

Revalue, reintegrate and reempower seniors: Educational level and continuing training make a difference

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Abstract

In recent years, the proportion of the active population over 55 years of age has increased and, with it, early retirement, unemployment of older workers and senior “push” entrepreneurs. Given the repercussions at a social and economic level, the debate about the need to recover and keep seniors in the labour market is becoming increasingly rife. The aim of this study is to evaluate the evolution and European tendency towards the training and reintegration of seniors and demonstrate how formal education and continuous training can make a difference when it comes to prolonging their working life and subordinate their conditions and employment opportunities. Data from the European Working Conditions Survey between 2010 and 2021 are used and a descriptive statistical analysis and a hypotheses contrast are carried out using the Student's *t* test. The results show: (1) a greater effort to train and revalue seniors; and (2) that educational level and training generate significant differences in terms of the type of tasks to be performed and some variables that condition job satisfaction.

KEYWORDS

continuous training, education level, Europe, seniors

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1 | INTRODUCTION

In recent years, downsizing and restructuring practices have been a constant in organisations around the world. More specifically, the economic crisis of 2008 brought with it drastic cuts in personnel, with seniors being one of the groups that were hit the hardest (Coile & Levine, 2011; Johnson, 2012). Automation and industry 4.0 plans have also recently pushed the expulsion of many seniors from the labour market. This, together with the general process of aging and lengthening of working life that has made the number of active seniors grow since 2008, has given rise to a significant increase in early retirement, unemployment of workers over 55 years of age and the well-known senior “push” entrepreneurs (OECD, 2022; Puyol et al., 2022).

In the European context, the proportion of the active senior population out of the total active population has increased (Eurostat, 2022a) and while countries like Germany have reduced the number of unemployed seniors between 2008–2020 (the market has not only absorbed the growth of seniors, but also a part of those who were unemployed), countries like France, Spain and Italy have seen a notable increase in this number. In 2020, the employment rate of workers between 55 and 69 years old stood at 56.49% in Germany, 43.20% in Italy, 41.95% in Spain and 38.76% in France (Puyol et al., 2022).

Given this scenario, there are many voices that have joined the debate about the need to recover and keep seniors in the labour market. On the one hand, and from a perspective that has repercussions at a social level, many studies have focused attention on the theories of cognitive aging, career development theories and theories focused on retirement to explain how cognitive functioning changes with age and its implications for work and workers and how the employment or unemployment situation can influence workers' motivation, well-being and life satisfaction (Fisher et al., 2019; Kooij et al., 2008; Lytle et al., 2015; Stamov-Roßnagel & Hertel, 2010). On the other hand, attending to a perspective that has implications at an economic level, other studies have emphasised the strengths of older workers and the benefits they can bring to organisations (for example, useful experience, work ethic, maturity, people skills, life skills, client knowledge, loyalty, low absenteeism, more active coping strategies, etc.), while they have highlighted the need to eliminate age stereotypes that act as barriers to employment (Davey & Cornwall, 2003; Dordoni & Argentero, 2015; Fraser et al., 2009; Hertel et al., 2015; Ng & Law, 2014; Thijssen & Rocco, 2010). But not only has the contribution of senior employment to organisations been highlighted, but also to the economy in general: this is confirmed by the PwC Golden Age Index, which calculates the positive impact on GDP of older workers remaining longer in the labour market. Senior ‘rescue’, reuse and stay has also started to emerge as an idea to contribute to sustainability and the circular economy, although the ‘human side’ of the circular economy is still underrepresented in the research literature (Jabbour et al., 2019). Thus, the renewal and training of seniors can bring a two-fold advantage. Firstly, it can help to develop and adopt new business models based on circularity—longevity and better use of ‘used’ resources—, which represents an opportunity to generate greater net economic benefit (McKinsey, 2015). The second advantage has to do with the use and exploitation of senior talent. The skills and experience of seniors can become key elements of any circular economy initiative, since, as García-Quevedo et al. (2020) underline, one of the main barriers that companies face is the lack of human resources capable of innovating, redesigning products, minimising resources, etc.

The objective of this paper is, firstly, to evaluate the evolution and European tendency towards the training and reintegrate of seniors in the last decade. Secondly, given the evidence that the educational level significantly conditions the employment rates of seniors (Eurostat, 2022b), it is intended to quantify how formal education and continuous vocational training can make a difference when it comes to extending the ‘useful life’ of this group in the productive system and subordinate their working conditions and opportunities. To carry out the analysis, data from the European Working Conditions Survey (EWCS) between 2010 and 2021 are used on different aspects related to the work of workers over 55 years of age and that can be indicators of sustainable management of human resources (for example, seniority and working time, work intensity, job training, job satisfaction, etc.). The descriptive statistical analysis and the contrast of hypotheses based on the Student's *t* test allow: (1) to identify and compare the perceptions of European seniors in the workplace over time; (2) verify the efforts of the different countries to train and revalue older workers; and (3) determine the impact of formal and non-formal education on some work conditions.

2 | FORMAL EDUCATION AND CONTINUING VOCATIONAL TRAINING: BACKGROUND AND HYPOTHESES

European statistics show that the level of educational attainment significantly affects the employment rate in all countries. In 2022, the employment rate of people aged 20–64 who had completed a high level of education (short-cycle tertiary, Bachelor's, Master's or Doctoral levels) was 86% in the European Union, compared to 74.2% for those who completed an upper secondary or post-secondary non-tertiary education or 57.2% of those who only reached a low educational level (primary or lower secondary education). This last group, in addition to being the least likely to find a job, was the most affected by the 2008 crisis (Eurostat, 2020) and the one with the slowest growth in employment rate between 2009 and 2022 (Eurostat, 2022b). But the positive thing is that, during this period, the number of employed people with a low educational level decreased by 24.6%; the number of employed people with a medium educational level also fell by 0.7%; and the number of employed people with a high level of education increased by 46.4% (Eurostat, 2022b). This trend has also been carried out by European seniors: the percentage of workers who only have lower education has decreased and the proportion of those who have secondary and tertiary education has increased. Seniors with tertiary studies have the best employability rates (Puyol et al., 2022).

But the level of formal education can condition not only the frequency, quantity and opportunities of employment, but also career decisions, job performance and the quality of employment. Career development theories provide answers to how the level of education can influence vocational maturity, career decisions, occupational choices and the professional status of the adult (Jordaan, 1977; Super & Jordaan, 1973). Most previous literature has also evidenced the positive relationship between academic achievement and task performance, professional potential, and creativity (Kahya, 2007; Kuncel et al., 2004; Ng & Feldman, 2009). With regard to the quality of employment and working conditions, various studies have highlighted the positive effect of educational level on individual earnings (Belfield et al., 2019; Bhuller et al., 2017; Hartog, 2000; Mincer, 1975; Vural & Gülcan, 2008) and the probability of occupying non-routine positions that provide greater control over work and work autonomy, which is positively related to job satisfaction (Debus et al., 2020; Fabra & Camisón, 2009; Jiang et al., 2020). However, some studies point out that workers with a higher educational level report lower rates of job satisfaction given their higher expectations and aspirations (Mottaz, 1984; Ross & Reskin, 1992). Disparate results are also found in the relationship between education, work stress, depression or burnout (Ahola et al., 2006; Jamaludin & You, 2019; Ross & Mirowsky, 2006).

In relation to continuing vocational training (CVT), which refers to intentional and organised learning through activities that improve knowledge, skills and abilities related to work, the figures in Europe have followed a slight inverted U-shape. According to the latest available data, in 2010, 63.6% of the companies that employed more than 10 workers offered CVT, the figure rising in 2015 to 70.5% and falling again in 2020 to 67.4%, probably due to decreased business activity due to the COVID-19 pandemic (Eurostat, 2022c). A similar curve has been followed by the percentage of European employees who participated in CVT courses: 38% in 2010, 42.9% in 2015 and 42.4% in 2020 (CEDEFOP, 2018; Eurostat, 2022c). The European Investment Bank (2020) has reported that training is significantly lower among workers in jobs that only require basic levels of education and are often at higher risk of being automated. It has also underlined that investment in training is higher in companies with a higher proportion of well-educated workers. While in 2015 the skills most targeted for training were IT and job-specific skills, problem-solving and management skills (Eurostat, 2015), in 2020 also teamwork skills and dealing with the client joined the list (Eurostat, 2022c).

As recognised by the *Global Report on Adult Learning and Education* prepared by the UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning (UIL, 2016), the need for support to acquire new skills and managing the physical, mental and emotional demands of the labour market is especially relevant for seniors. According to the *Survey of Health, Aging and Retirement in Europe*, in 2010 and 2017 less than half of older European workers attended a training course in the previous 12 months, although an increasing trend is observed (European University Institute, 2022). Despite this, some companies justify the low investment in senior training if the payback periods are considered long (Davey & Cornwall, 2003).

As in the case of formal education, previous literature has also revealed that training is of outstanding importance as a factor that can contribute to preventing obsolescence and prolonging working life, improving employability and job prospects, keeping a job or be in a better position to apply for a new job. Different studies have underlined the effects of training on the perception of self-efficacy and job performance because it allows the development of a greater repertoire of responses to address challenges with more security and confidence (Bartel, 1994; Nauman et al., 2021; Phillips, 2012; Salas et al., 2012; Thevanes & Dirojan, 2018).

In line with the previous arguments, the hypotheses shown below in Figure 1 are proposed:

H1a. There is a difference in means in the type of tasks to be carried out for groups with different educational levels.

H1b. There is a difference in means in the type of tasks to be carried out for groups with or without training.

H2a. There is a difference in means in dimensions related to satisfaction for groups with different educational levels.

H2b. There is a difference in means in dimensions related to satisfaction for groups with or without training.

3 | METHOD

3.1 | Data collection and sample

Data from the European Working Conditions Survey (EWCS) in the 2010, 2015 and 2021 editions were used.¹ The data for France, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, Spain and the United Kingdom (European countries with the highest GDP) were extracted from each database. The databases of each country were cleaned to select the observations of the people participating in the survey aged 55 or over. Next, the data of people in active employment (self-employed or employed by others) were selected, discarding those who were unemployed or retired. Table 1 contains information on the size of the initial and final samples for each country analysed.²

3.2 | Variable measurements

Based on the core concepts that professional development research has identified as relevant and the information provided by the survey, the variables related to the working time, physical environment, work intensity, skills and training, job prospects, work satisfaction and well-being, together with the variables that contained demographic

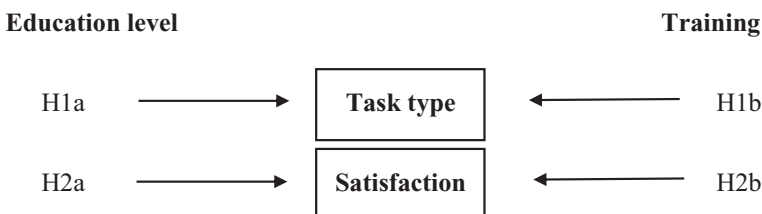


FIGURE 1 Hypotheses.

TABLE 1 Information on the samples.

	2010				2015				2021						
	Total sample	Workers over 55	Retired or unemployed	Workers over 55	Total sample	Workers over 55	Retired or unemployed	Workers over 55	Total sample	Workers over 55	Retired or unemployed	Workers over 55	Total sample	Workers over 55	Retired or unemployed
France	3,046	385 (12.63%)	50	325 (10.7%)	1,527	271 (17.75%)	12	259 (16.9%)	3,213	525 (16.3%)	12	259 (16.9%)	3,213	525 (16.3%)	12
Germany	2,133	369 (17.3%)	30	329 (15.4%)	2,093	543 (25.94%)	84	459 (21.93%)	4,131	744 (18%)	84	459 (21.93%)	4,131	744 (18%)	84
Italy	1,500	203 (13.53%)	20	183 (12.2%)	1,402	377 (26.9%)	73	304 (21.7%)	3,131	755 (24.1%)	73	304 (21.7%)	3,131	755 (24.1%)	73
Netherlands	1,017	233 (22.9%)	21	212 (20.18%)	1,027	288 (28%)	31	257 (25.02%)	1,816	435 (23.9%)	31	257 (25.02%)	1,816	435 (23.9%)	31
Spain	1,008	116 (11.51%)	2	114 (11.31%)	3,364	512 (15.22%)	8	504 (15%)	2,731	444 (16.2%)	8	504 (15%)	2,731	444 (16.2%)	8
United Kingdom	1,575	286 (18.16%)	3	282 (17.9%)	1,623	351 (21.63%)	9	342 (21.1%)	2,134	544 (25.5%)	9	342 (21.1%)	2,134	544 (25.5%)	9

information, were selected in each questionnaire.³ Appendix 1 contains the list of questions selected for each edition.

The questionnaires consisted of open-ended questions (for example, age, seniority in the organisation, working hours per week, desired retirement age, etc.), dichotomous questions (type of tasks, employment discrimination, need for training, etc.) and Likert-type multi-item questions (satisfaction with working conditions, impact of training, frequency of teleworking, job opportunities, etc.).

3.3 | Method of statistical analysis

First, descriptive statistics was applied to count and analyse the data collected. Maximum and minimum values, mean, standard deviation and frequencies offer valuable information about the selected variables that allow, on the one hand, to carry out a cross-sectional study in 2010, 2015 and 2021 and, on the other hand, to compare the results in the three periods and glimpse the evolution and trend of some variables.

Secondly, the Student's *t*-test was applied for independent samples in order to check whether there are significant differences in the mean of different variables. Specifically, the test was calculated for each of the samples using several grouping variables and different variables to contrast. Tests were made with the following grouping variables: (1) educational level (according to the ISCED 2011 classification, workers with lower (category 1) and higher (category 2) studies were grouped together⁴); and (2) training (1 if they have received training in the last twelve months and 2 otherwise). The variables used to contrast were related to the type of tasks to be performed in the job position (e.g., monotonous tasks, complex tasks, tasks that require learning new things and decision-making ability to influence tasks⁵) and different dimensions related to job satisfaction (e.g., satisfaction with working conditions, with rewards and with career prospects, opportunities to demonstrate knowledge and skills, anxiety and enthusiasm⁶).

4 | RESULTS

4.1 | Descriptive statistical analysis

Tables 2–4 show the statistical values calculated for 2010, 2015 and 2021, respectively, having created different categories to group various variables based on previous literature. It can be seen that, in general, the demographic composition of the samples from all the countries in the three periods is very similar in terms of gender, type of employment (employee or self-employed), contract (permanent vs. temporary) and sectors of activity (private vs. public or concerted). In 2021, in all the countries analysed, around 90% of employees have a single job or business, and high values are also found for full-time jobs, with the exception of the Netherlands and the United Kingdom, which have a higher percentage of employees with part time jobs. Similar averages are found in all countries with respect to seniority in the company (around 20 years) and hours worked per week (between 30 and 40 hours), reducing in all cases the average number of hours that seniors would like to work a week.

4.1.1 | Variables related to the type of tasks and the work environment

As regards the type of tasks, and as Table 3 reveals, in 2010, Spanish workers recognised in a much higher proportion than the rest that they held positions that involve monotonous tasks (62.3% compared to 16.5% in the Netherlands and 36.6% in Germany). The majority of German and Dutch workers state that they occupy positions

TABLE 2 Summary statistics in 2010.

Year 2010	France	Germany	Italy	Netherlands	Spain	United Kingdom
Demographic characteristics						
Gender (1) Male; 2) Female]	1) 38.5% 2) 61.5%	1) 56.2% 2) 43.8%	1) 59.6% 2) 40.4%	1) 62.7% 2) 37.3%	1) 59.6% 2) 40.4%	1) 50.5% 2) 49.5%
Age	[55.74]; $\bar{x} = 57.97$; $\sigma = 3.15^a$	[55.77]; $\bar{x} = 59.14$; $\sigma = 4.02$	[55.71]; $\bar{x} = 58.96$; $\sigma = 3.41$	[55.76]; $\bar{x} = 59.32$; $\sigma = 3.63$	[55.70]; $\bar{x} = 58.02$; $\sigma = 3.00$	[55.91]; $\bar{x} = 61.21$; $\sigma = 5.84$
Work situation (1) Employed; 2) Self-employed]	1) 78% 2) 22%	1) 85.4% 2) 14.9%	1) 66.3% 2) 31.7%	1) 76.4% 2) 23.6%	1) 70.2% 2) 29.8%	1) 74.1% 2) 25.9%
Kind of employment [indefinite contract]	86.5%	88.1%	91.1%	90.7%	82.5%	82%
Activity sector [private sector]	71.6%	72%	69.4%	45.7%	80.7%	64.4%
Seniority	[0.48]; $\bar{x} = 18.47$; $\sigma = 11.16$	[0.46]; $\bar{x} = 17.62$; $\sigma = 12.05$	[0.42]; $\bar{x} = 21.58$; $\sigma = 10.90$	[0.53]; $\bar{x} = 19.92$; $\sigma = 13.74$	[1.43]; $\bar{x} = 21.03$; $\sigma = 12.36$	[0.60]; $\bar{x} = 14.71$; $\sigma = 12.78$
Level of education ISCED [0] Pre-primary education; 1) Primary education; 2) Lower secondary; 3) Upper secondary; 4) Post-secondary non-tertiary education; 5) First stage of tertiary education; 6) Second stage of tertiary education]	$\bar{x} = 2.92$; $\sigma = 1.44$ 0) 3.4% ^b 1) 12% 2) 0% 3) 23.1% 4) 38% 5) 21% 6) 2.5%	$\bar{x} = 2.63$; $\sigma = 1.255$ 0) 0% 1) 0.9% 2) 0% 3) 69.5% 4) 7.9% 5) 20.7% 6) 0.9%	$\bar{x} = 3.18$; $\sigma = 1.282$ 0) 0% 1) 8.2% 2) 23.5% 3) 35.5% 4) 8.7% 5) 23% 6) 1.1% \bar{x}	$\bar{x} = 3.40$; $\sigma = 1.442$ 0) 0.5% 1) 6.1% 2) 0% 3) 30.7% 4) 6.6% 5) 38.2% 6) 0.5%	$\bar{x} = 2.76$; $\sigma = 1.741$ 0) 12.3% 1) 14.9% 2) 18.4% 3) 17.5% 4) 15.8% 5) 17.5% 6) 3.5%	$\bar{x} = 2.82$; $\sigma = 1.37$ 0) 1.1% 1) 3.2% 2) 61.4% 3) 7.2% 4) 2.5% 5) 23.5% 6) 1.1%
Working time	[1.90]; $\bar{x} = 35.11$; $\sigma = 12.86$	[3.75]; $\bar{x} = 35.5$; $\sigma = 1.446$	[5.75]; $\bar{x} = 36.23$; $\sigma = 12.10$	[2.85]; $\bar{x} = 32.63$; $\sigma = 15.37$	[4.84]; $\bar{x} = 38.35$; $\sigma = 12.17$	[1.84]; $\bar{x} = 29.72$; $\sigma = 15.79$
Preferred hours of work/week	[0.70]; $\bar{x} = 33.34$; $\sigma = 9.76$	[0.60]; $\bar{x} = 32.63$; $\sigma = 10.07$	[6.60]; $\bar{x} = 35.27$; $\sigma = 11.18$	[0.85]; $\bar{x} = 30.96$; $\sigma = 13.17$	[5.60]; $\bar{x} = 36.76$; $\sigma = 8.96$	[0.84]; $\bar{x} = 27.06$; $\sigma = 14.77$

(Continues)

TABLE 2 (Continued)

Year 2010	France	Germany	Italy	Netherlands	Spain	United Kingdom
Task type						
Monotonous task [1] Yes; 2] No]	$\bar{X} = 1.54; \sigma = 0.499$ 1) 46.1% 2) 53.9%	$\bar{X} = 1.63; \sigma = 0.482$ 1) 36.6% 2) 63.4%	$\bar{X} = 1.62; \sigma = 0.487$ 1) 37.9% 2) 62.1%	$\bar{X} = 1.83; \sigma = 0.372$ 1) 16.5% 2) 83.5%	$\bar{X} = 1.38; \sigma = 0.487$ 1) 62.3% 2) 37.7%	$\bar{X} = 1.49; \sigma = 0.501$ 1) 51.4% 2) 48.6%
Complex task [1] Yes; 2] No]	$\bar{X} = 1.53; \sigma = 0.500$ 1) 46.8% 2) 53.2%	$\bar{X} = 1.37; \sigma = 0.482$ 1) 63.5% 2) 36.5%	$\bar{X} = 1.51; \sigma = 0.501$ 1) 48.6% 2) 51.4%	$\bar{X} = 1.42; \sigma = 0.494$ 1) 58.5% 2) 41.5%	$\bar{X} = 1.64; \sigma = 0.482$ 1) 36% 2) 64%	$\bar{X} = 1.44; \sigma = 0.497$ 1) 56.4% 2) 46.3%
Learning new things [1] Yes; 2] No]	$\bar{X} = 1.45; \sigma = 0.498$ 1) 55.4% 2) 46.6%	$\bar{X} = 1.43; \sigma = 0.495$ 1) 57.3% 2) 42.7%	$\bar{X} = 1.31; \sigma = 0.465$ 1) 68.7% 2) 31.3%	$\bar{X} = 1.27; \sigma = 0.444$ 1) 73.1% 2) 26.9%	$\bar{X} = 1.46; \sigma = 0.500$ 1) 54.4% 2) 45.6%	$\bar{X} = 1.33; \sigma = 0.472$ 1) 66.8% 2) 33.2%
Skills						
Skills at work [1] Need for more training; 2) Task-appropriate skills; 3] Skills for more demanding tasks]	$\bar{X} = 2.27; \sigma = 0.526$ 1) 4% 2) 65.3% 3) 30.7%	$\bar{X} = 2.03; \sigma = 0.676$ 1) 21.3% 2) 54.3% 3) 24.4%	$\bar{X} = 2.21; \sigma = 0.587$ 1) 8.8% 2) 61.3% 3) 29.8%	$\bar{X} = 2.17; \sigma = 0.536$ 1) 7.1% 2) 68.4% 3) 24.5%	$\bar{X} = 2.29; \sigma = 0.578$ 1) 4.3% 2) 54.8% 3) 40.9%	$\bar{X} = 2.37; \sigma = 0.565$ 1) 4.3% 2) 54.8% 3) 40.9%
Training						
Training to improve skills (past 12 months) [1] Yes; 2] No]	$\bar{X} = 1.86; \sigma = 0.352$ 1) 14.5% 2) 85.5%	$\bar{X} = 1.70; \sigma = 0.461$ 1) 30.5% 2) 69.5%	$\bar{X} = 1.86; \sigma = 0.347$ 1) 13.9% 2) 86.1%	$\bar{X} = 1.67; \sigma = 0.470$ 1) 32.5% 2) 67.5%	$\bar{X} = 1.82; \sigma = 0.389$ 1) 18.4% 2) 81.6%	$\bar{X} = 1.69; \sigma = 0.465$ 1) 31.3% 2) 68.7%
Training utility [1] Agree; 2] disagree]	$\bar{X} = 1.09; \sigma = 0.295$ 1) 90.6% 2) 9.4%	$\bar{X} = 1.13; \sigma = 0.343$ 1) 86.5% 2) 13.5%	$\bar{X} = 1.09; \sigma = 0.281$ 1) 90.9% 2) 9.1%	$\bar{X} = 1.24; \sigma = 0.428$ 1) 76.3% 2) 23.7%	$\bar{X} = 1; \sigma = 0$ 1) 100% 2) 0%	$\bar{X} = 1.11; \sigma = 0.313$ 1) 89.1% 2) 10.9%
Employer training request [1] Yes; 2] No]	$\bar{X} = 1.97; \sigma = 0.167$ 1) 2.9% 2) 97.1%	$\bar{X} = 1.95; \sigma = 0.225$ 1) 5.3% 2) 94.7%	$\bar{X} = 1.91; \sigma = 0.289$ 1) 9.1% 2) 90.9%	$\bar{X} = 1.93; \sigma = 0.263$ 1) 7.4% 2) 92.6%	$\bar{X} = 1.98%; \sigma = 0.137$ 1) 1.9% 2) 98.1%	$\bar{X} = 1.95; \sigma = 0.221$ 1) 5.1% 2) 94.9%

TABLE 2 (Continued)

Year 2010		France	Germany	Italy	Netherlands	Spain	United Kingdom
Job satisfaction							
Age discrimination (past 12 months) (1) Yes; 2) No]		$\bar{X} = 1.92; \sigma = 0.276$ 1) 8.3% 2) 91.7%	$\bar{X} = 1.91; \sigma = 0.293$ 1) 9.4% 2) 90.6%	$\bar{X} = 1.97; \sigma = 0.179$ 1) 3.3% 2) 96.7%	$\bar{X} = 1.97; \sigma = 0.180$ 1) 3.3% 2) 96.7%	$\bar{X} = 1.97; \sigma = 0.161$ 1) 2.7% 2) 93.3%	$\bar{X} = 1.98; \sigma = 0.156$ 1) 2.5% 2) 97.5%
Satisfaction with working conditions (1) Very satisfied; 2) Satisfied; 3) Not very satisfied; 4) Not at all satisfied]		$\bar{X} = 1.98; \sigma = 0.700$ 1) 22.9% 2) 59.4% 3) 14.9% 4) 2.8%	$\bar{X} = 1.88; \sigma = 0.631$ 1) 25% 2) 63.4% 3) 10.1% 4) 1.5%	$\bar{X} = 2.02; \sigma = 0.770$ 1) 23.5% 2) 55.7% 3) 15.8% 4) 4.9%	$\bar{X} = 1.74; \sigma = 0.578$ 1) 32.2% 2) 61.6% 3) 5.7% 4) 5%	$\bar{X} = 2.02; \sigma = 0.612$ 1) 15.9% 2) 68.1% 3) 14.2% 4) 1.8%	$\bar{X} = 1.61; \sigma = 0.625$ 1) 45.1% 2) 49.5% 3) 4.3% 4) 1.1%
(1) Strongly disagree; 2) Disagree; 3) Neither agree nor disagree; 4) Agree; 5) Strongly agree]		$\bar{X} = 2.77; \sigma = 1.092$ 1) 14.4% 2) 26.9% 3) 28.8% 4) 26.6% 5) 3.2%	$\bar{X} = 3.28; \sigma = 1.007$ 1) 5.3% 2) 17.6% 3) 28.5% 4) 41.5% 5) 7.1%	$\bar{X} = 2.85; \sigma = 1.036$ 1) 14% 2) 18.4% 3) 38% 4) 27.9% 5) 1.7%	$\bar{X} = 3.46; \sigma = 1.049$ 1) 4.8% 2) 17.6% 3) 15.2% 4) 51.9% 5) 10.5%	$\bar{X} = 3.23; \sigma = 1.018$ 1) 4.5% 2) 18% 3) 37.8% 4) 28.8% 5) 10.8%	$\bar{X} = 3.35; \sigma = 1.160$ 1) 9.9% 2) 14.7% 3) 17.25% 4) 46.9% 5) 11.4%
Good prospects (1) Strongly disagree; 2) Disagree; 3) Neither agree nor disagree; 4) Agree; 5) Strongly agree Well paid]		$\bar{X} = 1.13; \sigma = 1.099$ 1) 35.4% 2) 33.7% 3) 15.8% 4) 13.1% 5) 2.1%	$\bar{X} = 2.22; \sigma = 1.094$ 1) 32.2% 2) 30.3% 3) 23.1% 4) 12.1% 5) 2.3%	$\bar{X} = 2.35; \sigma = 1.055$ 1) 23.2% 2) 37.8% 3) 20.7% 4) 17.1% 5) 1.2%	$\bar{X} = 2.32; \sigma = 0.913$ 1) 12.8% 2) 57.2% 3) 17.8% 4) 9.4% 5) 2.8%	$\bar{X} = 2.32; \sigma = 1.072$ 1) 24% 2) 39% 3) 21% 4) 13% 5) 3%	$\bar{X} = 2.60; \sigma = 1.102$ 1) 23.1% 2) 30.4% 3) 20.4% 4) 22.5% 5) 5.4%
Easy to find a job of similar salary (1) Strongly disagree; 2) Disagree; 3) Neither agree nor disagree; 4) Agree; 5) Strongly agree]		$\bar{X} = 2.37; \sigma = 1.389$ 1) 35% 2) 30% 3) 9.5% 4) 13.4% 5) 12%	$\bar{X} = 1.99; \sigma = 1.218$ 1) 49% 2) 23.8% 3) 11.2% 4) 11.2% 5) 4.8%	$\bar{X} = 2.24; \sigma = 1.206$ 1) 36.8% 2) 26.9% 3) 13.5% 4) 21.1% 5) 1.8%	$\bar{X} = 2.27; \sigma = 1.200$ 1) 32% 2) 35.6% 3) 9.8% 4) 19.1% 5) 3.6%	$\bar{X} = 2.05; \sigma = 1.255$ 1) 43.7% 2) 33% 3) 4.9% 4) 11.7% 5) 6.8%	$\bar{X} = 2.58; \sigma = 1.304$ 1) 27.5% 2) 25.1% 3) 15.7% 4) 25.1% 5) 6.7%

^aMinimum and maximum values between brackets, mean and standard deviation.

^bFrequencies.

TABLE 3 Summary statistics in 2015.

Year 2015		France	Germany	Italy	Netherlands	Spain	United Kingdom
Demographic characteristics	Gender (1) Male; 2) Female]	1) 47.5% 2) 52.5% [55.74]; $\bar{X} = 58.72$; $\sigma = 3.38$	1) 54% 2) 46% [55.72]; $\bar{X} = 60.53$; $\sigma = 4.19$	1) 52.6% 2) 47.4% [55.85]; $\bar{X} = 60.04$; $\sigma = 5.21$	1) 52.9% 2) 47.1% [55.81]; $\bar{X} = 60.12$; $\sigma = 4.18$	1) 53.6% 2) 46.4% [55.87]; $\bar{X} = 59.17$; $\sigma = 3.87$	1) 56.1% 2) 43.9% [55.84]; $\bar{X} = 60.93$; $\sigma = 5.54$
	Age	1) 86.9% 2) 13.1% 86.7%	1) 82.2% 2) 17.2% 89.3%	1) 61.2% 2) 38.8% 76.6%	1) 83.7% 2) 16.3% 85.3%	1) 74.4% 2) 25.6% 79.6%	1) 73.6% 2) 26.4% 88.1%
	Work situation (1) Employed; 2) Self-employed]	70.9% [1.50]; $\bar{X} = 20.42$; $\sigma = 12.74$	75.1% [1.47]; $\bar{X} = 17.56$; $\sigma = 11.7$	71.8% [1.64]; $\bar{X} = 22.92$; $\sigma = 12.42$	47.2% [1.55]; $\bar{X} = 19.62$; $\sigma = 12.67$	72.9% [1.60]; $\bar{X} = 21.62$; $\sigma = 12.64$	66.2% [1.66]; $\bar{X} = 16.83$; $\sigma = 12.29$
	Kind of employment [indefinite contract]	$\bar{X} = 4.76$; $\sigma = 1.85$	$\bar{X} = 4.68$; $\sigma = 1.447$	$\bar{X} = 4$; $\sigma = 1.4$	$\bar{X} = 5.05$; $\sigma = 2.16$	$\bar{X} = 4.10$; $\sigma = 2.07$	$\bar{X} = 4.64$; $\sigma = 1.94$
	Activity sector [private sector]	1) 0% 2) 9.3% 3) 10% 4) 46.7% 5) 13.5% 6) 0% 7) 4.2% 8) 16.2% 9) 0%	1) 0% 2) 0.9% 3) 3.7% 4) 69.7% 5) 5% 6) 4.1% 7) 6.5% 8) 9.2% 9) 0.9%	1) 0% 2) 7% 3) 32.1% 4) 43% 5) 4% 6) 1.3% 7) 11.6% 8) 0.3% 9) 0.7%	1) 0.4% 2) 5.1% 3) 28% 4) 24.5% 5) 2.7% 6) 0% 7) 15.6% 8) 23.2% 9) 0.4%	1) 9.1% 2) 16.4% 3) 21.8% 4) 10.7% 5) 16.6% 6) 8.3% 7) 12.1% 8) 2.4% 9) 2.6%	1) 1.2% 2) 0.6% 3) 43.6% 4) 14% 5) 1.8% 6) 14.3% 7) 14.6% 8) 8.4% 9) 1.5%
	Seniority	$\bar{X} = 4.76$; $\sigma = 1.85$	$\bar{X} = 4.68$; $\sigma = 1.447$	$\bar{X} = 4$; $\sigma = 1.4$	$\bar{X} = 5.05$; $\sigma = 2.16$	$\bar{X} = 4.10$; $\sigma = 2.07$	$\bar{X} = 4.64$; $\sigma = 1.94$
	Level of education ISCED (1) Early childhood; 2) Primary education; 3) Lower secondary; 4) Upper secondary; 5) Post-secondary non-tertiary education; 6) Short-cycle tertiary education; 7) Bachelor; 8) Master; 9) Doctorate]	1) 0% 2) 9.3% 3) 10% 4) 46.7% 5) 13.5% 6) 0% 7) 4.2% 8) 16.2% 9) 0%	1) 0% 2) 0.9% 3) 3.7% 4) 69.7% 5) 5% 6) 4.1% 7) 6.5% 8) 9.2% 9) 0.9%	1) 0% 2) 7% 3) 32.1% 4) 43% 5) 4% 6) 1.3% 7) 11.6% 8) 0.3% 9) 0.7%	1) 0.4% 2) 5.1% 3) 28% 4) 24.5% 5) 2.7% 6) 0% 7) 15.6% 8) 23.2% 9) 0.4%	1) 9.1% 2) 16.4% 3) 21.8% 4) 10.7% 5) 16.6% 6) 8.3% 7) 12.1% 8) 2.4% 9) 2.6%	1) 1.2% 2) 0.6% 3) 43.6% 4) 14% 5) 1.8% 6) 14.3% 7) 14.6% 8) 8.4% 9) 1.5%
	Hours of work/week	[2.84]; $\bar{X} = 35.33$; $\sigma = 12.01$	[2.75]; $\bar{X} = 32.98$; $\sigma = 13.57$	[2.80]; $\bar{X} = 35.43$; $\sigma = 13.58$	[2.70]; $\bar{X} = 30.41$; $\sigma = 12.81$	[2.90]; $\bar{X} = 36.9$; $\sigma = 12.86$	[4.85]; $\bar{X} = 34.15$; $\sigma = 14.14$
	Preferred hours of work/week	[15.70]; $\bar{X} = 34.54$; $\sigma = 7.88$	[0.54]; $\bar{X} = 31.04$; $\sigma = 10.12$	[0.65]; $\bar{X} = 35.96$; $\sigma = 11.66$	[0.60]; $\bar{X} = 29.04$; $\sigma = 10.4$	[0.60]; $\bar{X} = 35.21$; $\sigma = 9.45$	[0.60]; $\bar{X} = 30.14$; $\sigma = 12.10$
	Task type	$\bar{X} = 2.64$; $\sigma = 0.725$ 1) 9.7% 2) 20.8% 3) 66% 4) 2.7% 5) 0.8%	$\bar{X} = 2.69$; $\sigma = 0.632$ 1) 6.3% 2) 21.2% 3) 70.5% 4) 1.5% 5) 0.4%	$\bar{X} = 2.79$; $\sigma = 0.675$ 1) 6% 2) 15.4% 3) 74.2% 4) 2.3% 5) 2%	$\bar{X} = 2.171$; $\sigma = 0.718$ 1) 7.8% 2) 20% 3) 67.1% 4) 3.9% 5) 1.2%	$\bar{X} = 2.91$; $\sigma = 0.535$ 1) 2.6% 2) 10.5% 3) 81.5% 4) 4% 5) 1.2%	$\bar{X} = 2.63$; $\sigma = 0.787$ 1) 11.4% 2) 20.2% 3) 63.5% 4) 3.5% 5) 1.5%

TABLE 3 (Continued)

Year 2015		France	Germany	Italy	Netherlands	Spain	United Kingdom
Skills	Monotonous task (1) Yes; 2) No]	$\bar{X} = 1.56; \sigma = 0.497$ 1) 46.8% 2) 53.2%	$\bar{X} = 1.76; \sigma = 0.427$ 1) 23.9% 2) 76.1%	$\bar{X} = 1.59; \sigma = 0.493$ 1) 41.1% 2) 58.9%	$\bar{X} = 1.80; \sigma = 0.403$ 1) 20.3% 2) 79.7%	$\bar{X} = 1.32; \sigma = 0.466$ 1) 68.3% 2) 31.7%	$\bar{X} = 1.51; \sigma = 0.501$ 1) 48.5% 2) 51.5%
	Complex task (1) Yes; 2) No]	$\bar{X} = 1.40; \sigma = 0.491$ 1) 59.9% 2) 40.1%	$\bar{X} = 1.31; \sigma = 0.462$ 1) 69.3% 2) 30.7%	$\bar{X} = 1.50; \sigma = 0.501$ 1) 49.7% 2) 50.3%	$\bar{X} = 1.41; \sigma = 0.493$ 1) 59.1% 2) 40.9%	$\bar{X} = 1.5; \sigma = 0.500$ 1) 49.6% 2) 50.4%	$\bar{X} = 1.32; \sigma = 0.468$ 1) 67.6% 2) 32.4%
Training	Learning new things (1) Yes; 2) No]	$\bar{X} = 1.21; \sigma = 0.407$ 1) 79.2% 2) 20.8%	$\bar{X} = 1.46; \sigma = 0.499$ 1) 54% 2) 46%	$\bar{X} = 1.44; \sigma = 0.498$ 1) 55.6% 2) 44.4%	$\bar{X} = 1.23; \sigma = 0.419$ 1) 77.4% 2) 22.6%	$\bar{X} = 1.39; \sigma = 0.488$ 1) 61.2% 2) 38.8%	$\bar{X} = 1.21; \sigma = 0.408$ 1) 78.9% 2) 21.1%
	Skills at work [1] Need for more training; 2) Task-appropriate skills; 3) Skills for more demanding tasks]	$\bar{X} = 2.09; \sigma = 0.579$ 1) 12.8% 2) 65.9% 3) 21.3%	$\bar{X} = 2.18; \sigma = 0.631$ 1) 12.5% 2) 57.1% 3) 30.4%	$\bar{X} = 2.19; \sigma = 0.588$ 1) 9.5% 2) 61.9% 3) 28.6%	$\bar{X} = 2.15; \sigma = 0.495$ 1) 5.9% 2) 73.3% 3) 20.8%	$\bar{X} = 2.26; \sigma = 0.599$ 1) 8.2% 2) 57.3% 3) 34.6%	$\bar{X} = 2.23; \sigma = 0.555$ 1) 6.5% 2) 63.9% 3) 29.6%
Skills	Training to improve skills (past 12 months) (1) Yes; 2) No]	$\bar{X} = 1.90; \sigma = 0.301$ 1) 10% 2) 90%	$\bar{X} = 1.82; \sigma = 0.383$ 1) 17.8% 2) 82.2%	$\bar{X} = 1.89; \sigma = 0.310$ 1) 10.7% 2) 89.3%	$\bar{X} = 1.88; \sigma = 0.326$ 1) 12.1% 2) 87.9%	$\bar{X} = 1.94; \sigma = 0.238$ 1) 6% 2) 94%	$\bar{X} = 1.80; \sigma = 0.400$ 1) 19.9% 2) 80.1%
	Best way to work after training (1) Strongly agree; 2) Tend to agree; 3) Neither agree nor disagree; 4) Tend to disagree; 5) Strongly disagree]	$\bar{X} = 2.16; \sigma = 1.154$ 1) 33% 2) 38.6% 3) 13.6% 4) 9.1% 5) 5.7%	$\bar{X} = 1.94; \sigma = 0.895$ 1) 32.6% 2) 50% 3) 9.7% 4) 6.3% 5) 1.4%	$\bar{X} = 1.99; \sigma = 0.869$ 1) 29.9% 2) 48.3% 3) 16.1% 4) 4.6% 5) 1.1%	$\bar{X} = 2.02; \sigma = 1.040$ 1) 29.8% 2) 54% 3) 6.5% 4) 3.2% 5) 6.5%	$\bar{X} = 1.70; \sigma = 1.15$ 1) 61.7% 2) 23.4% 3) 3.9% 4) 4.7% 5) 6.3%	$\bar{X} = 1.95; \sigma = 0.960$ 1) 36.7% 2) 40.8% 3) 15% 4) 5.4% 5) 2%
Skills	More security after training (1) Strongly agree; 2) Tend to agree; 3) Neither agree nor disagree; 4) Tend to disagree; 5) Strongly disagree]	$\bar{X} = 2.57; \sigma = 1.294$ 1) 19.3% 2) 43.2% 3) 11.4% 4) 13.6% 5) 12.5%	$\bar{X} = 2.67; \sigma = 1.295$ 1) 21.5% 2) 28.5% 3) 22.9% 4) 15.3% 5) 11.8%	$\bar{X} = 2.35; \sigma = 1.020$ 1) 22.4% 2) 34.1% 3) 32.9% 4) 7.1% 5) 3.5%	$\bar{X} = 3.03; \sigma = 1.38$ 1) 12.9% 2) 29.8% 3) 22.6% 4) 10.5% 5) 24.2%	$\bar{X} = 2.30; \sigma = 1.48$ 1) 43% 2) 22.7% 3) 13.3% 4) 3.9% 5) 17.2%	$\bar{X} = 2.56; \sigma = 1.18$ 1) 23.1% 2) 23.8% 3) 34.7% 4) 10.9% 5) 7.5%

(Continues)

TABLE 3 (Continued)

Year 2015		France	Germany	Italy	Netherlands	Spain	United Kingdom
Better future employment prospects (1) Strongly agree; 2) Tend to agree; 3) Neither agree nor disagree; 4) Tend to disagree; 5) Strongly disagree]		$\bar{x} = 2.81; \sigma = 1.258$ 1) 11.4% 2) 40.9% 3) 18.2% 4) 14.8% 5) 14.8%	$\bar{x} = 2.78; \sigma = 1.260$ 1) 16.7% 2) 27.5% 3) 31.2% 4) 10.1% 5) 14.5%	$\bar{x} = 2.72; \sigma = 1.134$ 1) 17.1% 2) 23.2% 3) 15.4% 4) 18.3% 5) 6.1%	$\bar{x} = 3.24; \sigma = 1.24$ 1) 7.4% 2) 22.1% 3) 32.8% 4) 14.8% 5) 23%	$\bar{x} = 2.29; \sigma = 1.38$ 1) 41.4% 2) 18.8% 3) 21.9% 4) 5.5% 5) 12.5%	$\bar{x} = 2.49; \sigma = 1.1$ 1) 21.9% 2) 27.4% 3) 34.9% 4) 11% 5) 4.8%
	Employer training request (1) Yes; 2) No]	$\bar{x} = 1.86; \sigma = 0.349$ 1) 14.1% 2) 85.9%	$\bar{x} = 1.97; \sigma = 0.182$ 1) 3.4% 2) 96.6%	$\bar{x} = 1.96; \sigma = 0.185$ 1) 3.5% 2) 96.5%	$\bar{x} = 1.92; \sigma = 0.280$ 1) 8.5% 2) 91.5%	$\bar{x} = 1.93; \sigma = 0.255$ 1) 7% 2) 87.5%	$\bar{x} = 1.87; \sigma = 0.332$ 1) 12.5% 2) 87.5%
Age discrimination (past 12 months) (1) Yes; 2) No]	$\bar{x} = 1.90; \sigma = 0.296$ 1) 9.7% 2) 90.3%	$\bar{x} = 1.95; \sigma = 0.224$ 1) 5.3% 2) 94.7%	$\bar{x} = 1.98; \sigma = 0.151$ 1) 2.3% 2) 97.7%	$\bar{x} = 1.95; \sigma = 0.220$ 1) 5.1% 2) 94.9%	$\bar{x} = 1.97; \sigma = 0.159$ 1) 2.6% 2) 97.4%	$\bar{x} = 1.98; \sigma = 0.152$ 1) 2.3% 2) 97.7%	
Satisfaction with working conditions (1) Very satisfied; 2) Satisfied; 3) Not very satisfied; 4) Not at all satisfied]	$\bar{x} = 1.98; \sigma = 0.687$ 1) 20.1% 2) 66.8% 3) 18.5% 4) 4.6%	$\bar{x} = 1.87; \sigma = 0.640$ 1) 26.9% 2) 60.6% 3) 11.4% 4) 11.1%	$\bar{x} = 2.02; \sigma = 0.616$ 1) 15.6% 2) 69.1% 3) 13% 4) 2.4%	$\bar{x} = 1.71; \sigma = 0.608$ 1) 35.8% 2) 58.4% 3) 4.7% 4) 1.2%	$\bar{x} = 1.96; \sigma = 0.682$ 1) 22.3% 2) 62.3% 3) 12.5% 4) 3%	$\bar{x} = 1.70; \sigma = 0.702$ 1) 42.1% 2) 48% 3) 7.9% 4) 2%	
Well paid (1) Strongly agree; 2) Tend to agree; 3) Neither agree nor disagree; 4) Tend to disagree; 5) Strongly disagree]	$\bar{x} = 3.23; \sigma = 1.283$ 1) 9.3% 2) 25.3% 3) 18.3% 4) 27.2% 5) 19.8%	$\bar{x} = 2.55; \sigma = 1.144$ 1) 16.7% 2) 40.4% 3) 20.9% 4) 14.9% 5) 7.1%	$\bar{x} = 2.84; \sigma = 0.988$ 1) 3.6% 2) 40.7% 3) 31.1% 4) 17.9% 5) 6.8%	$\bar{x} = 2.35; \sigma = 1.29$ 1) 31.4% 2) 35.3% 3) 8.6% 4) 16.9% 5) 7.8%	$\bar{x} = 2.99; \sigma = 1.41$ 1) 17.2% 2) 27% 3) 16.8% 4) 17.6% 5) 21.4%	$\bar{x} = 2.72; \sigma = 1.37$ 1) 21.9% 2) 32.4% 3) 11.1% 4) 21% 5) 13.5%	
Good prospects (1) Strongly agree; 2) Tend to agree; 3) Neither agree nor disagree; 4) Tend to disagree; 5) Strongly disagree]	$\bar{x} = 3.48; \sigma = 1.343$ 1) 7.4% 2) 22.2% 3) 18.1% 4) 19.3% 5) 32.9%	$\bar{x} = 3.64; \sigma = 1.234$ 1) 5.5% 2) 13.9% 3) 25.4% 4) 21.2% 5) 34%	$\bar{x} = 3.41; \sigma = 1.146$ 1) 3.5% 2) 20.5% 3) 29.7% 4) 24% 5) 22.3%	$\bar{x} = 3.58; \sigma = 1.36$ 1) 7% 2) 20.5% 3) 19.1% 4) 14.4% 5) 39.1%	$\bar{x} = 3.48; \sigma = 1.5$ 1) 14.1% 2) 16.8% 3) 16.5% 4) 12.3% 5) 40.2%	$\bar{x} = 3.17; \sigma = 1.29$ 1) 11.7% 2) 20.7% 3) 26.2% 4) 21.4% 5) 20%	

TABLE 3 (Continued)

Year 2015	France	Germany	Italy	Netherlands	Spain	United Kingdom
Easy to find a job of similar salary [1] Strongly agree; 2) Tend to agree; 3) Neither agree nor disagree; 4) Tend to disagree; 5) Strongly disagree]	$\bar{x} = 3.75$; $\sigma = 1.477$ 1) 12.5% 2) 14.1% 3) 6.9% 4) 19% 5) 47.6%	$\bar{x} = 3.73$; $\sigma = 12.82$ 1) 6.5% 2) 14.4% 3) 16.9% 4) 24.2% 5) 38%	$\bar{x} = 3.74$; $\sigma = 1.209$ 1) 4.1% 2) 15% 3) 19.9% 4) 25.2% 5) 35.8%	$\bar{x} = 4.21$; $\sigma = 1.30$ 1) 7.1% 2) 9.6% 3) 4.6% 4) 12.1% 5) 66.5%	$\bar{x} = 3.95$; $\sigma = 1.31$ 1) 5.7% 2) 13.4% 3) 14.3% 4) 13.8% 5) 52.7%	$\bar{x} = 3.48$; $\sigma = 1.39$ 1) 11.2% 2) 18.3% 3) 13.9% 4) 24.7% 5) 31.9%
Perception as a good worker [1] Always; 2) Most of the time; 3) Sometimes; 4) Rarely; 5) Never]	$\bar{x} = 1.65$; $\sigma = 0.576$ 1) 40.5% 2) 55.2% 3) 3.9% 4) 0.4% 5) 0%	$\bar{x} = 1.63$; $\sigma = 0.600$ 1) 43.3% 2) 53.6% 3) 3.1% 4) 1.1% 5) 0%	$\bar{x} = 1.68$; $\sigma = 0.663$ 1) 42.8% 2) 52.2% 3) 5% 4) 2% 5) 0%	$\bar{x} = 1.43$; $\sigma = 0.512$ 1) 57.1% 2) 41.8% 3) 0.8% 4) 0% 5) 0%	$\bar{x} = 1.41$; $\sigma = 0.618$ 1) 64.6% 2) 31% 3) 3.2% 4) 0.8% 5) 0.2%	$\bar{x} = 1.44$; $\sigma = 0.547$ 1) 58.8% 2) 39.2% 3) 1.8% 4) 0.3% 5) 0%
Retirement age preference	[55,80]; $\bar{x} = 62.51$; $\sigma = 3.29$	[60,90]; $\bar{x} = 64.25$; $\sigma = 3.55$	[56,75]; $\bar{x} = 63.23$; $\sigma = 3.57$	[56,85]; $\bar{x} = 65.03$; $\sigma = 4.26$	[55,87]; $\bar{x} = 62.83$; $\sigma = 3.55$	[55,90]; $\bar{x} = 65.19$; $\sigma = 5.68$
Age limit to do similar work	[60,90]; $\bar{x} = 64.73$; $\sigma = 4.65$	[60,90]; $\bar{x} = 65.77$; $\sigma = 4.27$	[60,80]; $\bar{x} = 66.24$; $\sigma = 4.36$	[60,90]; $\bar{x} = 68.08$; $\sigma = 4.96$	[60,80]; $\bar{x} = 64.7$; $\sigma = 3.35$	[60,90]; $\bar{x} = 68.46$; $\sigma = 5.72$

^aNew questions regarding the 2010 edition marked in colour.

TABLE 4 Summary statistics in 2021.

Year 2021	France	Germany	Italy	Netherlands	Spain	United Kingdom
Demographic characteristics						
Gender (1) Male; 2) Female; 3) Neutral]	1) 50.5% 2) 49.3% 3) 0.2%	1) 56.3% 2) 42.6% 3) 0.1%	1) 59.5% 2) 40.3% 3) 0.2%	1) 54.5% 2) 43% 3) 0.5%	1) 54.1% 2) 45.9% 3) 0%	1) 56.1% 2) 43.9% 3) 0%
Age	[55,81]; \bar{x} = 58.99; σ = 3.63	[55,80]; \bar{x} = 59.41; σ = 3.73	[55,84]; \bar{x} = 59.7; σ = 4.28	[55,77]; \bar{x} = 60.11; σ = 3.95	[55,77]; \bar{x} = 58.81; σ = 3.32	[55,81]; \bar{x} = 60.28; σ = 4.71
Work situation (1) Employed; 2) Self-employed]	1) 83% 2) 17%	1) 82.8% 2) 17.2%	1) 69% 2) 31%	1) 88.7% 2) 11.3%	1) 79.6% 2) 20.4%	1) 77.4% 2) 22.6%
Activity sector [private sector]	62.1%	58.8%	67.7%	39.9%	58.7% 58.7%	58.8%
Seniority	[1,50]; \bar{x} = 19.87; σ = 12.62	[1,50]; \bar{x} = 19.72; σ = 11.98	[1,55]; \bar{x} = 21.93; σ = 12.87	[1,47]; \bar{x} = 17.74; σ = 12.18	[1,50]; \bar{x} = 20.13; σ = 12.46	[1,50]; \bar{x} = 15.48; σ = 12.36
Number of jobs/business (1) One; 2) More than one]	1) 91.8% 2) 8.2%	1) 91% 2) 9%	1) 94.8% 2) 5.2%	1) 94% 2) 6%	1) 95.7% 2) 4.3%	1) 89% 2) 11%
Working time (1) Part time; 2) Full time]	1) 10% 2) 82%	1) 22.8% 2) 77.2%	1) 13.7% 2) 86.3%	1) 47.2% 2) 52.8%	1) 11.4% 2) 88.6%	1) 32.5% 2) 67.5%
Level of education ISCED (1) Early childhood; 2) Primary education; 3) Lower secondary; 4) Upper secondary; 5) Post-secondary non-tertiary education; 6) Short-cycle tertiary education; 7) Bachelor; 8) Master; 9) Doctorate]	\bar{x} = 6.19; σ = 1.9	\bar{x} = 5.79; σ = 1.906	\bar{x} = 4.86; σ = 1.64	\bar{x} = 5.62; σ = 1.97	\bar{x} = 5.22; σ = 1.91	\bar{x} = 5.76; σ = 2.01
	1) 0% 2) 0% 3) 3.6% 4) 32.2% 5) 16.5% 6) 0% 7) 9.6% 8) 30.1% 9) 8%	1) 0.8% 2) 8% 3) 29.6% 4) 13.4% 5) 2.3% 6) 0% 7) 16.2% 8) 26.6% 9) 3.1%	1) 0% 2) 1.2% 3) 15.4% 4) 48.3% 5) 1.5% 6) 3.6% 7) 26.6% 8) 2.3% 9) 1.2%	1) 0.2% 2) 1.2% 3) 15.3% 4) 29.3% 5) 1.4% 6) 0.9% 7) 30% 8) 29.9% 9) 0.7%	1) 1.8% 2) 6.3% 3) 14.2% 4) 11.7% 5) 22.3% 6) 13.7% 7) 26.2% 8) 19.6% 9) 6.3% 9) 4.1%	1) 0.4% 2) 0.2% 3) 23.5% 4) 11.8% 5) 0.2% 6) 17.5% 7) 26.2% 8) 14.4% 9) 5.6%
Working time	[1,140]; \bar{x} = 39.77; σ = 13.1	[3,90]; \bar{x} = 39.02; σ = 12.44	[4,168]; \bar{x} = 40.34; σ = 13.28	[2,90]; \bar{x} = 32.74; σ = 12.64	[2,98]; \bar{x} = 39.56; σ = 12.07	[2,168]; \bar{x} = 37.95; σ = 15.7
Preferred hours of work/week	[1,70]; \bar{x} = 33.38; σ = 9.40	[0,100]; \bar{x} = 34.1; σ = 11.86	[0,160]; \bar{x} = 34.05; σ = 12.3	[0,60]; \bar{x} = 29.81; σ = 10.15	[0,77]; \bar{x} = 34.81; σ = 9.62	[2,110]; \bar{x} = 30; σ = 13.88

TABLE 4 (Continued)

Year 2021	Task type and work environment	France	Germany	Italy	Netherlands	Spain	United Kingdom
	Emotionally disturbing situations (1) Never; 2) Rarely; 3) Sometimes; 4) Often; 5) Always ^a	$\bar{x} = 2.62; \sigma = 1.134$ 1) 21.2% 2) 21.8% 3) 35% 4) 17.4% 5) 4.6%	$\bar{x} = 2.47; \sigma = 1.109$ 1) 22.2% 2) 32% 3) 25.5% 4) 17% 5) 3.2%	$\bar{x} = 2.17; \sigma = 1.126$ 1) 38.6% 2) 21.4% 3) 27.3% 4) 10.2% 5) 2.5%	$\bar{x} = 2; \sigma = 1.09$ 1) 46.8% 2) 18.1% 3) 25.5% 4) 8.3% 5) 1.6%	$\bar{x} = 2.33; \sigma = 1.181$ 1) 31.9% 2) 25.3% 3) 26% 4) 11.8% 5) 5%	$\bar{x} = 2.05; \sigma = 1.107$ 1) 42.9% 2) 23.6% 3) 21.5% 4) 9.9% 5) 2%
	Working with computer (1) Never; 2) Rarely; 3) Sometimes; 4) Often; 5) Always	$\bar{x} = 4.21; \sigma = 1.206$ 1) 8.2% 2) 3% 3) 6.1% 4) 25.3% 5) 57.3%	$\bar{x} = 4.15; \sigma = 1.273$ 1) 9.6% 2) 4.3% 3) 4.4% 4) 25.5% 5) 56.3%	$\bar{x} = 3.94; \sigma = 1.489$ 1) 16.2% 2) 3.6% 3) 6.2% 4) 18.3% 5) 55.8%	$\bar{x} = 4.10; \sigma = 1.302$ 1) 11% 2) 2.1% 3) 7.8% 4) 24.4% 5) 54.7%	$\bar{x} = 3.68; \sigma = 1.703$ 1) 24.5% 2) 4.3% 3) 6.1% 4) 9.2% 5) 55.9%	$\bar{x} = 4.32; \sigma = 1.101$ 1) 5% 2) 4% 3) 7.7% 4) 20.8% 5) 62.5%
	Workplace (1) Never; 2) Rarely; 3) Sometimes; 4) Often; 5) Always	$\bar{x} = 3.73; \sigma = 1.383$ 1) 10.1% 2) 12.4% 3) 14.5% 4) 20.3% 5) 42.6%	$\bar{x} = 3.74; \sigma = 1.499$ 1) 13.8% 2) 12.9% 3) 7.2% 4) 18.1% 5) 48%	$\bar{x} = 3.81; \sigma = 1.395$ 1) 11.4% 2) 9.6% 3) 11.6% 4) 22% 5) 45.5%	$\bar{x} = 3.49; \sigma = 1.54$ 1) 15.9% 2) 15.4% 3) 14.4% 4) 12% 5) 42.3%	$\bar{x} = 4; \sigma = 1.46$ 1) 13.8% 2) 4.5% 3) 9.9% 4) 11% 5) 60.7%	$\bar{x} = 3.03; \sigma = 1.613$ 1) 27.6% 2) 15.7% 3) 13.5% 4) 13.1% 5) 30.2%
	Working at very high speed (1) Never; 2) Rarely; 3) Sometimes; 4) Often; 5) Always	$\bar{x} = 3.09; \sigma = 1.151$ 1) 12.5% 2) 14.8% 3) 33.5% 4) 29.5% 5) 9.8%	$\bar{x} = 3.42; \sigma = 1.148$ 1) 6.8% 2) 15.6% 3) 23% 4) 38% 5) 16.6%	$\bar{x} = 3.34; \sigma = 1.118$ 1) 8.1% 2) 11.8% 3) 33.6% 4) 31.3% 5) 15.1%	$\bar{x} = 3.08; \sigma = 1.26$ 1) 17.6% 2) 10.9% 3) 29.2% 4) 30.3% 5) 12%	$\bar{x} = 3.20; \sigma = 1.26$ 1) 13.1% 2) 13.8% 3) 30.7% 4) 24.8% 5) 17.6%	$\bar{x} = 2.99; \sigma = 1.213$ 1) 15.7% 2) 14.8% 3) 35.4% 4) 22.4% 5) 11.7%
	Working to tight deadlines (1) Never; 2) Rarely; 3) Sometimes; 4) Often; 5) Always	$\bar{x} = 3.42; \sigma = 1.104$ 1) 7.3% 2) 11.1% 3) 29.7% 4) 36.2% 5) 15.7%	$\bar{x} = 3.29; \sigma = 1.158$ 1) 8.9% 2) 16.4% 3) 25.4% 4) 36.7% 5) 13.5%	$\bar{x} = 3.22; \sigma = 1.140$ 1) 9.7% 2) 13.6% 3) 35.6% 4) 27.4% 5) 13.7%	$\bar{x} = 2.92; \sigma = 1.29$ 1) 21.7% 2) 11% 3) 32.2% 4) 24% 5) 11.2%	$\bar{x} = 3.32; \sigma = 1.31$ 1) 14.2% 2) 9.8% 3) 28.1% 4) 25.6% 5) 22.4%	$\bar{x} = 3.69; \sigma = 1.126$ 1) 6.3% 2) 6.6% 3) 26.5% 4) 33.5% 5) 27.1%

(Continues)

TABLE 4 (Continued)

Year 2021	France	Germany	Italy	Netherlands	Spain	United Kingdom
Learning new things [1] Never; 2] Rarely; 3] Sometimes; 4) Often; 5) Always]	$\bar{x} = 3.82; \sigma = 0.988$ 1) 3% 2) 5.3% 3) 24.8% 4) 39.8% 5) 27%	$\bar{x} = 3.57; \sigma = 1.025$ 1) 3.5% 2) 12.9% 3) 23.3% 4) 43.5% 5) 16.7%	$\bar{x} = 3.81; \sigma = 1.077$ 1) 4.8% 2) 5.7% 3) 23.4% 4) 35.8% 5) 30.3%	$\bar{x} = 3.35; \sigma = 1.15$ 1) 9.7% 2) 8.8% 3) 35% 4) 30% 5) 16.6%	$\bar{x} = 3.95; \sigma = 1.22$ 1) 6.4% 2) 6.6% 3) 18.6% 4) 22.5% 5) 45.9%	$\bar{x} = 3.58; \sigma = 1.015$ 1) 3.1% 2) 9.2% 3) 35.2% 4) 31.9% 5) 20.6%
Decision influence [1] Never; 2] Rarely; 3] Sometimes; 4) Often; 5) Always]	$\bar{x} = 3.56; \sigma = 1.087$ 1) 5.2% 2) 10% 3) 29.3% 4) 34.5% 5) 21%	$\bar{x} = 4.06; \sigma = 1.077$ 1) 3.8% 2) 6.6% 3) 12.4% 4) 33.7% 5) 43.5%	$\bar{x} = 3.58; \sigma = 1.283$ 1) 11% 2) 7.9% 3) 22.2% 4) 29.9% 5) 28.9%	$\bar{x} = 3.82; \sigma = 1.104$ 1) 6.6% 2) 3.7% 3) 20.8% 4) 38.9% 5) 30%	$\bar{x} = 3.71; \sigma = 1.314$ 1) 9.6% 2) 7.8% 3) 24.2% 4) 19.2% 5) 39.3%	$\bar{x} = 3.79; \sigma = 1.174$ 1) 5.5% 2) 8.1% 3) 22.7% 4) 29% 5) 34.6%
Training Training to improve skills (past 12 months) [1] Yes; 2) No]	$\bar{x} = 1.62; \sigma = 0.486$ 1) 38.1% 2) 61.9%	$\bar{x} = 1.47; \sigma = 0.500$ 1) 53.1% 2) 46.9%	$\bar{x} = 1.41; \sigma = 0.493$ 1) 58.8% 2) 41.2%	$\bar{x} = 1.54; \sigma = 0.500$ 1) 46.2% 2) 53.8%	$\bar{x} = 1.47; \sigma = 0.500$ 1) 52.9% 2) 47.1%	$\bar{x} = 1.42; \sigma = 0.495$ 1) 57.9% 2) 42.1%
Satisfaction Discrimination at work (past 12 months) [1] Yes; 2) No]	$\bar{x} = 1.86; \sigma = 0.342$ 1) 13.5% 2) 86.5%	$\bar{x} = 1.92; \sigma = 0.268$ 1) 7.8% 2) 92.2%	$\bar{x} = 1.90; \sigma = 0.302$ 1) 10.1% 2) 89.9%	$\bar{x} = 1.92; \sigma = 0.273$ 1) 8.1% 2) 91.9%	$\bar{x} = 1.91; \sigma = 0.280$ 1) 8.6% 2) 91.4%	$\bar{x} = 1.90; \sigma = 0.305$ 1) 10.4% 2) 89.6%
Anxiety (past 12 months) [1] Yes; 2) No]	$\bar{x} = 1.54; \sigma = 0.499$ 1) 46.6% 2) 53.4%	$\bar{x} = 1.92; \sigma = 1.722$ 1) 8% 2) 92%	$\bar{x} = 1.63; \sigma = 0.483$ 1) 36.9% 2) 63.1%	$\bar{x} = 1.70; \sigma = 0.46$ 1) 29.9% 2) 70.1%	$\bar{x} = 1.69; \sigma = 0.463$ 1) 30.8% 2) 69.2%	$\bar{x} = 1.69; \sigma = 0.462$ 1) 30.7% 2) 69.3%
Well paid [1] Strongly agree; 2] Tend to agree; 3] Neither agree nor disagree; 4] Tend to disagree; 5] Strongly disagree]	$\bar{x} = 2.96; \sigma = 1.324$ 1) 11.6% 2) 37.6% 3) 10.7% 4) 23.3% 5) 16.9%	$\bar{x} = 2.19; \sigma = 1.286$ 1) 37.5% 2) 35.5% 3) 4.7% 4) 14.9% 5) 7.5%	$\bar{x} = 2.80; \sigma = 1.153$ 1) 7.6% 2) 45.8% 3) 15.5% 4) 21.3% 5) 9.8%	$\bar{x} = 2.24; \sigma = 1.329$ 1) 37.1% 2) 32.9% 3) 7.5% 4) 13.6% 5) 8.9%	$\bar{x} = 2.84; \sigma = 1.544$ 1) 25.3% 2) 27.7% 3) 9.7% 4) 12.7% 5) 24.7%	$\bar{x} = 2.42; \sigma = 1.395$ 1) 30.5% 2) 37.2% 3) 6.5% 4) 11.6% 5) 14.3%

TABLE 4 (Continued)

Year 2021		France	Germany	Italy	Netherlands	Spain	United Kingdom
Good prospects (1) Strongly agree; 2) Tend to agree; 3) Neither agree nor disagree; 4) Tend to disagree; 5) Strongly disagree		$\bar{x} = 3.06; \sigma = 1.379$ 1) 12.9% 2) 31.1% 3) 15% 4) 18.9% 5) 22.2%	$\bar{x} = 2.902; \sigma = 1.453$ 1) 22.4% 2) 25.2% 3) 10.4% 4) 23.6% 5) 18.3%	$\bar{x} = 3.22; \sigma = 1.186$ 1) 6.5% 2) 27.1% 3) 19.3% 4) 32.1% 5) 15%	$\bar{x} = 2.82; \sigma = 1.397$ 1) 21.5% 2) 26.2% 3) 17.7% 4) 17.7% 5) 16.9%	$\bar{x} = 3.32; \sigma = 1.575$ 1) 17.3% 2) 21.9% 3) 11.2% 4) 10.8% 5) 38.8%	$\bar{x} = 3.035; \sigma = 1.396$ 1) 15.6% 2) 26.9% 3) 17.6% 4) 18.2% 5) 21.7%
	Undesirable change (1) Strongly agree; 2) Tend to agree; 3) Neither agree nor disagree; 4) Tend to disagree; 5) Strongly disagree	$\bar{x} = 3.61; \sigma = 1.36$ 1) 9% 2) 17.5% 3) 12.8% 4) 24.5% 5) 36.2%	$\bar{x} = 2.51; \sigma = 3.47$ 1) 6.5% 2) 10.1% 3) 3.9% 4) 30.4% 5) 48.9%	$\bar{x} = 3.71; \sigma = 1.103$ 1) 4% 2) 13.9% 3) 14.1% 4) 43.5% 5) 24.6%	$\bar{x} = 3.7; \sigma = 1.418$ 1) 10.4% 2) 16.4% 3) 8.6% 4) 22.7% 5) 42%	$\bar{x} = 3.99; \sigma = 1.384$ 1) 9.5% 2) 8.5% 3) 13.4% 4) 10.6% 5) 58.1%	$\bar{x} = 3.99; \sigma = 1.280$ 1) 8.7% 2) 6.6% 3) 9.8% 4) 26.2% 5) 48.6%
Recognition (1) Strongly agree; 2) Tend to agree; 3) Neither agree nor disagree; 4) Tend to disagree; 5) Strongly disagree		$\bar{x} = 2; \sigma = 1.122$ 1) 37.9% 2) 43.1% 3) 5% 4) 8.6% 5) 5.4%	$\bar{x} = 1.95; \sigma = 1.144$ 1) 44.5% 2) 35.8% 3) 4.7% 4) 10.8% 5) 4.3%	$\bar{x} = 2.50; \sigma = 1.108$ 1) 15.3% 2) 47.4% 3) 15.1% 4) 16.5% 5) 5.6%	$\bar{x} = 1.9; \sigma = 1.141$ 1) 47.9% 2) 32.2% 3) 7.2% 4) 7.4% 5) 5.1%	$\bar{x} = 2.24; \sigma = 1.381$ 1) 40% 2) 29.6% 3) 9.3% 4) 8.6% 5) 12.5%	$\bar{x} = 2.28; \sigma = 1.322$ 1) 35.2% 2) 32.2% 3) 12.2% 4) 9.6% 5) 10.7%
	Opportunities at work (1) Strongly agree; 2) Tend to agree; 3) Neither agree nor disagree; 4) Tend to disagree; 5) Strongly disagree	$\bar{x} = 1.82; \sigma = 1.002$ 1) 44.1% 2) 43.2% 3) 2.9% 4) 6.3% 5) 3.5%	$\bar{x} = 1.52; \sigma = 0.881$ 1) 64.3% 2) 28% 3) 1.6% 4) 3.9% 5) 2.2%	$\bar{x} = 2; \sigma = 0.884$ 1) 25.7% 2) 60.1% 3) 5.1% 4) 7% 5) 2.1%	$\bar{x} = 1.61; \sigma = 1.042$ 1) 64% 2) 23.8% 3) 3.5% 4) 4.6% 5) 4.2%	$\bar{x} = 1.55; \sigma = 1.036$ 1) 69% 2) 20% 3) 3.2% 4) 3% 5) 4.8%	$\bar{x} = 1.67; \sigma = 1.082$ 1) 60% 2) 27.5% 3) 3.1% 4) 4.1% 5) 5.4%
Work well done (1) Never; 2) Rarely; 3) Sometimes; 4) Often; 5) Always		$\bar{x} = 4.22; \sigma = 0.458$ 1) 1.1% 2) 1.5% 3) 8.6% 4) 51.7% 5) 37%	$\bar{x} = 4.39; \sigma = 0.704$ 1) 4% 2) 2% 3) 4.3% 4) 44.4% 5) 48.9%	$\bar{x} = 4.311; \sigma = 0.721$ 1) 0.8% 2) 0.9% 3) 7.7% 4) 47.6% 5) 43%	$\bar{x} = 4.43; \sigma = 0.732$ 1) 1.1% 2) 1.4% 3) 3.4% 4) 41.6% 5) 52.4%	$\bar{x} = 4.57; \sigma = 0.762$ 1) 1.1% 2) 1.1% 3) 6.5% 4) 22.3% 5) 68.9%	$\bar{x} = 4.06; \sigma = 0.934$ 1) 1.5% 2) 3.5% 3) 21.2% 4) 31.4% 5) 53.6%

(Continues)

TABLE 4 (Continued)

Year 2021	France	Germany	Italy	Netherlands	Spain	United Kingdom
Usefull work (1) Never; 2) Rarely; 3) Sometimes; 4) Often; 5) Always]	$\bar{x} = 4.46; \sigma = 0.754$ 1) 0.9% 2) 0.6% 3) 9.1% 4) 30.5% 5) 59%	$\bar{x} = 4.59; \sigma = 0.720$ 1) 0.8% 2) 1.8% 3) 3.9% 4) 24.5% 5) 69.1%	$\bar{x} = 4.53; \sigma = 0.733$ 1) 0.8% 2) 1.7% 3) 4.5% 4) 29.9% 5) 63.1%	$\bar{x} = 4.60; \sigma = 0.696$ 1) 0.7% 2) 1.4% 3) 3.6% 4) 26% 5) 68.3%	$\bar{x} = 4.68; \sigma = 0.730$ 1) 1.3% 2) 0.7% 3) 5.6% 4) 13.9% 5) 78.5%	$\bar{x} = 4.34; \sigma = 0.870$ 1) 1.9% 2) 1.1% 3) 12.1% 4) 31.4% 5) 53.6%
Enthusiasm at work (1) Strongly agree; 2) Tend to agree; 3) Neither agree nor disagree; 4) Tend to disagree; 5) Strongly disagree]	$\bar{x} = 3.96; \sigma = 0.949$ 1) 2.3% 2) 4.7% 3) 19% 4) 42.6% 5) 31.4%	$\bar{x} = 4.08; \sigma = 0.911$ 1) 1.6% 2) 4.7% 3) 14.2% 4) 43.3% 5) 36.1%	$\bar{x} = 3.99; \sigma = 1.64$ 1) 1.8% 2) 6.4% 3) 18.5% 4) 37% 5) 36.2%	$\bar{x} = 4.29; \sigma = 0.853$ 1) 1.9% 2) 1.4% 3) 10.1% 4) 38.9% 5) 47.6%	$\bar{x} = 4.30; \sigma = 0.994$ 1) 2.3% 2) 3.6% 3) 14.4% 4) 21.6% 5) 58.1%	$\bar{x} = 4.15; \sigma = 0.991$ 1) 1.6% 2) 5.5% 3) 16.9% 4) 29% 5) 47.1%

^aNew questions regarding previous editions marked in colour.

that involve complex tasks (63.5% and 58.5%, respectively), finding the lowest figure in Spain (36%). Spain also obtains the lowest percentage when workers are asked about learning new things in their jobs (54.4% compared to 73.1% in the Netherlands).

As can be seen in [Table 4](#), in 2015 employees were asked if their tasks were significantly modified in the last 12 months. With regard to the rest of the countries, the results in Spain are striking: a higher percentage of employees claim to have faced the same tasks without changes (81.8% compared to percentages around 60% and 70% in the rest of the countries) and very few employees claim to have had to assume some or many more tasks.

Also in 2015 similar results were obtained to those of 2010 in relation to the type of tasks: Spanish workers point to the highest percentage of jobs with monotonous tasks (68.3%), a long way from the figures for the Netherlands and Germany (20.3% and 23.9%, respectively). The Germans and the British, followed by the French and the Dutch, admit that they face complex tasks to a much greater degree than the Italians and the Spanish. The highest numbers of employees who say they learn new things in their jobs are found in France, the United Kingdom and the Netherlands.

In 2021, after the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic, workers were asked for the first time about their adaptation to changes and new ways of working (see [Table 5](#)). French, German, and Spanish workers stated that they faced emotionally disturbing situations at work more frequently. In the United Kingdom, France, Germany and the Netherlands, seniors report using the computer/tablet more frequently to carry out their work. Consistent with these latest data, it is the British, Dutch, French and Germans who say they have visited their company's facilities less frequently in the last 12 months, having more teleworking options. Spanish workers are the ones with the highest percentage of attendance (60.7% always go to their workplace compared to 30.2% of the British). Smaller differences are found in the values about how often employees work at high speed, to tight deadlines, and learn new things. Specifically, the British are the ones who claim to be faced with jobs that require high speed with a somewhat lower frequency but those who have a higher figure in terms of tight deadlines, while the Spanish are the ones who stand out for indicating that their work implies a greater learning of new things. Most employees acknowledge having influence over decisions related to their work sometimes or often (means between 3 and 4 points), although Germans participate in decision-making to a greater degree (mean slightly above 4 points).

4.1.2 | Variables related to required skills

Regarding the skills required to perform a job adequately (person-position fit), workers were asked in 2010 and 2015, finding similar results (see [Tables 3](#) and [4](#)). In 2010, few workers in Spain admit they need more skills: only 6.2% compared to 21.3% found in Germany. This seems coherent with previous results: Spanish seniors assume, to a greater degree, more monotonous and less complex tasks than Germans. However, it is the Spanish, together with the British, who state, with higher percentages (35.5% and 40.9%, respectively), that they feel overqualified because they say they have the skills to face more demanding tasks than they assume in their job positions. In line with the above, Germany and the Netherlands have the lowest figures (24.4% and 24.5%, respectively).

In 2015, in almost all countries, around 60% of employees recognise the fit between their skills and functions (in the Netherlands the percentage rises above 70%). Once again, the Spanish state, to a greater degree than the rest of Europeans, that they have the skills to be able to face more demanding tasks.

4.1.3 | Variables related to training

With regard to the percentage of workers who received training in the last 12 months to improve their skills: again Spain, together with France and Italy, has one of the lowest figures in 2010 (18.4% compared to figures around

30% in Germany, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom). It is striking that all countries have very low percentages of workers who request training from their employers (none exceeds 10%), but Spain shows the lowest interest in training (only 1.9%).

In 2015, a higher proportion of British and Germans received training in the last year to update and improve their skills (19.9% and 17.8%, respectively), while only 6% of Spanish employees (the lowest figure found) claim to have received this training. However, in Spain, employees recognise, far more than their European counterparts, that training is more useful for improving the way and safety with which they carry out their jobs and better job prospects. In 2015, it is Italian and German seniors who, to a lesser extent, request training from their employers, with the French and British being the most interested in training.

But in 2021 the percentage of employees who received training in the last 12 months grew significantly compared to 2010 and 2015. Figures close to 50% are found in all countries except France, where only 38.1% of senior employees received training.

4.1.4 | Variables related to job satisfaction

In 2010, low percentages of seniors revealed having suffered age discrimination (figures around 3% are found in Spain, the United Kingdom, the Netherlands and Italy, while figures close to 9% are found in Germany and France). Also, in 2015, very low percentages are found in all countries (with the exception of France, with almost 10%). France also has a figure slightly higher than the rest of the countries in 2021 as far as discrimination at work (by age and other reasons) is concerned. The French are also the ones who report the most anxiety at work (46.6% compared to figures close to 30% in Spain, Italy, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom and 8% in Germany).

With regard to satisfaction with working conditions, in 2010 Spain had the lowest percentage of workers very satisfied with their working conditions (15.9% of workers compared to 45.1% in the case of the British, 32.2% the Dutch, 25% the Germans, 23.5% the Italians and 22.9% the French). In parallel, the Netherlands, the United Kingdom and Germany are the countries in which, to a greater degree, their workers perceive that they are well-rewarded for the work they do (the Italians, French and Spanish show the greatest disappointment). Although the Dutch stand out for being more dissatisfied with their career prospects, the majority of workers in all countries are also less optimistic (although the British report that it is easier to find a job with a similar salary).

As in 2010, the Dutch and British are the most satisfied in 2015 with their working conditions in general, with Italy being at the bottom of this list. Also the Dutch, together with the Germans, are the ones who feel better rewarded in financial terms, while the French express their discontent to a greater degree. Very similar and quite pessimistic mean values are found in all countries in relation to satisfaction with professional career prospects, although the Dutch stand out for underlining a greater difficulty in finding a job with a similar salary if they lose their current job. The most positive figures in terms of employees who feel they are good at their job are found in Spain, along with the United Kingdom and the Netherlands, although the Spanish report the lowest data referring to the age up to which they want to work (62.83 years compared to 65.19 years in the United Kingdom and 65.03 years in the Netherlands). However, the majority of European seniors acknowledge being able to continue doing a job like the one they do until they are 65–68 years old.

In line with the 2010 and 2015 results, once again it is the Germans, Dutch and British who feel better rewarded. Some differences in relation to previous years are found in relation to the prospects for professional advancement. While the Dutch and Germans are more satisfied, the Spanish disagree more when asked about their good prospects for a professional career. However, the Germans are the ones who most expect an unwanted change in their employment situation, while the Spanish and British show the most optimistic values. But despite this, Germans, along with Dutch and French, are the ones who acknowledge receiving the most recognition for their work. Italians are the most dissatisfied in this regard, as well as showing greater discontent when referring

to the opportunities to use their knowledge and skills in their work (the rest of the countries have similarly lower averages). Lastly, in all countries there are similar figures regarding the feeling of doing a useful and well-done job (means above 4 points in all cases) and, taking into account the average values and the percentage of employees who admit that they always show enthusiasm in their work, the Spanish are the most enthusiastic.

4.2 | Hypotheses contrast

Tables 5–7 show the results of the *t* test. The first column reflects, for each country, the number of observations included in each of the groups classified according to level of education and training. The variables and groups are detailed below, followed by the means and standard deviations for each of them. The *p*-value of the Levene test has been used to test the assumption of homogeneity of the variance⁷ and to identify the value of the *t* statistic.⁸ The *p*-value of the *t*-test is indicative of the probability of obtaining a difference other than zero with no differences other than purely random ones; that is, if the *p*-value is less than 0.05, the null hypothesis of equality of means is rejected, concluding that there is a significant difference in means between the two independent populations. As can be seen, based on the significance levels shown in the last column of the tables, only the tested variables that show a significant mean difference have been included.

Table 5 shows the similarity in the results of each country in 2010 (mean values and mean differences are also very similar). There are significant differences depending on the level of studies: senior employees with higher education occupy more positions that require complex tasks and learning new things, pointing to better career prospects. Training also makes a difference: employees who have received training take on tasks that require continuous learning and have better career prospects.

With regard to complex tasks, tasks that require learning new things and career prospects, the results in 2015 are very similar to those obtained in 2010 for all countries, as shown in Table 6. There are also significant differences according to the level of studies in relation to rewards and working conditions: employees with higher education are more satisfied with working conditions and rewards in the case of Spain and France. But in the Netherlands, it is the employees with lower education who most often point out a greater perception as good workers. This same perception is more frequent in German seniors who have received training in the last 12 months.

In 2021, as shown in Table 7, similar results are achieved regarding the type of tasks and career prospects. With regard to the educational level, there are significant differences in the ability to make decisions or influence them in favour of seniors with higher education (except in the United Kingdom, where no such differences are found). It is striking that Germans with lower education have a feeling of doing their job well more often than those with higher education. With regard to training, in the case of Spain, seniors who have completed it in the last year also show greater influence on decisions and, in the case of Italy, a greater opportunity to demonstrate their knowledge and skills. No significant differences are found in terms of anxiety and enthusiasm of European seniors according to the level of education and training.

These results allow us to confirm the four previously raised hypotheses throughout the entire period. In the first place, the significant differences of means in the type of tasks to be carried out according to the educational level of the seniors are confirmed (H1a). Specifically, workers with higher education are more likely to perform complex tasks that require learning new things and have more influence on decisions related to their work. Complex tasks that require learning new things are also linked to employees who undergo continuous training, thus fulfilling H1b. Secondly, the educational level also makes a difference in some variables that approximate job satisfaction (H2a), especially in terms of career advancement and rewards. Training also positively conditions career opportunities and prospects (H2b).

TABLE 5 t-test results in 2010.

	Variable	Type	Mean	Standard Deviation	Levene F	p-valueur	t-test	p-valueur
GERMANY	EDUCATION (N1 = 258) (N2 = 71)	Higher educ.	1.41	0.493	83.825	<.001	3.784	<.001
		Lower educ.	1.20	0.401				
	Learning new things	Higher educ.	1.49	0.501	171.035	<.001	5.575	<.001
		Lower educ.	1.18	0.390				
	Good prospects	Higher educ.	2.08	1.079	0.59	.808	-4.198	<.001
		Lower educ.	2.70	1.015				
	TRAINING (N1 = 100) (N2 = 229)	With train.	1.21	0.411	84.742	<.001	-4.188	<.001
		No train.	1.43	0.497				
	Learning new things	With train.	1.22	0.416	100.384	<.001	-5.628	<.001
		No train.	1.52	0.501				
Good prospects	With train.	2.66	1.159	6.884	.009	4.906	<.001	
	No train.	2.02	1.005					
SPAIN	EDUCATION (N1 = 90) (N2 = 24)	Higher educ.	1.30	0.461	0.351	.555	-3.431	<.001
		Lower educ.	1.67	0.482				
	Learning new things	Higher educ.	1.52	0.502	43.642	<.001	3.143	.002
		Lower educ.	1.21	0.415				
	TRAINING (N1 = 21) (N2 = 93)	With train.	1.19	0.402	55.383	<.001	-3.196	.001
		No train.	1.52	0.502				
FRANCE	EDUCATION (N1 = 249) (N2 = 76)	Higher educ.	1.59	0.493	4.202	.041	3.593	<.001
		Lower educ.	1.36	0.482				
	Learning new things	Higher educ.	1.53	0.500	197.310	<.001	7.005	<.001
		Lower educ.	1.16	0.369				
	Good prospects	Higher educ.	1.98	1.048	3.349	.068	-4.290	<.001
		Lower educ.	2.61	1.127				
TRAINING (N1 = 47) (N2 = 278)	With train.	1.34	0.479	10.583	.001	-2.954	.002	
	No train.	1.56	0.497					
Learning new things	With train.	1.15	0.360	266.314	<.001	-5.739	<.001	
	No train.	1.50	0.501					

TABLE 5 (Continued)

	Variable	Type	Mean	Standard Deviation	Levene F	p-valueur	t-test	p-valueur																																																																																							
ITALY	EDUCATION (N1 = 139) (N2 = 44)	Higher educ.	1.37	0.485	64.451	<.001	3.497	<.001																																																																																							
		Lower educ.	1.14	0.347					NETHERLANDS	EDUCATION (N1 = 130) (N2 = 82)	Higher educ.	1.55	0.499	66.371	<.001	5.778	<.001	Lower educ.	1.20	0.399	TRAINING (N1 = 69) (N2 = 143)	Learning new things	Higher educ.	1.38	0.486	139.476	<.001	5.181	<.001	Lower educ.	1.10	0.299	UNITED KINGDOM	EDUCATION (N1 = 215) (N2 = 67)	With train.	1.09	0.284	136.781	<.001	-5.112	<.001	No train.	1.36	0.481	Monotonous task	Higher educ.	1.44	0.498	6.360	.012	-2.776	.003	Lower educ.	1.63	0.486	Complex task	Higher educ.	1.53	0.500	199.708	<.001	6.954	<.001	Lower educ.	1.15	0.357	TRAINING (N1 = 88) (N2 = 194)	Learning new things	Higher educ.	1.39	0.489	108.123	<.001	4.410	<.001	Lower educ.	1.15	0.359	Good prospects	Higher educ.	2.45	1.144	0.429	.513	-3.616	<.001	Lower educ.	3.08	1.250	TRAINING (N1 = 88) (N2 = 194)	Learning new things	With train.	1.17	0.378	99.261
NETHERLANDS	EDUCATION (N1 = 130) (N2 = 82)	Higher educ.	1.55	0.499	66.371	<.001	5.778	<.001																																																																																							
		Lower educ.	1.20	0.399						TRAINING (N1 = 69) (N2 = 143)	Learning new things	Higher educ.	1.38	0.486	139.476	<.001	5.181	<.001	Lower educ.	1.10	0.299	UNITED KINGDOM	EDUCATION (N1 = 215) (N2 = 67)	With train.	1.09	0.284	136.781	<.001	-5.112	<.001	No train.	1.36			0.481	Monotonous task	Higher educ.					1.44	0.498	6.360	.012	-2.776	.003	Lower educ.	1.63	0.486	Complex task	Higher educ.	1.53	0.500	199.708	<.001	6.954	<.001	Lower educ.	1.15	0.357	TRAINING (N1 = 88) (N2 = 194)	Learning new things	Higher educ.	1.39	0.489		108.123	<.001	4.410	<.001	Lower educ.	1.15	0.359	Good prospects	Higher educ.	2.45	1.144	0.429	.513	-3.616	<.001	Lower educ.	3.08	1.250	TRAINING (N1 = 88) (N2 = 194)	Learning new things	With train.	1.17	0.378	99.261	<.001	-4.481	<.001	No train.
	TRAINING (N1 = 69) (N2 = 143)	Learning new things	Higher educ.	1.38	0.486	139.476	<.001	5.181				<.001																																																																																			
			Lower educ.	1.10	0.299				UNITED KINGDOM	EDUCATION (N1 = 215) (N2 = 67)	With train.		1.09	0.284	136.781	<.001	-5.112	<.001	No train.	1.36	0.481			Monotonous task	Higher educ.	1.44					0.498	6.360		.012	-2.776	.003	Lower educ.	1.63	0.486	Complex task	Higher educ.	1.53	0.500	199.708	<.001	6.954	<.001	Lower educ.	1.15	0.357	TRAINING (N1 = 88) (N2 = 194)	Learning new things	Higher educ.	1.39	0.489	108.123	<.001	4.410	<.001	Lower educ.	1.15		0.359	Good prospects	Higher educ.	2.45	1.144	0.429	.513	-3.616	<.001	Lower educ.	3.08	1.250	TRAINING (N1 = 88) (N2 = 194)	Learning new things	With train.	1.17	0.378	99.261	<.001	-4.481	<.001	No train.	1.41	0.493									
UNITED KINGDOM	EDUCATION (N1 = 215) (N2 = 67)	With train.	1.09	0.284	136.781	<.001	-5.112	<.001																																																																																							
		No train.	1.36	0.481							Monotonous task	Higher educ.	1.44	0.498					6.360	.012	-2.776		.003	Lower educ.	1.63	0.486	Complex task	Higher educ.	1.53	0.500	199.708	<.001		6.954	<.001	Lower educ.	1.15	0.357	TRAINING (N1 = 88) (N2 = 194)	Learning new things	Higher educ.	1.39	0.489	108.123	<.001	4.410	<.001	Lower educ.	1.15	0.359		Good prospects	Higher educ.	2.45	1.144	0.429	.513	-3.616	<.001	Lower educ.	3.08	1.250	TRAINING (N1 = 88) (N2 = 194)	Learning new things	With train.	1.17	0.378	99.261	<.001	-4.481	<.001	No train.	1.41	0.493																					
		Monotonous task	Higher educ.	1.44								0.498	6.360	.012										-2.776	.003																																																																						
			Lower educ.	1.63						0.486	Complex task	Higher educ.			1.53	0.500	199.708	<.001	6.954	<.001	Lower educ.		1.15			0.357	TRAINING (N1 = 88) (N2 = 194)	Learning new things	Higher educ.	1.39	0.489	108.123	<.001	4.410	<.001	Lower educ.	1.15	0.359		Good prospects	Higher educ.	2.45	1.144	0.429	.513	-3.616	<.001	Lower educ.	3.08	1.250	TRAINING (N1 = 88) (N2 = 194)	Learning new things	With train.	1.17	0.378	99.261	<.001	-4.481	<.001	No train.	1.41	0.493																																	
	Complex task	Higher educ.	1.53	0.500	199.708	<.001	6.954	<.001																																																																																							
		Lower educ.	1.15	0.357						TRAINING (N1 = 88) (N2 = 194)	Learning new things	Higher educ.	1.39	0.489	108.123	<.001	4.410	<.001	Lower educ.	1.15	0.359	Good prospects	Higher educ.	2.45	1.144	0.429		.513	-3.616	<.001	Lower educ.	3.08	1.250	TRAINING (N1 = 88) (N2 = 194)	Learning new things	With train.	1.17	0.378	99.261	<.001	-4.481	<.001	No train.	1.41	0.493																																																		
	TRAINING (N1 = 88) (N2 = 194)	Learning new things	Higher educ.	1.39	0.489	108.123	<.001	4.410				<.001																																																																																			
			Lower educ.	1.15	0.359				Good prospects		Higher educ.		2.45	1.144	0.429	.513	-3.616	<.001	Lower educ.	3.08	1.250	TRAINING (N1 = 88) (N2 = 194)	Learning new things	With train.	1.17	0.378	99.261	<.001	-4.481	<.001	No train.	1.41	0.493																																																														
Good prospects		Higher educ.	2.45	1.144	0.429	.513	-3.616	<.001																																																																																							
		Lower educ.	3.08	1.250					TRAINING (N1 = 88) (N2 = 194)	Learning new things	With train.	1.17	0.378	99.261	<.001	-4.481	<.001	No train.	1.41	0.493																																																																											
TRAINING (N1 = 88) (N2 = 194)	Learning new things	With train.	1.17	0.378	99.261	<.001	-4.481	<.001																																																																																							
		No train.	1.41	0.493																																																																																											

TABLE 6 t-test results in 2015.

	Variable	Tipo	Media	Desviación típica	Levene F	p-valour	t-test	p-valour
GERMANY	EDUCATION (N1=361) (N2=95)	Higher educ.	1.73	0.442	37.996	<.001	-3.044	.001
		Lower educ.	1.86	0.346				
	Complex task	Higher educ.	1.37	0.482	294.655	<.001	7.354	<.001
		Lower educ.	1.08	0.279				
	Learning new things	Higher educ.	1.52	0.500	149.768	<.001	5.903	<.001
		Lower educ.	1.22	0.419				
	Good prospects	Higher educ.	3.78	1.199	0.023	.879	4.252	<.001
		Lower educ.	3.16	1.240				
	Complex task	With train.	1.13	0.335	119.006	<.001	-4.833	<.001
		No train.	1.34	0.476				
	Learning new things	With train.	1.10	0.300	548.910	<.001	-10.577	<.001
		No train.	1.55	0.499				
Good prospects	With train.	3.18	1.408	8.961	.003	-3.248	<.001	
	No train.	3.75	1.170					
Perception as a good worker	With train.	1.44	0.524	0.185	.667	-3.212	<.001	
	No train.	1.68	0.608					
SPAIN	EDUCATION (N1=375) (N2=129)	Higher educ.	1.26	0.437	39.852	<.001	-4.902	<.001
		Lower educ.	1.50	0.502				
	Complex task	Higher educ.	1.57	0.496	33.284	<.001	5.448	<.001
		Lower educ.	1.31	0.463				
	Learning new things	Higher educ.	1.47	0.500	342.566	<.001	7.861	<.001
		Lower educ.	1.15	0.357				
	Satisfaction with working conditions	Higher educ.	2.02	0.711	0.009	.926	3.359	<.001
		Lower educ.	1.79	0.556				
	Well paid	Higher educ.	3.13	1.391	0.11	.916	3.629	<.001
		Lower educ.	2.60	1.408				
	Good prospects	Higher educ.	3.67	1.458	0.162	.687	4.234	<.001
		Lower educ.	2.97	1.494				

TABLE 6 (Continued)

	Variable	Tipo	Media	Desviación típica	Levene F	p-valueur	t-test	p-valueur
TRAINING (N1=470) (N2=34)	Complex task	With train.	1.17	0.384	287.305	<.001	-4.736	<.001
		No train.	1.53	0.500				
FRANCE	Learning new things	With train.	1.07	0.254	352.540	<.001	-6.642	<.001
		No train.	1.41	0.492				
EDUCATION (N1=171) (N2=88)	Monotonous task	Higher educ.	1.49	0.501	33.424	<.001	-3.477	<.001
		Lower educ.	1.70	0.459				
FRANCE	Complex task	Higher educ.	1.49	0.501	70.665	<.001	4.456	<.001
		Lower educ.	1.23	0.421				
FRANCE	Learning new things	Higher educ.	1.27	0.448	82.814	<.001	4.352	<.001
		Lower educ.	1.08	0.272				
FRANCE	Well paid	Higher educ.	3.40	1.233	0.282	.596	3.024	.001
		Lower educ.	2.90	1.321				
ITALY	Monotonous task	Higher educ.	1.54	0.499	215.676	<.001	-4.967	<.001
		Lower educ.	1.86	0.354				
ITALY	Complex task	Higher educ.	1.55	0.498	112.543	<.001	5.295	<.001
		Lower educ.	1.19	0.397				
ITALY	Learning new things	Higher educ.	1.51	0.501	692.590	<.001	5.493	<.001
		Lower educ.	1.07	0.261				
TRAINING (N1=40) (N2=262)	Complex task	With train.	1.25	0.440	73.598	<.001	-3.330	<.001
		No train.	1.53	0.500				
TRAINING	Learning new things	With train.	1.19	0.397	149.952	<.001	-3.748	<.001
		No train.	1.47	0.500				
NETHERLANDS	Complex task	Higher educ.	1.50	0.502	42.475	<.001	3.834	<.001
		Lower educ.	1.27	0.445				
NETHERLANDS	Learning new things	Higher educ.	1.30	0.461	73.243	<.001	4.015	<.001
		Lower educ.	1.11	0.313				
NETHERLANDS	Perception as a good worker	Higher educ.	1.35	0.492	4.929	.027	-3.321	<.001
		Lower educ.	1.56	0.518				

(Continues)

TABLE 6 (Continued)

	Variable	Tipo	Media	Desviación típica	Levene F	p-valour	t-test	p-valour
TRAINING (N1=31) (N2=226)	Complex task	With train.	1.19	0.402	84.445	<.001	-3.081	.002
		No train.	1.44	0.497				
	Learning new things	With train.	1.03	0.180	60.869	<.001	-5.074	<.001
		No train.	1.25	0.435				
UNITED KINGDOM	Monotonous task	Higher educ.	1.45	0.499	5.977	.015	-3.070	.001
		Lower educ.	1.62	0.488				
	Complex task	Higher educ.	1.44	0.497	178.938	<.001	6.337	<.001
		Lower educ.	1.14	0.352				
	Learning new things	Higher educ.	1.27	0.447	93.374	<.001	4.573	<.001
		Lower educ.	1.09	0.289				
TRAINING (N1=69) (N2=273)	Learning new things	With train.	1.10	0.306	33.368	<.001	-2.989	.002
		No train.	1.24	0.427				

TABLE 7 t-test results in 2021.

	Variable	Tipo	Media	Desviación típica	Levene F	p-valueur	t-test	p-valueur
GERMANY	EDUCATION (N1 = 385) (N2 = 359)	Higher educ.	3.38	1.129	57.676	<.001	-5.346	<.001
		Lower educ.	3.77	0.857				
	Perception as a good worker	Higher educ.	4.50	0.663	0.001	.970	4.441	<.001
		Lower educ.	4.27	0.729				
	Decision influence	Higher educ.	3.95	1.171	12.342	<.001	-2.968	.002
		Lower educ.	4.19	0.952				
Good prospects	Higher educ.	3.103	1.475	4.354	.037	3.246	<.001	
	Lower educ.	2.687	1.397					
Learning new things	With train.	3.68	0.924	8.286	.004	3.284	<.001	
	No train.	3.36	1.072					
Good prospects	With train.	2.732	1.392	0.811	.368	-4.203	<.001	
	No train.	3.313	1.432					
SPAIN	EDUCATION (N1 = 251) (N2 = 193)	Higher educ.	3.77	1.349	43.127	<0.001	-3.708	<0.001
		Lower educ.	4.18	0.981				
	Decision influence	Higher educ.	3.47	1.396	23.387	<.001	-4.456	<.001
		Lower educ.	4.01	1.135				
	Learning new things	With train.	4.15	1.000	32.996	<.001	4.277	<.001
		No train.	3.45	1.456				
Decision influence	With train.	3.67	1.223	0.988	.321	2.970	.002	
	No train.	3.17	1.368					
Good prospects	With train.	2.974	1.488	0.283	.595	-4.380	<.001	
	No train.	3.853	1.472					
FRANCE	EDUCATION (N1 = 190) (N2 = 335)	Higher educ.	3.61	1.127	31.322	<.001	-3.406	<.001
		Lower educ.	3.94	0.884				
Decision influence	Higher educ.	3.26	1.165	5.376	.021	-4.743	<.001	
	Lower educ.	3.72	1.005					
Learning new things	With train.	4.06	0.774	16.519	<.001	3.758	<.001	
	No train.	3.66	1.031					

(Continues)

TABLE 7 (Continued)

	Variable	Tipo	Media	Desviación típica	Levene F	p-valueur	t-test	p-valueur
ITALY	EDUCATION (N1 = 499) (N2 = 256)	Higher educ.	3.63	1.122	27.465	<.001	-7.439	<.001
		Lower educ.	4.18	0.871				
	TRAINING (N1 = 207) (N2 = 145)	Higher educ.	3.43	1.354	41.116	<.001	-5.025	<.001
		Lower educ.	3.88	1.058				
	Learning new things	With train.	3.95	1.015	14.557	<.001	3.581	<.001
	Opportunities at work	No train.	3.50	1.253				
		With train.	1.95	0.825	11.180	<.001	-2.949	.002
		No train.	2.25	1.000				
NETHERLANDS	EDUCATION (N1 = 211) (N2 = 224)	Higher educ.	3.04	1.173	0.600	.439	-5.760	<.001
		Lower educ.	3.65	1.010				
	TRAINING (N1 = 116) (N2 = 135)	Higher educ.	3.61	1.184	16.489	<.001	-3.646	<.001
		Lower educ.	4.00	0.991				
	Learning new things	With train.	3.62	0.987	1.514	.220	4.040	<.001
		No train.	3.05	1.193				
UNITED KINGDOM	EDUCATION (N1 = 207) (N2 = 337)	Higher educ.	3.37	1.101	9.363	.002	-3.748	<.001
		Lower educ.	3.72	0.915				
	TRAINING (N1 = 168) (N2 = 122)	With train.	3.79	0.874	8.008	.005	2.982	.002
		No train.	3.45	1.069				
	Good prospects	With train.	2.766	1.350	0.444	.506	-3.403	<.001
		No train.	3.333	1.389				

*Since the interview will not be face-to-face in 2021, there are some missing values for this variable. Hence, the sum of the observations N1 and N2 in most cases does not result in the total number of the sample.

5 | DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

Based on the data from the European Working Conditions Survey collected during the period 2010–2021, the objective of this work was two-fold. Firstly, it intended to compare certain perceptions on issues related to work in the European context and to evaluate the evolution and European trend towards training in order to demonstrate, or not, the effort of the different countries to revalue and keep seniors in their system productive and contribute to the circularity of the economy.

The results of the descriptive statistical analysis in the period 2010–2021 have revealed the growing trend and the positive evolution of the rates of continuous training (promoted in large part by the changes that the COVID-19 pandemic has brought with it in the workplace). However, the number of senior employees who take it and benefit from it is still very low, although Germany, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom present the most optimistic scenarios. Generally, on the side of companies, the brake on providing training opportunities has to do, in addition to stereotypes about older workers (for example, less flexibility and adaptability, decreased cognitive abilities and physical limitations, resistance to change, etc. (Hanrahan et al., 2017; McGregor & Gray, 2002; Ng & Feldman, 2012)), with the cost of the programmes, with the return on investment and its recovery period, and with the voluntary turnover of employees who could change jobs at any point, since the current employer could not appropriate all or part of the return on investment and this would benefit the ultimate employer (Bishop, 1994; Lynch, 1992). That is why companies are more likely to focus training resources on young workers (Centre for Research into de Older Workforce, 2022). On the side of employees, although since 2010 the percentages of seniors requesting training from their employers have also been somewhat higher, factors such as stress, techno-stress or less ambition or motivation in the face of a shorter activity horizon may discourage or be constituted as barriers on many occasions for training (Fraser et al., 2009; Ng & Feldman, 2012; Tams, 2017). Additionally, requesting training can sometimes be interpreted as a sign that the employee is currently unable to carry out their duties (Centre for Research into de Older Workforce, 2022). Seniors also often refer to a poor selection of training methods and adaptation of the contents to the training needs (Zwick, 2015), revealing that few opportunities for training and development skills with 'sense' are offered in the last stretch of the professional career (Centre on Aging and Work, 2015).

More training is crucial to face, as the analysis reveals, and although with notable differences between countries, the progressive automation of jobs and the reduction of monotonous tasks, as well as the increase in tasks and functions that require learning more frequently of new things. Specifically, the data provided about monotonous tasks and those that require new learning, suggest, especially in Spain, a redesign of jobs for seniors in order to achieve a good person-job fit (there are high percentages of workers who feel overqualified for the job position they occupy) and take advantage of some of the talent that is being wasted, which could contribute to greater competitiveness. A higher degree of learning and training and more teleworking options in the Spanish labour market could also favour a more rapid implementation of industry 4.0, which has arrived later in Spain than in other European economies (Aranda Jiménez et al., 2022; European Commission, 2021; IMD, 2022a, 2022b). All this suggests the need to modify some aspects of the work culture that persists in Spain.

Higher proportions of jobs involving complex tasks are found in Germany, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom (and, generally, also greater control and autonomy at work) and job positions that require changes more frequently because they have advanced further in the Industry 4.0 implementation process and are more competitive (European Commission, 2021; IMD, 2022a, 2022b). Together with France, these countries are the ones that have most introduced digitisation at work: German, Dutch, British and French seniors are the most frequently working with computers and remotely.

In addition to the disparities found in terms of the type of tasks and work environments, the analysis also shows that Germans, Dutch and British show greater satisfaction with working conditions and, especially, with aspects related to remuneration, being the Spanish and Italians the most discontented. In fact, Spain and

Italy are the countries with the lowest average wages and interprofessional minimum wages (Eurostat, 2022d; Expansión, 2022). But, in general, European seniors reflect pessimism in relation to their professional career prospects, although the Spanish accentuate their dissatisfaction.

The second aim of this study was to show how formal and non-formal education can explain the differences in different aspects related to the work of seniors. Having higher education means that positions characterised by more complex and less monotonous tasks are more likely to be occupied, requiring more learning, with greater autonomy in decision-making. Eurostat (2022e) has ensured that employed people with a high educational level are more likely to work-from-home than employed people with a medium or low educational level (43.9% vs. 14.7% and 6.4% in 2021, respectively). The reason for this may lie, according to these findings, in the type of tasks that each group faces. Also, the educational level, in line with previous work (Belfield et al., 2019; Bhuller et al., 2017; Fabra & Camisón, 2009; Mottaz, 1984; Vural & Gülcan, 2008), determines the probability of improving satisfaction with career advancement and compensation. However, there is no evidence that educational level makes a difference in other dimensions closely linked to job satisfaction and well-being, such as anxiety or enthusiasm, although it is striking that, in countries like Germany or the Netherlands, it is workers with lower education who feel that they do their job well more often than those with higher education.

On the other hand, the seniors who are in training also point to significantly different averages in relation to the assumption of complex tasks that require more learning. Therefore, it could be deduced that both workers who perform routine tasks more frequently and their employers find fewer incentives to train this group. In line with studies that reveal that the training of the “elderly” has a positive impact on their satisfaction as workers (Leppel et al., 2012), those who are undergoing training also reach different averages when assessing their expectations and job opportunities. In fact, Fraser et al. (2009) highlight training, among others, as a support factor to continue working.

These findings support the need to rethink some policies and actions on adult education and lifelong learning.⁹ Although most research on this topic has focused on young people and adults, some works have discussed different issues concerning educational gerontology (how and why older adults learn) and barriers (situational, institutional, informative and psychosocial) to the participation of older adults in learning activities (Findsen & Formosa, 2012; Jarvis, 2014). These works underscore the need to fine-tune teaching and instructional styles for adult learning to improve the learning experiences of older adults, requiring instructors to become sensitive to the unique characteristics of older adults. Regarding some of these recommendations, most European countries have moved in this direction. A new European Agenda for Adult Learning has been agreed to design training programmes and increase the participation of adults in the labour market. In addition, many European countries, even taking into account the legislative differences, are exploring and/or implementing reforms to extend the retirement age or extend the part-time work formula as ways of achieving permanence in the labour market (Hinrichs, 2021; Komp, 2018). Some financial incentives have also been created to encourage companies' investment in training and workplace learning; within these, reverse mentoring programmes have been implemented and lines of action have been developed to improve the sense of intergenerational solidarity, especially following the COVID-19 pandemic (Center on Aging and Work, 2015; Ellerich-Groppe et al., 2021; OECD, 2021).

It is precisely decision-makers at the public and private levels who may find these conclusions useful in order to guide labour reforms or new policies that contribute to the 3Rs: re-evaluate, reintegrate and re-empower seniors in the labour market. On the one hand, the findings can be used in the public sphere by decision-making institutions to formulate or introduce changes or policies at the European and/or national level on issues at the centre of political and social debate (for example, the acquisition and development of skills, skills for the digital transition, job redesign, retirement age, etc.). On the other hand, in the private sphere, employers and human resources managers have the opportunity to create or adapt certain practices linked to hiring processes and diversity and inclusion initiatives, medium- and long-term workforce planning and generational replacement plans, work environments, occupational health, professional development possibilities, or recognition of the valuable contribution of senior professionals, among others. Decisions in favour of seniors are in line with the arguments of

the sustainable HRM approach, which defends the regeneration and revaluation of human resources through the use of socially and economically efficient hire-develop-retain-retire policies over the long term, which can have a positive impact on employees' employability, working conditions and wellbeing (Ehnert, 2009).

This study also adds a theoretical contribution. No previous work reveals the panorama and the differences found here for employees over 55 years of age. This is relevant because, as the Council of the European Union (2021, p. 4) has recognised, "It is necessary to further develop in-depth data analysis and research through a range of tools [...]. The analysis should also include monitoring of vulnerable groups of adults and data on investment in education and training, if possible also at the level of employers [...]. This will support adults in their lifelong career development and facilitate both labour market and societal transitions". However, several limitations are identified. The first of these has to do with the subjective nature of the information collected in the surveys used. A second limitation is related to the impossibility of comparing the evolution of some variables throughout the period analysed, given that at different moments in time some questions have been eliminated, reformulated or incorporated new response options in the EWCS. Future lines of research are contemplated that can extend the analysis of trends and identify if there are differences in the perceptions of seniors based on the employment situation (employees vs. self-employed) and the sector for which they work (public vs. private). Since some industries offer more training and development opportunities for seniors (Centre for Aging and Work, 2015), it would be interesting to be able to carry out a sectoral analysis, although the European survey, for the moment, does not make a distinction according to the type of industry that employs the respondents.

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CONFLICT OF INTEREST STATEMENT

Any conflict of interest declarations.

DATA AVAILABILITY STATEMENT

The data that support the findings of this study are openly available in EUROPEAN WORKING CONDITIONS SURVEY at <https://ukdataservice.ac.uk/>.

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ENDNOTES

- ¹ EWCS is conducted (generally once every five years) by the European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions (Eurofound) since 1990. The survey is based on a questionnaire which is administered face-to-face to a random sample of 'persons in employment' (i.e. employees and the self-employed), representative of the working population in each EU country. The 2010 survey included nearly 43,000 workers in 24 countries. In 2015 nearly 44,000 workers from 35 countries participated. The regular face-to-face EWCS had to be prematurely terminated in 2020 due to the Covid pandemic so, in 2021, Eurofound carried out a once-off European Working Conditions Telephone Survey (EWCTS) using computer-assisted telephone interviewing. The EWCTS 2021 included over 71,000 workers in 36 European countries.
- ² In the 2010 and 2015 editions, people of working age but already early retired or unemployed were found. In the 2021 edition, only people in active employment participated in the survey.
- ³ New questions were added in the 2015 and 2021 edition. Many of the questions included in the 2010 and 2015 edition were modified or removed in 2021. The EWCTS 2021 focused mainly on changes and the impact of the pandemic on issues related to the job.

- ⁴ Lower studies include levels 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5 and higher studies include levels 6, 7, 8 and 9 according to ISCED 2011.
- ⁵ In 2010 and 2015 the following variables are used: monotonous tasks, complex tasks and learning new things. Of the above, in 2021 only the variable 'Learning new things' is available and the variable that has to do with the ability to influence decisions is added.
- ⁶ In 2010, the following variables are used: satisfaction with working conditions, satisfaction with rewards and prospects for career advancement. In 2015, the following was added to the previous ones: perception of a job well done. In 2021, to the previous ones, the following are also added: opportunities to demonstrate knowledge, anxiety and enthusiasm; while the variable 'satisfaction with working conditions' is not available.
- ⁷ Values greater than 0.05 indicate that the variances are not significantly different from each other (they are homogeneous). Whether or not to assume equal variances influences the value of the t statistic.
- ⁸ t measures the size of the difference represented in units of standard error.
- ⁹ Education and learning have been concepts used interchangeably in numerous documents but there are notable differences between the two depending on the intention, the source or the context (for a review, see Jarvis, 2004, 2014).

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APPENDIX 1

Variables selected in each questionnaire

Code	Questions Edition 2010
hh2a	Sex
hh2b	Age
hh2d	Work situation
ef1_isced	What is the highest level of education or training that you have successfully completed?
q6	Are you mainly ...?
q7	What kind of employment contract do you have?
q10	Are you working in the ...?
q12	How many years have you been in your company or organisation?
q18	How many hours do you usually work per week in your main paid job?
q19	How many hours per week would you prefer to work at present?
149d	Generally, does your main paid job involve monotonous tasks?
q49e	Generally, does your main paid job involve complex tasks?
q49f	Generally, does your main paid job involve learning new things?
q60	Which of the following alternatives would best describe your skills in your own work?
q61c	Over the past 12 months, have you undergone any of types of training to improve your skills or not— On-the-job training?
q61_1a	Do you agree or disagree with statements describing some aspects of the training—The training has helped me?
q61_2	Did you ask for training to be provided for you?
q65a	Over the past 12 months, have you been subjected at work to age discrimination?
q76	On the whole, are you very satisfied, satisfied, not very satisfied or not at all satisfied with working conditions?
q77b	How much do you agree or disagree with statements describing some aspects of your job—I am well paid for the work I do?
q77c	How much do you agree or disagree with statements describing some aspects of your job—My job offers good prospects?
q77f	How much do you agree or disagree with statements describing some aspects of your job—easy for me to find a job of similar salary?
Code	Questions Edition 2015
Q2a	Gender
Q2b	Starting with yourself, how old are you?
Q2c	Please look at this card and tell me which of these categories describes your current situation the best?
Q7	Are you working as an employee or are you self-employed?
ISCED	What is the highest level of education or training that you have successfully completed?
Q11	What kind of employment contract do you have in your main paid job?
Q14	Are you working in ...? [private sector; public sector; joint private-public; not-for-profit sector; other (please specify)]
Q17	How many years have you been in your company or organisation?
Q18d	Your tasks and duties [last 12 months work changed in the following ways?]
Q24	How many hours do you usually work per week in your main paid job?

APPENDIX 1 (Continued)

Code	Questions Edition 2015
Q25	How many hours per week would you prefer to work at present? [Make a free choice regarding your working hours]
Q53d	Monotonous tasks [Generally, does your main paid job involve...]
Q53e	Complex tasks [Generally, does your main paid job involve...]
Q53f	Learning new things [Generally, does your main paid job involve...]
Q64	Which of the following statements would best describe your skills in your own work?
Q65d	Other training [Past 12 months, have you undergone any training to improve your skills?]
Q67a	The training has helped me improve the way I work?
Q67b	I feel that my job is more secure because of my training?
Q67c	I feel my prospects for future employment are better?
Q69	Did you ask for training to be provided for you by your employer?
Q72a	Age discrimination [Past 12 months at work, subjected to?]
Q88	On the whole, are you very satisfied, satisfied, not very satisfied or not at all satisfied with working conditions in your main paid job?
Q89a	Considering all my efforts and achievements in my job, I feel I get paid appropriately [Agree, about your job?]
Q89b	My job offers good prospects for career advancement [Agree, about your job?]
Q89h	If I were to lose or quit my current job, it would be easy for me to find a job of similar salary [Agree, about your job?]
Q90f	In my opinion, I am good at my job [Please tell me how often you feel this way ...]
Q92	Until what age do you want to work?
Q94	Until what age do you think you will be able to do your current job or a similar one?
Code	Questions Edition 2021
SCR_Age	Starting with yourself, how old are you?
Q2new	Would you describe yourself as (transformed into gender_recoded for analysis)
QN1	Do you have one, or more than one paid job or business?
Q2d	And do you work part time or full time?
Q7	Are you working as an employee or are you self-employed?
ISCED_11	What is the highest level of education or training that you have successfully completed?—coded according to 2011 ISCED classification
Q14	Are you working in ...?
Q17	How many years have you been in your company or organisation?
Q24	How many hours do you usually work per week in your main paid job?
Q25	How many hours per week would you prefer to work at present? [Provided that you could make a free choice regarding your working hours and taking into account the need to earn a living]
Q30H	Being in situations that are emotionally disturbing for you [How often does your main paid job involve ...?]
Q30J	Working with computer, laptop, tablet, smartphone [How often does your main paid job involve ...?]
QM35A1	Your employer's premises (office, factory, shop, school, etc.) [... how often you have worked in each location during the last 12 months in your main paid job]
Q49A	Working at very high speed [And, does your job involve ...]
Q49B	Working to tight deadlines [And, does your job involve ...]

APPENDIX 1 (Continued)

Code	Questions Edition 2021
Q49F	Learning new things [And, does your job involve ...]
Q61H	Your job gives you the feeling of work well done [Please tell me how often the following applies to your work situation?]
Q61J	You have the feeling of doing useful work
Q61N	You can influence decisions that are important for your work [Please tell me how often the following applies to your work situation?]
Q65A	Training paid for or provided by your employer [Over the past 12 months, have you undergone any of the following types of training to improve your skills?]
Q72	Over the past 12 months at work, have you been discriminated at work?
Q78H	Anxiety [Over the last 12 months, did you have any of the following health problems?]
Q89A	Considering all my efforts and achievements in my job, I feel I get paid appropriately [To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements about your job?]
Q89B	My job offers good prospects for career advancement [To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements about your job?]
Q89C	I am expecting an undesirable change in my work situation [To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements about your job?]
Q89D	I receive the recognition I deserve for my work
Q89P	I have enough opportunities to use my knowledge and skills in my current job [To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements about your job?]
Q90B	I am enthusiastic about my job [The following statements are about how you feel about your job. For each statement, please tell me how often you feel this way ...]