we discover that the organization acts as if it were completely removed from reality. The knowledge and culture of the union is intimately linked with democracy and participation. The success of this survey shows that there is a need for democracy but today we can't fulfill that need. This is the most important conclusion that this survey gives the FIOM (Italian Federation of Metalworkers) and the whole union structure.

Giorgio Cremaschi national secretary Fiom-Cgil (Federation of Blue and White Collars Metalworkers - Italian General Confederation of Labor)

THE VOICE OF 100,000 WORKERS

Presentation of the results of a national survey on the conditions of metal workers in Italy

1. Who and how many answered the survey

1.1 Where do they work

The results of the survey which we present below are based on a total of **96,607 valid questionnaires**[1]. The large number of questionnaires is an important result, making this survey almost unique particularly considering that **more than 4,000 metal working companies** throughout all of Italy were included. As the table shows, the number of questionnaires gathered in each area is pretty much proportional - according to the official ISTAT (the Italian National Institute of Statistics) - to the number of metal mechanics in that area with the exception of the South where there is a partial underrepresentation. The survey was carried out in **all sectors of the metal mechanics industry** from steel workers to mass production from electronics to information technology. Even with respect to sector of activity responses were proportional to the official data.

Table 1 – Questionnaires by geographical areas*

	Istat	Fiom Survey
North West	43,8	44,9
North East	29,3	32,3
Center	13,1	13,2
South	13,8	9,5
TOTAL	**100,0**	**100,0**

** Comparison with Istat data from the 2001 census of industry and services.*

With respect to **the size of the company**, workers were interviewed in companies that are:

- **small** (fewer than 50 employees): 12% of all cases;
- **medium** (between 50 and 250 employees): 46.8% of all cases;
- **large** (over 250 employees): 41.4% of all cases. Within this category, 12.3% of the total worked in companies with more than 1000 employees particularly in the mass production, mainly automobiles and household appliances.

Table 2 – Questionnaires by industry sector

	percentage
mechanical equipment	27,3
mass production (auto, motorcycles, appliances)	21,5
metallurgy and foundry	19,9
electronics and electrical equipment	14,2
steel	6,1
other transport equipment (ship building, aerospace, train construction)	5,1
information technology	3,1
maintenance, installation, transportation and other services	2,5
other production (gold, music, toys etc...)	0,2
TOTAL	**100,0**

Comparing our results with the official data we see that – in part – workers in *small* and especially *very small* companies are underrepresented in particular, artisanal companies which represent (according to the census of industry and services) 33% of all workers. In equal measure, workers from medium sized companies were overrepresented (28.6%). This is a fact that must be taken into consideration when analyzing the results of the survey particularly when we consider that salary levels and working conditions are generally worse in small and very small companies where unionization is not as strong and 2nd level negotiations (those done at the local as opposed to the national level) are less frequent.

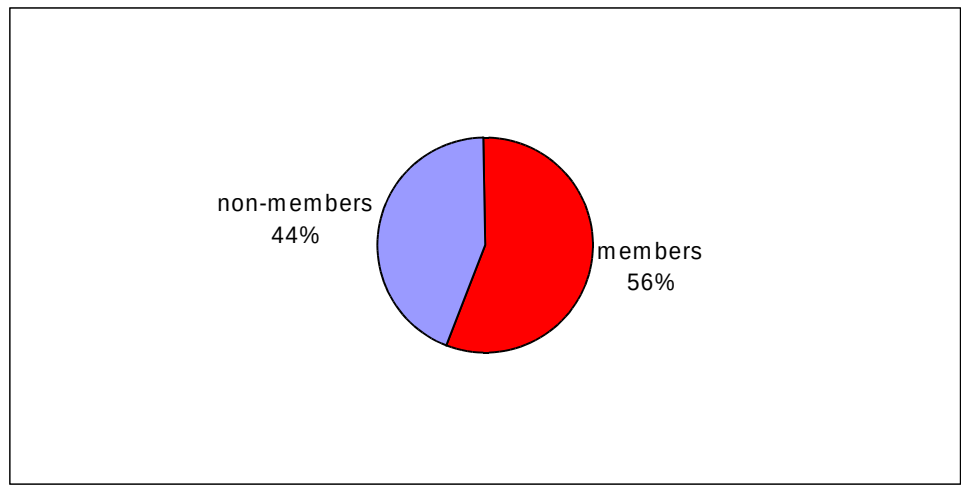
1.2 How many are union members and how many are not union members

Among the workers who responded to the survey, there is a high incidence (**44% of the total**) of workers who are not members of the union. They represent over 41,000 workers who are not members of any union. Results of this type increase the significance and the validity of the results and eliminate the risk that the results are influenced by one union or another. At the same time this is an indication that promoting this type of survey on the living and working conditions of workers was well received in the work place regardless of union

[1] The total number of questionnaires gathered was just over 98,000, about 2000 of which the optical character recognition system we used to insert the survey results in the database could not read. It was not possible to recover these surveys manually.

membership even though the questionnaire was relatively long and complex.

Chart 1 - Union members and non-members



1.3 Who are they: men and women, young and less young

Female interviewees were 22% of the total, exactly in line with Istat data from 2001 in which 20.5% of metal workers were women. The women represent:

- about 40% of white collar workers;
- and also 20% of blue collar workers.

The percentage of female blue collar workers varies significantly between industries. They have a significant presence in:

- the mass production (28%) and in particular in the appliances industry (38.6%);
- in IT services (44%);
- in the electronics industry (39.2% in general and more specifically in the production of micro-components like computer and telephone production where women are in the majority with a percentage of 60%).

There are few women blue collar workers in the ship building, railroad and aerospace industries, in foundries and in plant installation and maintenance.

With respect to **age**, the majority of interviewees fall into one of three large categories each one of which represents approximately one third of the sample.

- from 26 to 35 years of age (30%);
- from 36 to 45 years of age (about 35%);
- over 45 years old (28.4%).

Then there are the very young – less than 25 years of age – who represent 6.7% of the total. The table on the left summarizes the profiles of the sample by gender, age and nationality.

Table 3 – age profiles

	percentage
Italian male less than 35 years old	27,1
Italian male from 36 to 45 years	26,0
Italian male older than 45 years old	22,5
Italian female less than 35 years old	8,2
Italian female from 36 to 45 years	7,7
Italian female older than 45 years old	5,3
Foreign male	2,6
Foreign female	0,6

1.4 Immigrant workers

Immigrants were a minority of those interviewed (3.4%) and this percentage is certainly lower than the actual percentage of immigrants in the sector; Inail (National Institute for Insurance against Accidents at Work) estimates that about 12% of all workers in the metal working industry are foreigners. In any case the number of questionnaires gathered is sufficient and significant (3,138) to analyze the data and to perform specific analyses on this group of workers.

Of immigrants interviewed:

- almost all are men (81%);
- almost all are blue collar workers (91%);
- most are at the 3rd professional grade (52% of all foreign blue collar workers);
- more than one third work in foundries and in bulk metal manufacturing (36.4% of foreigners versus fewer than 20% of Italians).

The region where the majority of immigrant interviews were performed were (in line with the official statistics) the North West (39.5% of the questionnaires filled out by immigrants) and the North East (51.5%). Specifically the regions with the greatest number of immigrant interviewees are:

- Lombardy (about 28% of all immigrants interviewed);
- Emilia-Romagna (21.8%);
- Veneto (19%);
- Piedmont (9%);
- Trentino and Friuli (just over 5%).

The territories from which the majority of the questionnaires come are Treviso (316), Brescia (295), Bologna (249), Trento (173), Torino (168), Reggio Emilia (162), Modena (158), Bergamo (153) and Lecco (145).
The most common region of origin is Africa (41% of all foreigners) and Europe (EU 19%, non EU 17%); immigrants from Asia (11%) and Latin America (8%) were much less prevalent. Along with foreign immigrant workers **there is also a significant percentage of Italian workers who have moved in the last five years from Southern regions to Northern regions**. This last group consists of 4,600 or 5.2% of all interviewees. Most of these are young (55.7% are under 35 years old) and blue collar workers (80%). Three out of four (75.3%) lives in one of the Northern regions.

1.5 What do they do: function and professional grade[2]

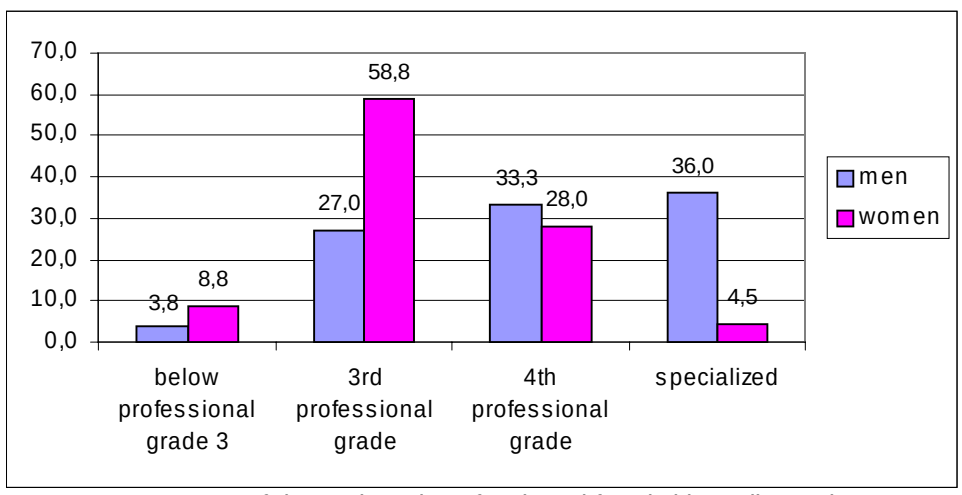
Most of the questionnaires were filled out by workers in production (81% of the total); just a small minority works in other areas in particular services (8%), administration (3.5%) and logistics (3.3%).
Interviewees are:

- in just over 70% of all cases **blue collar workers:**
  - 5% of blue collar workers at lower than the 3rd professional grade
  - 33% at the 3rd professional grade ;
  - 32% at the 4th professional grade;
  - 30% at the 5th professional grade or higher;
- of the 17% who are **white collar workers:**
  - 61% are under the 5th professional grade;
  - 39% at the 6th professional grade and higher
  - 8% are **technicians,**
  - only a minority have a position as **coordinator or supervisor** and even fewer – about 100 questionnaires – are executives.

In terms of professional position, women are always at a disadvantage and – at the same level of responsibility – are always concentrated at the lowest professional grades:

- female blue collar workers in the vast majority of cases (just under 60%) at the 3rd professional grade (against 27% of men);
- 70% of female blue collar workers are at the 5th professional grade or lower (against 54.5% of men).

Chart 2 - Professional grades of male and female blue collar workers



** percentages of the total number of male and female blue collar workers*

Along with women at the lower professional grades the following categories are also at a disadvantage:

- **among blue collar workers:**
  - in Southern regions, where about 55% of interviewees were at the 3rd professional grade or lower (against approximately 35% in the North Western and North Eastern regions);
  - in the mass production, where 55% of blue collar workers are at the 3rd professional grade or lower;
- **among white collar workers:**
  - in the regions of the North West and North East where they represent 60.4% and 68.1% of the total;
  - in foundries and in metal working industries (76.8%), in the iron and steel industry (70.5%) in the production of machine tools (approximately 70%) in plant installation and maintenance (about 65%) and in the mass production (61.5%).

1.6 Work precarious

Among interviewees, those with **precarious work contracts** represent 9.4% of the total. For the most part these workers have fixed term contracts or are temps. In any case two out of three workers with precarious contracts have fixed term contracts.
About 25% of these workers - one in four – has already had one or more work contracts with their

[2] Italian job levels are based on professional grades going from grade 1a (the lowest) to grade 7a (the highest). Generally, blue collar workers' grades go from 3a (with no specialization) to 5a (for specialized workers).

current employer.
The percentage of workers with precarious contracts varies significantly with age, gender and the type of work:

- almost 16% are younger than 35 years old;
- 13% are women (versus 8.4% men)
- 10.6% have precarious contracts if we consider only blue collar workers (versus 7% for white collar workers).

This means that:

- among the youngest blue collar workers (under 35 years old) 17% are in this condition;
- among young women blue collar workers this rises to 21.2%. **In other words, among young women blue collar workers, one in five has a precarious work contract.**

Precariousness varies significantly with seniority in the workplace so recently hired workers (less than 2 years seniority) have an extremely high level of precariousness (56%) which decreases as seniority increases. Never the less, even among workers with 2 to 6 years of seniority, precariousness is still very high – just under 10% (15% if we consider only women).

2. Salaries

2.1 Net monthly income

Workers' incomes on average are low even though the majority (80%) receive performance bonuses by contract: **average net monthly income is 1,246 euro.**
In any case:

- 30% of interviewees had an income between 900 and 1,100 per month;
- the vast majority (71%) do not exceed 1,300 per month;
- with some rare exceptions pretty much all of the category (86%) has an income which is lower than 1,500 euro per month.

The workers with the lowest pay are, clearly, blue collar workers, who have an average monthly income of 1,170 per month. 63% of blue collar workers (that is two out of three) has a monthly income which is lower than 1,200 euro per month. Next come white collar workers (1,370 euro per month on average), technicians (1,463 euro) and coordinators (1,668 euro).
Incomes *do not* increase significantly with age: **on average a blue collar worker who is 45 old or older earns just 100 euro more than one who is less than 35 years old.**

Table 4 – Net monthly income by age group

	Euro / month
Blue collar workers	
- less than 35 years old	1.111
from 36 to 45 years old	1.197
- over 45 years old	1.225
White collar workers	
- less than 35 years old	1.227
from 36 to 45 years old	1.425
- over 45 years old	1.531
TOTAL	**1.246**

Clearly monthly income increases with longer working hours. In any case, **even those who regularly work more than 40 hours per week rarely earn more than 1,300 euro** (75.4% of those who state they work more than 44 hours per week *don't* exceed this income). In any case as we will see only some workers have working weeks of more than 40 hours (which implies a higher income) and few of these are blue collar workers (one in five). Moreover women are almost completely excluded from this even more so if they are blue collar workers. It is women in fact who earn less than anyone. **Almost one in three women (32%) earns less than 1,000 euro per month** (among men only 19% earn less than that amount). Of those who earn between 1,000 and 1,200 euro (45%), a total of 77% of all women earning less than 1,200 euro. In other words, **three out of four women have a monthly income which is lower than 1,200 euro.**
Women's salaries are always lower than those of men even if they have the same function and qualifications. Amongst blue collar workers in fact those having a monthly income of less than 1,100:

- in general 72.8% of women versus 32% of men;
- at the 3rd professional grade, 78,8% of women versus 54.4% of men.

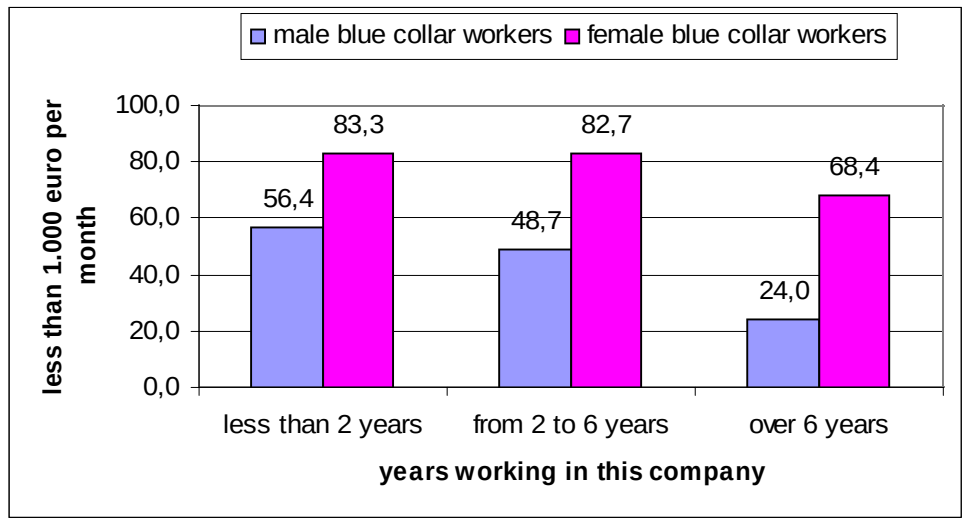
Similarly, among white collar workers, those who earn less than 1,300 euro per month are:

- most often women (65% versus 40% of the men);
- at the 5th professional grade and below, 82% of the women versus 62.7% of the men

Women earn less than men even if they have the same seniority:

- considering only those who work the usual 40 hours per week without shifts or overtime, 52% of women earn less than 1,100 euro per month versus 27.6% of men;
- even after 6 years in the same company, 68.4% of female blue collar workers earn less than 1,000 euro per month versus only 24% of males.

Chart 3 - Relationship between work seniority and income



** percentages of the total number of male and female blue collar workers who earn less than 1,000 euro per month*

Workers with precarious work contracts, whose monthly incomes are always lower than those who have open ended contracts earn less than 1,100 euro per month in 60% of the cases (amongst workers with open ended contracts, only 30% of workers earn less than 1,100 euro per month). These differences are seen even between workers of the same age: about 70% of young (under 35) blue collar workers with precarious contracts earn less than 1,100 euro per month while this falls to 44% for those with open ended contracts.
The data we have analyzed so far refers to net monthly salary and therefore includes **bonuses and other additions to base salary.**
In detail:

- **the majority of interviewees (78.6%) receive a performance bonus as part of their compensation package,** with significant differences according to the size of the company: from 53% in small companies to 86.8% in the largest companies. In general workers with precarious employment situations are at a disadvantage as in 40.4% of the cases they do not participate in bonus schemes;
- **fewer than 8% receive a bonus outside of their contract,** which half the time is less than 100 euro per month. This is generally reserved for coordinators (15.6%), technicians (11.5%) and in part for white collar workers (9%); quite rarely for blue collar workers (6.8%). Further more it is more often rewarded to men (8.4%) versus women (5.8%);
- **37.2% receive a 14th month's salary (a bonus equivalent to about one month's salary)** from 22% in companies with fewer than 50 employees to almost 45% in companies with more than 250.

Few male workers however (and even fewer women) who have a second job. A total of 4.5% of all interviewees have a second job; the percentage increases – even if only a bit – among those with precarious contracts (6.8%) and particularly among immigrants (9.2%).
A significant minority – particularly among blue collar workers – earn less than their normal salaries for part of the year because they receive payments from the CIG (the Italian redundancy fund – similar to unemployment benefits but it is for workers temporarily laid off). During the course of 2006, just over 11% of workers were recipients of CIG payments; the percentage is almost 20% if we consider only blue collar workers in the South: **this means that in the South, one blue collar worker in five had at least one period in 2006 during which he or she received CIG payments.** The industries with the highest percentages were mass production (20%) and plant installation and maintenance (15%).

2.2 Net family income

In addition to individual income, the data we gathered allow us to verify total family income which **averages 2,125 euro per month.** The difference between white and blue collar workers in this case is even more pronounced; about 500 euro: **from 1,983 euro for blue collar workers to 2,462 for white collar workers.**
In detail:

- 18% of interviewees had family income below 1.300 euro per month;
- 41% are below 1,900;
- an overwhelming majority (80%) are below 2,600.

On average, **a couple with children** (usually one or two and very rarely more) **get by with a monthly family income of 2,150 euro.**
Specifically:

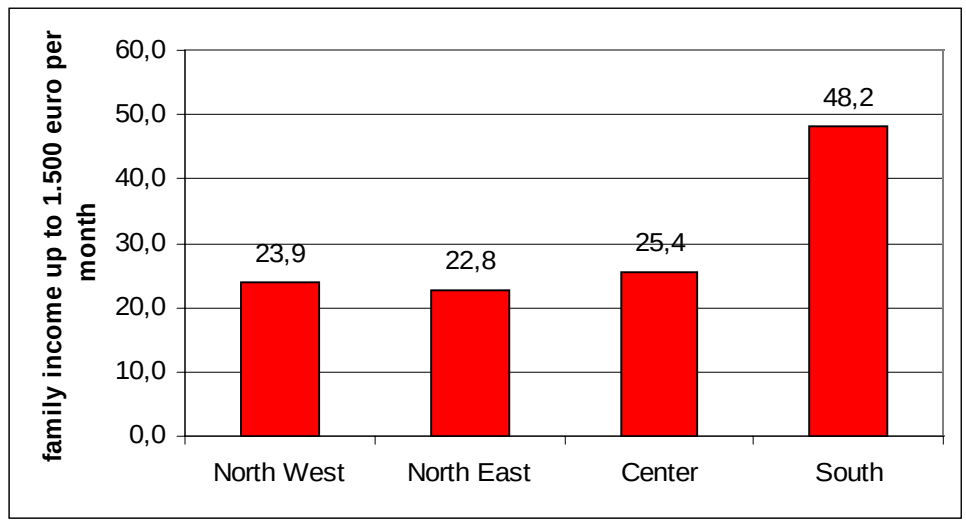
- 21.5% of families of this type have a family income of no more than 1,500 per month;
- in 17% of the cases it is between 1,500 and 1,900;
- in 46% of the cases it is between 1,900 and 2,600.

The following table shows average family incomes according to the number of people in the family unit and pro-capita family income. As shown, **for families with three and four people, that is the most common family unit, pro-capita monthly income is very low, less than 700 euro in the first case and just over 500 in the second.**

Table 5 – Net monthly family income			
Number of people in the family unit	**% of interviewees in this category**	**Average income**	**Per-capita income**
One	7,4	1.319	1.319
Two	21,6	1.965	982
Three	33,5	2.072	**691**
Four	29,7	2.093	**523**
Five	6,1	2.086	417
More than Five	1,7	2.097	na

In the South, family incomes are proportionally lower, about 50% do not exceed 1,500 euro per month. This is due – in part – to the greater number of families with a single income in this part of the country principally because there are fewer work opportunities for women: among workers in the South, 53% of families are single income families versus a national average (which at any rate is high) of 28%.

Chart 4 - Net family income by geographic location



** percentages calculated for those earning up to 1.500 euro per month*

In the face of family incomes that are so low, housing expenses are relatively high. In fact, although the majority of interviewees (about 80%) own the homes they live in, a significant proportion of these are still paying off a mortgage.
In follows that:

- 42% of interviewees are still paying off a mortgage (even more if we consider only couples with or without children);
- 21.4% are not home owners and pay rent.

For those paying off a mortgage:

- half have a monthly payment between 300 and 600 euro;
- in just over one third of the cases, it is even higher than 600 euro per month.

Of those who pay rent, housing costs represent:

- over one fifth of total family income in 80% of the cases;
- over one third of family income in 30% of all cases.

Summing up, as shown in table 6, **63.6% of interviewees sustain expenses for mortgages or rent**; of these, the vast majority state that it is a major expense (over 300 euro per month and in any case over one fifth of family income).

Table 6 – Housing expenses	
mortgages	**42,2**
of whom:	
- up to 300 euro	*11,5*
from 301 to 600 euro	***50,6***
- over 601 euro	***37,9***
	100%
pay rent	**21,4**
of whom:	
- low (less than 20% of family income)	*19,6*
- medium (20-30% of family income)	***50,6***
- high (over 30% of family income)	***29,8***
	100%
own their home	**36,4**
TOTAL	**100%**

3. Working time

3.1 Negotiations on working time and work organization

The majority workers interviewed work in unionized companies. In large part because of this, the percentage that state that in their company working time and organization are regulated by a specific agreement is very

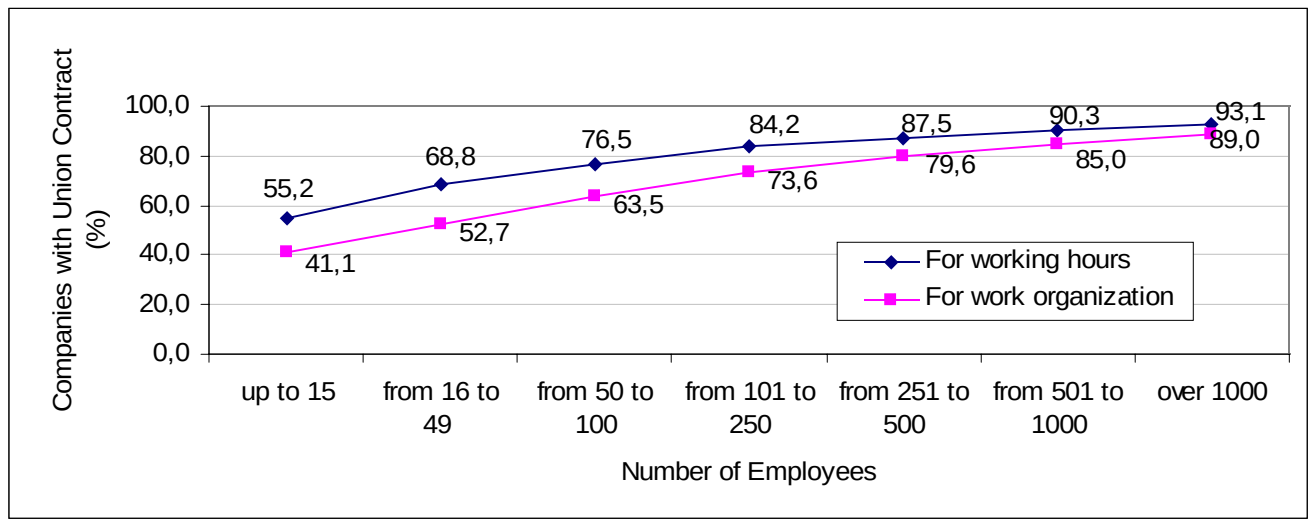
high; **equal to 83.4% of the cases for working hours and 73.7% for organization.** Such high percentages are testimony to how common 2nd level negotiations are for these issues in places where unionization is more prevalent. At the same time we tend to overestimate the presence of company wide negotiations in the sector, particularly in the myriad small and very small companies where the presence and longevity of unionization is lower.

In fact, responses varied widely according to the size of the company, with variance which goes from:

- for working hours from 55% in the case of companies with fewer than 15 employees to 93% in companies with more than 1,000;
- from 41% to 89% for work organization.

In any case, the industries where company wide negotiations on working hours and organization are most frequent are the mass production, ship building, aerospace and train construction and steel. Those with a lower frequency are metallurgy, foundries and information technology.

Chart 5 - Relationship between negotiated contracts and company size

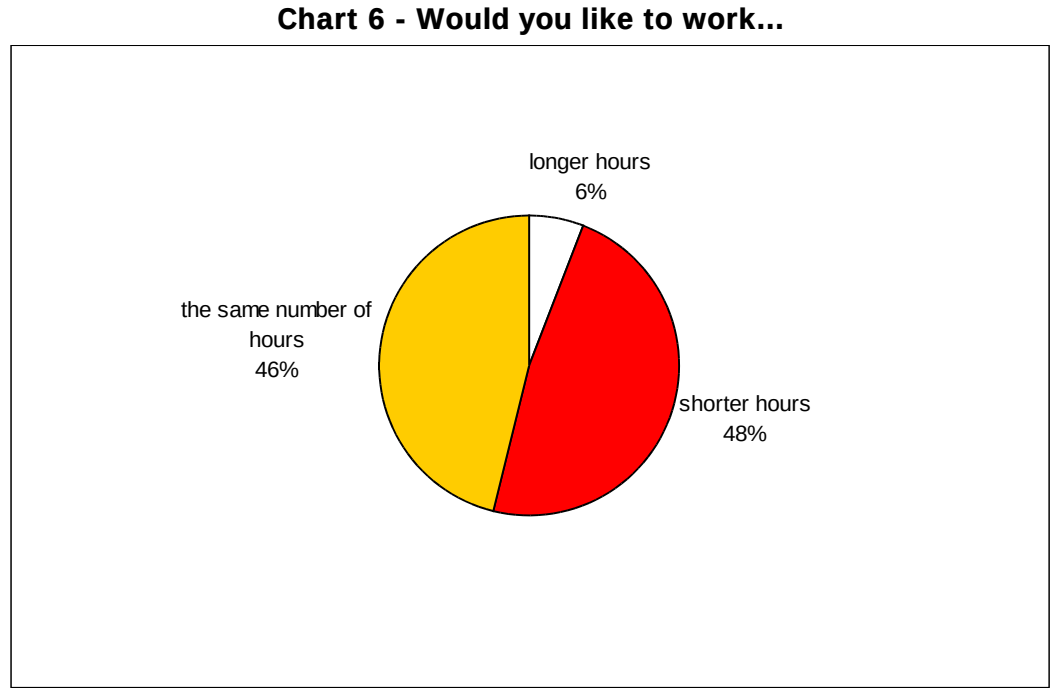


3.2 Working hours

64% of interviewees work 40 hours per week. 26.3% - more or less one in four – works more than 40 hours per week. (specifically, 15% work 44 hours a week and 11% even more).

In any case, **about half of the interviewees would like to work fewer hours** (48.4%) and only a tiny minority – less than 6% of the total – say they would be willing to increase their work hours. Work weeks greater than 40 hours are more prevalent proportionally for workers who do not have blue collar jobs: about 34% of white collar workers, 42% of technicians and over 50% of coordinators and managers

Chart 6 - Would you like to work...



In any case, even among blue collar workers, work weeks of over 40 hours are quite common at 21% of the total: this means that **one in five blue collar worker normally works more than the standard 8 hours per day.**

Among blue collar workers, those categories which most frequently work more than 40 hours per week are:

- men (about 24%);
- immigrants (about 30%).

In any case a significant percentage (24.3%) of immigrants state that they would be willing to work longer hours. Even among those immigrants who work more than 40 hours per week (about 20%) – one in five thinks in fact that they could further increase the number of hours they work.

Generally, women work fewer hours regardless of the position. In fact those working less than 36 hours per week are:

- 20% of white collar women versus 5% of white collar the men;
- 18% of blue collar the women versus 7,7% of blue collar men;

It is much less common for women to work more than the standard 40 hours per week: in fact men are twice a likely to work more than 40 hours per week than women (30% of men and 15% of women).

The industry in which work weeks of over 40 hours are most prevalent is ship building, train construction and aerospace (37.8%). Next come information technology, plant installation and maintenance and machine tool production (about 30%). The mass production has the highest concentration of workers who regularly work 40 hours per week (71%) while those who work more than 40 hours are less prevalent (18.5%).

In general, workers in small companies are more likely to work more than 40 hours per week: 30.4% in companies with fewer than 50 employees versus 23% in companies with more than 250 employees. In addition, **about 15% of interviewees have a work day of 10 hours or more at least once a month;** 3.6% more than once a month.
Those who have a very long work day at least once a month are mostly:

- white collar workers, technicians and coordinators (respectively 25.6%, 31.8% and 36% work more than 10 hours at least one day per month);
- workers working for contractors (22% at least once a month, 5.5% even more frequently);
- immigrants (16% once a month and 7% more frequently).

In general women work longer than 10 hours in a day less frequently than men (about 10% less). In particular, female blue collar workers almost never: 96% of women blue collar workers never work more than 10 hours a day.
The long work days are most prevalent in the following industries:

- plant installation and maintenance (34.8%);
- information technology (30,2%);
- ship building, train manufacture and aerospace (25.3%).

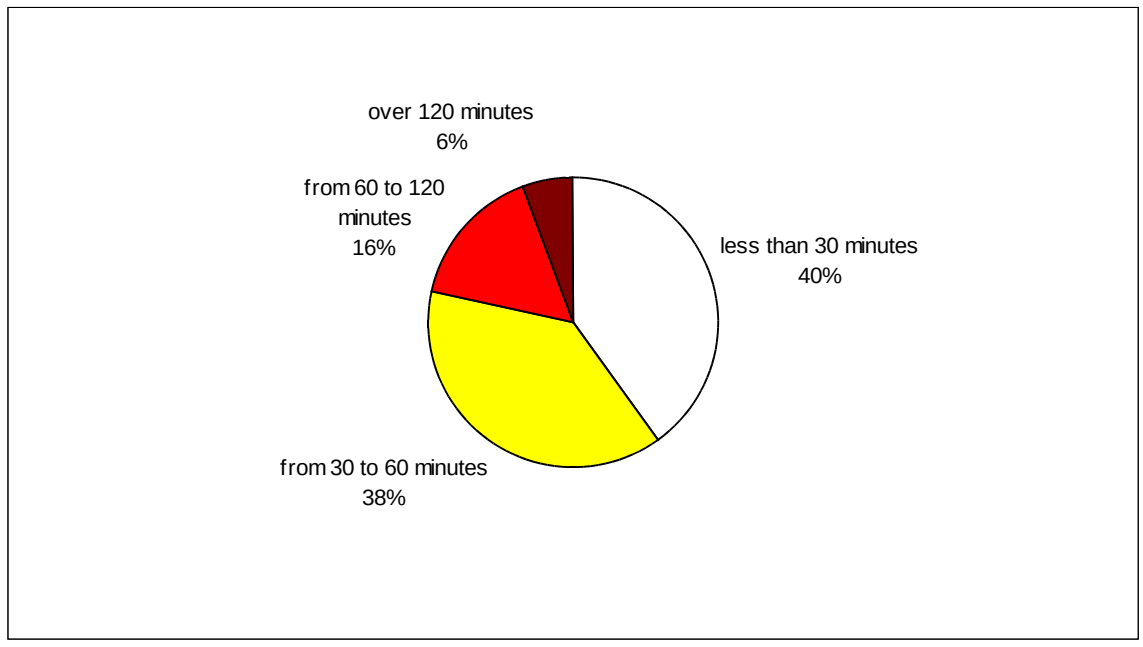
Part time workers are a small minority of interviewees (just 5.4% of the total) with a significant difference between women (13%) in particular **Italian women in the middle age group (between 36 and 45) of whom 17.5% work part time.** Even if not at the same professional grades, significant numbers of those with precarious contracts (10.8%) and immigrants (9.9%) work part time.

3.3 Outside of working time: commute times and domestic work

In addition to normal working time, commuting times and – particularly for women – time spent on domestic work inside the home must be considered. **Commute times** are relatively brief for the majority of interviewees (just over half take 30 minutes to go to and return from work and about one third take less than an hour), but for a large number of metal workers, commuting takes up a significant amount of time. Just under 12% of interviewees have a commute of over an hour and in particular:

- those living in the south (just less than 22%)
- those working for a contractor (about 15%).

Chart 7 - Commute times - workers in the South



Time dedicated to domestic work and taking care of family members takes up 6 hours or less for 35% of interviewees, up to 10 hours for 22% of interviewees, up to 18 hours for 18% of interviewees and more than 20 hours for just under 25% of interviewees.
In this case the difference between men and women are significant in all areas of the country: **43% of women spend more than 20 hours on domestic work versus 19% of men.**
Specifically:

- the women who say they work the greatest number of hours in the home are blue collar workers: 46% of female blue collar workers spend 20 plus hours a week on domestic work while amongst female white collar workers this decreases slightly to 37%;
- the domestic workload for women who work less than 36 hours is greater (53% of these women spend 20 or more hours on domestic work per week), but other women also spend plenty of time on domestic work: in fact 43.4% of women who work 40 hours per week and about 30% of women who work more than 40 hours per week spend 20 or more hours per week on domestic work. For men, the amount of time spent on domestic work does not change with the type of job or the number of hours worked.

So about 31% of women blue collar workers – that is almost one in three – works 40 hours at her job and in addition spends at least 20 hours on domestic work in her home every week.

3.4 Night shifts and working during holidays

Over all, 16.5% of interviewees do night work, but looking closer, 20% of all blue collar worker and 23% of male blue collar workers do night work: this means that **more or less one male blue collar worker out of four does some night work.**

Over all the blue collar workers who do the most night work are:

- those working in the South (about 40% of blue collar workers there work at night);
- blue collar workers working for contractors and sub-contractors (30.8%);
- in companies with more than 250 employees (about 30%);
- among immigrant blue collar workers (29.7%).

The industries with the most night work are steel (53% of blue collar workers), mass production (25.4%) and plant installation and maintenance (23.5%).

Even more common is working on Saturdays for blue collar workers in general and particularly men: **just under half of all blue collar workers and 57% of male blue collar workers work on Saturday at least once a month.**

Among blue collar workers, the percentage of those who work Saturdays is highest:

- for immigrants (71.5%);
- among those with precarious work contracts (64.5%);
- for employees of contractors and sub-contractors (64.5%)
- for those working in the South (61,3%);
- in companies with more than 250 employees (57,3%);

Even in this case, the steel industry, where about one in four blue collar workers work on Saturdays, has the highest concentration of workers in this situation.

A much lower percentage (even amongst blue collar workers) work **Sundays** – less than 7% of all interviewees. The exceptions are executives (a tiny minority of the interviewees) of whom just over 30% say they work on Sundays.

3.5 Shifts and working hours

The majority of interviewees work the same number of days in a week (88.6%), the same number of hours in a day (85.3%) and with fixed working hours (78.7%).

Generally, women have a more regular work schedule and young workers a less regular work schedule. Industries in which irregular hours are more frequent are:

- information technology (30,5%);
- ship building, train manufacture and aerospace (22%).
- plant installation and maintenance (19%).

43% of all information technology workers said that they *don't* have fixed working hours. Other industries have much lower percentages (about 20%) with the exception of some steel workers (27.2%).

Most interviewees work during the day (60.8%) and many alternate morning and afternoon shifts (23.6%). About 12% alternate between morning, afternoon and night shifts. Alternating shifts is done almost exclusively by blue collar workers; 50% work regular daily shifts, while 30.7% (much more frequently than other types of workers) alternate morning and afternoon and 15.6% alternate morning, afternoon and night shifts. In any case, regular shifts are pretty much the rule in companies with fewer than 50 employees (just under 80%) while in companies with more than 250 employees about 30% alternate morning and afternoon shifts and 16.4% alternate morning, afternoon and night.

Table 7 – Working hours - shifts

	percentage
day	**60,8**
alternate morning and afternoon	**23,6**
alternate morning, afternoon and night	**11,9**
always morning	2,0
always afternoon	0,6
always night	0,6
alternate day and night	0,7

Alternating between two or three shifts is most frequent in:

- the steel industry (22.4% for two shifts, 40% for three shifts);
- the mass production (40.4% for two shifts, 17% for three shifts).

A regular daily schedule is most common in:

- information technology (about 90%);
- plant installation and maintenance (about 80%).

3.6 Changes in scheduled working time

About one fourth of interviewees are subject to schedule changes during the course of the month with significant differences according to position: white collar workers **don't** change working schedule in 92.5% of the cases and a good number of technicians and coordinators **don't** change schedules (in 86.5% and 84% of the cases) while blue collar workers change schedules frequently (68.7% **do** have changes to their work schedules).

Steel industry blue collar workers most often have work schedule changes: more than half of them have work schedule changes sometimes very frequently; 31% state that their work schedules change 3 to 5 times per months and just under 9% change work schedules more frequently. Even for blue collar workers in the mass production work schedule changes are frequent: only 63% never, just under 14% at least twice a month and 22% 3 to 5 times a month.

Among blue collar workers, those most affected are:

- employees of large companies (about half of the blue collar workers in companies with over 250 employees; 23% of the time 3 to 5 times per month);
- workers in the South (46.7% have schedule changes; 28.4% 3 to 5 times per month).

In general, schedules changes affect women least (17.8% versus 27.4% of men) and most frequently:

- immigrants (38% have schedule changes against 25% of Italians);
- employees of contractors and sub contractors (35% versus 25% of other workers);
- those with precarious contracts (30,3% of versus 25% of those with open ended contracts).

Among other things, the schedule changes are usually unexpected particularly in small companies: in fact **more than half the time** (and in 67.4% of the companies with fewer than 50 employees) **changes in work schedule are announced with barely a day's notice (35.2% of the time) and sometimes the same day (18.2% of the time).** Only a small percentage (15%) are told of schedule changes with at least a week's notice.

3.7 Being on call and work travel

Being on call and travel for work are relatively uncommon: a small portion of workers are on call (8.2%) and just over one in five travel for work (22%). In both cases, men are more affected than women:

- 9% of men and 5.4% of women are on call;
- 25% of men and 12% of women travel for work.

Those least likely to be on call are white collar workers (6%) followed by blue collar workers (8%); technicians and coordinators are affected in 11.5% and 15% of the cases. Even the probability of travelling for work is low for blue collar workers (13%), it is more frequent for white collar workers (38%) and coordinators (about 50%) and especially technicians.

The industry in which workers are most likely to be on call is plant installation and maintenance (about 25% of blue collar workers, 30% of technicians and 40% of coordinators). Work travel also affects this industry (48.5%) as well as information technology (55%).

4. Work organization

4.1 Repetitivity and fragmented division of labor

The majority of interviewees (about 65%) confirmed that in their jobs they perform repetitive movements.

Repetitivity primarily affects :

- blue collar workers (75%) particularly 3rd professional grade blue collar workers (85%) and also more specialized blue collar workers (60% at professional grades 5 and up);
- those working in production (about 70%);
- the mass production (76%) and steel (70.6%) industries.

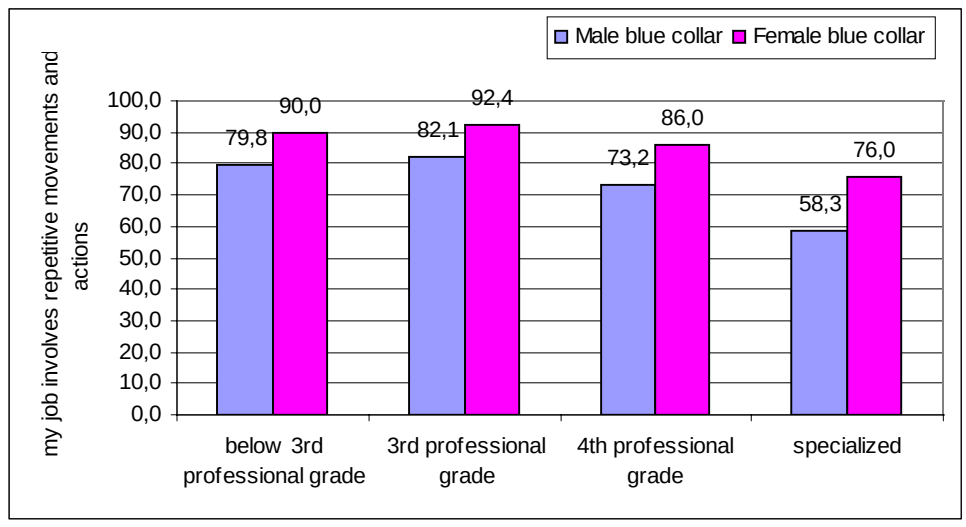
Looking closely, 44% of white collar workers and especially those less specialized (51% at professional grades 4 and below) also state that they perform repetitive jobs.

The categories most likely to consider their jobs repetitive are primarily:

- women (76% versus 61% of men);
- those with precarious contracts (73,2% of versus 63,4% of those with open ended contracts);
- young workers (the percentage of those who consider their jobs repetitive decreases proportionally with age: from 74.5% of those under 18 years old to 58.6% of those over 56).

In absolute terms, female blue collar workers are most likely to consider their jobs repetitive and they are more likely to do so than their male colleagues even at the same professional grade.

Chart 8 - Job repetitivity



In general, **workers who believe their jobs are repetitive also consider them to be highly specific and fragmented (in the sense that they perform a tiny part of a complex process) one in four (25.7%) state that repetitive motions and tasks last less than 30 seconds;** those lasting less than a minute affect 40% of all interviewees. Vice-versa, for 35.8% of interviewees, repetitive tasks last more than 10 minutes.

Even in this case highly repetitive jobs and frequently repeating movements primarily affect:

- blue collar workers (41,4% report movements lasting less than one minute versus 32,5% of white collar workers);
- women (46.8% versus 38% of men);
- the mass production industry (48% report movements lasting less than one minute).

4.2 Work pace and deadlines

More than half of interviewees (51%) experience high work rates for much of the work day (at lease three fourths of the time); 23% just part of the time (from half to a quarter of the time) and 21% never or almost never.

High work rates affect:

- immigrants (63,5% of versus 50,6% of Italians);
- women (58,8% versus 48,7% of men)
- workers in large companies (57% in companies with over 1000 employees versus 42.8% in companies with fewer than 15 employees).

Those most affected are:

- coordinators (about 55%);
- blue collar workers (53.3%) and in particular those at the 3rd professional grade (62.7%);
- but also white collar workers (just under 45%).

Those most affected are again female blue collar workers and in particular those at the 3rd professional grade who in 67% of the cases had high work rates for a good portion of their work day.

About half of all interviewees (48%) had strict deadlines for most of their work day:

- 17% to a lesser degree (for half or a quarter of their work day);
- 27.7% never or almost never.

Even in this case those most affected are:

- workers in large companies (52,7% in companies with over 1000 employees versus 45% in companies with fewer than 15 employees);
- immigrants (51,3% of versus 48% of Italians);
- women (50,3% versus 47,3% of men).

As is the case for work rate, the category most affected by rigid deadlines were coordinators (over 60%), followed however in this case by white collar workers (50.1%) more than blue collar workers who were affected at relatively lower rates (46.8%).

4.3 What does work rate depend on

Factors affecting work rates change according to the job performed.

For everyone – from blue to white collar workers – it is determined primarily by:

- fixed production or performance objectives (from 63% of white collar workers to 71.6% of blue collar workers);
- the work performed by colleagues (61% of white collar workers and 58% of blue collar workers).

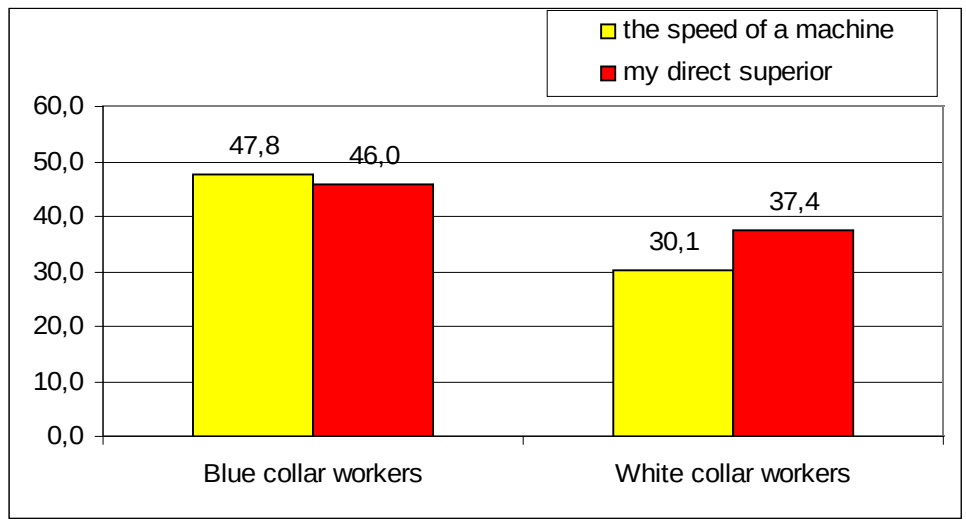
For blue collar workers, in just under half the cases, work rate is also a factor of:

- the speed of a machine (for 47.8% of blue collar workers and in particular for 55.4% of those at professional grade 3);
- management by a direct superior (46% independent of professional grade)

In any case these two factors also affect a number of white collar workers particularly those less specialized:

- 37% of white collar workers think that work rates are a function of their direct superior (just under 40% for professional grade 5 and below);
- 30% by the speed of a machine (33.3% for professional grade 5 and below).

chart 9 - the speed of my work depends on



More frequently, work rates for white collar workers, particularly for specialized workers (as well as for technicians and coordinators) is affected by:

- project based objectives (65.3%);
- direct requests from clients (62.8%).

4.4 Work interruptions

About 35% of interviewees state that they are forced to interrupt work more than once a day; 20.3% several times a week. In fact only 33.7% state that they never - or very rarely – need to interrupt their work.
In general, blue collar workers are least effected by interruptions: only 29% of blue collar workers versus 50% of white collar workers need to interrupt their work several times a day.
Interruptions have negative consequences (54%); 40% of interviewees stated that interruptions have no negative consequences and only a tiny minority (6.8%) considered work interruptions as positive.
Interruptions are caused by:

- requests from colleagues or superiors (81.7%);
- bad organization (67.8%);
- the nature of their jobs (67.6%);
- machines or instruments which do not work properly (49.6%), in particular for blue collar workers (58.8%) and in mass production (66%);
- outside requests (43.8%);
- bad design of their work stations (31%), particularly among blue collar workers (36.6%).

4.5 Rotating functions and group work

For about half of all interviewees (54.6%) work involves job rotation. This affects blue collar workers most often (on average 63.6% of blue collar workers versus 30% of all other workers) and in particular female blue collar workers (71.8%).
Even the percentage who state that they work in groups is relatively high (53%) particularly among technicians (62.3%) and coordinators (63.8%).
The following also reported group work:

- 53,8% of white collar workers;
- 50,3% of blue collar workers.

The industries most affected are:

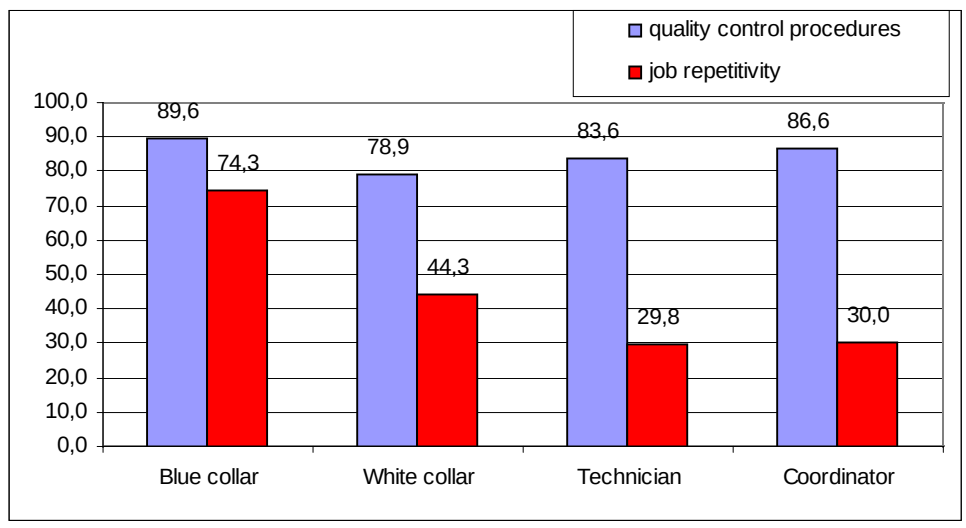
- information technology (72,3%);
- ship building, train manufacture and aerospace (61,7%).
- plant installation and maintenance (61,5%);
- the steel industry (58.2%);

5. Work Activities

5.1 Quality procedures, self-evaluation and autonomous problem resolution

It is surprising the percentage of workers who state that quality procedures are part of their job (87%).
This high percentage cuts across all job types. Among blue collar workers this rises to 90% and again, irrespective of job type and professional grade.
Quality control procedures affect pretty much all industries with little difference between industries: from a low of 78.5% in information technology to a high of 89% in mass production and the steel industry.
Particularly for blue collar workers, following quality control procedures seem to be superimposed on to the traditional Taylorist and Fordist idea of work: in large part in fact, blue collar interviewees think that their job demands the following of quality control procedures even if they believe that their jobs are repetitive or when they affirm that the work pace is determined by the speed of a machine or by their direct superior.
As the chart shows, the vast majority of blue collar workers (89.6%) state that they must follow quality control procedures but at the same time three out of four (74.3%) state that their jobs are repetitive.

Chart 10 - Quality control procedures and job repetitivity



This gives us a level of overlap of 66% which means that **two out of three blue collar workers who consider their jobs repetitive must follow quality control procedures.**

Very high percentages are also found for questions about self-evaluation of quality and autonomy in solving problems:

- 73.4% of interviewees stated that their job requires **self-evaluation of quality.** This is true for all job types, even for blue collar workers (76%) especially specialized ones (82%);
- 67.2% state that their jobs require **autonomous resolution of unforeseen problems.** Particularly white collar workers, technicians and coordinators, but also blue collar workers (60% overall) and particularly specialized ones (93.4%).

The following stated that their job requires self-evaluation of quality:

- 67.5% of the youngest workers (less than 25 years old) versus 77.8% of those over 45 years old;
- 68,5% of those with precarious contracts versus 74,3% of those with open ended contracts;
- 68,4% of women versus 75,2% of men.

Workers whose job requires them to resolve unexpected problems were:

- 59.3% of the youngest workers (less than 25 years old) versus 70.5% of those over 45 years old;
- 54,2% of those with precarious contracts versus 68,5% of those with open ended contracts;
- 55% of women versus 70,3% of men

Women at the same professional grade and with the same job type are less likely to be allowed to solve problems autonomously: the percentage of female blue collar workers who state their job requires them to autonomously resolve unforeseen problems is about half of that of their male colleagues (39% of women versus 63.4% of men).

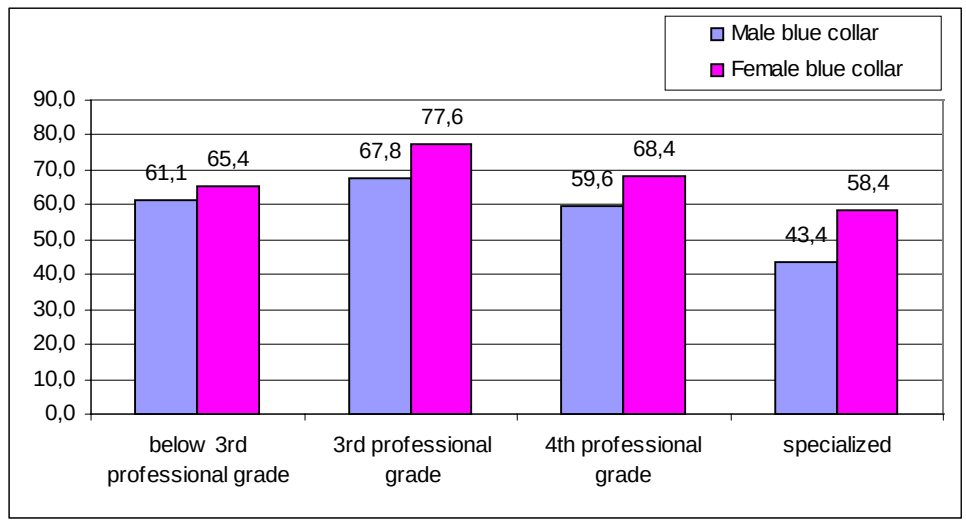
5.2 Work from monotony to complexity

Just over half of the interviewees stated that their jobs involved monotonous tasks, particularly blue collar workers (about 60%); but also many white collar workers, particularly at less specialized professional grades (half of white collar workers at professional grade 5 and below).

Again women are at a disadvantage whether they are white or blue collar workers at any professional grade The following state that their jobs involve monotonous tasks are:

- 73% of blue collar the women versus 56,5% of blue collar men;
- 52,4% of white collar women versus 39,2% of white collar the men

Chart 11 - My job consists of monotonous tasks



The industry most affected by this is the mass production (65% of all respondents and 70% if we consider only blue collar workers).

Such high percentages of responses to questions that imply **high job complexity** seem at odds with high percentages of workers who consider their jobs monotonous.

In fact 51.4% of interviewees responded in this way and looking at categories we that they were :

- mainly technicians (82%) and coordinators (78%);
- white collar workers (66%), particularly those with higher qualifications (78.2%);
- some blue collar workers but particularly those who are more specialized (54.4%) and at a much lower rate those at the 3rd professional grade (30.5%).

Even in this case there are significant differences between:

- men and women (54.4% of men have jobs which are complex versus about 40% of women). This difference persists even at the same level of qualification;
- open ended versus precarious contracts (52,6% versus 40,7%)

- Italians versus immigrants (51% versus 43,3%).

5.3 Learning, personal attitudes and training

An even higher percentage (64.5%) state that their job requires them to **learn new concepts:**

- particularly white collar workers (79.2%), technicians (88.6%) and coordinators (84.4%);
- as well as a high percentage of blue collar workers (55.5%), particularly specialized ones (62.7%) but also in part those at the 3rd professional grade (48.6%).

The industry with the highest response rate was information technology (82%); the lowest were mass production (55%) and in the steel industry (59%).

The majority of interviewees (65.8%) state that **their jobs require skills at their skill level;** 23.5% state that their jobs require skills below their skill level and 10.6% that their jobs require skills above their skill level. The percentages vary little between job types and even among blue collar workers, the majority (65%) state they are doing jobs which require their skill levels.

In large companies the percentage of workers who believe they are working at their skill level diminishes (58% in companies with over 1,000 employees versus 72% in companies with fewer than 15). Vice-versa the percentage who think their skill levels exceed those required by their jobs increases with the size of the company (29% in companies with more than 1,000 employees versus 17.8% in companies with fewer than 15).

In any case, only 17.4% of interviewees state that they have attended **company sponsored training courses** in the past year: from 12% in the smallest companies to a maximum of 21.4% in those with more than 1,000 employees. In great measure, the training courses were not longer than 8 hours (40% of those who have had training).

5.4 Margins of autonomy

As is to be expected, the possibility to assign priorities to tasks and determine work pace and methods depends in large measure on job type and is usually reserved for non-blue collar workers with high percentages usually around 80%.

Among blue collar workers, levels of autonomy are lower particularly for those less specialized and in general for women:

- more than half of blue collar interviewees (52.3%) *can't* change the priority or order of tasks to perform (more than 60% at the 3rd professional grade; and 64.4% of female blue collar workers);
- about one male blue collar in three (31.5%) *can't* change work methods (40% at the 3rd professional grade; 38% of female blue collar workers);
- just over 35% of male blue collar workers *can't* change work pace and speed (and 56.3% at the 3rd professional grade; 42.8% of female blue collar workers).

Low levels of autonomy of blue collar workers, especially at the 3rd professional grade are further evidenced by the results of questions about self-regulation:

- 83% of blue collar workers are not free to significantly influence their work hours 87.5% at the 3rd professional grade);
- 36% of blue collar workers *don't* have enough time to finish their work (42% at the 3rd professional grade);
- 44.3% of blue collar workers are *not* free to decide when to take vacation or days off (51.3% at the 3rd professional grade);
- about one blue collar worker in four (24.4%) state that they *can't* take a break when they feel the need (34.4% at the 3rd professional grade).

The responses from white collar workers imply completely different conditions in their cases but there are still (even if to a lower degree) some hardship particularly for those less specialized.

Specifically:

- even for white collar workers, 66,3% are not free to significantly influence their work hours (72.6% among those less specialized);
- even for white collar workers, 35% don't consider themselves free to decide when to take vacation or days off (about 40% for those less specialized);
- even 35,7% of white collar workers *don't* have enough time to finish their work (in this case the percentage rises to 38% for those who are more specialized).

The responses to questions about **the possibility of getting help from co-workers when requested** were very different; almost all interviewees responded positively (88%) particularly in small companies (91.8%).

6. Social enviroment

6.1 Bosses: all men

In the vast majority of cases, direct superiors are men (94.3%). The probability of having a female boss increases a bit only:

- in the information technology industry (28.4%);

- in general among white collar workers (14.4%).

In any case, even at the same professional grade, a female worker is more likely than a male worker to have a female boss. **In other words not only is it rare that a woman is the direct superior of anyone, it is practically impossible – particularly among blue collar workers – that a man has a female boss.**
In fact:

- among blue collar workers interviewed, 12% of women and only 1.7% of men has a female boss;
- for white collar workers, 24% of women and only 8.2% of men have a female boss.

6.2 Exchanging points of view

Within the work place, workers seem to have the opportunity to discuss their working conditions (77.6%) and work organization (62%).
Looking more closely however, among blue collar workers, one in four (24.4%) doesn't feel able to discuss their own working conditions and just under one of two (43%) to discuss work organization.
In general those most at a disadvantage are:

- women in general but blue collar women in particular (just under 32% don't discuss their condition and 50.6% don't discuss work organization);
- immigrants (just under 31% don't discuss their condition and 50.5% don't discuss work organization);

Points of view are exchanged primarily with co-workers (95.2%). Depending on whether one is a blue or white collar worker, discussions with the union representative or with superiors becomes more or less likely:

- three blue collar workers out of four (74.5%) say they have had discussions with union representatives while only 55% of white collar workers have done so;
- vice-versa, 70% of white collar workers (and 74.2% of technicians) say they have had discussions directly with their superior versus 58% of blue collar workers.

Discussions with union representatives are more likely in companies with more than 50 employees where 70% of interviewees and 75% of blue collar workers have done so. In any case, even in companies with fewer than 50 employees, more than 60% of interviewees have had discussions with the union representative.
In general women have fewer opportunities to exchange points of view not only with their superiors (44% of women *never* have any opportunity to do so) but even with union representatives (35%).
In any case, in general, discussions – when they do occur – have positive effects and create improvements particularly at the work place (67.8%), at the department level (56%) and even at the company level (43.8%).

6.3 Authoritarianism at the work place: discrimination, intimidation, violence

In work place relationships, **intimidation, discrimination and violence** sometimes occur and the larger the company the more likely this will be. **In general it is women, immigrants and the youngest workers particularly those under 18 years old who are victims**
The table below shows how many workers have been victims of these types of relationships in the last 12 months. The percentages are relatively small but the are a sign of problems that are not negligible.

Table 8 – In the past 12 months while at work have you been subject to:		
Intimidation	11,6%	Particularly - **Immigrants (20%)** - blue collar workers (13%) and in particular those working in the South (20.7%) and in large companies (17.5% with more than 1,000 employees) - the youngest (16.4%).
Sexual harassment	2,6%	Particularly: - women (4.7%) - the youngest (5.6%).
Physical violence from colleagues	2,1%	Particularly: - Immigrants (5,3%) - the youngest (6.8%).
Sexual discrimination	6,7%	**Among women 11.4%** in particular: - the youngest (15%). - those who work in the South (15,3%); - in large companies (13%).
Age discrimination	4,7%	Those most affected are: - the youngest (10% up to 25 years old); - the oldest (14% of those over 55 years old)
Discrimination based on nationality	1,8%	**27.6% of immigrants**
Racial or ethnic discrimination	1,9%	**21.7% of immigrants**
Discrimination based on handicap	1,6%	
Discrimination based on sexual preferences	2,5%	Particularly: - women (5.2%) - the youngest (7.8%).
Have you been subject to disciplinary measures or notes	5,6%	The most affected are men (6.2%) particularly if; - they are blue collar workers (7.6%) - they are immigrants (11,4%) - they work in large companies (7.4%)

7. Physical environment and safety

7.1 Noise, fumes, temperature, vibrations and radiation

In significant numbers, metal workers – mainly blue collar workers and particularly those at the 3rd professional grade - are exposed to loud noises, vibrations made by machines or tools, fumes, smoke and dust. A significant number are also exposed to temperatures that are either too high or too low and are in contact with dangerous substances and even radiation.
Specifically, interviewees think they have been exposed for a good portion of their work time (from always to about three fourths of the time) to:

- **loud noises** in 43.4% of the cases (56.5% for blue collar workers; 60% for 3rd professional grade blue collar workers);
- **vibrations** from hand tools, machines etc... in 38.4% of the cases (50.3% for blue collar workers; 56% for 3rd professional grade blue collar workers);
- **fumes, smoke, dust and chemical or infective substances** in 33.2% of the cases (43.4% for blue collar workers at all professional grades);
- **temperatures high enough** to cause sweating even when not working in 28.5% of the cases (35.2% for blue collar workers; 39,2% for 3rd professional grade blue collar workers);
- **very low temperatures** in 14.4% of the cases (18% for blue collar workers at all professional grades);
- **dangerous substances or materials** in 17.2% of the cases (22,6% for blue collar workers at all professional grades);
- **radiation** like x-rays, radioactive materials, arc welding, laser beams etc... in 8.2% of the cases (10.2% for blue collar workers at all professional grades).

Those most exposed are those who work:

- in the steel industry (72% of blue collar workers breathe fumes, smoke or dust; 75% are exposed to very loud noise and 52% about very high temperatures; 60% are exposed to vibrations);
- in metallurgy (49% of blue collar workers breathe fumes, smoke or dust; 63% are exposed to very loud noise and 39% to very high temperatures; 54% to vibrations);
- in the mass production (61.5% are exposed to very loud noise; 578.3% to vibrations);
- in plant installation and maintenance (48.6% breathe fumes, smoke or dust; 28% are exposed to very low temperatures; 33.4% to dangerous materials or substances and 20.3% to radiation).

7.2 Movement and position at work

Metalworkers are not only exposed to work that is repetitive but must frequently work in positions that are uncomfortable and that require the use of personal safety equipment and movement of heavy objects. Again those most exposed are blue collar workers; less specialized ones in particular.
Specifically, interviewees say they are been exposed for a good portion of their work time (from always to about three fourths of the time) to:

- repetitive movements of their arms and legs in 57% of the cases (68% for blue collar workers; 81% for 3rd professional grade blue collar workers);
- uncomfortable positions which induce pain in 27% of the cases (32% for blue collar workers; 44% for 3rd professional grade blue collar workers);
- continuous use of personal protection equipment in 44.6% of the cases (58% for all blue collar workers; in this case the highest exposure is for 4th and 5th professional grade blue collar workers);
- movement of heavy objects in 26% of the cases (35% for all blue collar workers; 40,2% for 3rd professional grade blue collar workers);

The industry in which there is the most exposure to repetitive movement of arms and legs and uncomfortable positions which induce pain is mass production (78% and 44% respectively); movement of heavy objects is more common in metallurgy and the steel industry (39.5% and 38.3% respectively).
Female blue collar workers are always more likely to be affected even when compared to male colleagues at the same professional grade. **In particular, female blue collar workers complain of repetitive movements of arms and hands which is for the vast majority – even those who are highly specialized – the most common problem:** the range is from 73% of 5th professional grade female blue collar workers up to 91% of those at the 3rd professional grade (**and an incredible 93% for 3rd professional grade female blue collar workers working in the mass production).**
Less frequently, their male colleagues state that their jobs require the continuous use of personal safety equipment (44% of female blue collar workers versus 61.5% of males).
Repetition of movements also affects many white collar workers particularly those who are less specialized (33.2%) and women to a greater extent even at the same professional grade: **just under half of all female white collar workers state that their job requires repetitive movements of the arms and hands for a good portion of the time.**
In any case, the use of computers and maintaining contacts with clients and suppliers characterizes the jobs of white collar workers in particular and some of the other categories as well. In particular, the use of computers is required most of the time for:

- 88.7% of all white collar workers (and 94% of female white collar workers);
- 68% of technicians and 55% of coordinators.

Those required to maintain contacts with clients and suppliers etc... are:

- 27,8% of white collar workers (35% if we consider only women);
- 19% of technicians and 22,4% of coordinators.

7.3 Safety on the job

Almost three interviewees out of four (73.3%) state that they received good or suitable information on the risks they face from materials, equipment and products they use in the work place.
However, a significant proportion of the responses (17%) state that the information received was totally inadequate. In particular:

- blue collar workers (just under 20% that is **almost one in five is not satisfied with the safety information received);**
- workers in large companies (19,3% in companies with over 1000 employees versus 10.4% in companies with fewer than 15 employees).

Similarly, 78.4% state that they received good or appropriate job safety training but a significant minority state that their training was inadequate. **16% of blue collar workers are not satisfied with the job safety training they received particularly in the largest companies where one in five (19%) states that they have received totally inadequate safety training for their job.**
What is more: 20% of blue collar workers state that they have not received appropriate information about the personal safety equipment necessary for their job. Even in this case it is a significant minority of interviewees and this is an important problem: **one blue collar worker in five has not received appropriate information about safety equipment.**
The industry most affected is **information technology where there are the highest percentages of answers which demonstrate dissatisfaction or lack of information** (those who answered "I don't know"):

- 32.8% of information technology workers state that they have not received or do not know they have received appropriate information about risks from the use of materials, products or substances;
- 30% has not received or do not know if they have received appropriate information to work in safety;
- 44% has not received appropriate information about the personal safety equipment necessary for their job.

Note that for these problems **the percentage of those responding "I don't know" rises significantly among immigrants:**

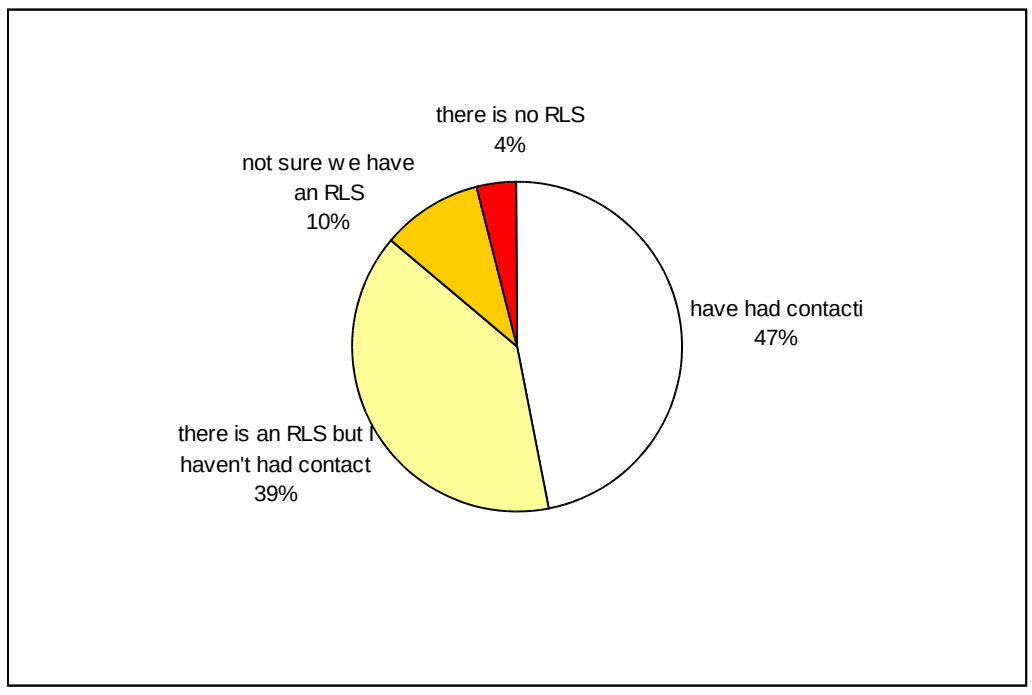
- 17.5% of immigrants state they don't know if they have received appropriate information on risks from the use of materials, products or substances (versus 9% of Italians);
- 13,7% of immigrants does not know if they have had appropriate training to work safely (against 7% of Italians);
- 19% of immigrants do not know if they have received appropriate information about the personal safety equipment necessary for their job (versus 12% of Italians).

On the other hand **just under 14% of interviewees are unclear about the RLS (Safety Representative) and state either that in their company the employee representative for safety does not exist (3.7%) or more frequently that they don't know if there is one (10%).**
Those most likely to respond this way were workers:

- in small companies (under 15 employees 35.6%);
- in the information technology industry (33,3%);
- those with precarious contracts (24,8% of versus 12,5% of those with open ended contracts).
- who are immigrants (23,8% of versus 13,3% of Italians).

In any case, **even when there is an RLS, the percentage of interviewees who state that they haven't had any contact with this person is relatively high:** if we consider those who state that the RLS doesn't exist (4%), those who don't know (10%) and those who normally don't meet the RLS, we see that fewer than one in two workers has had any contact with the RLS in the past two years.
Even in this case, the worst situation is in the **information technology industry.**

Chart 12 - Contacts with the RLS



The percentage of workers and in particular blue collar workers who believe that their work place does not have the necessary equipment to work safely is also very high (27%). Even in this case a significant portion of interviewees answered "I don't know". By taking the difference, an alarming statistic emerges: ***only* 58% of blue collar workers interviewed believe that their work place is up to standard; that is equipped with the *necessary* equipment to work safely.**

The industry in which the highest percentage of interviewees believe that their work place does *not* have the necessary safety equipment is the steel industry in which 30% of all cases and 32% of blue collar workers believe safety equipment to be lacking: in other words, **one of three blue collar workers in the steel industry believes that their work place does *not* meet minimum safety standards.**

The information technology industry, in this case as well, has a high percentage who answered "I don't know" (26.8%). Even regarding the company's actions (both to respect minimum safety standards and to improve them), a significant number of interviewees gave negative answers particularly blue collar workers:

- 21% of blue collar workers believe that the company has not done anything to guarantee minimum safety standards at the work place in the past 3-5 years (20.4% state they don't know);
- just under 30% of blue collar workers believes that in the same period the company has not done anything to improve the following of safety standards at the work place (24,2% state they don't know);

In both cases the highest percentages who believe their company has done nothing are in small companies (fewer than 50 employees) with respectively 24.3% and 33% of the cases.

7.4 The risk of injury to one's self or to others

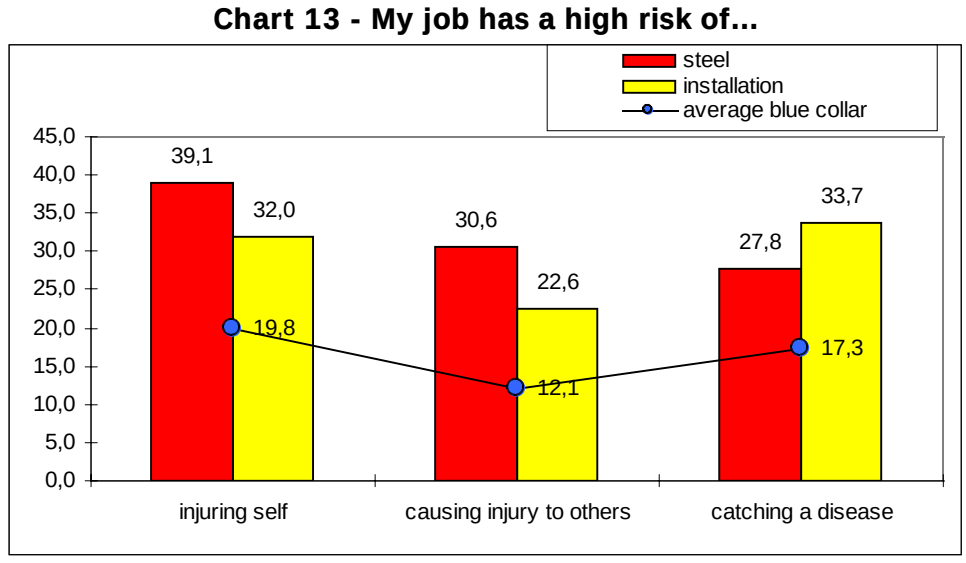
The perception of if work can be dangerous to one's self or to others changes significantly depending on professional grade.

The percentage of answers from blue collar workers are clearly the highest. In particular, the belief that in their own work there is a high (or very high) risk of:

- injuring themselves (just under 20% of blue collar workers;
- injuring others (12% of blue collar workers);
- contracting diseases in the long term (17.3% of workers).

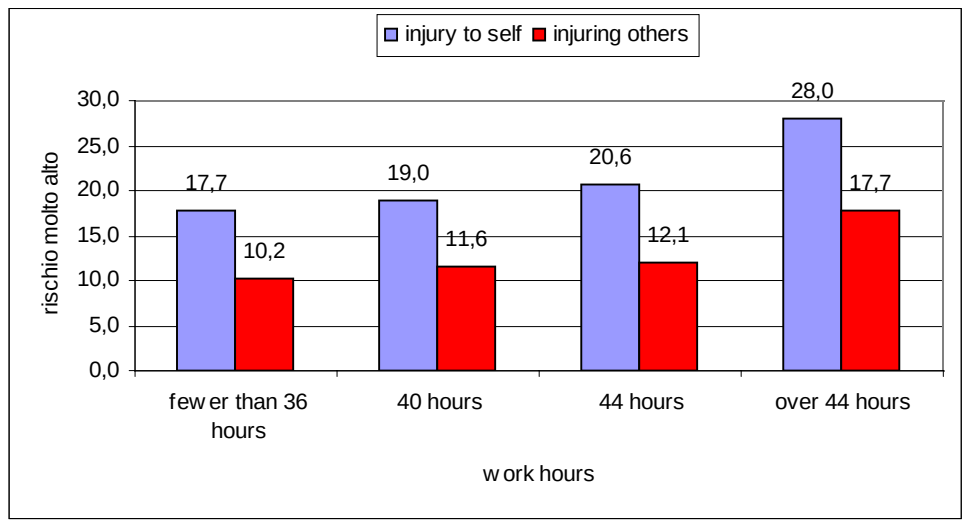
The industries most affected are the steel industry and plant installation and maintenance with percentages of answers among blue collar workers at least ten percentage points than the average.

Chart 13 - My job has a high risk of...



As shown in the chart, **the risk of injury to one's self or of injuring others increases linearly in proportion to work hours: the higher the number of hours per week, the higher the probability that blue collar interviewees believe their jobs to be risky for themselves or others**. In particular the perception of risk increases among blue collar workers who often work overtime and therefore normally work longer than the normal 40 hour work week: 28% of blue collar workers who work more than 44 hours per week believe that their work is dangerous to themselves, 17.7% to others.

Chart 14 - Relationship between risk of injury (or injuring) and working hours



** percentage calculated on all blue collar workers*

8. Health Conditions

8.1 Health problems

About 40% of interviewees believe their health to have been damaged because of work. This varies with job and professional grade:

- 43% of blue collar workers believe their health to have been damaged at work;
- 30% of white collar workers believe their health to have been damaged at work;
- 27.8% of technicians believe their health to have been damaged at work.

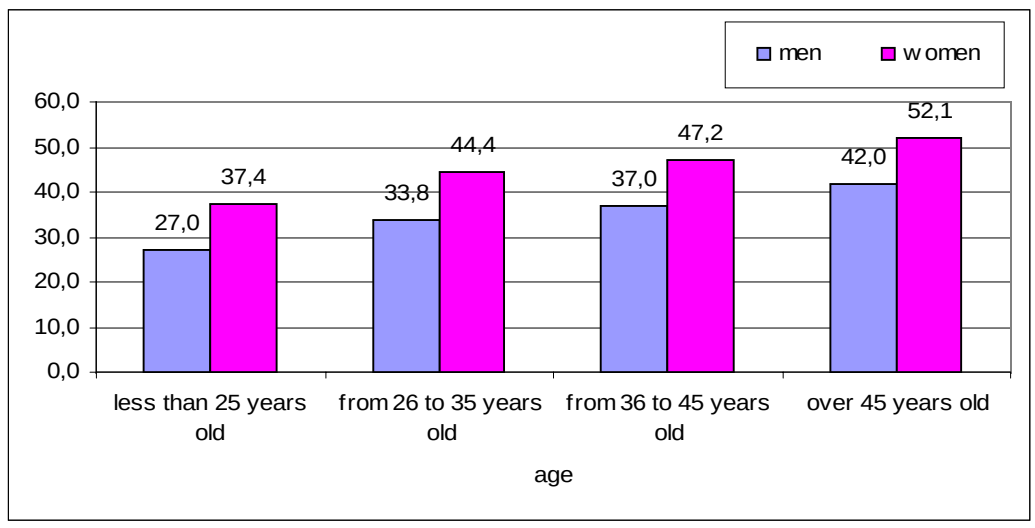
A significant percentage (21%) answered “I don’t know”. This clearly shows sufficiently widespread uncertainty to correlate discomfort and symptoms of psychophysical malaise to working conditions in particular among young workers under 25 years old.

In general those who most frequently state that work has damaged their health are:

- women (47% versus 36,8% of men)
- the less young (from 29% for those under 25 years old to 43.8% for those over 45 years old).

The highest percentages are found amongst women who are less young particularly if they are blue collar workers: **52% of women over 45 years old believe that their health has been damaged by work;** about 60% if we consider only blue collar women.

Chart 15 - Work has injured my health...



The table below shows the main effects work has on health. Blue collar workers – particularly women – show percentages above the average in all of the questions about muscular and skeletal malaise, particularly those of the upper body. **In fact about one in two women blue collar workers report problems of the back, shoulder, arm and hand.**

The most affected are female blue collar workers in the **mass production,** mainly automobiles and household appliances:

- 55.7% have arm and hand pain;
- 55% to the shoulder and neck;
- 52.6% to the back.

In general, a significant percentage of female blue collar workers are affected by all aspects of fatigue both physical and psychological: they are in fact more likely than other workers to be tired, fatigued and also irritable, anxious; many have stomach problems and some state they suffer from insomnia.

Even in this case particularly high percentages of female blue collar workers in mass goods production are affected: among these for instance, 35.2% state they feel fatigued and almost 19% suffer from insomnia.

Table 9 – Health problems

	percentage of total responding yes:		
	all interviewees	**all blue collar workers**	**female blue collar workers**
Back pain	**35,3%**	**40,2%**	**47,5%**
Muscle pain in the shoulders and neck	**30,6%**	**34,2%**	**48,5%**
Muscle pain in the arms and hands	**26,1%**	**30,8%**	**46,7%**
I am very tense - tired	**25,2%**	**27,8%**	**36,3%**
Muscle pain in the legs	21,3%	**24,9%**	**31,5%**
Tiredness	21,3%	**24,2%**	**30,2%**
Hearing problems	20,2%	**23,5%**	17,6%
Irritability	19,9%	21,5%	25,0%
Problems with eyes/eyesight	19,0%	20,0%	20,8%
Anxiety	17,9%	19,0%	**25,7%**
Tire easily and feel weak	13,0%	15,0%	**19,6%**
Insomnia	13,0%	14,2%	16,0%
Stomach pain	11,9%	12,8%	14,8%
Skin problems	10,9%	11,8%	12,5%
Difficulty concentrating	10,1%	11,4%	11,8%
Suffer allergies	9,6%	11,3%	13,4%
Difficulty breathing	7,4%	8,7%	6,7%
Difficulty thinking	7,2%	7,9%	7,8%
Cardiopathy	2,5%	2,8%	2,0%

Among white collar workers, many (27.1%) are affected by problems related to their eyes and eyesight principally because of their continuous use of computers. As in most of the cases, women are most affected (31% of female white collar workers).
White collar workers often state that they suffer from problems related to physical and psychological fatigue and in general to stress.
They state they suffer from:

- tiredness (27.8% and 36.3% among women);
- irritability (17%);
- anxiety (15.6%);
- fatigue (14.0% and 16.7% among women);
- difficulty in concentrating (9.9%);
- stomach problems (9.9%);
- insomnia (9,7%).

Tension, tiredness, anxiety and irritability are frequently cited by technicians and coordinators as well; that is those with higher levels of responsibility.
In the questionnaire interviewees were asked to rank their health from 1 to 10. This **"report card" for health** shows a self-representation of their physical state and is therefore largely influenced by the mentality and culture of interviewees. The "grades" workers gave themselves are an evaluation of their desire for well being and the conditions in which they are forced to live. It is with this interpretation that the results should be examined.
In any case, even in this part of the questionnaire the answers are largely influenced by professional grade and type of job. The lowest grades are given by blue collar workers who in just under 15% of the cases give their health a grade of four or five (versus just 7.8% of white collar workers).
As for other categories, however, the majority of blue collar workers give themselves a grade of seven or eight (45%); this rises for white collar workers (54%), technicians (57%) and coordinators (57.8%).
Women – particularly female blue collar workers – give themselves the lowest grades on health: **one of four female blue collar worker (26%) gives herself a vote lower than five** (among male blue collar workers this is less than 17%).

Table 10 – The "health chart"

	fewer than 3	from 4 to 5	6	from 7 to 8	*from 9 to 10*
All interviewees	3,5	12,7	18,9	47,7	*17,2*
Blue collar workers	4,2	14,7	19,9	44,9	*16,3*
White collar workers	1,6	7,8	*16,9*	54,1	*19,5*

8.2 Absences due to illness or injury

In the last 12 months, **absences due to injury on the job** affected male blue collar workers almost exclusively:

- 8% of male blue collar workers was absent for a period of one to two weeks;
- 4,2% for more than a week.

Regarding **absences due to illness** – which 30% state they have *not* had in the last twelve months – we note that:

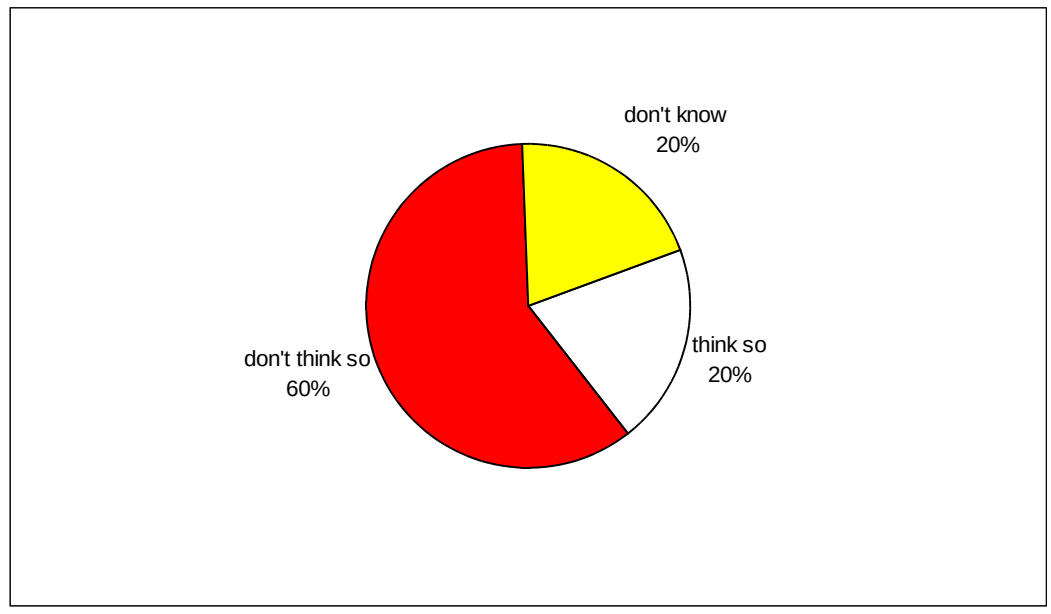
- 25% of male blue collar workers has been absent for about a week because of illness; 16.2% for about two weeks and 15.5% for more than two weeks;
- **for blue collar workers with precarious contracts, it is very difficult to have an absence due to illness regardless of age:** 44% of blue collar workers with precarious contracts state that they have never had an absence in the last 12 months (against 29.4% of those with open ended contracts);
- among white collar workers, technicians and coordinators absences due to illness are relatively short (23-24% of the responses for up to 3 days against 12.6% for blue collar workers).

9. Perception of the future

9.1 Difficulty in continuing the same job to 60 years of age.

60% of the blue collar workers interviewed do *not* believe that they could perform their current job when they reach 60 (about 62% of women and 59% of men) If we consider that 20% answered "I don't know", only one blue collar worker in five thinks they can do the same job when they reach 60.
The percentage of positive answers rises among white collar workers, technicians and coordinators (about 50%).

Chart 16 - Do you think you could do your current job at 60 years of age?



The blue collar workers most likely to state they would have difficulty doing the same job at 60 are those:

- in the South (72,5%);
- who work in large companies (68.6%).

The industries most affected are:

- mass production (66%);
- plant installation and maintenance (65,3%);
- steel (63.6%);

9.2 The risk of losing one's job

Regarding the risk of losing one's job, **the outlook for the future for all workers is not encouraging** with no significant differences between blue or white collar workers or between the young and the less young:

- if about half of all interviewees see, in the next two years, a stable situation in their companies, **just under one third state that there is the risk of a worsening of the situation;**
- **34.1% state that in the next two years their jobs could be at risk; that's almost one in three workers.**

Those who most feel their jobs are at risk are:

- workers in the South (44.4%);
- workers in information technology (53%), plant installation and maintenance (44.7%) and the mass production (40.7%).

Clearly those with precarious contracts feel most at risk (43.8% versus 33% for workers with open ended contracts), but in general even women feel their jobs to be more at risk than men (38% versus 33% for men).

Chart 17 - In the next two years you think the situation in your company will...

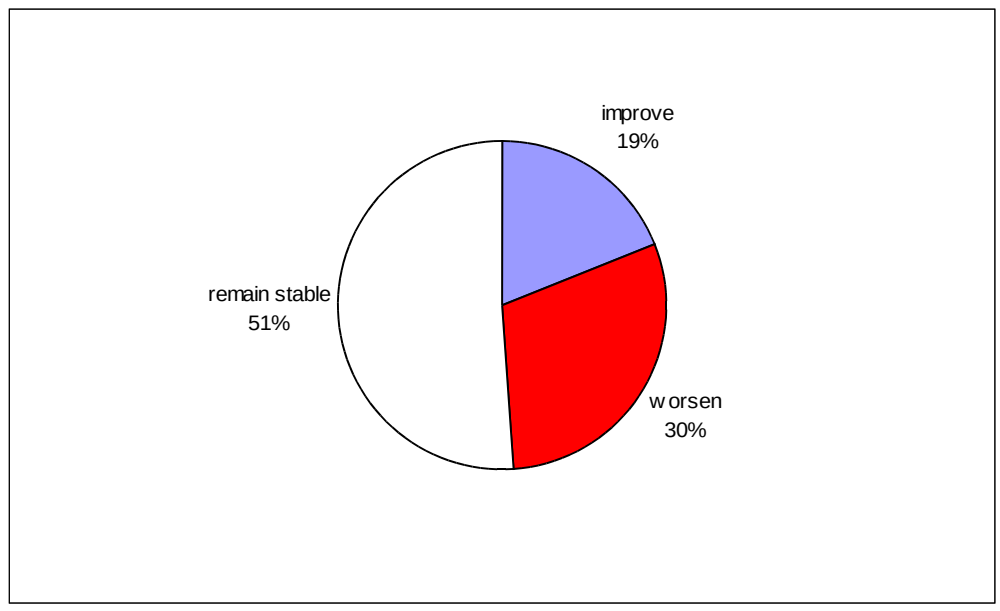
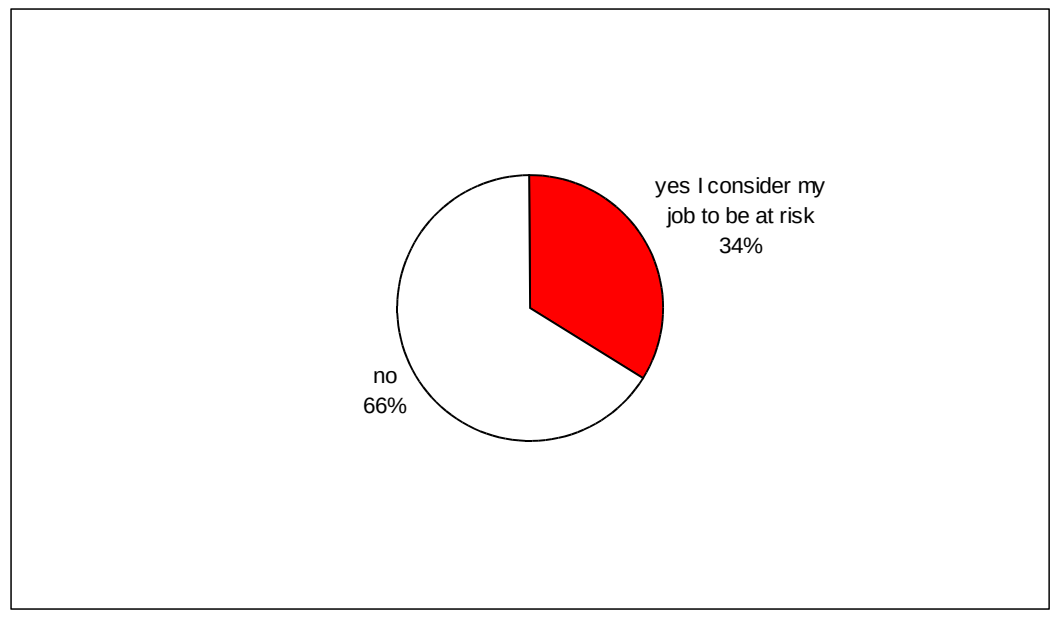


Chart 18 - In the next two years do you think your job will be at risk?


yes I consider my job to be at risk 34%
no 66%