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Threats and Opportunities

Findings of Finnish Quality
of Work Life Surveys 1977–2003

Foreword

This is the first report from the findings of the Quality of Work Life Survey carried out by Statistics Finland in 2003. It draws together the entire series of the Quality of Work Life Surveys and analyses the changes that have taken place in working life in Finland. The series was started in 1977 in connection with the concurrent work on social indicators. The fifth and, so far, the latest round of the survey was conducted towards the end of 2003. Because all these surveys have been carried out using congruent concepts and methods, they provide comparative data on how working life has changed over a time period spanning a quarter of a century.

Co-operative partners form research institutes, ministries and universities, in particular, have contributed to the designing of individual surveys in the survey series. The latest Quality of Work Life Survey was co-financed by the Ministry of Labour, the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health, the Finnish Work Environment Fund, the State Treasury (State's work environment fund), the Finnish Institute of Occupational Health, the Finnish Centre for Industrial Safety, the Finnish Centre for Pensions, the Local Government Pensions Institution, the Social Insurance Institution, the Finnish Rehabilitation Foundation and the Occupational Accident Prevention Programme. By networking with external partners Statistics Finland has endeavoured to respond to society's diverse information needs.

The Finnish Quality of Work Life Surveys follow a strong tradition of Nordic co-operation. The Nordic surveys, in turn, have served as examples for the European Working Conditions Surveys that have been conducted within the European Union since the beginning of the 1990s. There has also been close collaboration with the annual Working Life Barometer survey of the Ministry of Labour. Studies of the quality of working life will continue to occupy an important place in Statistics Finland's research into the living conditions of the population. The well-established research programme to monitor working conditions has comprised regular, extensive data collections at five to seven-year intervals.

Findings from the latest, 2003 Quality of Work Life Survey have been published in Finnish as articles in Statistics Finland's periodical "Hyvinvointikatsaus" (Welfare Review 2004/2) and in English different reports and news on the web pages of the European Working Conditions Observatory (EWCO) at: <http://www.eurofound.eu.int>. This summary report will be followed later on by a report focusing on the gender equality aspect of working life, and a compendium of articles to be published jointly with the co-operative partners involved in this research.

The persons responsible for the 2003 Quality of Work Life Survey at Statistics Finland were Senior Adviser, Dr. Anna-Maija Lehto and Senior Researcher Hanna Sutela, who also compiled this report. The translation from Finnish into English was done by Aila Hanley. The layout of the publication was produced by Hilikka Potila.

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Introduction

This report describes the findings of the Quality of Work Life Surveys in respect of some of their core contents for the total time period in which these surveys have been carried out. The graphics and tables essentially depict the entire wage and salary earning population in Finland. Gender has been used as a background variable in many of the graphics. This has always been done where it has not impaired the visual clarity of the presentation.

Quality of Work Life Surveys are extensive studies which involve between 3,000 and 6,000 persons and cover the entire wage and salary earning population in Finland. Up to now, Statistics Finland has carried out five of them, in 1977, 1984, 1990, 1997 and 2003. The surveys have been implemented as personal, face-to-face interviews. The interview which, on average, lasts a little over an hour, includes questions on the physical, mental and social work environment and the employees' experiences relating to it, as well as questions on work experience, labour market position, conditions of employment, occurrence of psychological and somatic symptoms, work motivation, job satisfaction, work orientation, perceptions concerning gender equality and fair treatment, absences from work and reconciliation between work and family.

Identical questions have been used in inquiring about these issues so that data on findings spanning 26 years are now available on the main topics. Thus, the Quality of Work Life Surveys provide a very useful tool for assessing changes in the working life.

The complete survey series comprises the following:

- Working Conditions Survey 1977. Personal, face-to-face interview, sample size 7,500 employed persons, 5,778 wage and salary earners in data. Response rate 91 per cent.
- Working Conditions Survey 1984. Personal, face-to-face interview, sample size 5,000 wage and salary earners, 4,502 persons in data. Response rate 89 percent.
- Quality of Work Life Survey 1990. Personal, face-to-face interview, sample size 5,000 employed persons, 3,502 wage and salary earners in data. Response rate 85 per cent,
- Quality of Work Life Survey 1997. Personal, face-to-face interview, sample size 3,800 wage and salary earners, 2,979 persons in data. Response rate 79 per cent.
- Quality of Work Life Survey 2003. Personal, face-to-face interview, sample size 5,300 wage and salary earners, 4,104 persons in data. Response rate 78 per cent.

The objective of the Quality of Work Life Surveys has been to produce data on the state of the working life to support labour policy decisions and development of work communities. The surveys aim to provide for public debate information about Finnish people's views concerning their working conditions and about how these conditions have changed. They also supply material for the research, training and communications activities related to working conditions which take place in diverse quarters of society.

Among the reports published by Statistics Finland after the 1997 Quality of Work Life Survey were:

"Efficient, More Efficient, Exhausted" – *Findings of Finnish Quality of Work Life Surveys 1977–1997* (Anna-Maija Lehto & Hanna Sutela) Labour Market 1999:8.

"Gender Equality in Working Life" (Anna-Maija Lehto & Hanna Sutela) Labour Market 1999:22.

"*Jaksaen ja joutaen*" (Coping and flexing, in Finnish only) Compendium of articles from the Quality of Work Life Survey (eds. Anna-Maija Lehto & Noora Järnefelt) Studies 230.

"*Työhulluja vai hulluja töitä*" (Work crazy or crazy work?, in Finnish only) Studies of experiences of time pressure at workplaces (Noora Järnefelt & Anna-Maija Lehto) Studies 235.

"*Vähän enemmän arvoinen*" (Worth a little bit more, in Finnish only) Study of experiences of equality at workplaces. (Pia Pulkkinen) Studies 234.

Appendix 1 to this publication describes in more detail the data, non-response and methodology of the latest Quality of Work Life Survey. Appendix 2 contains the interview questionnaire of the 2003 survey. The questionnaire gives a good overview of the full scope of the survey. There is still a good number of questions and topics in it that are not covered by this first report.

Structural changes in the wage and salary earning population

Changes in working conditions and in the way of experiencing them are easier to understand against knowledge about the changes that have taken place in the structure of the labour force. The wage and salary earning population in Finland is divided so that women form the majority in it. According to Labour Force Statistics, in autumn 2003 when the Quality of Work Life Survey was conducted, Finland's wage and salary earning population comprised 1,013,000 women and 1,002,000 men. (Labour Force Statistics, 4th quarter 2003.)

The change in the **occupational structure** among women and men over the past 25 years reflects clearly the decrease of manufacturing work. Women's paid work can hardly be said to be characterised by industrial work any more. Over the period concerned, its share has fallen from 18 to 6 per cent. The proportion of office work, too, has diminished since the 1970s. In the services sector, work has decreased clearly in the cleaning field. Over the past quarter of a century, the growth areas in women's employment have been health and social care work, and teaching.

Manufacturing work has also contracted as an occupational field for men (from 40 to 26 per cent). Correspondingly, the proportions of other occupations have been growing steadily. Commercial, office and technical work have all increased somewhat from the 1970s. There has been strong fluctuation in construction work which reached its peak in the early 1990s.

Thus, the occupational structure has undergone a fairly substantial change in Finland. When contemporary working life and its employees are discussed, the group referred to is quite different from the one it was a few decades ago.

When examining the **employer sectors**, especially in the Nordic Countries the public sector has been an extremely significant employer of women. The field of public sector services has been very wide in Finland, extending to education, health care, children's daycare and social services, which have been almost exclusively the responsibility of the central and local governments. In the Nordic Countries the public sector has been a strong ally of women as it has offered job opportunities, on the one hand, and the services needed by wage and salary earners, on the other.

In Finland, almost half (47%) of all female wage and salary earners work in the public sector. Before the recession of the 1990s, it still looked as if employment for women would be well protected precisely because it was concentrated in the public sector. However, with the recession employment decreased rapidly in these fields, too, although later than in the private sector. Since then, employment has recovered somewhat in the local government sector. The central government sector's proportion as an employer of women and men has contracted particularly as a result of incorporation of state-owned companies such as the postal services and railways in the 1990s.

The change in the occupational structure has also brought a change in the **socio-economic groups** towards an increasing proportion of white-collar wage and salary earners. In 20 years, the proportion of those classified as blue-collar groups has fallen in Finland from one third to one fifth among female wage and salary earners. Half of men still belong to this group. The proportion of those

Figure 1 Female wage and salary earners by occupation
Quality of Work Life Surveys 1977, 1984, 1990, 1997 and 2003

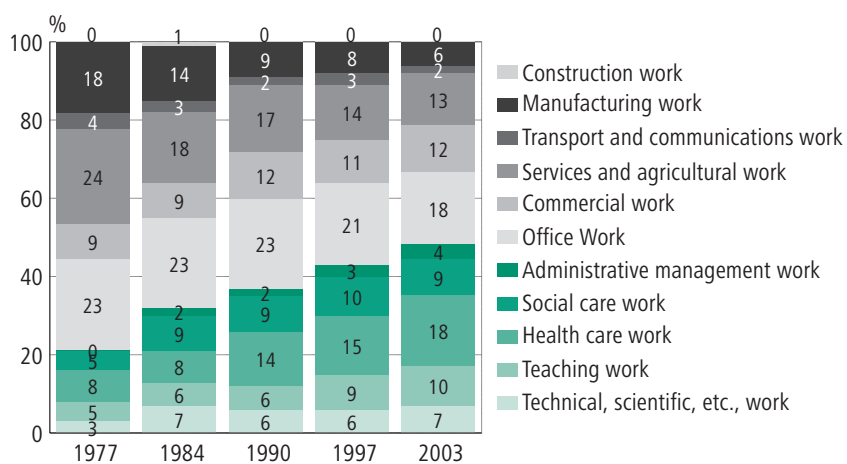


Figure 2 Male wage and salary earners by occupation
Quality of Work Life Surveys 1977, 1984, 1990, 1997 and 2003

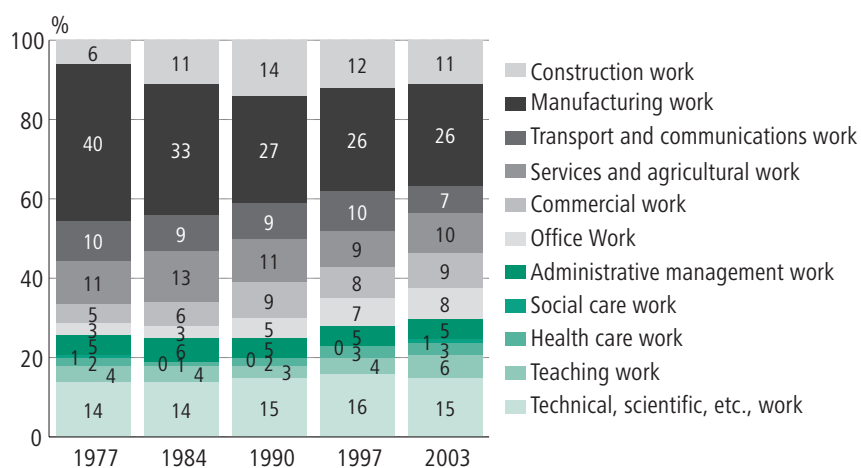


Figure 3 Female wage and salary earners by employer sector
Quality of Work Life Surveys 1984, 1990, 1997 and 2003

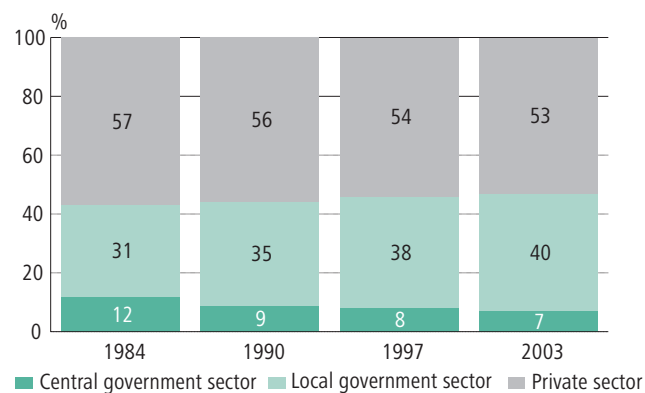


Figure 4 Male wage and salary earners by employer sector
Quality of Work Life Surveys 1984, 1990, 1997 and 2003

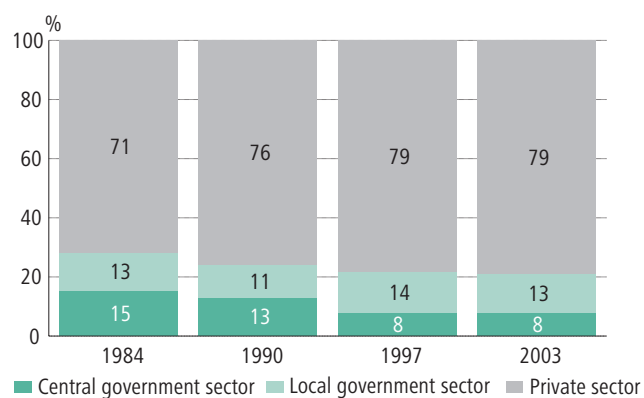


Figure 5 Female wage and salary earners by socio-economic group
Quality of Work Life Surveys 1984, 1990, 1997 and 2003

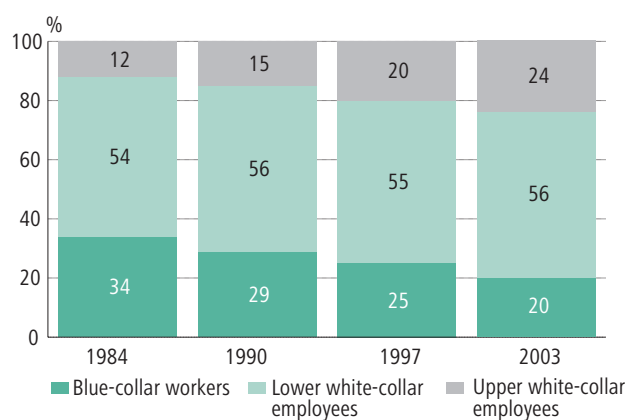


Figure 6 Male wage and salary earners by socio-economic group
Quality of Work Life Surveys 1984, 1990, 1997 and 2003

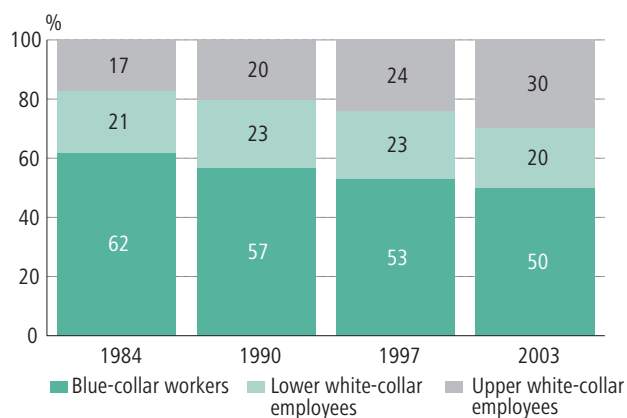
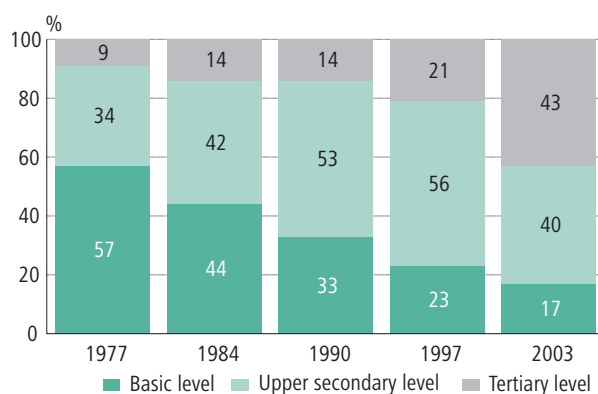
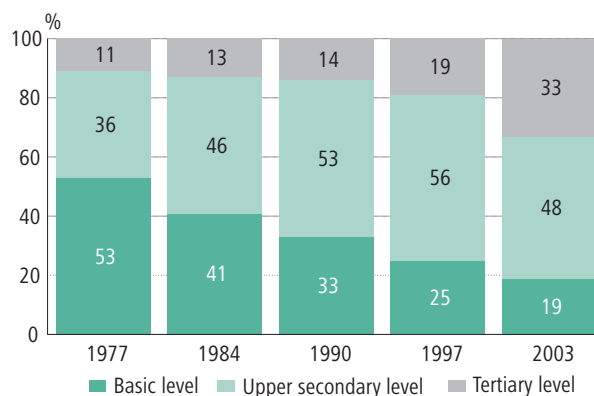


Figure 7 Female wage and salary earners by level of education
Quality of Work Life Surveys 1977, 1984, 1990, 1997 and 2003



Year 2003 according to revised classification of education

Figure 8 Male wage and salary earners by level of education
Quality of Work Life Surveys 1977, 1984, 1990, 1997 and 2003



Year 2003 according to revised classification of education

classifiable as upper white-collar employees has grown briskly among both women and men, but a little more so among women. Today, women account for around 44 per cent of all upper white-collar employees, albeit only 27 per cent of those in management positions. (Työvoiman koulutus ja ammatit 2002.)

The change that has taken place in the **educational structure** of the Finnish wage and salary earning population has been phenomenal. In 1977, 43 per cent of all female wage and salary earners had attained some qualification beyond basic education.

In twenty-five years, the figure has risen to 83 per cent. Today, 43 per cent of Finnish female wage and salary earners have a tertiary qualification as defined by the latest classification of education. The educational level of Finnish male wage and salary earners has also risen sharply, but the growth in women's educational level has been a little faster. The proportion of men who have attained a qualification beyond basic education has risen from 47 to 81 per cent. The faster rise of women's educational level is also visible in the figure on tertiary qualifications which, according to the new educational classification, is 33 per cent among male wage and salary earners and 43 per cent among female wage and salary earners.

By European comparison, the educational level of the Finns – especially women – is today very high. According to the 2002 Labour Force Statistics, the average proportion of women aged 25 to 29 with tertiary level educational qualifications was 22 per cent in the European Union, but 38 per cent in Finland. Even for men the figure for Finland is much higher than the average (30% vs. 23%). (European Labour Force Survey, 2003)

In keeping with the above, the clearest change in the structure of the wage and salary earning population is that it has been getting increasingly white-collared and better educated. The changing age structure, or ageing, of the wage and salary earning population is also frequently brought up. According to the Quality of Work Life Surveys, the ageing has been clearly observable. Table 1 show how the average age of the wage and salary earning population has changed.

In the 1980s the average age of the wage and salary earning population still went up quite slowly. The figure is influenced by both entries into and exits from the labour market. The speed of the ageing accelerated a little in the 1990s and the average age has risen by four years in just over a decade, and by as many as five years in the case of women.

Table 1 Average age of wage and salary earners by gender
According to Quality of Work Life Surveys

	All	Women	Men
1977	36.2	36.6	36.0
1984	36.8	37.1	36.5
1990	37.3	37.4	37.2
1997	39.7	40.1	39.1
2003	41.6	42.1	41.1

Changed importance of work

Especially in the 1980s, it was quite generally forecast that the importance of paid work would diminish in Finland. Until then, strong commitment to work had been characteristic of the Finnish wage and salary earning population. This subject has been studied in the Quality of Work Life Surveys by asking the respondents to put values on a set of different areas of life. The areas concerned are gainful employment, family life and leisure time hobbies. The adjacent graphics (Figures 9 and 10) illustrate the change that has taken place since 1984 in people's **appreciation of different areas of life**.

Throughout the 1980s, the forecast declining trend prevailed in the way people rated the importance of gainful employment. However, this trend halted in the 1990s and the importance attached to work grew clearly, whereas a slight decline is again detectable in the importance placed on gainful employment in the early 2000s. The latest period of growth in the appreciation of work in the 1990s is quite obviously linked with the simultaneous economic recession, so that difficulties in finding work and rising unemployment raised the value of paid work.

The difference between women and men in viewing gainful employment as an important area of life was the greatest in the early Quality of Work Life Surveys, when it was 14 percentage points. In the later survey of 2003 the difference is only five percentage points. With women, the overall trend is rising and with men falling.

This finding is interesting when considered against the debate that has gone on for the last five years or so. Work centredness, especially in relation to family, has also been analysed by a number of social researchers (Jallinoja 2003, Julkunen, Nätti, Anttila 2004). Recent years have been regarded as a time of awakening, triumph for family centredness, or turning point, when so-called familism is again kept in high esteem. However, the Quality of Work Life Surveys indicate no clear change as either growth in the value placed on family or as lessened importance of work. By contrast, among the areas of life thus defined, leisure time appears to have been receiving growing appreciation from both genders. In this matter, women have been catching up with men and the appreciation of leisure time is now over 10 percentage points higher among both genders than it was two decades ago. (Women, 21% vs. 33%; Men, 25% vs. 38%)

A surprising aspect that came to light from the assessments of importance of work was that the highly educated wage and salary earners who do upper white-collar work and are actually known to work the longest hours in today's Finland, are not the ones who attach the highest importance to work.

Quite the contrary, the survey results reveal that the highest value is most often placed on work by those wage and salary earners who have only basic educational qualifications and do blue-collar work in manufacturing, production or service work. Their relative number is the lowest among the highly educated wage and salary earners. This division has not changed since the previous survey (1997). The only change can be seen among upper white-collar employees in management positions, who in the 2003 survey express less work-centredness than before. The lessening of work centredness concerns especially women in management positions. They may, indeed, be the ones hit hardest by the moralistic accusations in the past few years of excessive work-centredness.

Figure 9 Gainful employment very important life content
Quality of Work Life Surveys 1984, 1990, 1997 and 2003

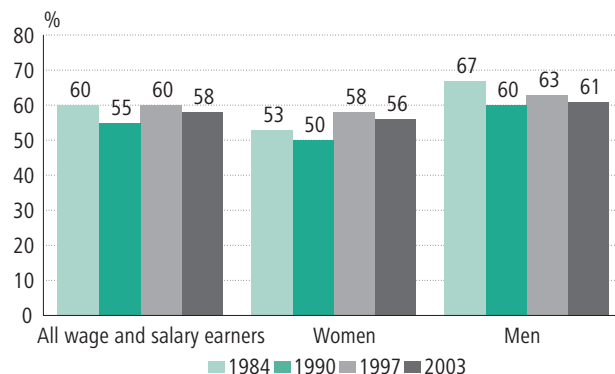
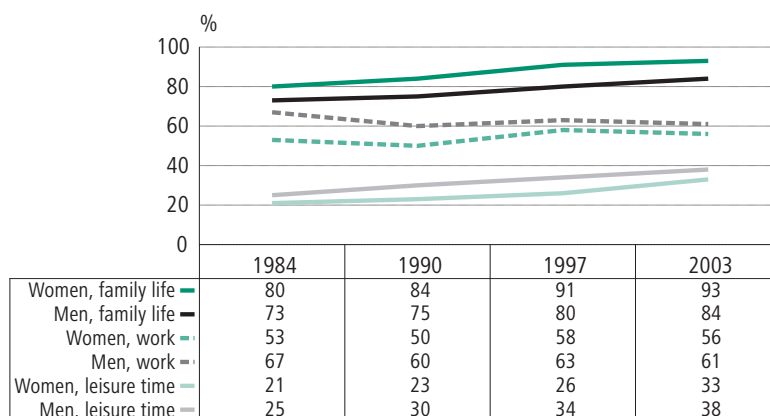


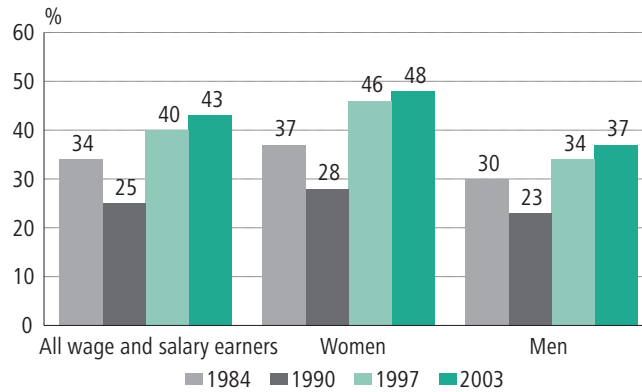
Figure 10 Importance of different areas of life
Regards as very important, Quality of Work Life Surveys 1984, 1990, 1997 and 2003



A similar development trend to that in the appreciation of gainful work can be seen in responses to the question of **how important or significant the respondents regard their own, current work** (Figure 11). There is also a small decline in this at the turns of the 1980s and 1990s, after which the appreciation of own work increases observably, first due to the recession but then continuing even afterwards. The change in the increase of value placed on own work is even more distinct among women than among men.

Appreciation of own work is distributed among the different wage and salary earner groups surprisingly differently from that of gainful work as an important area of life. Placing high value on own work is concentrated among the highly educated employees, and among occupations involving human interaction, such as teaching, health care and social care services, whereas the wage and salary earners doing manufacturing work do not regard their own work as important and significant.

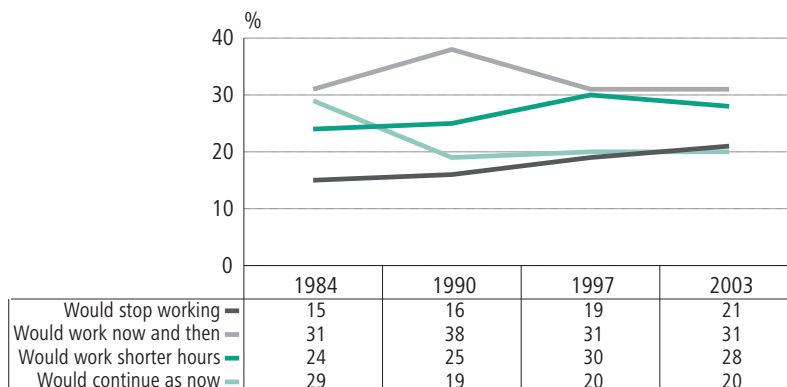
Figure 11 Regards own work as very important and significant
Quality of Work Life Surveys 1984, 1990, 1997 and 2003



A so-called “windfall” question has traditionally always been included in the Work Life Surveys and has always been asked in the same format. With it, the salience of work is studied by asking the respondents what they would do if they got so much money from, for example, a lotto win or as an inheritance, that they could live comfortably without having to work (Figure 12). The alternative of “Would stop working altogether” has grown in popularity since 1984, but only slightly. The number of those who “Would shorten their working hours fundamentally” has also grown to some extent. The statement “Would only do some work every now and then” has regained its earlier level of popularity of being agreed to by one third of the respondents. A clear drop was evident earlier in the proportion of those who “Would continue working as now”, in other words those very enthusiastic about their work.

The share of this group has now remained unchanged at around one fifth of all wage and salary earners. The graphics do not show differences between the

Figure 12 Choice of action if had enough money and did not need to work
Quality of Work Life Surveys 1984, 1990, 1997 and 2003



genders but the relative proportions of men prepared to stop working altogether have been larger than those of women in the last two surveys (22% vs. 19%), while in the 1984 survey women selected this alternative more often than men. The work-centred disposition of women, especially, would therefore seem to have intensified on the basis of this question, too.

Compared to the average proportion of all wage and salary earners (21%), the oldest of them, aged 55 to 64, would be clearly more prepared to stop working (36%) should finances allow it. Likewise, examined by level of education, the proportion is higher than the average among those with no post-basic level of education (31%). The readiness to stop working associates with present job so that women would be most willing to stop working in manufacturing (34%) and men in transport (33%).

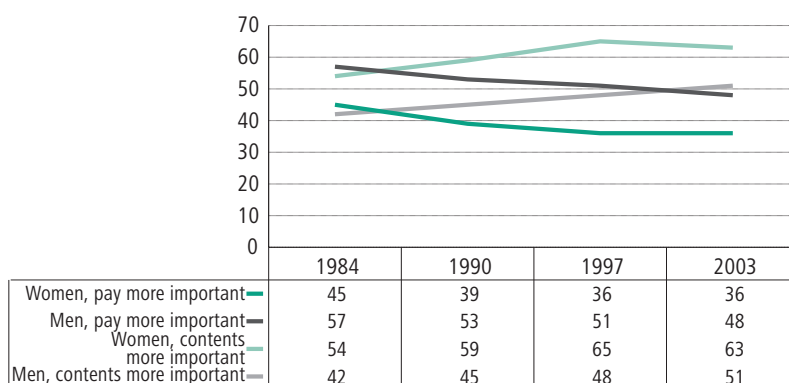
Figure 13 depicts change in the appreciation of work when measured by asking **which is more important in work: pay or contents**. We can see that throughout the surveys contents have been more important to women than to men.

Correspondingly, men's answers emphasise pay. In respect of both genders the trend of the change depicts the emergence of contents of work as increasingly important and the decline in the importance of pay.

The orientation towards pay is quite clearly tied to the quality of work, because 36 per cent of those doing manufacturing work regard pay as definitely more important than contents, while the average proportion among all wage and salary earners is 16 per cent. There are also clear differences by level of education in this: only six per cent of those with tertiary educational qualifications but 29 per cent of those with basic level educational qualifications regard pay as the most important aspect of work. In other words, those with a bigger pay appreciate it less, or at least claim that contents are more important.

This development trend mirrors the change that has happened in the educational structure of the wage and salary earning population, its risen educational levels. On the other hand, the orientation towards work also indicates that work itself is becoming the source of motivation instead of pay (Siltala 2004). This has largely happened because of efforts that have been expended to develop the contents of work.

Figure 13 Pay or contents more important in work?
Definitely or slightly more important



Labour market position

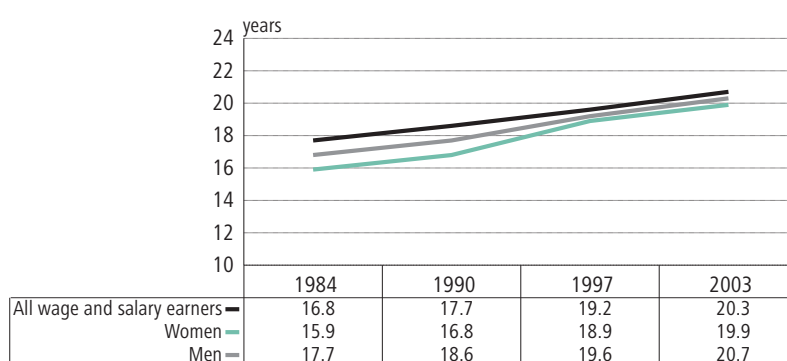
Changes in the labour market position are here examined against years of work experience, and from the perspective of mobility between occupations and jobs, as well as prevalence of so-called atypical employment relationships. Wage and salary earners' **work experience measured in years** has been going up steadily since 1984 (Figure 14). This phenomenon is linked to the ageing of the wage and salary earning population. It is, however, worth pointing out that women's work experience has increased more than that of men, which, in turn, is linked to women's growing commitment to working life. By international comparison, an exceptional feature in Finland is that there is no appreciable difference in the average work experience between women and men: women have 19.9 years and men 20.7 years of work experience. No comparisons can be made with other countries in work experience, but this can be seen from the rates of employment among different age groups (Labour Force Surveys 2003).

Table 2 Average years of work experience age and level of education, 2003

	Age 15–24	Age 25–34	Age 35–44	Age 45–54	Age 55–64
Men					
Basic level	2.5	11.5	20.6	32.6	39.9
Upper secondary level	3.3	8.9	20.6	29.6	39.0
Tertiary level	2.0	8.0	15.9	26.5	35.4
All	3.1	8.9	18.8	29.3	38.0
Women					
Basic level	1.8	9.5	18.4	29.2	36.9
Upper secondary level	3.1	8.1	17.7	27.1	34.2
Tertiary level	3.3	7.4	15.8	25.6	33.5
All	2.7	7.8	16.7	26.9	34.9

Figure 14 Years of work experience by gender

Työolotutkimukset 1984, 1990, 1997 ja 2003



The adjacent table shows in detail how women's and men's work experience accumulates with age. Even in the oldest age group (55–64 years), the difference between the genders is only about three years.

In this age group the difference is greatest (4.8 years) among employees with upper secondary level of education and smallest (1.9 years) among those with tertiary educational qualifications. In other words, relative to men, high level of education has increased women's participation in gainful work. In this age group there is also little difference between men and women with basic level of education only (3 years), which by international comparison can be regarded as a really minor amount. Such comparative data standardised for age are unfortunately not available.

The survey results concerning **number of occupations during life** depart somewhat from presuppositions (Figure 15). The proportion of the wage and salary earning population of those who have always worked in roughly the same occupation has diminished only slightly and, in respect of men, the trend is approaching growth rather than reduction. The second figure on this subject shows that the proportion of those who have worked in several different occupations has remained quite unchanged, varying between 13 and 15 per cent, throughout the examination period (Figure 16). Long-term examination of the proportion of those who have worked in two or three occupations shows a slight decrease. So far, at least, the findings do not lend support to the claims that employees have to change their occupation several times during their lives.

However, the concept of change of occupation is quite vague: a person may keep the same occupational title even if the tasks involved change. Other findings of this survey tell of considerable changes in tasks and especially in working implements, which is reflected in, among other things, the introduction of information technology. Because of the vagueness of the concept of occupational change, this kind of very rough classification of occupational experience has been adopted in the Quality of Work Life Surveys.

There is very little difference between women and men in the changing of occupation: 41 per cent of men and 42 per cent of women have always worked in roughly the same occupation. Sixteen per cent of men and 13 per cent of

Figure 15 Number of occupations during life

Always in roughly the same occupation, Quality of Work Life Surveys 1984, 1990, 1997 and 2003

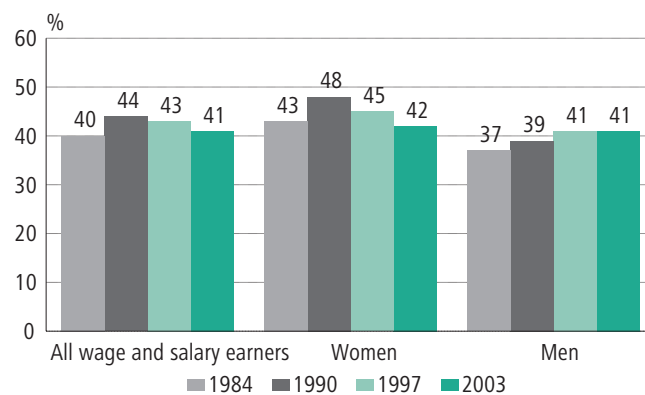
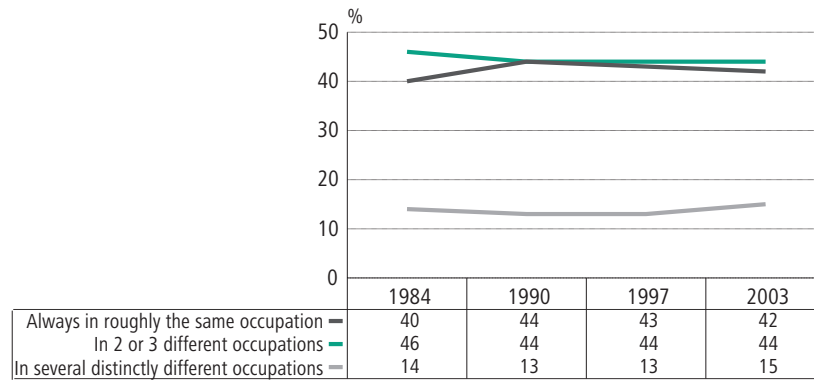


Figure 16 Number of occupations during life
Quality of Work Life Surveys 1984, 1990, 1997 and 2003



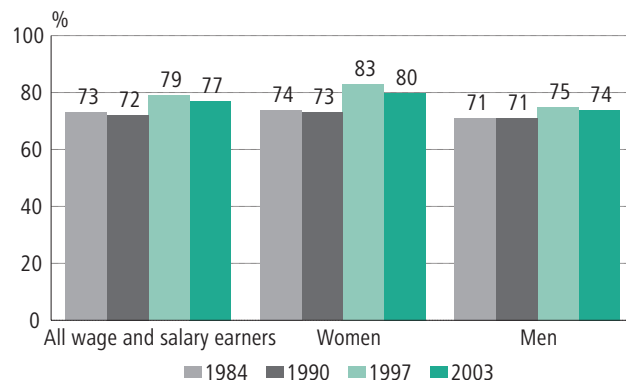
women have worked in several occupations. Generally, changes of occupation are the more numerous the lower the level of education, although women with upper secondary level of education have the highest number of changes of occupation. Examined by occupation, those employed in health care are the most loyal to their field, for 51 per cent of them – 55 per cent of men and 50 per cent of women – have always worked in roughly the same occupation. The difference between the genders is the greatest among those doing industrial work so that only 30 per cent of women but 42 per cent of men have always worked in roughly the same occupation. With men, the proportion of those having always worked in the same occupation is the lowest, 31 per cent, among those doing transport work.

Regional differences are also interesting in the context of this question, for the proportion of those having always worked in the same occupation is the lowest, 32 per cent, in the Province of Lapland, which can be presumed to reflect the necessity to change occupation dictated by the employment situation. This proportion is almost the same among women and men. In the Capital Region, this measure of loyalty is also fairly low, or 35 per cent, among men but almost the average, or 43 per cent, among women.

Following the dramatic worsening of the employment situation after 1990 it is logical for the **membership of trade union** to have increased as it has a deciding influence on the size of the daily unemployment allowance (Figure 17). Membership of trade union is slightly more common among women (80%) than among men (74%). Membership of trade union increased especially among women in the 1990s and has since also fallen slightly more among women than men. In 2003, 77 per cent of wage and salary earners belonged to trade unions. This is a very high proportion by international comparison. As can be expected, membership of trade union increases with age. It is slightly more widespread among those with tertiary educational qualifications than with others and in the local government sector (89%) than in the private sector (71%).

Differences by occupational group can be observed so that membership of trade union is most widespread in health care (91%) and least frequent in commerce (62%).

Figure 17 Membership of trade unions
Quality of Work Life Surveys 1984, 1990, 1997 and 2003



Although general insecurity in working life increased in the 1990s, employment relationships have surprisingly also become more permanent. In other words, fewer employees have changed jobs and there has been less mobility than in the years before the recession. The average **length of time in the same job** is now over ten years (10.1) while in the 1984 Quality of Work Life Survey it was 8.3 years (Figure 18). At the same time as the length of time in the same job has increased, the difference between women and men in this respect has decreased. Among women, the current employment relationship had lasted 9.9 years and among men 10.2 years. This finding contradicts the view often presented in debates about labour market position that an increase has taken place in all kinds of mobility (Beck 1992, Suikkanen et al. 2002). Similarly, the foregoing graphics describing occupational changes also support the notion of growing permanency. The proportions among all wage and salary earners of those having always worked in roughly the same position had remained unchanged and, in men's case, even increased.

Like the numbers of years of work experience, the lengths of employment relationships also grow with age. Therefore, as the wage and salary earning population ages the lengths of their employment relationships naturally also grow. The strong increase in the number of very short fixed-term employment contracts in the past decade does, however, have a counteracting influence. These kinds of lengths of time of working for the same employer are, therefore, quite surprising. Quite obviously job loyalty among those having held on to their jobs is still strong. The phenomenon also depicts a way of working that deviates totally from e.g. the American work culture that is typified much more strongly by continuous mobility on the labour market, including voluntary changing of jobs. The average lengths of employment relationships standardised by age vary very little in Finland by gender, educational level, sector or occupation. This kind of tendency towards job loyalty may also conflict with the increased threat of loss of job and unexpected changes. These are examined later on in this report.

The scarcity of mobility is also depicted by Figure 19 on numbers of respondents having **changed jobs in the last 5 years**.

In the 1997 survey, this proportion of the total wage and salary earning population had decreased to 34 per cent from the 42 per cent it was in the 1990 survey, but has since risen slightly to 37 per cent. There is little differ-

Figure 18 Length of time in same job
Quality of Work Life Surveys 1984, 1990, 1997 and 2003

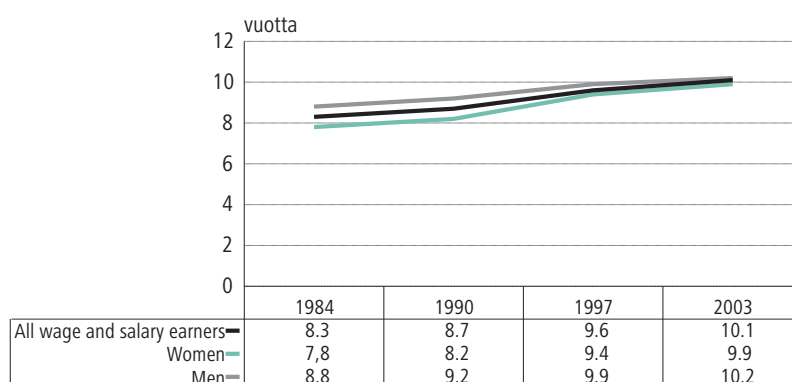
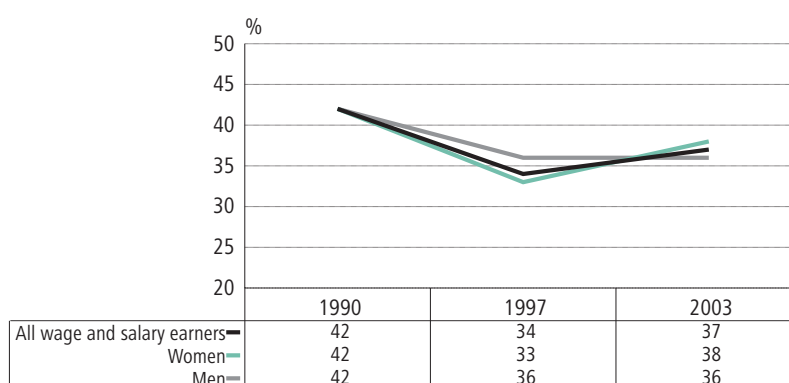


Figure 19 Changed jobs in the last five years
Quality of Work Life Surveys 1990, 1997 and 2003

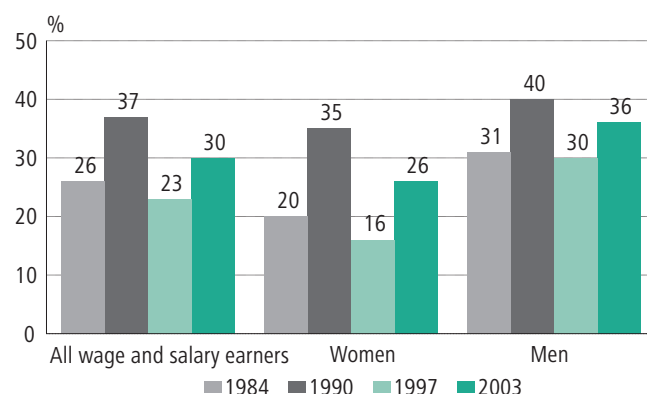


ence between the genders in this. On the one hand, the changing of jobs may be linked to a poor labour market position, such as very short fixed-term employment relationship or, on the other hand, to a good position where an employee can move from one employer to another at will.

Indeed, fixed-term employment contracts clearly raise the probability of job change: only 31 per cent of those in permanent employment relationships had changed jobs (2003) whereas the same proportion among fixed-term employees was 76 per cent. Age is another determinant of job change: whereas 77 per cent of employees aged 15 to 24 had changed jobs, only 10 per cent of those aged 55 to 64 had done so. Examined by field of occupation, the proportion of those with job changes behind them was the largest (48%) among both women and men doing commercial work. Examined by sector, the mobility concentrates into the private sector.

According to the respondents' own assessments, the **likelihood of getting a new job** has improved slightly from the previous survey round and returned nearly to the 1990 level (Figure 20).

Figure 20 Likelihood of getting a new job
Considers likelihood as good, Quality of Work Life Surveys 1984, 1990, 1997 and 2003



In this latest 2003 survey, 31 per cent of the respondents regarded their possibilities as good, while the same proportion in the previous survey round was only 23 per cent. According to the Barometer of Working Conditions of the Ministry of Labour, confidence about being able to find work from elsewhere that would correspond with own professional skills reached its lowest point in 1993. Since then, it has been going up slowly (Ylöstalo 2003).

The graphics included here (Figure 20) do not present data by age group. However, the likelihood of getting a new job is a factor describing a person's labour market position in which age is of particular significance. Confidence about the likelihood of being able change jobs declines drastically with age.

The adjacent table also shows that men regard their possibilities of finding a new job clearly better (36%) than women (26%). This difference persists even when level of education, occupational status or field of occupation are standardised. The difference between women and men is largest in health care work in which a clearly larger proportion of men (56%) than women (32%) are confident about good possibilities and in industrial work in which 30 per cent of men and 14 per cent of women regard their possibilities as good. However, these figures could also be explained by other structural factors, such as level of education and age.

Table 3 Good likelihood of getting a new job 1990, 1997 and 2003

	Total			Women			Men		
	1990 %	1997 %	2003 %	1990 %	1997 %	2003 %	1990 %	1997 %	2003 %
Total	37	23	31	35	16	26	40	30	36
Age 15–24	53	36	47	52	31	48	54	41	46
Age 25–34	50	41	48	48	32	46	52	50	50
Age 35–44	37	22	37	32	14	30	41	30	45
Age 45–54	19	10	19	18	7	15	20	14	23
Age 55–64	8	4	11	9	3	7	7	5	15

Fixed and part-time employment relationships

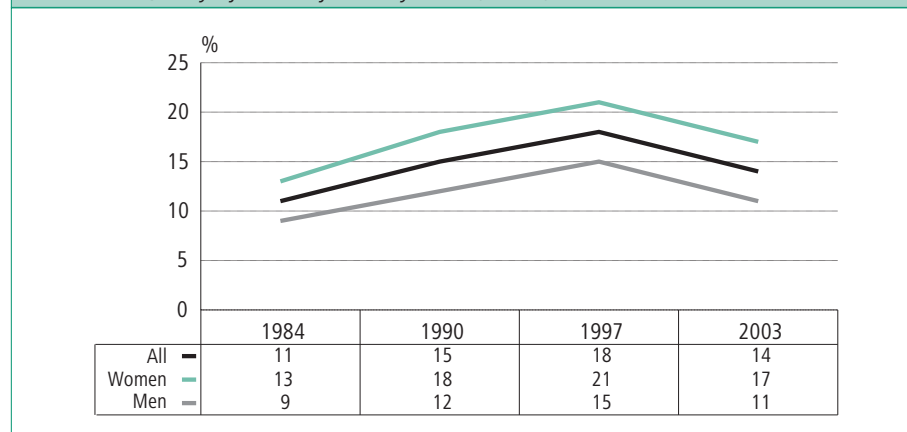
A lot has been talked in recent years about the continuously increasing prevalence of fixed-term, and very short fixed-term, employment relationships. According to the Quality of Work Life Surveys, the proportion of wage and salary earners with fixed-term employment contracts grew from the 1980s right up to the year 1997, but has since declined somewhat.¹ A large part of this decline is explained by cutbacks in subsidised employment measures (Figure 21). (Kauhanen 2002, Sutela et al. 2001)

Fixed-term employment relationships are more typical among women than men. Differences between the genders in this are the largest with wage and salary earners aged 25 to 44, among whom fixed-term employment contracts are at least twice as common for women as they are for men. The disparities even out among the very youngest and the more mature wage and salary earners (Figure 22).

Fixed-term employment contracts can be used only if the employer has a justifiable reason for it. Good one third (37%) of fixed-term wage and salary earners have received an oral justification and roughly one in two a written justification for their fixed-term employment contracts. The reason for employing them fixed-term had not been given to 14 per cent of fixed-term employees.

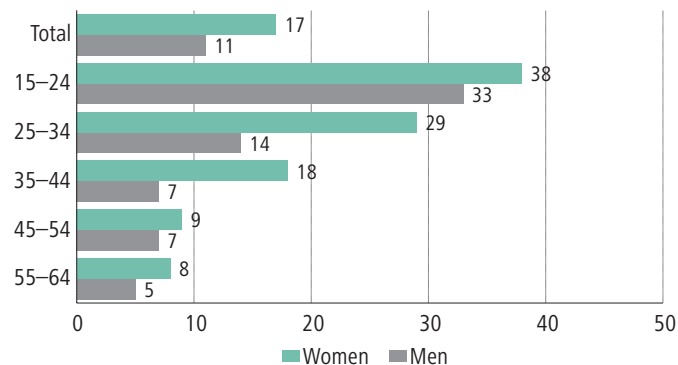
The prevalence of fixed-term employment relationships among women has sometimes been justified by claiming that the long family leaves in Finland create a substantial need for replacements to cover maternity and parental leaves. However, this alone cannot explain their prevalence. Although substitution without a permanent post is the most widespread type of fixed-term employment among women, this proportion of substitutes accounts for “only” 38 per

Figure 21 Proportions of fixed-term employees of all wage and salary earners
Quality of Work Life Surveys 1984, 1990, 1997 and 2003



¹ The data collection of the Quality of Work Life Survey takes place in the autumn, so fixed-term summer jobs do not show in its results. For this reason the proportion of fixed-term wage and salary earners is always slightly smaller in the Quality of Work Life Surveys than in the annual average figures of the Labour Force Surveys.

Figure 22 Proportion of fixed-term employees
Quality of Work Life Survey 2003

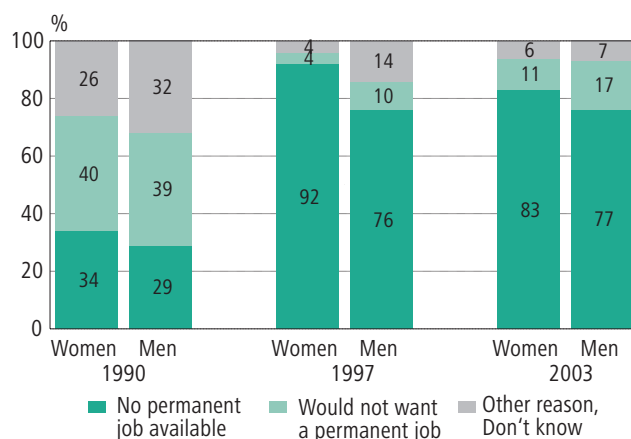


cent of all women employed fixed-term. The corresponding proportion for men is 13 per cent; project work being the commonest reason (15%) why men are employed for fixed-term. In the 2003 survey, only one in ten of all fixed-term employees were employed by subsidised measures, whereas in 1997 this was the case with one in six (17%) of them.

Fixed-term employment is often not the personal choice an employee would make. The more prevalent fixed-term employment relationships are, the less often they are chosen out of own preference (Figure 23). Four out of five wage and salary earners in fixed-term employment relationships say that they do it because they could not find a permanent job. The number of those working in fixed-term jobs because of their own preference or because of traineeship is the highest among the youngest wage and salary earners with fixed-term employment contracts.

Figure 23 Reason for fixed-term employment

Fixed-term employees, Quality of Work Life Surveys 1990, 1997 and 2003



Fixed-term employment contracts are most typical in the public sector where nearly one in four of central government (24%) or local government (23%) employees work in fixed-term jobs. By contrast, the corresponding proportion in the private sector is nine per cent. In the public sector, fixed-term employment relationships are almost equally common among men and women. However, considerably fewer men than women work in the public sector.

The proportions of fixed-term employees are particularly large in teaching (29%), health care (25%) and social service (24%) work, as well as in agriculture (21%). Among women they are also widespread in technical, scientific, art, etc., occupations (21%).

Part-time work

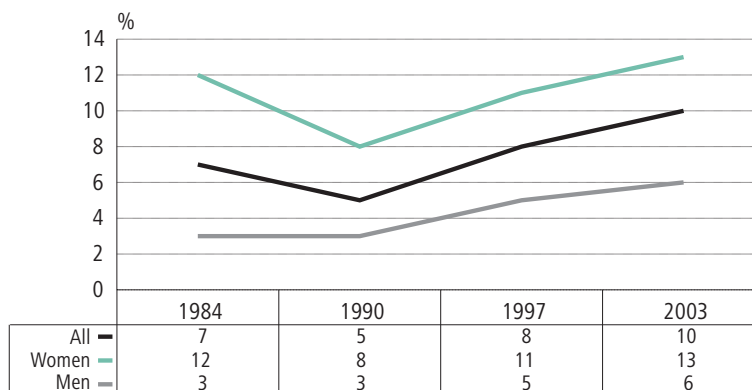
In the 1984 and 1990 Quality of Work Life Surveys, part-time work was defined against the so-called normal weekly working hours so that the wage and salary earners working under 30 hours per week were classified as part-time employees. The 1997 and 2003 surveys also produced data on employees' own perceptions about whether they were working part-time or not.

The time series show that the proportion of women working under 30 hours per week fell towards the end of the 1980s. Subsequent to this, short working weeks grew more widespread again, both among women and men (Figure 24).

The proportion of those employees who in their own opinion work part-time is slightly larger than that of employees working under 30 hours per week. According to their own reporting, 17 per cent of women and seven per cent of men – 12 per cent of all wage and salary earners – were working part-time in 2003. This proportion, too, has gone up since 1997 when it was 14 per cent among women and 6 per cent among men.

The main reason for the increase in part-time work seems to be part-time retirement. The proportion of those working part-time because of retirement of **all wage and salary earners working part-time work** has grown more than five-fold in the period between 1997 and 2003 (Table 4).

Figure 24 Proportion of wage and salary earners working part-time
Weekly working hours under 30 per week, Quality of Work Life Surveys 1984, 1990, 1997 and 2003



	Total	Studying	Health	Could not find full-time work	Caring for children or relatives	Retirement/ part-time retirement	Does not want to work full time	Other reason
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
All								
1997	100	23	5	44	8	4	11	5
2003	100	23	2	33	7	21	8	6
Women								
1997	100	18	5	46	11	3	13	3
2003	100	20	2	37	9	17	9	6
Men								
1997	100	33	5	41	—	7	7	8
2003	100	30	3	23	1	33	5	5

Although part-time work has become more widespread, it is still relatively rare in Finland by European comparison (European Labour Force Surveys 2002). Even when women in Finland do work part-time, childcare is generally not the reason for it. The reasons for working part-time vary according to age. With the youngest wage and salary earners, the main reason is studying and with the oldest, retirement. The age groups in between do part-time jobs primarily because they have not found full-time ones.

Part-time work is most widespread in commercial and service work occupations. One in five wage and salary earners in these occupational groups say that they work part-time.

Changes in work organisations

Changes that take place at workplaces determine strongly the employees' working conditions and their perceptions of them. The changes can relate to organisational structures, work arrangements, personnel numbers or the financial standing of the workplace. Many studies of the psychological and social factors affecting work have observed that these changes are strongly associated with, for example, work-related stress and exhaustion, and even psychological violence at a workplace (Sutela & Lehto 1998, Vartia 2003, Kalimo & Toppinen 1997).

From the point of employees' well-being, the way in which different changes are implemented is crucial. In recent decades, the major contributors to stress and insecurity have been **changes in the number of personnel**, i.e. redundancies, temporary dismissals and diverse other measures aimed towards numerical flexibility in personnel. By the beginning of the 2000s, the worst years of personnel cut-backs caused by the economic recession of the 1990s had already been passed. Nevertheless, 23 per cent of wage and salary earners still state that personnel numbers had been reduced if anything at their places of work (Figure 25). The difference between the genders has altered clearly so that in 2003 a larger proportion of men than women (25% of men, 21% of women) state that personnel numbers had mainly been decreased at their place of work, whereas in 1997 more women than men (26% of women, 22% of men) stated this.

The methods used for cutting down numbers of personnel can be seen from Figure 26. The proportions have been calculated from all wage and salary earners. In the past three years, transition to retirement via unemployment had been used at the workplaces of 16 per cent of them, while the workplaces of 22 per cent of them had used other dismissals and those of 18 per cent had reduced personnel through natural loss, in other words by not hiring new employees to replace those who had left.

Figure 25 Change in the number of employees at workplace
Change during past three years, Quality of Work Life Surveys 1997 and 2003

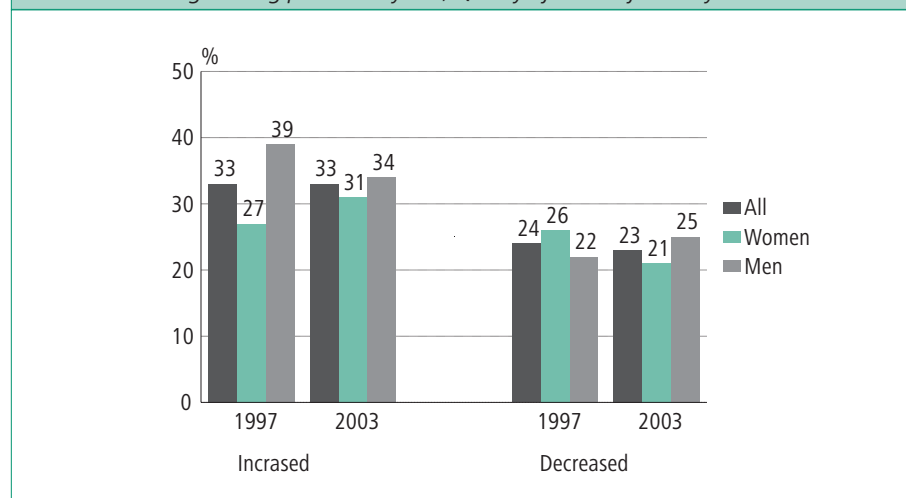
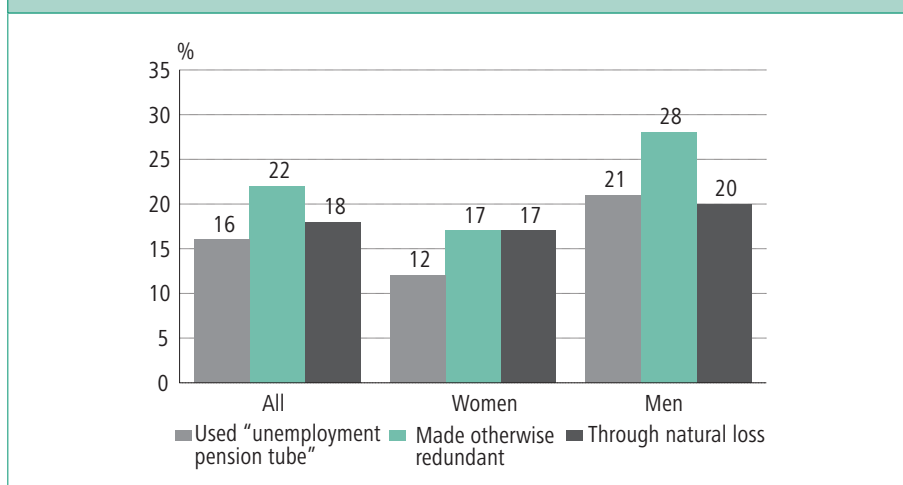


Figure 26 Methods used to reduce number of employees



The use of **transition to retirement via unemployment** (so called "unemployment pension tube") has been clearly more typical at the workplaces of men (21%) than women (12%). The unemployment pension route has been used most in the private sector and, within it, especially by foreign-owned enterprises (31%) or enterprises that also operate elsewhere besides Finland (43%).

Only 17 per cent of strictly domestic enterprises have used this method. Looked at from other perspectives, transition to retirement via unemployment is most typical in large establishments with over 500 employees and in industrial occupations.

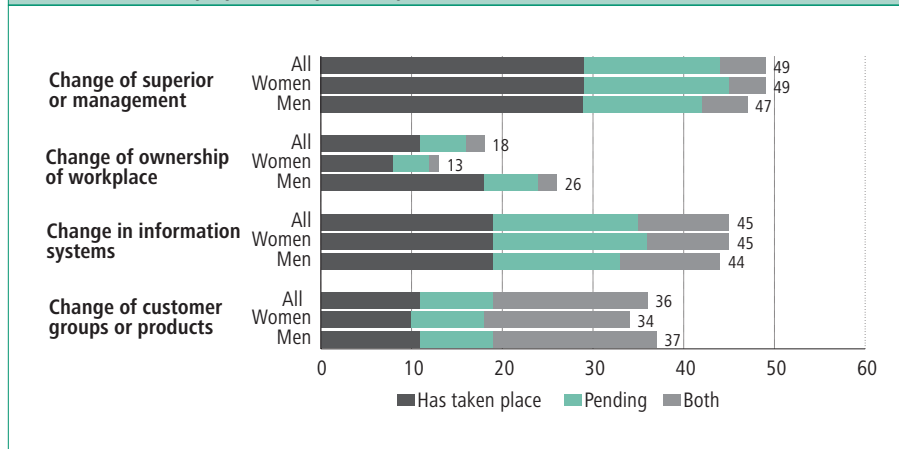
Other dismissals is also a method extensively used by the private sector (31%) and is more typical in male-dominated fields (28%) than in female-dominated ones (17%). In this, too, large workplaces, manufacturing workplaces and workplaces in foreign ownership dominate. By contrast, **natural loss** has been used evenly across the different sectors and only slightly more at men's than at women's workplaces (20% vs. 17%). Examined by occupational field and type of enterprise ownership, the use of natural loss is also very evenly distributed.

The fact that changes take place continuously at workplaces comes very clear from the adjacent Figure 27 showing **what kinds of major changes have taken place or are expected at workplaces**. Almost half of wage and salary earners report changes in information systems (45%) or in superiors and management (49%). More than one third (36%) of employees say that changes have taken place or are expected in customer groups or products.

Changes at workplaces hardly differentiate at all between women and men, for both genders share this experience. The only changes that appear to be more typical among male wage and salary earners (26%) than among female ones (13%) are those in workplace ownership. The fact that largely explains this is that more men than women work in the private sector.

The changing of superiors or management is especially typical in technical or scientific work, administrative management, and office work. Looked at from other perspectives, change of management is more prevalent than on the average among highly educated wage and salary earners, and among upper

Figure 27 Major changes at workplace in recent years
Quality of Work Life Survey 2003



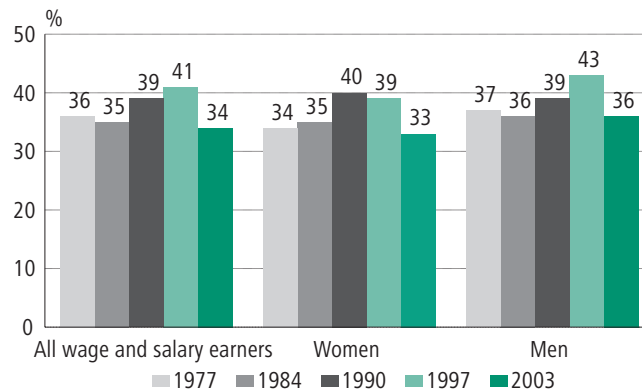
white-collar employees in general. Examined by sector it is interesting to see that changes of superiors or management that have already taken place are more plentiful in the private sector whereas expected changes in them are more numerous in the public sector. In the central government sector, the proportion of employees expecting changes was 31 per cent and in the private sector 16 per cent. It may well be that expected changes are better known in the public sector, but the finding can also be connected with the age structure of employees in the public sector, in other words the fact that increasing numbers of supervisors are starting to approach retirement age.

More changes to the information systems are also expected in the central government sector (37%) than in the local government (25%) or private sector (24%). In the private sector, changes of information systems, superiors and managers concentrate into workplaces that are not fully domestically owned. In strictly Finnish-owned enterprises, 43 per cent of employees had experienced or were expecting changes to information systems while the corresponding proportions of employees in foreign-owned enterprises and in enterprises also operating outside Finland were 60 per cent. In changes in management the respective proportions were 42 and 61 per cent. In foreign-owned enterprises, the information about changes mostly centres on happened ones, which indicates that they provide less advance information than Finnish-owned enterprises.

In the 2003 Quality of Work Life Survey, the distribution of the reply alternatives to the question about employer's origin was as follows: "Enterprise in foreign ownership", 15 per cent of respondents in the private sector (9% of all wage and salary earners), "Enterprise in domestic ownership", 78 per cent (49% of all) and "Hard to say, also operates outside Finland", seven per cent (4% of all). Thus, one quarter of the employees in the private sector already work in enterprises that are either foreign-owned or operate in several countries. This matter also clearly affects working conditions as evidenced by the results presented above.

The question concerning **being informed about changes relating to work** is highly interesting especially in this round of the Quality of Work Life Survey. Adjacent Figure 28 depicts a portion of the question about being informed

Figure 28 Being informed about changes relating to work
Receives information at the planning stage



about changes relating to work. The reply alternatives and the respective results in 2003 were: "At the planning stage" (34%), "Shortly before the change" (39%) and "At the implementation stage or after it" (25%). In other words, one employee in four has to face changes without being informed about them in advance. A surprisingly clear change has happened in this since the 1997 survey. At that time, 41 per cent of wage and salary earners, but now only 34 per cent of them, said they received information at the planning stage. Obtaining information has, thus, become clearly more difficult.

A closer investigation of this matter reveals that the position of the respondent in the work organisation has a bearing on the flow of information. Whereas 51 per cent of upper white-collar employees are informed already at the planning stage, the corresponding proportion of those in blue-collar positions is only 22 per cent. Even according to gender there are large differences between these groups: among male upper white-collar employees the proportion is 57 per cent but among female upper white-collar employees 44 per cent. The decline from the situation in 1997 is also biggest in this group of female employees, from 55 to 44 per cent.

Examined by employer sector, blue-collar workers in the private sector have experienced the largest decrease in being informed in advance about changes, from 41 to 32 per cent. By contrast, the central government sector has actually increased its provision of information from the previous survey round, from 41 to 49 per cent.

Thus, besides for finding out how the respondents experience their working lives, the Quality of Work Life Surveys have also been used for getting as much information as possible about the organisational factors most likely to affect working conditions. These include, above all, different organisational development measures, and management strategies in general. The last three surveys, in particular, looked at diverse measures associated with management by results. The aim was to determine how common these measures are becoming at Finnish workplaces, and their implications on working conditions. The problem with an interview inquiry directed at employees is that it is difficult to obtain reliable information about issues relating to the organisational level, such

as management practices, forms or work organisation, quality management or management by results by asking the employees.

Increasing **assessment of work by its productivity and profitability** continues to command the leading position in changes in the organisation of work. Nearly 60 per cent of wage and salary earners said this had happened at their place of work. A less widespread change had been the **outsourcing of work** to subcontractors which had increased at the workplaces of about one quarter (24%) of all wage and salary earners (Figures 29 and 30).

In the latest survey, monitoring of productivity had intensified especially in the central government sector, as 72 per cent of its employees had experienced it, whereas the corresponding proportions in the local government sector and the private sector were 57 per cent and 59 per cent, respectively. There are no differences in this by gender. Intensified productivity thinking appears to concern fairly evenly all occupational groups and positions, as well as wage and

Figure 29 Assessment of work by productivity has increased in recent years
Quality of Work Life Surveys 1990, 1997 and 2003

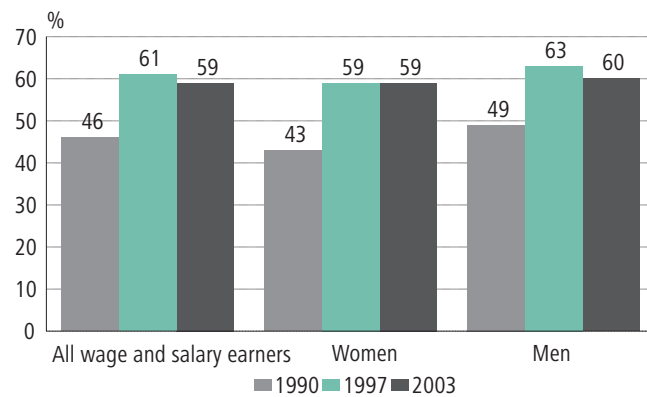
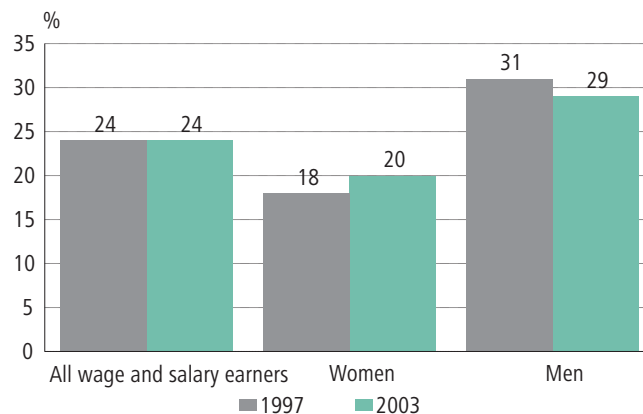


Figure 30 Outsourcing of work has increased
Quality of Work Life Surveys 1997 and 2003



salary earners with different levels of education. In this matter, too, there is a clear difference within the private sector dependent of whether the employer is Finnish or foreign. Monitoring of productivity has been intensified most in foreign-owned or multi-national enterprises of whose employees 72 per cent reported that this had happened, while the respective figure for Finnish-owned enterprises was 54 per cent. This can also be seen in the outsourcing of work, which has increased most, or by 41 per cent, in foreign-owned enterprises, at least according to the experiences of their employees. The corresponding figure for Finnish-owned enterprises was 23 per cent.

Opportunities for self-development in work

From the very first survey in 1977, the Quality of Work Life Surveys have included questions on how diverse **opportunities for advancement**, development and training are experienced at workplaces. The lowest score of these three is given to opportunities for advancement (Figure 31). At all points of time especially women have considered their opportunities as poor, or worse than men's. The only groups who consider their advancement opportunities as fairly good are employees in commercial occupations and, among men, also those in administrative management positions. In the latter mentioned group, 21 per cent regard their opportunities as good, while the respective average among all wage and salary earners is only 10 per cent. An examination by age group reveals that young wage and salary earners, especially men aged 15 to 24, still believe in their advancement opportunities. The proportion of wage and salary earners considering their advancement opportunities as good is the lowest (5%) in the local government sector. Differences by occupational position and educational level are, again, minor. The size of the employer organisation has a bearing on this so that opportunities are regarded as better at large establishments, especially those employing between 500 and 1,000 persons (men: 23%, women: 14%).

All in all, the percentages and differences in them are small. On the other hand, it is not quite clear what opportunities for advancement exactly meant. For many, it is more important to develop in one's own work than to ascend on the hierarchical ladder. The trend today is to avoid hierarchical systems and reduce layers of management. This was studied more closely in the latest Quality of Work Life Survey in which the respondents were asked separately how important they regarded the opportunity to progress into a better position at the workplace. They were also asked how important opportunities for development were to them personally. Figure 32 shows that considerably fewer regard **advancement on career** as very important than consider development in own

Figure 31 Opportunities for advancement at work
Good opportunities, Quality of Work Life Surveys 1977, 1984, 1990, 1997 and 2003

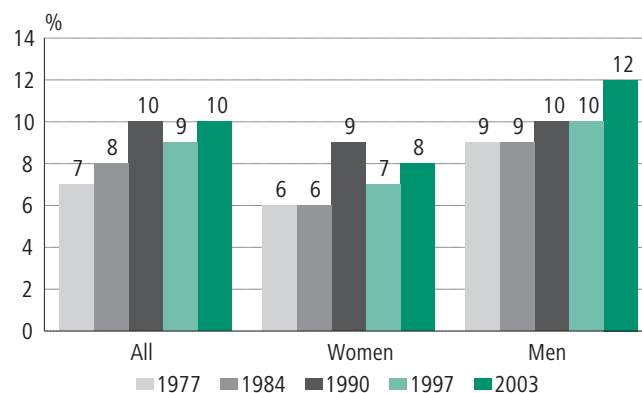
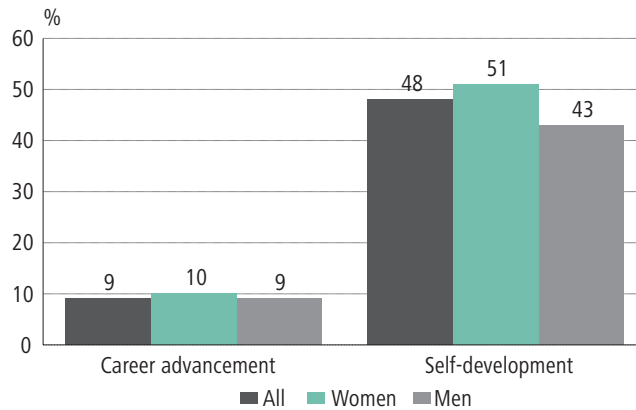


Figure 32 Importance of career advancement and self-development
Very important, quality of Work Life Survey 2003



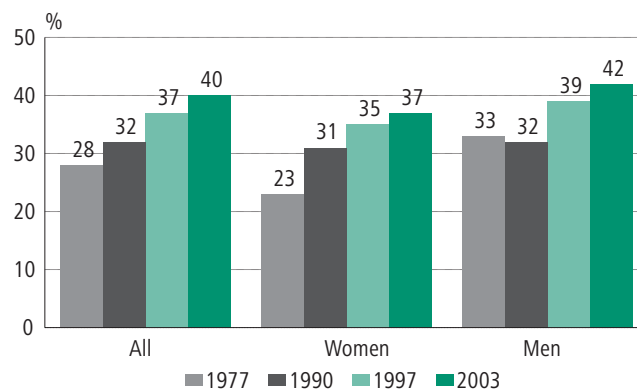
work (9% vs. 48%). Advancement on career is viewed as important by young people aged from 15 to 24 starting their working careers (21%), among women those working in technical and scientific jobs (18%) and among men those doing administrative work (14%). On the average, commercial work is the field that leads in career expectations (13%).

Education, position and characteristics of the employing organisation do not otherwise essentially influence career expectations, but the expectations of wage and salary earners in the blue-collar group are lower than those of salaried white-collar employees.

Of the employer sectors, the local government is one where progressing to a better position is not particularly appreciated. Especially the men employed by local government think this way, for only three per cent of them regard advancement on career as very important.

Perceptions about **opportunities for development** are highly positive (Figure 33). The topic has been studied in four of the Quality of Work Life Surveys and the prevailing trend appears to be one of improvement. From 1977 to 2003, women have experienced an even more significant increase in their op-

Figure 33 Opportunities for development at work
Good opportunities, Quality of Work Life Surveys 1977, 1990, 1997 and 2003



opportunities than men: the proportion of women who think that development opportunities are good has increased from 23 to 37 per cent. Among men, the respective figures are 33 and 42 per cent. According to occupation, opportunities for development are especially good for men in administrative management work. Of all the men in this group, 67 per cent regarded their opportunities as good. By contrast, only 18 per cent of the women working in manufacturing considered their opportunities as good.

Examined by sector, the central government leads in this respect (men: 58%, women: 46%). According to the response, the private sector offers the least opportunities for development (men: 41%, women: 36%). Seeing one's opportunities as good is clearly linked to high educational level and the group of upper white-collar employees. Opportunities for development are considered as slightly better at establishments with over 500 employees than in other organisations. Over 50 per cent of the employees working for large organisations regard them good while the same figure for the whole wage and salary earning population is 40 per cent.

According to Figure 32, Finnish wage and salary earners regard **self-development** at work considerably more important than ascent on the hierarchical ladder. The need for further development concentrates especially among those whose educational level is already high. Of them, 61 per cent regard self-development at work as very important, while the respective proportion among all employees is 48 per cent. Nevertheless, more than one in three (34%) of those with only basic level of education also consider self-development at work as very important.

The differences according to level of education are also reflected in those by occupation, for self-development at work is appreciated most by employees engaged in technical, scientific, educational, health care and administrative work. However, more than one in four in manufacturing (29%) and transport jobs (26%) also regard self-development as important. Age has very little bearing on this, for as many as 36 per cent of even the oldest group of those aged over 55 regard further self-development as very important. On the whole, the keenness for self-development is higher among women, but it is especially high among women in upper white-collar positions of whom 73 per cent view self-development as very important.

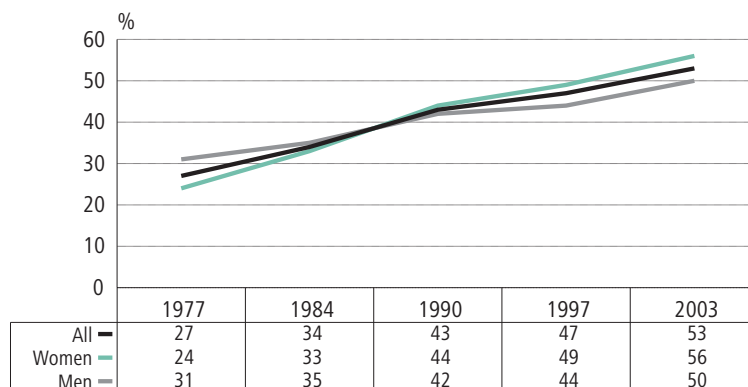
According to the Quality of Work Life Surveys, **participation in training paid for by the employer** has increased clearly in Finnish working life over the past 25 years (Figure 34). However, participation in in-house training is very clearly tied to position and level of education. Whereas 69 per cent of upper white-collar employees had participated in such training, the proportion in the blue-collar employee group was only 34 per cent.

However, this differential between occupational positions is showing signs of evening out. Here, too, the public sector is foremost, for 72 per cent of central government employees and 63 per cent of those of local government had received training in the last 12 months, while in the private sector the corresponding proportion is only 47 per cent. An examination by age group shows that the least amount of training is invested in the very young: among the 15 to 24-year-old employees the proportion was only 35 per cent. There is most probably a link between this and temporary employment relationships and occupation, or position at the workplace in general.

The difference between genders is very small, although women began to overtake men at the onset of the 1990s. This may be explained more by the

Figure 34 Participation in training paid for by employer

In the last 12 months, Quality of Work Life Surveys 1977, 1984, 1990, 1997 and 2003

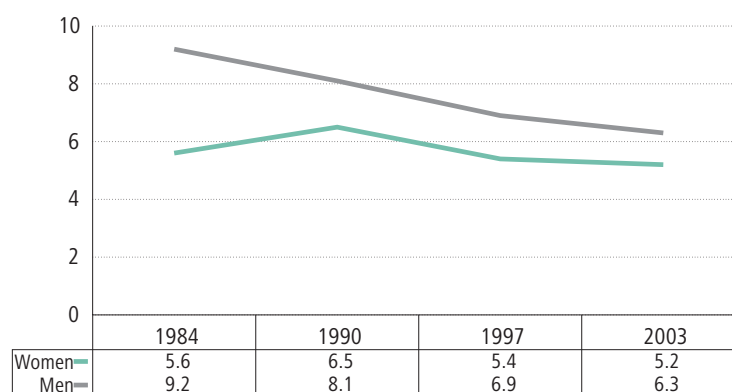


faster rise in women's educational level than by more plentiful job training offered to women. The size of the work organisation influences the amount of offered in-house training clearly, so that participation rate for workplaces with more than 1,000 employees is 71 per cent, but only 35 per cent for those with 1 to 4 employees.

The development of the number of training days gives a slightly different picture of women's and men's position than does that of general participation in training (Figure 35). In this respect, men have retained their lead, although a tendency towards reduction in the average number of training days can be seen even among them. In other words, training is provided to more people but it is of shorter duration. The averages in the adjacent graphics only include those who had participated in training at least once during twelve months. In the 1977 survey, questions were asked about pre-classified training days, so it is not possible to work out averages from them in the same way.

Figure 35 Number of training days

Participants in training paid for by employer, Quality of Work Life Surveys 1984, 1990, 1997 and 2003



Opportunities for influencing own work

Being independent in one's own work is very highly valued by Finnish employees. On the other hand, independence is not easy to capture with questionnaires. For this reason, the Quality of Work Life Survey question about autonomy in one's work has been made as detailed as possible. Asking about independence and influencing opportunities in very general terms is not purposeful, because the answers will then usually reflect a too positive assessment of the situation, in the same way as they do in questions relating to general job contentment. Since 1984, the Quality of Work Life Surveys have included a question about opportunities for influencing one's own work, asking the respondents to assess the extent to which they can influence various aspects of their own work.

The adjacent Figure 36 indicates the changes that have taken place in respect of the total wage and salary earning population in the opportunities for influencing these particular aspects of work. The trend has been rising in respect of all aspects except the order and pace of work. Since 1990, the trend in being able to influence the pace of work has been falling. The ability to influence the order in which tasks are done has remained at approximately the same level where it was in the 1984 survey.

The figure does not show differences in influencing opportunities by gender. However, the answers of male and female respondents have been gathered into the adjacent table (Table 5). Examined like this, there are systematic differences in men's and women's work. Women have less opportunities for influencing almost all the listed aspects of work. The order in which tasks are done is the only aspect on which women have as much say as men. Among all employees, the clearest increase has happened in opportunities for influencing the contents of one's work, in which men's opportunities have advanced even faster than women's. Influencing the pace of work seems to have become more difficult for women today and here the gap between the genders has widened

Figure 36 Opportunities for influencing own work
Can influence a lot or quite a lot, Quality of Work Life Surveys 1984, 1990, 1997 and 2003

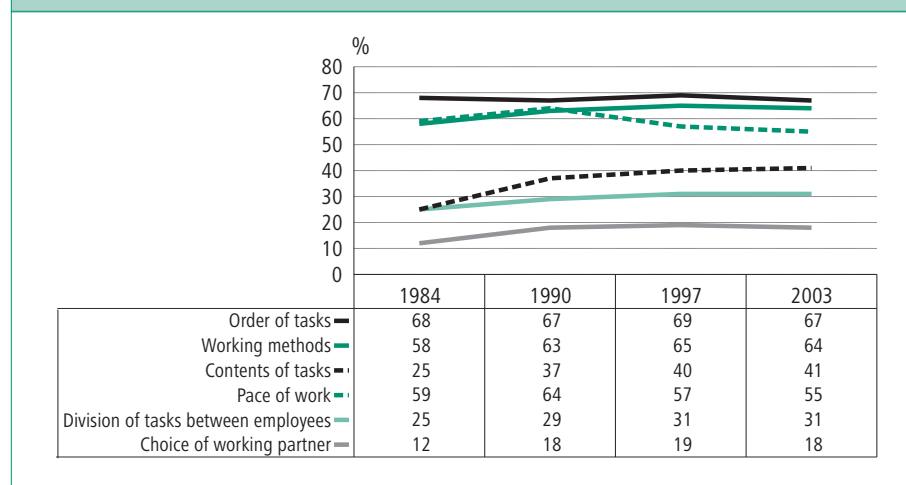


Table 5 Can influence following aspects of work a lot or quite a lot

	Women				Men			
	1984 %	1990 %	1997 %	2003 %	1984 %	1990 %	1997 %	2003 %
Contents of tasks	23	37	38	38	28	38	43	45
Order in which tasks are done	63	67	70	67	62	66	69	67
Pace of work	56	61	54	50	62	67	61	61
Working methods	54	60	63	62	62	65	68	67
Division of tasks between employees	22	27	29	28	27	30	33	35
Choice of working partner	9	16	16	15	16	19	21	23
Project or service timetables				14				23
Working hours				29				37

somewhat. The answers to the new questions about ability to influence the schedules of projects or services replicate the same difference between the genders as the answers to most of the other questions produce about influencing opportunities: women have distinctly less say.

Well-educated employees and those in high positions can influence the **contents of their tasks** slightly more than others. The numbers of those claiming they can influence the contents of their work are also highest at small workplaces with one to four employees. The group having answered "Not at all" to the question about influencing ability is mainly comprised of women in the blue-collar employee group, in the private sector and engaged in manufacturing or transport work.

The ability to influence the **order in which tasks are done** is distributed most evenly across different employee groups. Likewise, the ability to influence **pace of work** is today surprisingly evenly divided according to position and level of education. The numbers of those claiming they can influence pace of work are the lowest in welfare services, especially in the local government sector. On the other hand, these are jobs requiring good education and thus equalise the earlier clear differentials between employee groups in the independence of work, meaning that attainment of a good educational or occupational position has improved influencing opportunities.

The ability to influence **working methods** is more tied to position than that relating to the pace of work, for 77 per cent of upper white-collar employees say they are able to influence their working methods a lot or quite a lot, whereas 59 per cent of blue-collar employees claim this. Age, type of employer or size of enterprise have next to no bearing here. According to occupational group, those doing educational work have the biggest opportunities, as 86 per cent of them can influence their working methods a lot or quite a lot, whereas in transport work the respective proportion is 38 per cent and in manufacturing work 57 per cent.

Having a say on the **division of tasks and choice of working partner** is fairly closely tied to position at workplace. Upper white-collar employees, who often also have supervisory tasks, are more independent in this respect than others. Whereas 39 per cent of the blue-collar employee group say they cannot influence the division of tasks at all, only 15 per cent of upper white-collar employees say this. Especially female wage and salary earners have very little say on

whom they work with. "Not at all" was the answer given by 62 per cent of women, both lower white-collar and blue-collar employees, while the same proportion for all wage and salary earners was 49 per cent. On the other hand, Table 5 shows that improvement has taken place in these respects, too, in two decades, both among women and men.

In 2003, new questions were added to the Quality of Work Life Survey about the ability to influence the "**schedules of projects, goods deliveries and services**" and "**own working hours**". With both of these, the ability to influence is clearly tied to position so that upper white-collar employees and those doing administrative management work are more independent in these respects than others. However, women with tertiary educational qualifications seem to be in clearly worse position in these matters than highly educated men. To a degree this is explained by occupation and employer sector, for there are generally fewer employees in the female-dominated local government sector who claim they can influence schedules (14%) or their own working hours (21%) a lot or quite a lot. The corresponding proportions for the whole wage and salary earning population are 18 per cent and 33 per cent.

The ability to influence own working hours has an interesting connection with the size of the establishment, for according to the survey results small workplaces of less than five employees and large units of over 1,000 employees are ones where over 40 per cent say they can influence their working hours a lot or quite a lot.

Different demands of work

The **monotony** of work has been given much consideration for as long as efforts have been made to improve work and working conditions. The redesigning of work patterns was a response to the Tayloristic work organisation, in which the monotony of work reached its peak due to extreme task specialisation. As late as 25 years ago, it was quite common in Finland for women's work to be very monotonous. One third of Finnish women regarded their work as monotonous, while under one fifth of Finnish men thought this of their work (Figure 37). The situation has changed fast, and there are no differences between the genders in this respect today. An explanation to the change is the increased prevalence of service-oriented jobs and almost total disappearance of, for example, women's manufacturing work – especially work adhering to traditional Tayloristic patterns of work organisation.

Perceptions of work as monotonous are clearly linked to position, so that upper white-collar employees regard their work as least monotonous (8%) and employees in the blue-collar group as most monotonous (28%). The differences between women and men are similar. Examined by level of education, those with tertiary educational qualifications distinguish clearly from other educational groups. These differences can also be seen when occupational groups are compared in that the numbers regarding their work as monotonous are highest among those doing manufacturing work, followed by employees engaged in service work, including cleaning, and those in business occupations. Persons working in teaching, social service, health care and administrative management occupations consider their work to be the most varied. The alleviation of monotony over the 25 years of Quality of Work Life Surveys is, therefore, largely linked to the changes that have taken place in the occupational and educational structure, but partly certainly also to the diverse measures taken to improve working life.

Of all the aspects of work described here, the one of how **physically demanding** work is has changed least (Figure 38). This is rather surprising as one

Figure 37 Monotony of work

Work very, or quite, monotonous, Quality of Work Life Surveys 1977, 1984, 1990, 1997 and 2003

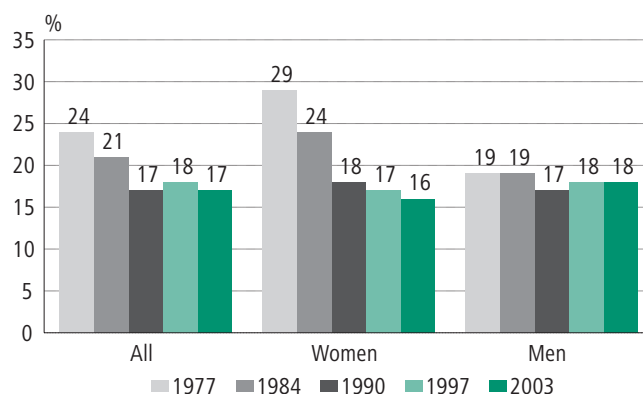
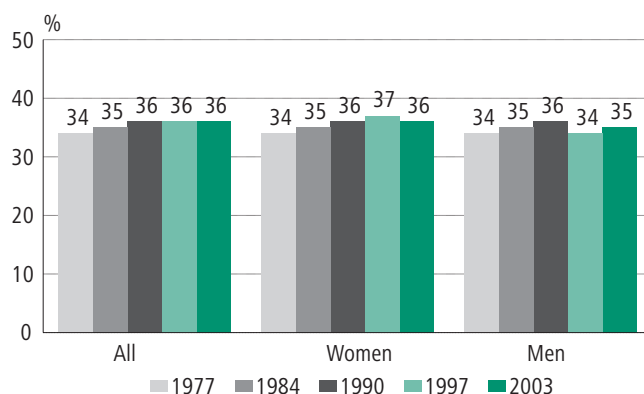


Figure 38 Physical demands of work

Work very, or quite, demanding physically, Quality of Work Life Surveys 1977, 1984, 1990, 1997 and 2003



would assume that mechanisation would have alleviated this feature in particular. Here, too, the explanation may lie in the development of the employment structure towards service occupations, of which at least care work continues to be highly demanding physically.

The physically most demanding occupations are agricultural work (67%) and manufacturing work (57%). Considering all wage and salary earners, 36 per cent regard their work as physically very or quite demanding. For men, construction work is also strenuous (63%). For women, besides manufacturing work, other physically demanding jobs are those in health care (52%), social services (56%) and services, e.g. cleaning (55%).

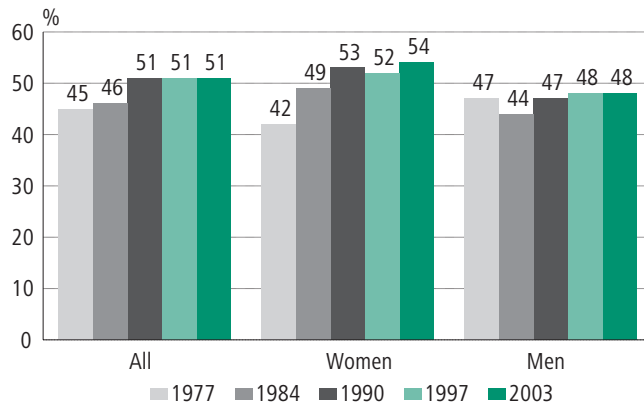
The biggest differences by position and gender in this respect are those between male upper white-collar employees (6%) and female blue-collar employees (68%).

Greater **mental demands** and increasing pace of work go almost hand-in-hand. Besides time pressure, other factors also dictate how mentally demanding a job is. Conflicts arising from a variety of factors at the workplace, for example, lie behind growing psychological demands. Over the survey period, women's work has become more strenuous than men's in this respect (Figure 39).

The mental demands imposed by work have increased most among local government employees. Especially women working in the fields concerned complain the psychological strenuousness of their work, for 66 per cent of them regard their work as very or quite demanding mentally, while the respective proportion among all wage and salary earners is 51 per cent. Among men, those working for the central government experience the greatest mental demands (60%). The degree of mental demands also seems to correlate strongly with the work done by upper white-collar employees that requires high education. While 66 per cent of those with tertiary educational qualifications regard their work as mentally demanding, the same proportion among those with basic level of education only is 37 per cent. In general, involvement of human relations increases the mental demands of work.

Figure 39 Mental demands of work

Work very, or quite, demanding mentally, Quality of Work Life Surveys 1977, 1984, 1990, 1997 and 2003



Behind the mental strenuousness also lie factors connected with the organisation and work atmosphere. The bigger the workplace, the more mentally strenuous work is experienced. It is also interesting that especially among men working in the private sector, work is experienced more demanding mentally in foreign-owned enterprises than in Finnish-owned ones (60% vs. 43%).

Conflicts at the workplace increase mental demands, especially for women. If there are a lot or quite a lot of conflicts between superiors and subordinates at the workplace, 69 per cent of women regard their work as mentally strenuous whereas the respective average among women is 54 per cent. Conflicts between employees raise the proportion of women who regard their work as mentally demanding to 73 per cent. Men are less influenced by conflicts between superiors and subordinates or between employees, for their respective proportions concerning mental strenuousness in such cases only rose to 50 and 58 per cent, while the average among men was 49 per cent.

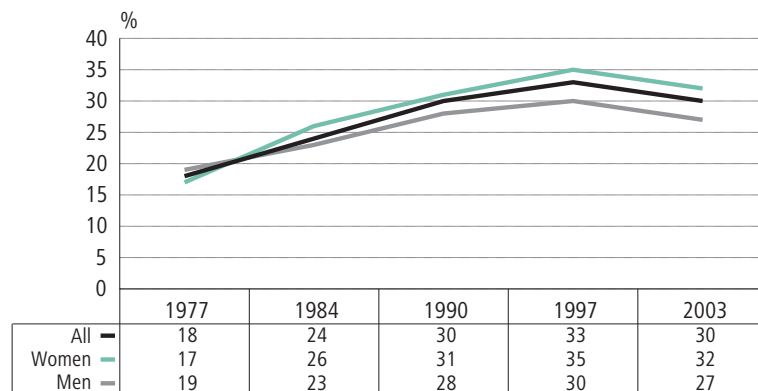
Workplace bullying also clearly influences how mentally stressful women regard their work. Altogether 71 per cent of the women currently being bullied or having been bullied in the past at their present workplace regard their work as mentally demanding. Among men the proportion is 58 per cent, while the respective averages are 54 per cent among women and 49 per cent among men.

The psychological demands of work are very strongly linked to the adverse effects of time pressure. Of the employees who say time pressure hampers their work considerably or quite considerably, 75 per cent regard their work as demanding mentally, while the same proportion of the total wage and salary earning population is 51 per cent. Among all those feeling considerable time pressure the proportion is 78 per cent for women and 72 per cent for men.

From the very first survey round the Quality of Work Life Surveys have included a question about the **adverse effects caused by time pressure** (Figure 40). In it, the respondents are asked to comment on diverse problems, including time pressure and tight time schedules and on the degree of impediment they cause. Studied like this, time pressure has emerged as the adverse factor in the work environment that has shown clearest growth. Since the 1997 sur-

Figure 40 Adverse effects of time pressure

*"Very much" or "Quite a lot" adverse effects extreme or moderate,
Quality of Work Life Surveys 1977, 1984, 1990, 1997 and 2003*



vey, this topic has been the subject of several articles (Lehto 1998, 1999) and even a separate survey conducted with qualitative methods (Järnefelt & Lehto, 2002). They have focused on the experienced changes in work-related stress, and especially on how it has become a problem for women, in particular, in Finland and how the growth in it is connected with the diverse measures aimed at improved efficiency. The patterns of work organisation introduced due to productivity thinking have, thus, generated both positive and negative development. Lack of human resources has been seen as the problem at women's workplaces. Growing work-related stress has created conflicts so that even considerable mental violence is present at those workplaces that struggle against time pressure. The experiencing of work-related stress is also clearly linked to the prevalence of diverse symptoms of fatigue, headache, neck and shoulder pain or sleeplessness.

The order of occupations in the experiencing of time pressure has changed so that in the first survey in 1977, manufacturing work was the most time-pressured, especially for women. Now, in 2003, the proportion of those in manufacturing jobs and reporting that they are hampered a lot or quite a lot by time pressure is below the average for all wage and salary earners (25% vs. 30%). Time pressure is clearly greatest in health care work (47%). Among women, high time pressure is also experienced in social work (33%) and teaching (39%), the average for women being 32 per cent. Besides health care work, transport work (41%) and these days also construction work (34%) are above the 27 per cent average for men.

Congruent with the above is also the finding according to which the local government sector has become the leader in time pressure statistics. Of the wage and salary earners of the local government sector 38 per cent experience a lot or quite a lot of time pressure, while the corresponding proportions for the central government and private sectors are 21 and 27 per cent. This order applies especially to women, for as many as 42 per cent of the women working for the local government sector regard time pressure excessively stressful.

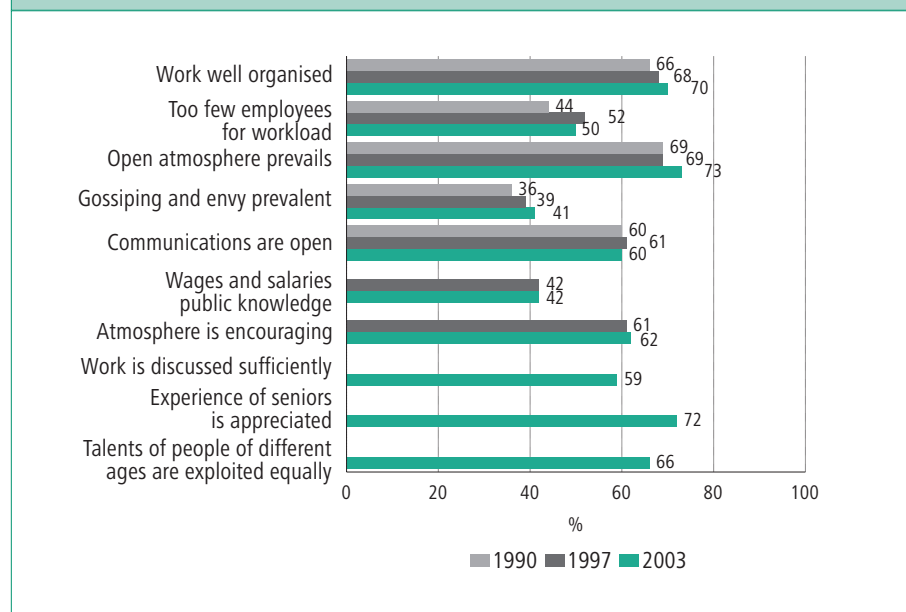
Social relationships

Almost all Finnish wage and salary earners **have co-workers**; only fewer than two per cent have none at all. This is most often the case with those working in social service or agricultural occupations. Approximately half of all employees also deal with people other than their co-workers, such as customers, patients, passengers, students or daycare children for at least half of their working time.

Ideally, a work community can offer its members social support, encouragement and appreciation. However, internal conflicts and competition can also arise within work communities. At its best, work with customers can be very rewarding and gratifying but customers can also make work very unpleasant, even dangerous.

The data from the Quality of Work Life Surveys allows examinations of social relationships at workplaces from many perspectives. The measures concerning the atmosphere at workplace indicate only minor changes since 1990 (Figure 41). Slightly more employees than before think that **work is well organised** and that the **atmosphere is both inspiring and open**. In 1997, due to the personnel cuts caused by the recession, many felt that there were too **few employees for the workload** at their workplace – there has not been much improvement in this respect since then. **Gossiping and envy at the workplace** are more familiar to a slightly larger number of employees and the openness of communications has certainly not increased. **Wages and personal bonuses are public knowledge** as often as before. The openness of knowledge about wages concerns the public sector in particular. Only good one third (36%) of the wage and salary earners in the private sector say that details about pay are pub-

Figure 41 Atmosphere at workplace
Proportion of those in agreement, Quality of Work Life Surveys 1977, 1984, 1990, 1997 and 2003



licly known; with the central government the respective proportion is 56 per cent and with the local government 52 per cent, i.e. more than half.

The 2003 survey included a new question about whether the respondents thought there was **enough discussion about work arrangements or problems at the workplace**. Nearly 60 per cent considered there to be sufficient discussion. This was slightly more common at the workplaces of men (61%) than women (57%).

The 2003 survey also contained two statements for analysing the attitudes of workplaces to ageing employees. According to the survey results, nearly three out of four (72%) employees thought that **the experience of senior employees was appreciated at their workplace** and two thirds also felt that **the abilities of employees of different ages were utilised equally**. Men agreed with these statements more often than women did.

Encouragement of the work community

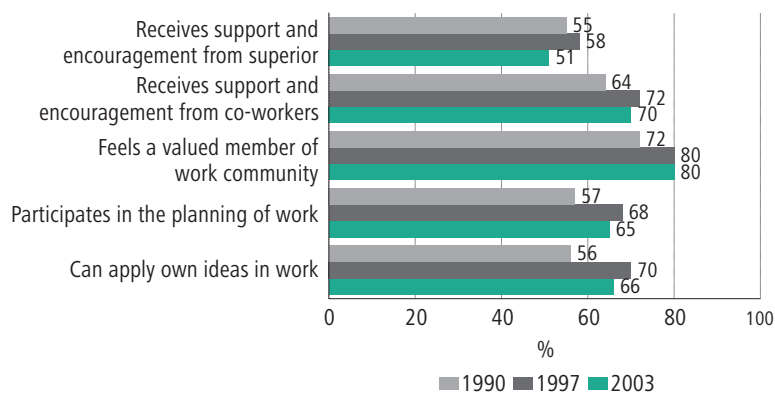
The prevalence of support and encouragement from both superiors and co-workers increased between 1990 and 1997. However, the 2003 survey reveals surprising changes for the worse in this (Figure 42). **Support from superiors** in particular has decreased. The decline since 1997 in the proportion of those receiving support always or often is clearer among men (55% vs. 46%) than among women (60% vs. 56%). Among women, the reduction has been largest in the local government sector (63% vs. 53%).

Support and encouragement from co-workers has also declined slightly among men from 1997 (65% vs. 62%) but remained unchanged among women (78%). All in all, more women than men continue to feel that they receive support from both their superiors and co-workers.

The proportion of employees who **always or often feel that they are a valued member of the work community** has not changed since 1997. However, there is movement from the proportion of “always” answers to that of “often” ones. The proportion of those who feel they are valued is quite high among the

Figure 42 Encouragement from work community

Always or in most cases, Quality of Work Life Surveys 1990, 1997 and 2003



Finnish wage and salary earners (80%), and even a couple of percentage points higher among women than men.

The pleasing finding from the 1997 survey was that at that time more employees than before felt that they were **able to apply their own ideas in their work and take part in the planning of their work**. In this respect the results from 2003 seem to have deteriorated. Women and men take part in the planning of their work to the same extent, but men's opportunities for applying their own ideas in their work are slightly better than women's.

Work with customers, praise and feelings of anger

The Quality of Work Life Surveys have asked employees whether they **receive praise for their work** from other members of the work community or customers (Figure 43). Receiving of praise has increased. Clearly often the praise comes from customers, for receiving it is connected direct with whether or not the respondent works with customers and how much. Work with customers grew slightly more widespread in the 1990s but according to the latest survey has since, somewhat surprisingly, decreased especially among men. All in all, work with customers is more typical among women than among men (Figure 44).

Practically all women who work with customers for at least half of their working time receive praise sometimes, and half of them (48%) at least once a week. Only one in six (16%) of the women whose work does not involve any contact with customers receive praise weekly, and good ten per cent never receive it. Of the employees working with customers, those in health care and social service occupations receive praise more often than others, while employees in technical, scientific and administrative management occupations receive praise least frequently of all.

Work situations arousing negative feelings of hatred or anger are also directly linked to work involving customer contacts (Figure 43). Employees working with customers face such situations twice as often (10%) as those do-

Figure 43 Receiving praise and negative feelings
Quality of Work Life Survey 2003

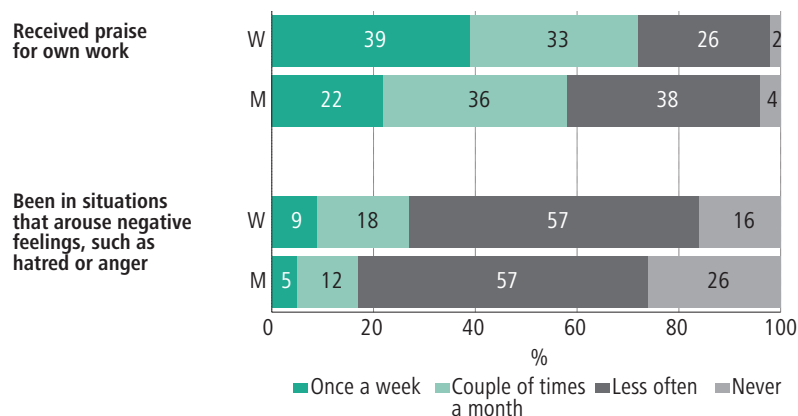


Figure 44 At least half of working time spent on customer contact work
Quality of Work Life Surveys 1990, 1997 and 2003



ing little or no work involving customer contacts (4–5%). Only 16 per cent of the employees working with customers for at least half of their working time evade negative feelings completely. The respective proportion among those whose work does not involve contact with customers is 34 per cent.

Feelings of anger or hatred are most familiar to the employees working in the field of education, although they are also experienced more often than the average by employees working in health care and social service occupations. The fact that feelings of anger and hatred are felt weekly by nine per cent and once or twice a month by 27 per cent of all women is probably connected with the fact that working with customers is so prevalent among women. The corresponding proportions among men are five and 17 per cent.

A vast majority (64%) of the employees who work with customers for at least half of their working time state that pleasant customers/students make their work more enjoyable. This is more typical among women than men. This is most often the case in educational work (82%) and commercial work (70%). On the other hand, one employee in three working with customers (32%) – again, women more often than men – say that difficult customers reduce their enjoyment at work. This is clearly most often the case in work in the field of education (53%).

Pleasant customers add to the job enjoyment of the employees who work with customers equally frequently according to the latest survey and the one conducted in 1997 (64% vs. 63%)¹. However, the negative side of working with customers receives more emphasis this time than in 1997. At that time 26 per cent of those engaged in customer contact work said that difficult customers/students reduced their enjoyment at work but in the latest survey the respective proportion was 32 per cent. The growth has mainly taken place among the employees working with customers in education, social services, commerce and transport.

¹ More on the factors making work more or less enjoyable in a separate chapter on this subject.

Conflicts and competitiveness

Workplaces that have evaded conflicts and competitiveness have become ever rarer during twenty or so years. Today, in most of the work places there are at least occasional conflicts between superiors and subordinates and/or between employees and/or employee groups.

Figure 45 Conflicts in work unit

A lot, or quite a lot, Quality of Work Life Surveys 1984, 1990, 1997 and 2003

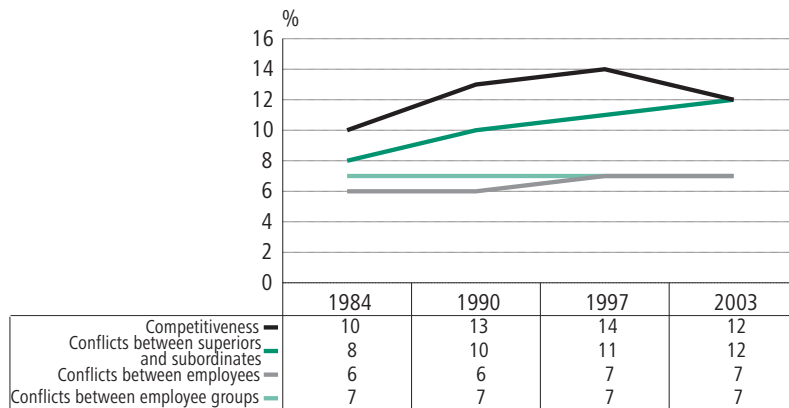


Table 6 Prevalence of competitiveness and conflicts in work unit by characteristics of organisation of work

	Very/quite prevalent in work unit			
	Competi- tiveness	Conflicts between superiors and subordinates	Conflicts between employees	Conflicts between employee groups
	%	%	%	%
All	12	12	7	7
Being informed about changes				
At planning stage	10	7	6	5
Just before change	11	12	7	6
At the time of change	15	21	9	10
Work well organised				
Agree	10	8	5	5
Neither agree nor disagree	13	15	8	7
Disagree	18	27	13	13
Too few employees				
Agree	13	15	9	9
Neither agree nor disagree	11	12	6	5
Disagree	11	9	6	4
Open communications				
Agree	9	6	4	4
Neither agree nor disagree	12	12	8	6
Disagree	19	27	14	13
Problems in work are discussed				
Agree	10	6	4	4
Neither agree nor disagree	12	10	8	7
Disagree	17	26	15	12

The proportion of the respondents reporting that there are a lot or quite a lot of conflicts between employees or employee groups has remained more or less unchanged from one survey to the next. By contrast, conflicts between superiors and subordinates have been increasing throughout the surveyed period, and they are, in fact, the commonest type of conflicts today. The trend in the prevalence of competitiveness was also a rising one right up to 1997, when it turned to a decline (Figure 45).

The occurrence of conflicts and competitiveness in a work unit is connected direct with the way work and communications are organised at the workplace (Table 6). The respondents whose workplaces had deficiencies in these respects report many times more frequently than others that conflicts occur a lot or quite a lot.

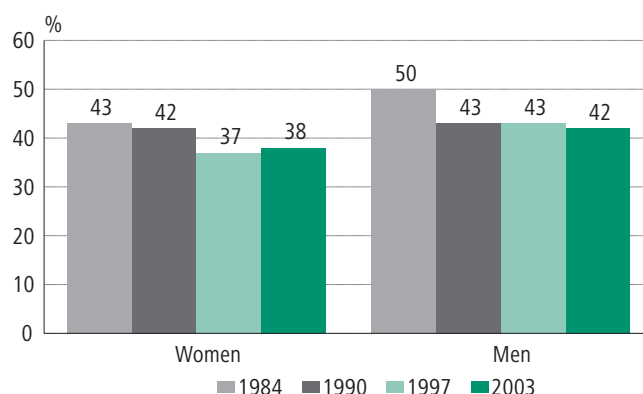
Co-workers

The segregation of workplaces by gender seems to persist. Although clearly female or male-dominated workplaces seem to have declined somewhat since 1984, over 40 per cent of men and just under 40 per cent of women still work at workplaces that only have **co-workers of the same gender doing similar tasks** (Figure 46).

More than 90 per cent of wage and salary earners have the possibility to **talk informally with their co-workers at their workplace daily**, for instance in the canteen or cafeteria. Almost all also **use this possibility**. Informal socialising with co-workers several times a day is slightly less widespread among women than men. At another point of the survey women, in fact, report more often than men (38% vs. 25%) that there is very little social interaction at their workplace because of time pressure.

Nevertheless, women say more often (69%) than men (63%) that co-workers add to the enjoyability of their work – if they have co-workers on the whole. There is very little difference between the genders in feeling that relationships with superiors add to the enjoyability of work (33%). However, rela-

Figure 46 Co-workers doing similar tasks
All same gender as respondent, Quality of Work Life Surveys 1984, 1990, 1997 and 2003



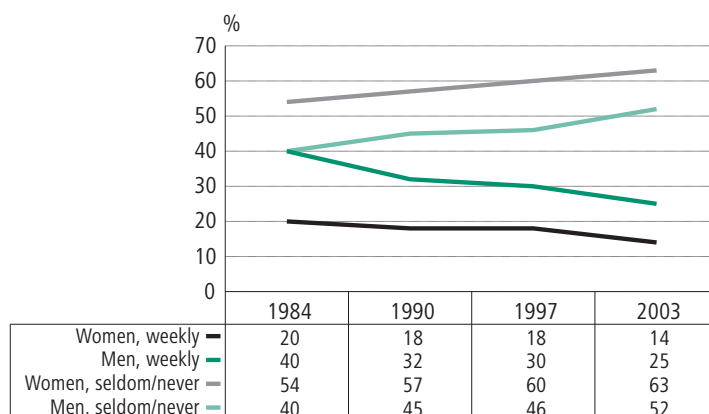
tionships with superiors reduce women's enjoyment at work more often (13%) than they do men's (9%).

Meeting co-workers during free time has declined decidedly since 1984 when it was asked about for the first time. At that time, one woman in five (20%) and two men in five (40%) saw their co-workers at least once a week during their free time. Now, after a steady decline of twenty add years, the corresponding proportions are no higher than 14 per cent among women and 25 per cent among men. In 1984, 54 per cent of women and 40 per cent of men met their co-workers very seldom or never, while in 2003 the corresponding proportions were 63 per cent among women and 52 per cent among men (Figure 47).

Socialising with co-workers during free time correlates direct with the age of the respondent. The younger the employees concerned the more they meet their co-workers. The changes that have taken place in this from 1984 to 2003 have not only come from the ageing of the population. Women aged under 45 meet their co-workers as frequently as they did a couple of decades ago, but such meetings have become rarer among women older than this, as well as among all men, even in the very youngest age groups.

Figure 47 Meeting co-workers during free time

Quality of Work Life Surveys 1984, 1990, 1997 and 2003



Supervisory activity, work on equality

The way supervisory work is organised and functions are very important elements of organisational efficiency. Several studies have shown that supervisory activity has quite a decisive influence on e.g. the work motivation of ageing employees (Ilmarinen 1999) or coping with work-related stress (Järnefelt & Lehto 2002). Figure 48 shows the proportions of employees whose **work includes supervisory tasks**. The trend is a steadily growing one for both women and men.

Generally, the number of supervisory positions has been growing in Finland in the long term despite the talk about lightening organisational structures. The results by educational level and occupational group would seem to indicate that organisation of work in the group format in manufacturing and services still demands a work supervisor even where hierarchical levels have otherwise been reduced. On the other hand, the numbers of supervisory positions have decreased in the groups of highly educated employees. This is especially true among women. Increasingly, good education is beginning to signify working as an independent expert. An interesting finding is that the likelihood of inclusion of supervisory activities is the highest in foreign-owned enterprises, especially among men. While 35 per cent of all wage and salary earners in the private sector act as supervisors, the respective proportion in foreign-owned enterprises is 44 per cent.

Figure 49, in turn, shows how many employees have a **woman as supervisor**. The number of women working in supervisory positions has been growing continuously since 1984 so that today one in three (36%) of all employees, and 59 per cent of woman employees have a woman as supervisor. The proportion of women working in a supervisory capacity is high in Finland even by international comparison. Of the old European Union Member States, only Sweden, Denmark and the United Kingdom have almost as high proportions as Finland (Paoli 1997, Paoli & Merllié 2001).

Examined by educational level, those with upper secondary education have always been more likely than others to have a woman supervisor. However,

Figure 48 Work involved supervisory tasks
Quality of Work Life Surveys 1984, 1990, 1997 and 2003

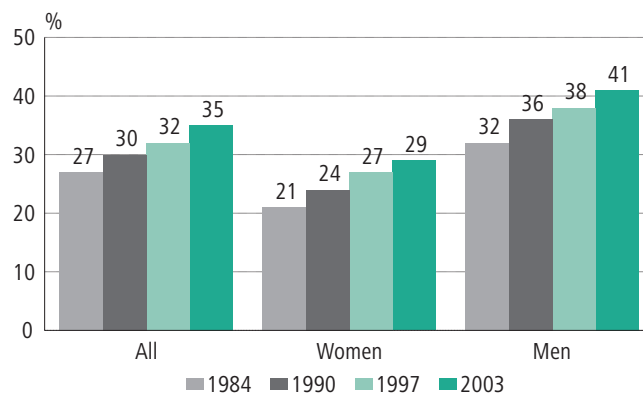
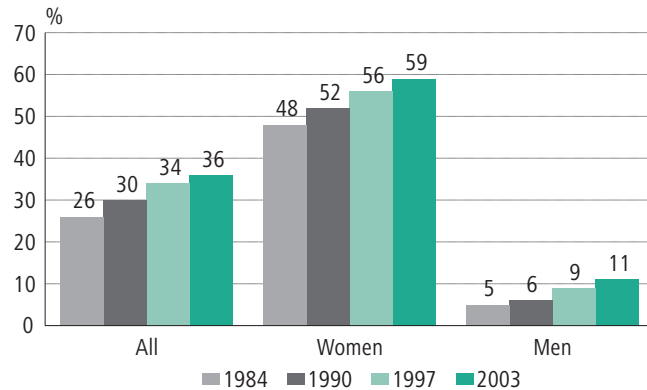


Figure 49 Superior is woman
Quality of Work Life Surveys 1984, 1990, 1997 and 2003

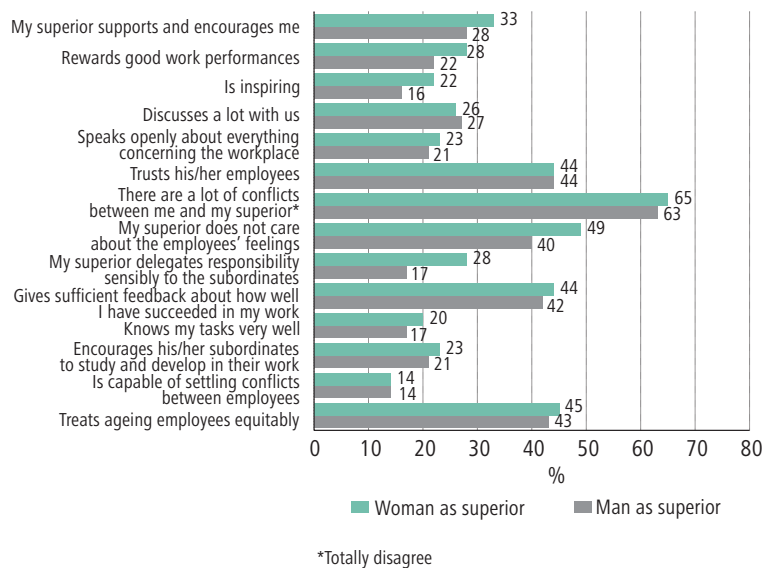


this largely applies to women only. Among men, high educational level increases the likelihood of ending up working under a woman superior.

This probability has also been growing so that today as many as 15 per cent of the men with tertiary level of education work under female supervision.

In the past, young people were usually the main group working under female supervision. Today, the distribution is far more even. Examined by employer sector, the proportion of woman supervisors has increased so that a growing number of employees in the local government sector have a woman supervisor. This has particularly affected men in the local government sector, of whom one in three (33%) today work under female supervision.

Figure 50 Statements concerning the work of superior
Totally agree, Quality of Work Life survey 2003



Women are slightly different from men as superiors or work supervisors (Figure 50). When the respondents of the Quality of Work Life Survey were asked about the **characteristics of their immediate superior**, women turned out to be distinctly better than men in matters like giving support and encouragement, being inspiring, caring about the employee's feelings and, above all, in encouraging them to study and develop in their work.

On the other hand, the gender of the superior does not seem to make any difference where, for example, prevalence and settling of conflicts between employees and superiors, division of responsibilities, dialogue, dissemination of information, knowledge of work tasks or taking ageing employees into consideration are concerned. Female supervisors score points especially in the areas of development, support of subordinates and taking feelings into account.

Equality measures

The latest Quality of Work Life Survey also inquired whether organisations had taken any measures to promote equality between the genders. It is a well-known fact that there is a pay differential between women and men in favour of men, that tasks are not divided evenly between the genders at workplaces and that men do not exercise their right to statutory family leaves to the same extent as women do. On the other hand, the current Finnish Equality Act obliges every workplace with at least 30 employees to draw up an equality plan.

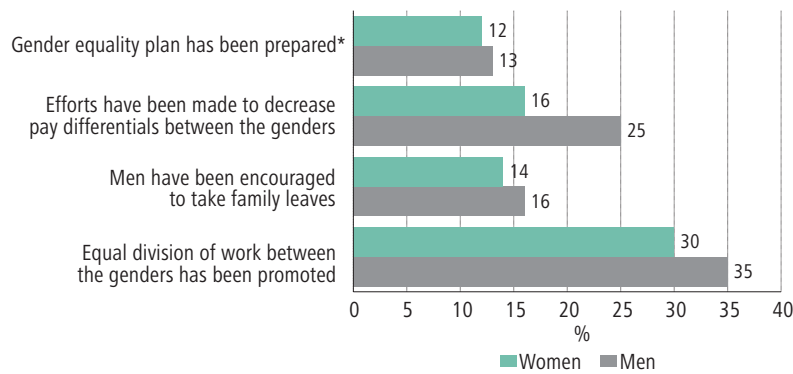
The results obtained with the question about the existence of equality plans and diverse measures to promote equality are shown in Figure 51. These reveal that very little has been done to promote equality between the genders. At least employees have not observed such measures.

Although the figure only examines the **existence of equality plans** in respect of those workplaces with at least 30 employees, the proportion is surprisingly small. Positive answers were given by 12 per cent of the respondents, on the average. Seventeen per cent on all employees at workplaces with at least 30 employees did not know whether an equality plan existed and eight per cent thought the question did not apply to them. The gender composition of a workplace can well be assumed to have an impact on the amount of importance that is attached to an equality plan. Yet, plans to promote equality had been observed at only 14 per cent of the workplaces with over 30 employees of whom equal numbers were women and men.

The public sector clearly excels in this matter. Whereas one in four (24%) of the central government's employees report that a plan has been made, the respective proportion in the other employer sectors is only 11 per cent. The distribution by occupational group shows that such plans may exist in a larger proportion of workplaces than the above-mentioned 12 per cent. Both women and men in administrative management work report more often (31%) than others that such plans exist. However, information about their existence has not reached an ordinary line worker.

An interesting aspect in answers to the question of whether measures had been taken to **decrease pay differentials between the genders** is that considerably more men (25%) than women (16%) have noted this kind of activity. Women and men agree that large workplaces with over 200 employees have done more to reduce this pay gap. By contrast, when examined by occupa-

Figure 51 Measures taken to advance gender equality in the organisation
"Yes" answers, Quality of Work Life Survey 2003



* Workplaces with at least 30 employees

tional group, such public sector areas as teaching, health care, social services and, on the private side, service work are fields where the views of women and men are strongly divergent. Men are clearly more often than women of the opinion that measures have been taken to reduce pay differentials between the genders.

More men than women (16% vs. 14%) have also observed **encouragement of men to take family leaves**. In this, too, the central government sector is the forerunner, as men think that men are encouraged there (24%), while the women working in the sector have not observed quite so much of it (17%). However, compared to other employer sectors, these percentages are high, for in the private sector the corresponding proportion for both genders is 14 per cent. If almost all the employees at a workplace are men, encouragement of men to take family leaves is lowest, 11 per cent. Yet, at workplaces with employees of both genders the percentage is 23 per cent.

Of all the inquired equality measures, observations were most frequent of promotion of **equal division of work between the genders**. In this, too, men were more perceptive (35%) than women (30%), or women took a more realistic view of the situation. Men had noted these kinds of measures particularly frequently in the central government sector (48%), where the proportion among all male wage and salary earners approached one in two. According to women, there were far fewer measures of this kind (33%) in the same sector. Size of the workplace seems to have a bearing on this, judging by men's responses at least, for almost half of men at large workplaces of over 200 employees had observed efforts towards equal division of work between the genders.

Violence, harassment, bullying and discrimination

Physical violence, or threat of it has increased clearly in the work of female wage and salary earners. Some growth was evident in this already between 1990 and 1997, but in the latest survey the proportion of women having **experienced physical violence or threat of it in their work** has gone up considerably, i.e. to a quarter. Among men, the proportion remained on level with 1997 (Figure 52). These results are congruent with those concerning the threats and hazards associated with work that were asked about in a separate question. (See subsequent Chapter on Threats and hazards associated with work)

Experiences of violence or threat of it vary by occupational group. Health care, social service and other service work carry by far the biggest risks: more than one in ten in the field of health care have experienced violence or threat of it at least a couple of times a month. Experiences of physical violence or threat of it are also more frequent than on the average among the wage and salary earners engaged in teaching, service and transport work.

The growth of violence or threat of it has also taken place in the occupational groups of teaching, health care, social services and transport. A small increase has also happened in commercial and service work, and even administrative management and office work.

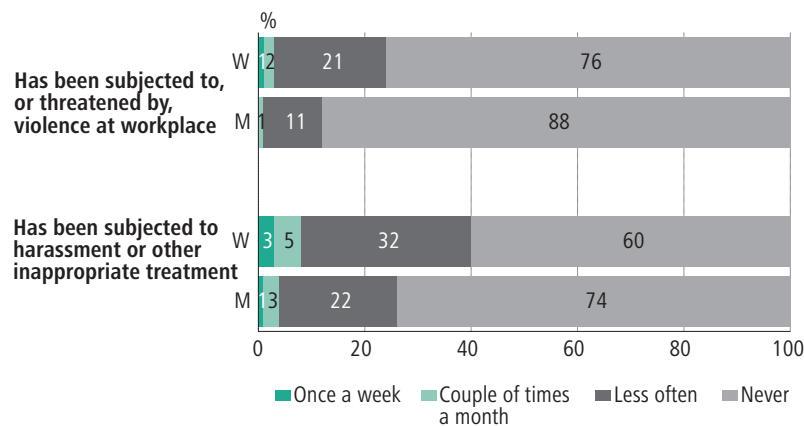
Differences between the genders in experiences of violence are not large, when the occupational groups of health care, commerce and transport are examined. However, in teaching work more women (27%) than men (20%) have experienced violence. By contrast, in the occupational group of service work, being subjected to or threatened by physical violence is much more common among men (41%) than women (16%). Men in service occupations typically work in guarding and security jobs, while women work in hotels and restaurants or as cleaners. Experiences of violence or threat of it at least a couple of times a month are as common among the men working in these service occupations as they are among wage and salary earners in health care occupation, i.e. more than ten per cent have them.

In most cases the physical violence or threat of it come from parties other than co-workers. Thirty per cent of the employees (34% of women and 23% of men) who are in contact with customers for more than half of their working time have experienced violence or threat of it, whereas the corresponding proportion among other employees is eight per cent.

The growth of the phenomenon is also clearest among employees working with customers. In 1997, the proportion of the employees doing customer service work who had experienced violence or threat of it was 22 per cent. On the other hand, more women than before whose work does not include customer contacts today have experiences of violence or threat of it (9% vs. 6%). The proportion among the men who do not work with customers has stayed on level with 1997, i.e. 6 per cent.

In almost all occupational groups, the very youngest wage and salary earners encounter violence or threat of it in their work more often than their seniors. Experience may have taught the older employees to anticipate situations better, but they have probably also sought safer tasks and shifts as they have grown older.

Figure 52 Violence and harassment at workplace
Quality of Work Life Survey 2003



Harassment and inappropriate treatment

The Finnish Occupational Safety and Health Act was amended as of the beginning of 2003 by extending the concept of occupational safety and health to also concern psychological, and not just physical, safety and health. The amended Act requires the employer to intervene if an employee is subjected in his or her work to harassment or other inappropriate treatment that causes inconvenience or danger. (The Occupational Safety and Health Act 738/2002, Section 28) Since this amendment took effect, contacts to industrial safety district offices have increased.

With view to the amended Act, respondents to the 2003 Quality of Work Life Survey were asked whether they **had been subjected to harassment or any other inappropriate treatment when at work**. Such experiences were clearly more familiar to women (40%) than men (26%). Eight per cent of women and four per cent of men reported having been subjected to harassment or inappropriate treatment at least a couple of times a month. (Figure 52)

Like physical violence, harassment and inappropriate treatment often originate from customers/pupils/patients. Experiences of harassment are twice as frequent among the employees who are in contact with customers for at least half of their working time (44%) as among those employees who have fewer or no contacts with customers (22%). Almost one half (48%) of the women doing customer contact work have been subjected to harassment, while the respective proportion among men doing similar work is one third (37%).

Experiences of harassment or inappropriate treatment are the more frequent the younger the employees concerned. Women aged under 25 are the most susceptible target for harassment: half (50%) of them have experienced harassment when at work and almost a fifth (18%) have been subjected to it at least a couple of times a month. Among the young women who are in con-

tact with customers for at least half of their working time the proportion of those being harassed monthly rises to as high as a quarter (23%).

Harassment and inappropriate treatment are by far the most prevalent (58%) in health care work, but they are also more common (39 to 47%) than the average in the occupational groups of teaching, social services, and commercial and transport work.

Psychological violence

The 1997 and 2003 Quality of Work Life Surveys define **psychological violence, or workplace bullying**, as isolation of a member of the work community, voiding/nullifying the results of his/her work, telling stories behind his/her back or exertion of some other form of mental pressure on him/her. The respondents were asked **whether this type of behaviour existed at their workplace** (even from customers) and **whether they had (had) personal experiences of it** – at the moment, previously at the current workplace, previously at another workplace or never. In 2003, those respondents having experience bullying were asked whether the bullying persons were (had been) supervisors, co-workers, subordinates or customers.

The proportions of employees having both observed bullying and been personally subjected to it have gone up since 1997, mainly among women. (Figures 53 and 54) On the whole, women report more personal experiences and observations of bullying than men. The disparity may partly be due to the different ways women and men interpret situations. It may also be easier for women to admit that they have personally been bullied.

The answers to the question concerning respondents' personal experiences show that the proportion of women who have been bullied in the past – either at their current or at a previous workplace – has gone up in particular.

This finding is interesting. It may be connected with the fact that workplace bullying did not really become a topic of public discussion until after the

Figure 53 Prevalence of workplace bullying at workplace
Quality of Work Life Surveys 1997 and 2003

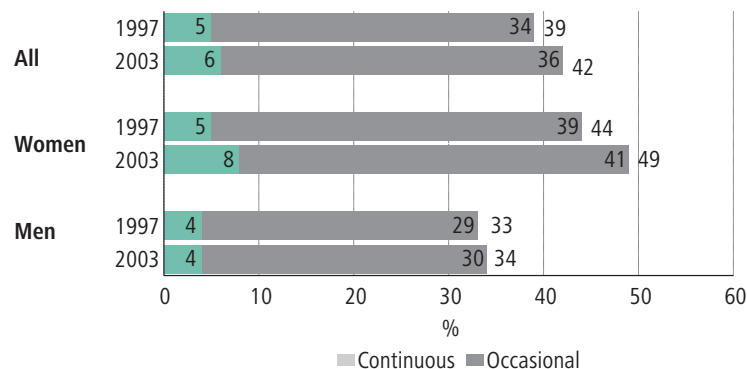
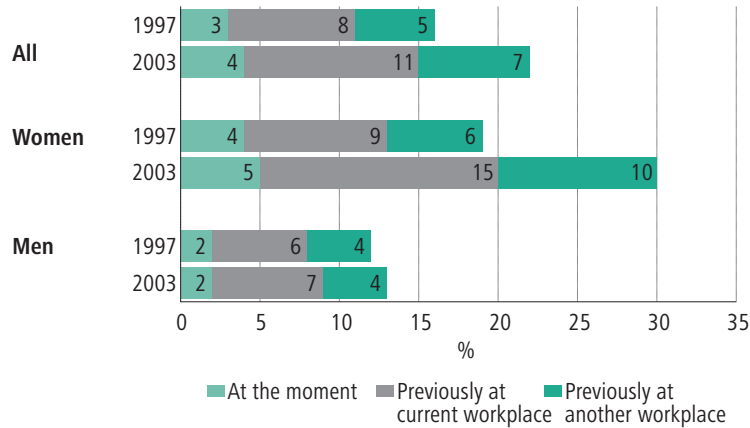


Figure 54 Has been personally subjected to workplace bullying
Quality of Work Life Surveys 1997 and 2003



1997 Quality of Work Life Survey. Consciousness of the existence of this phenomenon has grown: it is likely that an increasing number of different types of behaviour are reported and labelled as workplace bullying. It may also be that a certain kind of personally experienced treatment is only recognised and named as workplace bullying once it has been brought out to the open.

Especially women observed more psychological violence at their workplace in 2003 (49%) than in 1997 (44%). Both continuous and occasional psychological violence have increased.

The proportion of the men having observed psychological violence at their workplace only grew by one percentage point to 34 per cent. The increase is explained by a slightly larger proportion than before reporting occasional psychological violence.

Employees aged under 25, those with fixed-term contracts or having been less than twelve months at the workplace have observed less psychological violence than older employees, those in permanent employment relationships or having been longer at the same workplace. This suggests that psychological violence may be very subtle, invisible to newcomers.

Employees working in health care (58%), social services (47%) and teaching (46%) occupations have more frequent observations than others of psychological violence. Ten per cent of the wage and salary earners in health care occupations and seven per cent of those in commercial occupations report continuous psychological violence at their workplace.

It became clear already from the results of the 1997 Quality of Work Life Survey that the prevalence of workplace bullying is undoubtedly connected with many aspects of the work organisation, such as task management, information flow, uncertainty at the workplace, changes and time pressure. (Sutela & Lehto 1998, Vartia 2002) The results of the 2003 survey lend further support to these findings.

Workplace bullying is more prevalent at workplaces where monitoring or subcontracting have been increased to promote productiveness or profitability and where there is uncertainty about temporary redundancies or lay-offs.

Workplace bullying is quite usual at workplaces where there is uncertainty about unforeseen changes and increase of workload beyond tolerance capacity. The situation is especially bad when these kinds of uncertainties are combined with a habit of the workplace to only inform its employees about changes as they happen or have already taken place. (Table 7)

Time pressure also increases bullying: it is many times more prevalent at workplaces where time pressure spoils atmosphere or social interaction than at workplaces where statements concerning these aspects are disagreed with.

There is very little workplace bullying, or at least continuous bullying, at workplaces where tasks are well organised, there are enough personnel, problems are discussed sufficiently and employees are informed about forthcoming changes in good time, information flow is free and atmosphere is open and encouraging.

Table 7 Prevalence of psychological violence at workplace by uncertainties associated with unforeseen changes and provision of information about changes 2003

Uncertainty about coming changes and provision of information about them	Prevalence of bullying at workplace			
	Total %	Continuous %	Occasional %	None %
No uncertainty about coming changes				
Information provided at planning stage	100 (n=946)	3	31	66
Information provided just before the change	100 (n=927)	4	33	63
Information provided at the time of/after change	100 (n=543)	6	36	58
Uncertainty about coming changes				
Information provided at planning stage	100 (n=446)	4	39	57
Information provided just before the change	100 (n=670)	7	43	50
Information provided at the time of/after change	100 (n=498)	14	41	45

Personal experiences of workplace bullying

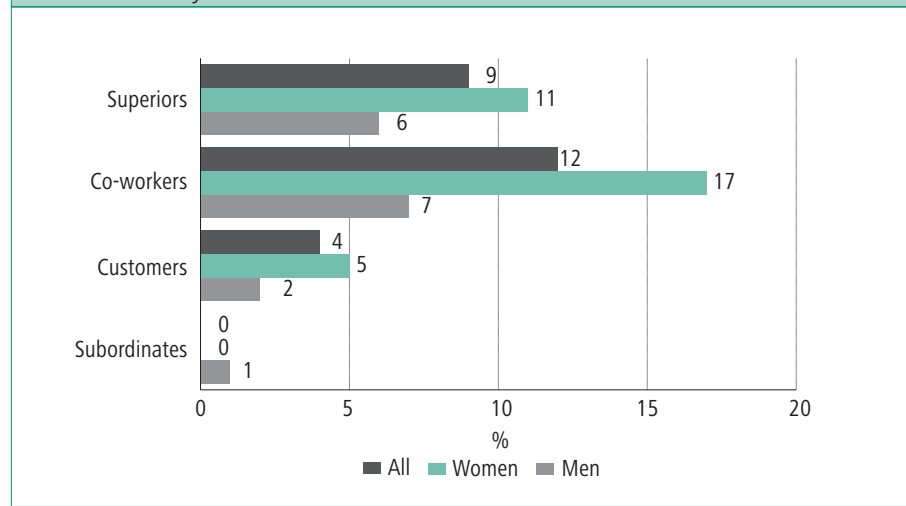
The occupational groups in which personal experiences of workplace bullying are most prevalent are, naturally, at least partly the same in which bullying has also been observed most frequently. The proportions of employees being currently subjected to bullying are highest in health care work (7%), social services work (6%), commercial work (5%) and service work (5%). The respective proportion in transport and office work is four per cent and in other occupational fields around two per cent. Past experiences of bullying are also most frequent in the same occupational fields: health care (17%), social services (15%) and teaching (14%).

In the most common situation, the **bullying persons** are (have been) co-workers. Seventeen per cent of female and seven per cent of male wage and salary earners are currently or have previously been bullied by co-workers. Men have been bullied equally frequently (7%) by supervisors and co-workers. Eleven per cent of women have experienced bullying from supervisors. Customers or pupils/students have bullied five per cent of women and two per cent of men. Being subjected to psychological violence by subordinates is least

common of all – one per cent of wage and salary earners have experienced it. (Figure 55)

The targets of workplace bullying are likely to suffer from many kinds of psychological and somatic symptoms. Even the employees having observed bullying as bystanders at their workplace have clearly more of such symptoms than employees at a workplace where bullying does not take place.

Figure 55 Bullying persons at workplace
Proportions of all wage and salary earners, Quality of Work Life Survey 2003



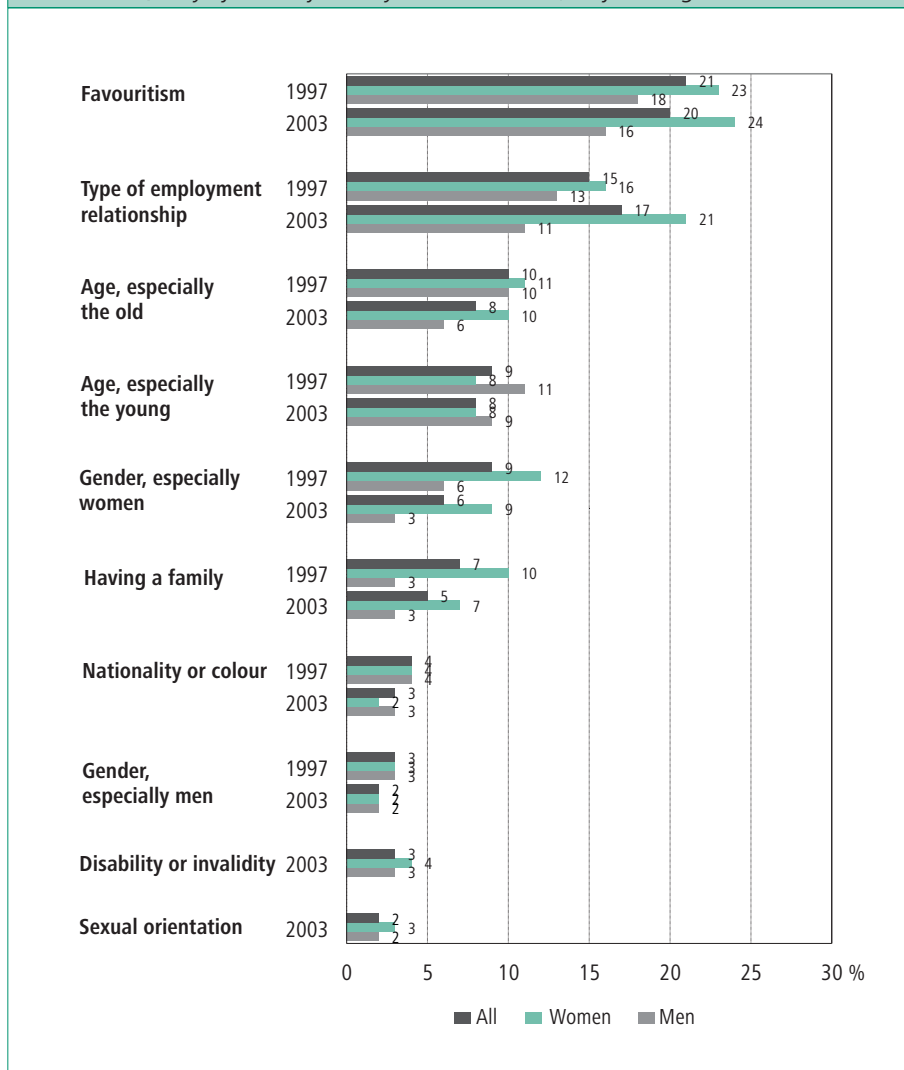
Discrimination

One wage and salary earner in five (20%) in Finland have observed **discrimination or unequal** treatment based on favouritism in his/her work organisation. In the opinion of one in six (17%), there is discrimination based on the type of employment contract while every tenth employee has also observed at his/her workplace discrimination on the grounds of age. (Figure 56)

Women have observed more frequently than men almost all the forms of discrimination inquired about in the Quality of Work Life Survey. Women have noticed sexual discrimination directed at women about three times as often, and discrimination on the grounds of type of employment contract or having a family twice as often as men. The only types of discrimination of which men had more observations than women were those based on young age, nationality or colour.

Reported observations of discrimination were altogether fewer in the 2003 survey than in the 1997 survey. This concerned especially discrimination of women because of their gender and discrimination based on having a family. The only exceptions were discrimination based on favouritism and that based on type of employment contract, of which women had more numerous observations than before. The growth is especially clear in discrimination based on type of employment relationship. A partial explanation to this may be increased awareness, as the problems associated with fixed-term jobs have been the subject of lively discussion in recent years.

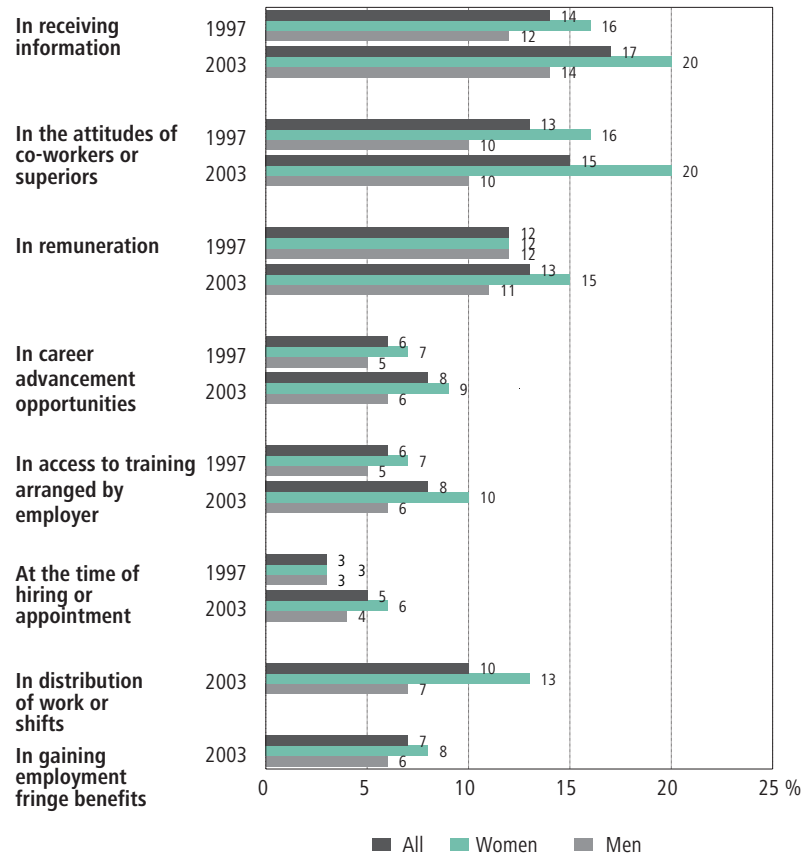
Figure 56 Discrimination observed at workplace
Quality of Work Life Surveys 1997 and 2003, on following bases: Favouritism



The above description also applies to personal experiences of discrimination for different reasons. Fewer wage and salary earners than before have experienced discrimination on the grounds of any of the reasons listed in the question, with the exception of favouritism and type of employment relationship. Slightly more employees than before had personal experiences of discrimination for these reasons.

On the other hand, more employees than before report having **experienced discrimination or unequal treatment in certain situations** at their current workplace. (Figure 57) The comparability of the figures is somewhat weakened by the fact that in 1997 the question contained no time limit whereas in the 2003 survey respondents were asked about experiences of discrimination or unequal treatment in the last five years.

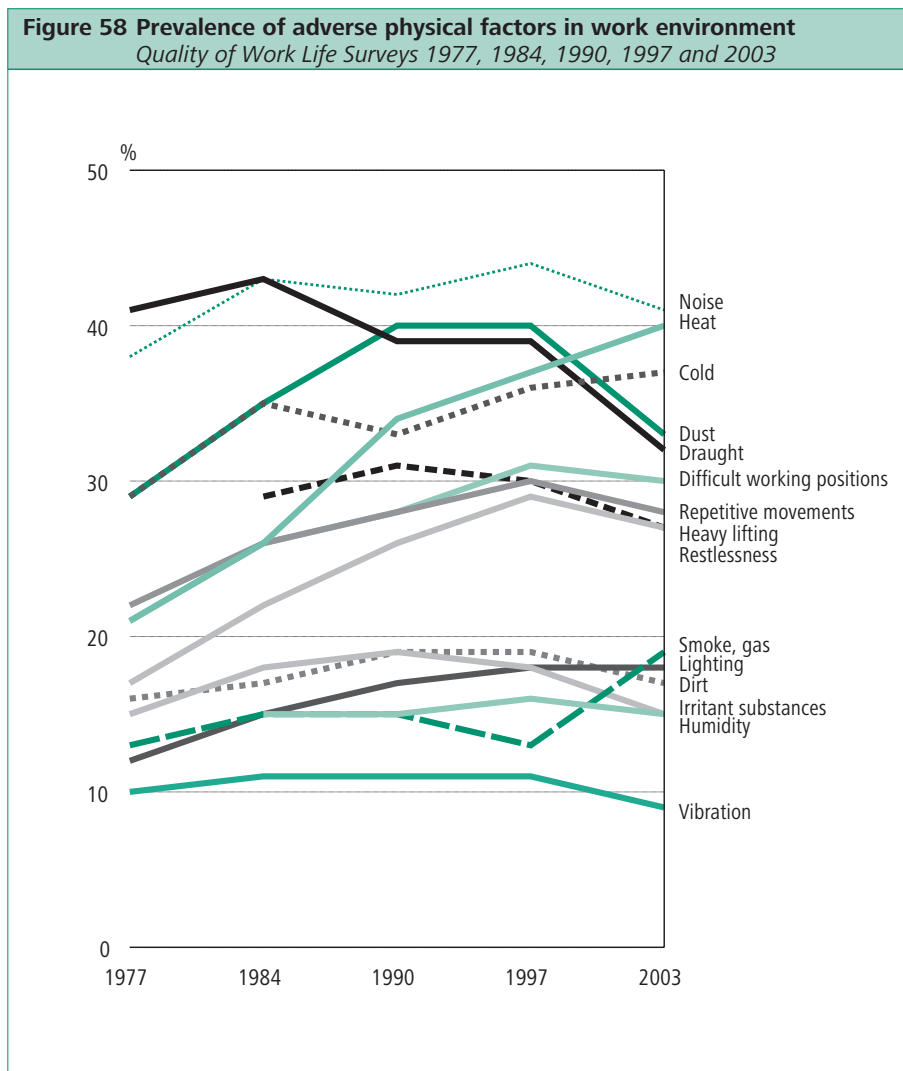
Figure 57 Experienced discrimination at current workplace
In the last five years, Quality of Work Life Surveys 1997 and 2003



Experiences of discrimination or unequal treatment are most prevalent in receiving information, attitudes of co-workers and superiors, remuneration and distribution of work or shifts. Women have experienced more discrimination than men in all situations; the difference between the genders has actually grown in receiving information, attitudes of others and access to training. In 1997, experiences of unequal treatment in remuneration and at the time of hiring or appointment were equally widespread among women and men, but there were differences even here in 2003.

Adverse physical factors

In 2003, wage and salary earners observed more adverse physical factors in their work environment than they did a quarter-of-a-century earlier. According to the answers to the 2003 survey, the only exceptions were draught, which was less prevalent, and vibration, which was as common as in 1997. (Figure 58, Table 8)



However, a gratifying finding is that growth in many of the adverse physical factors had halted by the turn of the 1990s. In comparing the years 1997 and 2003, the proportions of employees having observed many of the listed adverse physical factors have actually gone down. The only adverse factors that are experienced more now than in 1997 are heat, and smoke, gases and fumes.

Table 8 Prevalence of adverse physical factors in work environment

	1977 %	1984 %	1990 %	1997 %	2003 %
Heat	21	26	34	37	40
Cold	29	35	33	36	37
Draught	41	43	39	39	32
Humidity		15	15	16	15
Restlessness of work environment	17	22	26	29	27
Dust	29	35	40	40	33
Smoke, gases, fumes	13	15	15	13	19
Irritant substances	15	18	19	18	15
Noise	38	43	42	44	41
Poor/glaring lighting	12	15	17	18	18
Dirtiness of work environment	16	17	19	19	17
Repetitive, monotonous movements	22	26	28	30	28
Difficult working positions	21	26	28	31	30
Heavy lifting		29	31	30	27
Vibration	10	11	11	11	9
Inadequate ventilation					35

The growth in the prevalence of adverse physical factors since 1977 seems surprising, because so much has been achieved in occupational safety since the 1970s.

In questions like these, comparisons become difficult because wage and salary earners' consciousness of adverse factors in their environment has increased, which influences their personal assessments and experiences.

Men observe many of the different listed adverse factors in their work environment more frequently than women do. Only restlessness and repetitive movements are clearly more common in women's than in men's work environment. Difficult or awkward working positions, heavy lifting, lack of space and mildew are as common in women's as in men's work environment.

Hazards and risks associated with work

Since the 1984 Quality of Work Life Survey, respondents have been asked about their views concerning diverse **illness or accident hazards associated with work**: do they experience the aspects listed in the relevant question as distinct hazards, think about them occasionally or do not see them as hazards at all. (Figure 59, Table 9)

Growth could first be seen between 1984 and 1990 in the frequencies at which all the listed items were experienced as hazards, but after this the proportions fell in respect of many of them. Most probably as a result of efficient improvements of industrial safety, the experiencing of risks of accidents, caus-

Figure 59 Experiencing of hazards in own work

Experiences as clear hazard or thinks about occasionally, Quality of Work Life Surveys 1984, 1990, 1997 and 2003

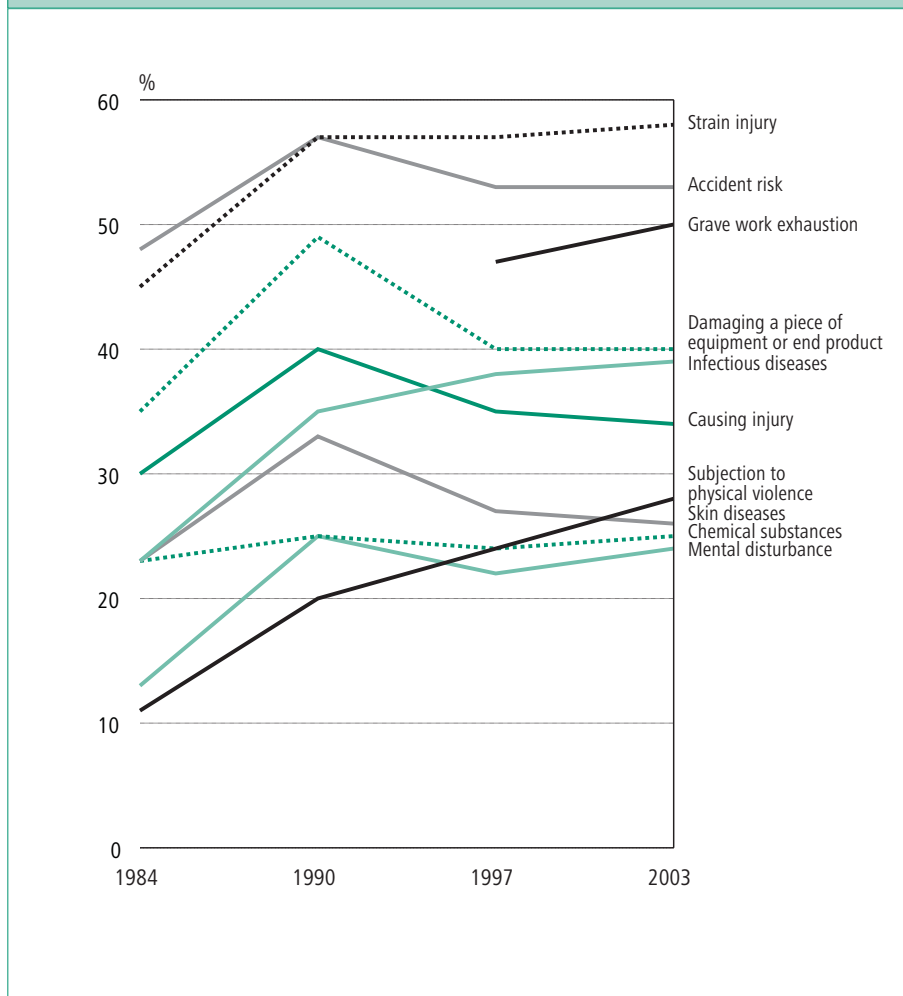


Table 9 Experiencing of hazards in own work

	1984 %	1990 %	1997 %	2003 %
Risk of strain injury	45	57	57	58
Accident risk	48	57	53	53
Risk of grave work exhaustion			47	50
Risk of causing serious damage to piece of equipment or end product	35	49	40	40
Hazard of infectious diseases	23	35	38	39
Risk of causing serious injury to someone else	30	40	35	34
Risk of becoming subjected to physical violence	11	20	24	28
Hazard of skin disease	23	33	27	26
Hazards caused by chemical substances	23	25	24	25
Risk of succumbing to mental disturbance	13	25	22	24

ing injury to others or contracting skin diseases has become clearly less widespread since the 1990 survey. The fear of causing damage to a valuable piece of equipment or end product was particularly prevalent in 1990, but subsided clearly during the decade that followed.

This may be explained by the rapid increase in the use of information technology that had started in the 1980s: many employees may have initially feared that they could not use the new, strange gadgets without breaking them. As their use became established, employees became accustomed to them, which dispelled the fears.

However, fears concerning strain injuries, contracting infectious diseases and becoming subjected to physical violence have continued to grow. In the latest survey, the risk of grave work exhaustion was also perceived as a threat more often than in 1997, when a question about it was first included in the survey. During the entire time period covered by the surveys no appreciable changes have taken place in employees' views about chemical substance in this respect.

The experiencing of grave work exhaustion as a distinct hazard, or at least thinking about it occasionally have increased in several occupational groups, whereas the growth in experiencing physical violence as a threat is concentrated in the occupational groups of health and social care, and teaching work. In health care occupations the proportion of employees viewing subjection to physical violence as a distinct hazard has doubled from 8 to 16 per cent over the 1997 to 2003 period, and over quadrupled from three to 13 per cent in the same time period among employees working in social service occupations. If the employees who occasionally think about becoming subjected to physical violence as a hazard are included on top of those who actually experience it as a hazard, in the same six years the proportions have gone from 58 to 70 per cent in health care work, from 36 to 48 per cent in social service work and from 24 to 30 per cent in teaching.

There are considerable differences between women and men in the experiencing of the various hazards. Women experience physical violence and infectious diseases as distinct hazards in their work twice as often as men do. Women also experience the risk of strain injuries, succumbing to mental disturbance and the risk of grave work exhaustion as distinct hazards more frequently than men do.

The most widespread fear among women is that of strain injuries. One woman in five (21%) sees it as a distinct hazard, while 43 per cent of women think about it as a hazard occasionally. The next most common threat among women is that of grave work exhaustion, which one woman in ten (10%) experience as a distinct hazard and 45 per cent think about occasionally.

By comparison, men perceive the risks of accidents, chemical substances, causing serious injury to someone else or causing serious damage to a valuable piece of equipment as distinct hazards more frequently than women do. Among men, the most widespread cause for fear by far is the risk of an accident, which 18 per cent of men experience as a distinct hazard and 44 per cent think about as such at least every now and then. The next biggest fear among men is that of strain injury, which 14 per cent perceive as a clear hazard and 38 per cent think of as such occasionally.

Dissimilarities between the genders in the experiencing of hazards reflect the risks associated with different occupations. The occupational groups in which strain injuries are viewed as a hazard more frequently than the average include both male and female-dominated occupations: agricultural work, health care work, service work, manufacturing work, social service work, transport work and construction work. Nevertheless, the hazards of risk of accidents and risk of causing serious damage to a valuable piece of equipment are more prevalent in the male-dominated occupational fields of construction, transport, agricultural and industrial work. The experiencing of a risk of causing serious injury to someone else as a hazard is most frequent by far in construction work. However, it is also quite frequent in transport, health care and social service work. Chemical substances are mostly experienced as a hazard in industrial occupations.

The risks of grave work exhaustion and succumbing to mental disturbance are a problem especially in the female-dominated occupational groups of health care, social service and teaching work. Infectious diseases, physical violence and skin diseases are seen as distinct hazards in health care and social service work. Besides in these occupational groups, the risk of contracting infectious diseases is also seen as a hazard in teaching and service occupations, and employees working in manufacturing and service occupations also see the risk of skin diseases as a hazard.

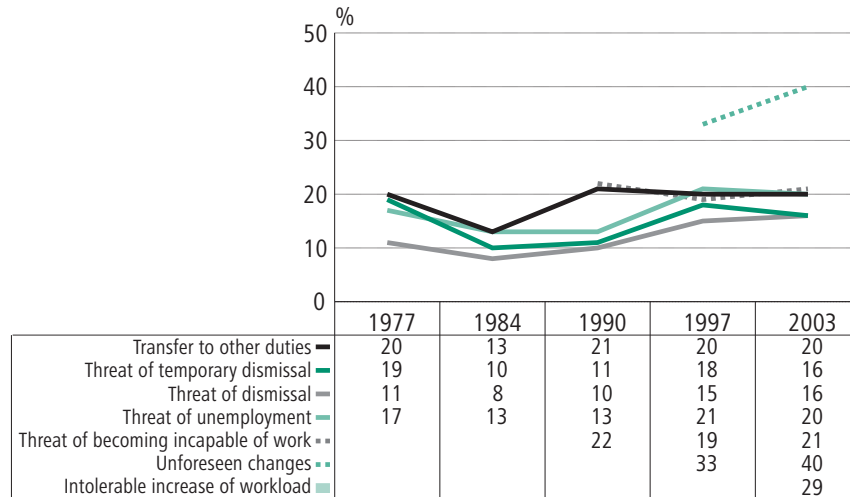
The experiencing of hazards in own work is by far most widespread among employees working in health care occupations. One in three (34%) of the employees working in these occupations experience at least two of the aspects listed in the question as a distinct hazard. Wage and salary earners doing office or administrative management work encounter least hazards, the proportion among them is only around four or five per cent.

Insecurity factors

From the outset, the Quality of Work Life Surveys have contained a question about such **insecurity factors connected with work** which influence labour market position. (Figure 60) In 1984, reports about diverse insecurity factors were fewest but the onset of the 1990s saw a return to the situation of the late 1970s in respect of the threats of temporary dismissal and transfer to other duties, and the situation was even gloomier with regard to the threats of dismissal

Figure 60 Insecurity factors connected with work

Quality of Work Life Surveys 1977, 1984, 1990, 1997 and 2003



and unemployment. However, it should be noted that none of the survey rounds coincided with periods of peak unemployment, when the proportions of respondents expressing these fears would have certainly been higher.

Except for the factor of unforeseen changes, the results from the latest survey are fairly reminiscent of those from 1997. Insecurity because of unforeseen changes – as vague as this concept is – increased notably at the turn of the millennium, rising from 33 per cent to 40 per cent in 2003.

Intolerable increase of workload was a new insecurity factor added to this survey question in 2003. This threat was felt by women (40%) clearly more strongly than by men (29%).

Women feared the listed insecurity factors more than men did, although the differences were mostly small. An exception to this is the threat of temporary dismissal, which men feared clearly more frequently (19%) than women did (13%).

The threats of dismissal (19%) and unemployment (22%) are clearly largest in the private sector. In 1997, there were no appreciable differences between the employer sectors in the fear of unforeseen changes, but the 2003 survey showed clear variation: in the private sector 41 per cent, in the local government sector 38 per cent and in the central government sector 33 of employees feared unforeseen changes.

The increase in the fear of unforeseen changes is largely caused by the changes that have happened in the private sector.

By contrast, the fear of intolerable increase of workload is clearly a problem of the local government sector (43%). This factor is feared by 36 per cent of wage and salary earners in the central government sector and 32 per cent of those in the private sector. Almost half (46%) of the women employed in the local government sector fear that their workload will increase intolerably. A similar figure (47%) was also obtained for local government employees in a survey of the Municipal Pension Insurance Institute. (Forma et al. 2003)

Working hours

Local agreements about working hours increased in the 1990s. The revision of the Working Hours (Restrictions) Act in 1996 brought variation to the working hours even in fields where changes had not been made to working hours before. (Antila 2004.) According to Antila (1998) it seems that strongly grown competition has produced new arrangements of working hours dictated by the market; even in fields where no significant change has taken place in competition, diversified working hours have been adopted to give employees more choice. Thus, local agreements and variations of working hours are used to respond to the needs of production and/or employees. In addition, paid work has acquired entrepreneurial features, and lines are no longer drawn according to what is "normal". (Julkunen & Nätti 1999, Julkunen et al. 2004.)

The decline in the proportion of wage and salary earners doing conventional day work can also be seen in the time series of the Quality of Work Life Surveys, even though day work continues to be the **form of working hours** for the majority of Finnish wage and salary earners. (Figure 61) However, the proportion of employees doing shift work has grown and "other forms of working hours" became prevalent already at the turn of the 1990s. Other forms of working hours comprise weekend work and other irregular or varying working hours. In this examination, persons doing period work refer to the employees who report that they primarily do period work¹.

Form of working hours is clearly connected with occupational and socio-economic group. Nearly 90 per cent of upper white-collar employees continue to do day work. In a couple of decades, the proportion of those doing day work has decreased most among lower white-collar employees, from 77 to 64 per cent. This

Figure 61 Forms of working hours

Quality of Work Life Surveys 1984, 1990, 1997 and 2003



- 1 Most of the respondents doing periodic work say they do day, shift or evening/night work: eight per cent of those doing day work, just under half of shift workers, approximately one in five of the evening/night workers and 30 per cent of those with "other" forms of working hours say their work is periodic.

has happened especially due to the increase in shift work. The lowest proportion (59%) of those doing day work can be found among blue-collar employees.

Day work is still more of a rule than exception in administrative management occupations, office work and teaching, whereas in health care and service occupations it was not a very widespread form of working hours even as late as in the 1980s – in these occupational groups only around one half of employees do day work. The decrease of day work is most clearly evident in the occupational groups of transport, agricultural, social service, commercial and industrial work, in which irregular working hours have become increasingly prevalent.

Employees' possibility for brief absences from work in the middle of the working day to run personal errands can be examined over the entire time period covered by the surveys. (Figure 62) Such opportunities appear to have de-

Figure 62 Possibility for brief absences from workplace to run personal errands
Whenever required, Quality of Work Life Surveys 1977, 1984, 1990, 1997 and 2003

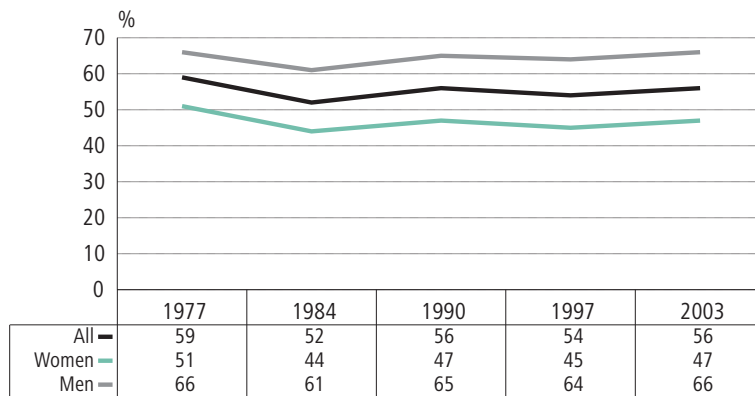
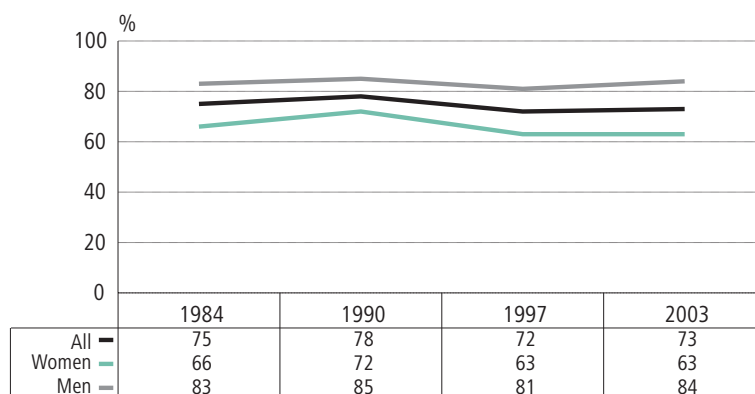


Figure 63 Possibility to take sufficient breaks from work
Quality of Work Life Surveys 1984, 1990, 1997 and 2003



clined if anything. Not much change has taken place in two or so decades either in the **possibility to take breaks sufficiently often**. (Figure 63)

By contrast, the **possibilities of influencing starting and/or finishing times of work by at least 30 minutes** have increased clearly since 1984. (Figure 64) However, this growth has largely come from the increased application of flexible working hours in day work. No appreciable change has happened in the other models of working hours.

The 2003 Quality of Work Life Survey contained new questions concerning the flexibility of working hours. Men's working hours are somewhat more flexible than women's – in the positive sense from the employees' perspective. "Negative" flexibility, such as **having to be flexible in working hours dictated**

Figure 64 Can influence starting and finishing times of own work
Can influence by at least 30 minutes, Quality of Work Life Surveys 1984, 1990, 1997 and 2003

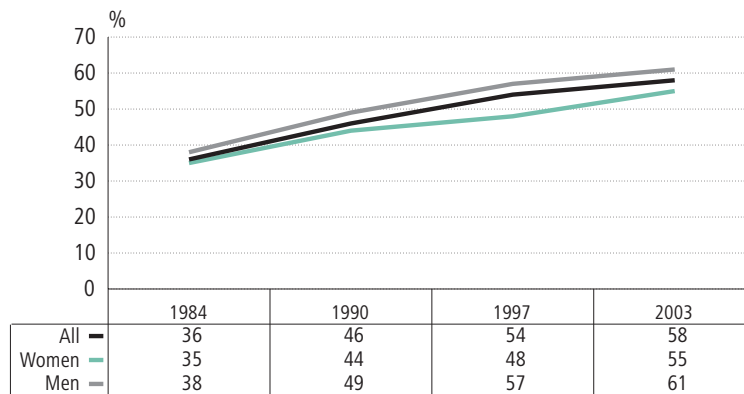
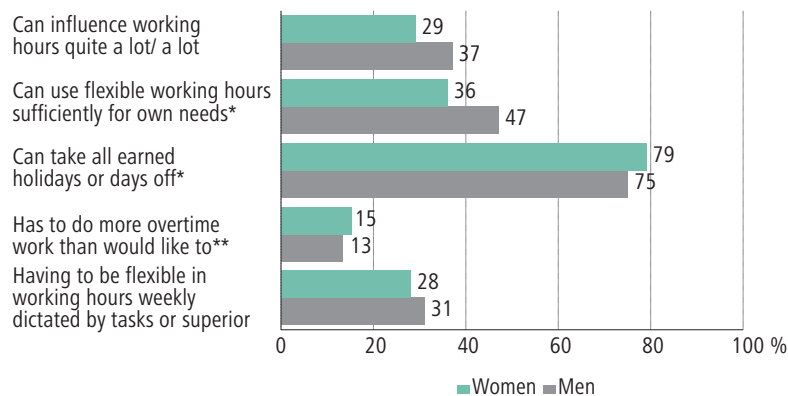


Figure 65 Flexibility of working hours
Quality of Work Life Survey 2003



* Totally true

** Totally true or true to some extent

by tasks or superior and having to do more overtime than one would like to, is almost equally common among women and men. (Figure 65)

Male upper white-collar employees have more opportunities than other men for applying flexible working hours. There is very little variation in this among women by socio-economic group. This is at least partially explained by the fact that approximately one third of the female upper white-collar employees work in teaching occupations where the opportunities for flexible working hours are relatively poor.

Overtime work

There has been a slight increase in **overtime compensated in money or time off** during the examined couple of decades. Men do compensated overtime slightly more frequently than women. Women mostly receive time off as compensation for their overtime whereas men are compensated in money. (Figure 66)

Overtime without compensation increased strongly in the 1980s and 1990s, but then decreased to some extent at the onset of the 2000s, especially among men. Working unpaid overtime is equally common among women and men. (Figure 67)

There is a clear link between type of overtime and socio-economic group. Uncompensated overtime working is typical among upper white-collar employees, of whom 56 per cent do it at least occasionally. Overtime compensated in money or time off is worked above all by blue-collar employees: 75 per cent do it at least now and then.

Altogether 14 per cent of wage and salary earners feel that they do **more overtime work than they would like to**. (Figure 65) Half of the wage and salary earners who do some kind of overtime work almost daily feel that they do more overtime than they would like to, while the corresponding proportion among those working overtime at least once a week is 37 per cent.

Figure 66 Paid overtime working

Compensated in money or time off, Quality of Work Life Surveys 1984, 1990, 1997 and 2003

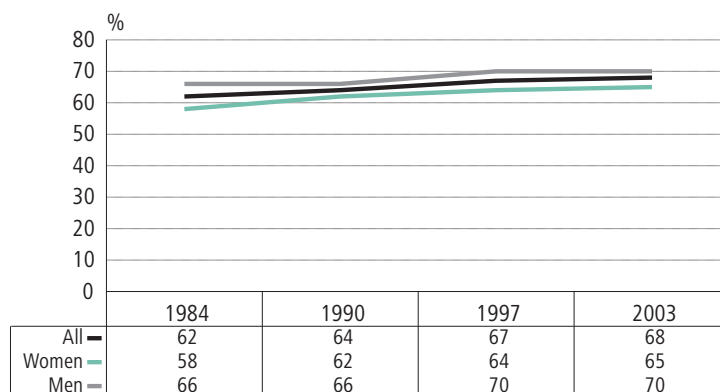
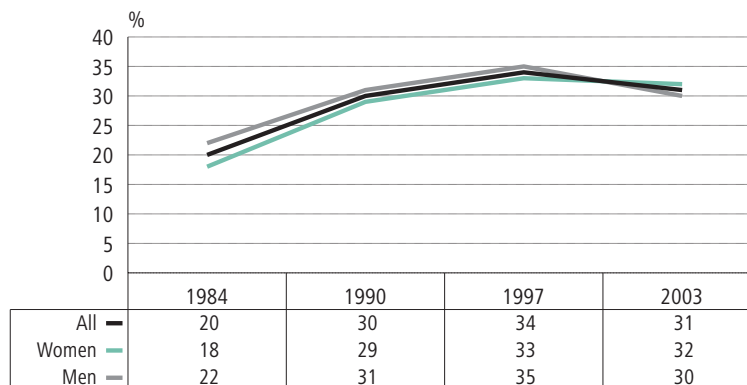


Figure 67 Unpaid overtime working

Works overtime for which no compensation is made, Quality of Work Life Surveys 1984, 1990, 1997 and 2003



Just under a third of both women and men do **work connected with their main job at least occasionally or partially at home**. The proportion increased from 1990 to 1997 but has since remained fairly stable. While 70 per cent of upper white-collar employees bring work home, under 10 per cent of blue-collar employees do so. At least one in three of male and every fourth female lower white-collar employee do work at least partially home.

With nearly 60 per cent of the employees, the working at home concerns overtime only or work without compensation, with one third an agreement made with the employer and with one tenth both are concerned.

Nearly 40 per cent of the employees doing work connected with their main job occasionally or partially at home use for it an hour per week, on the average, while two thirds (64%) spend two to three hours at most on it. However, one in ten of those who work at home occasionally do it for at least ten hours per week. Such high numbers of hours usually relate to a situation where an agreement has been made with the employer about working some hours at home.

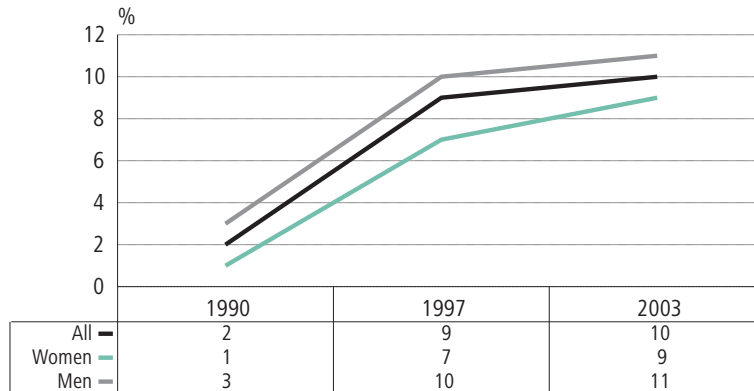
Arrangements independent of time and place

If an agreement has been made with the employer about **working at least partially at home and information technology is used to perform the work** teleworking can be referred to. Thus, the criteria used to define teleworking are an agreement with the employer and the use of information technology. Actual overtime or unpaid “work brought home” is not regarded as teleworking. Defined like this, teleworking increased nearly five-fold from 1990 to 1997, but has since grown only very little. (Figure 68)

In the 1997 and 2003 Quality of Work Life Surveys, employees were also asked direct whether they themselves thought they did teleworking. In these cases teleworking was defined as “paid work done away from the actual work-

Figure 68 Teleworking

Agreed with employer to work at least some hours from home utilising information technology, Quality of Work Life Surveys 1990, 1997 and 2003

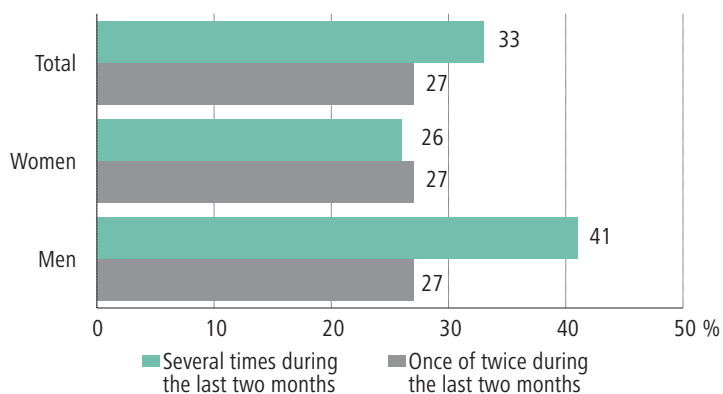


place under an agreement with the employer. The essential characteristics of teleworking being arrangements independent of time and place”.

In the 2003 survey, seven per cent of men and four per cent of women, or six per cent of all employees reported that they telework. The proportions had gone up by one percentage point for both genders since 1997. One employee in three, women slightly more often than men, would have been interested in teleworking. The interest towards teleworking had not grown from the previous survey round.

In the 2003 Quality of Work Life Survey respondents were asked whether they had been contacted in matters concerning their main job outside their actual working hours during the last two months. A vast majority of employees had been contacted at least once or twice. Approximately one in three, men more often than women, had been contacted several times in work-related matters in the last two months. (Figure 69)

Figure 69 Contacted in matters concerning work outside working hours
Quality of Work Life Survey 2003



There are clear differences in this by socio-economic group. Upper white-collar employees are contacted in work-related matters distinctly more frequently than lower white-collar or blue-collar employees. Just under one quarter of upper white-collar employees had escaped contacts altogether while one in two had been contacted several times. The corresponding proportions among blue-collar employees are reversed: one in two respondents had not been contacted at all and one in four had been contacted several times.

Most of the employees who are contacted in work-related matters outside their actual working hours also want to be reachable from their own free will. This is more typical among men (78%) than women (70%).

Family, work and time use

Three out of four (74%) of the respondents of the Quality of Work Life Survey live in a married or co-habiting relationship and 40 per cent of all of them have children aged under 18 living at home.

Women in partner relationships still continue to do the largest share of housework. Approximately one in three of the married or co-habiting respondents think that the wife does much more, and good one quarter report that she does slightly more domestic work at home. Basing on the answers of both genders, some progress seems to have taken place between 1990 and 1997 towards more equal sharing of housework. According to the replies of women in the 2003 survey, the situation has remained unchanged since 1997, whereas more men than before (31% vs. 24%) feel that they do as much housework as their spouse. Respectively, fewer male respondents than before (30% vs. 36%) are of the opinion that the wife does much more housework than they do.

Under half of the married or co-habiting respondents report that **conflicts have arisen in the family about working hours, household work and personal time** at least occasionally. About three per cent say that this was true in the past but not anymore. Half of the respondents say that they manage to adjust times peaceably.

Conflicts arising from time use appear to connect above all with the family phase. (Table 10) (Julkunen et al. 2004) The younger children the family has, the more conflicts there are. On the other hand, among the respondents with-

Table 10 Conflicts about working hours, household work and personal time among married or co-habiting wage and salary earners by age of youngest child, 2003

	Total %	Times are adjusted peacefully %	Conflicts arise from time to time/often %	Conflicts before but not anymore %
Total	100 (n=3017)	47	50	3
No children	100 (n=1534)	57	39	3
Under 3 years	100 (n=345)	30	70	–
3– 6 years	100 (n=350)	32	67	2
7–11 years	100 (n=413)	42	55	2
12–17 years	100 (n=375)	53	43	4

out children, the proportion of couples capable of amicable settlement also grows along with age, at the same time as the proportions of those stating that “there were conflicts in the past but not anymore” increase. Only 43 per cent of the respondent couples aged under 25 without children come to amicable agreements about time matters, whereas the respective proportion among couples aged over 55 without children is over 70 per cent. These older respondents who do not have children aged under 18 living at home (anymore), state more often (6%) than others that there were conflicts before but not anymore.

In addition to most of the respondent employees having a family, two out of five (40%) also have to assume diverse **care responsibilities for their relatives living outside the household**.

This is slightly more typical among women (42%) than men (37%). Good one third of wage and salary earners have care responsibilities for **adults** and more than one in ten for **children**, for instance grandchildren. (Tables 11 and 12) When the caring concerns a child or children, the average number of hours

Table 11 Care responsibilities for *adults* outside the household, wage and salary earners by age, 2003

	Total	No care responsibilities	1–9 hours per month	10 or more hours per month
	%	%	%	%
Total	100	66	19	14
Age 15–24	100	72	16	12
Age 25–34	100	75	15	9
Age 35–44	100	65	22	13
Age 45–54	100	58	22	19
Age 55–64	100	66	17	16

Table 12 Care responsibilities for *children* outside the household, wage and salary earners by age, 2003

	Total	No care responsibilities	1–9 hours per month	10 or more hours per month
	%	%	%	%
Total	100	87	7	5
Age 15–24	100	90	5	5
Age 25–34	100	95	2	2
Age 35–44	100	93	3	3
Age 45–54	100	84	10	5
Age 55–64	100	71	18	10

it takes per month is clearly higher than when adults have to be cared for. Some wage and salary earners care for both adults and children. Having to care for children is more usual among women than men, but both genders care almost equally for adults.

Comparisons by age group indicate that the care responsibility often concerns the carer's or his or her spouse's ageing parents and/or grandchildren. Caring for children is most widespread in the age group of those over 55, in which one woman employee in three and one man in four state that they are at least occasionally responsible for looking after children who do not live in their household. Having the care responsibility for adults is most frequent, and the number of hours used for it highest, among those aged from 45 to 54. In this age group, own parents and those of the spouse are often still alive but may already need help.

Pay systems

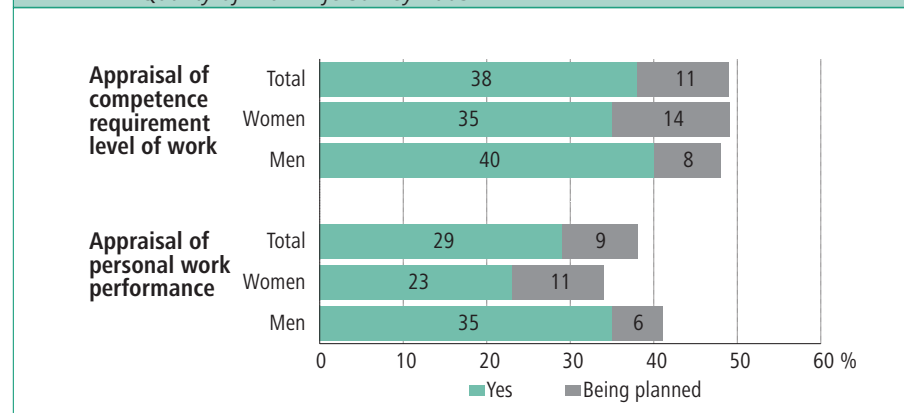
Since the 1984 survey, the Quality of Work Life Surveys have included quite a number of questions about pay, as it has been viewed as an important contributor to well-being at work. In fact, the quality of Work Life Survey has been almost the only tool for researching pay differentials between women and men, as it has made it possible to examine simultaneously important factors that influence pay, such as amount of work experience, level of education and employer sector, as well as other aspects of working conditions. The results have been quoted in many national and EU reports. (Lehto 1988, 1992, 1999, 2002)

Separate analyses concerning size of pay will also be published later on from this survey conducted in 2003. These will approach pay especially from the perspective of the different positions of the genders. This report contains some new data on the composition of pay and payment of performance-based bonuses, requests for pay rises, and perceived fairness of pay, on which a question has already been included in the Quality of Work Life Surveys before this.

Figure 70 depicts answers to the questions of whether the respondent's own pay system is based on **appraisal of the requirement level of work**, on the one hand, and on **appraisal of personal work performance**, on the other. In both questions those respondents whose pay system was not based on either of these were additionally asked whether such a system was being planned. The interviewer's instructions contained more detailed descriptions of the kinds of systems that could be concerned. Workplaces use a huge variety of different pay systems, but the two elements referred to here can, nevertheless, probably be identified from them.

According to the survey responses, pay systems based on **appraisal of the requirement level of work** are already in place at quite a number of workplaces, or among 38 per cent of wage and salary earners, slightly more frequently among men (40%) than women (35%). Moreover, 11 per cent of wage and salary earners state that such a system is being planned, and this applies to women more than men. For the time being, the systems based on appraisal of the requirement level of work appear to concentrate on tasks requiring high education (43%), but the difference with those having basic level of education only is not a large one (33%).

Figure 70 Basis for remuneration system
Quality of Work Life Survey 2003



Of the employer sectors, the central government (46%) and the private sector (41%) have introduced clearly more systems based on appraisal of requirement level of work than the local government sector (28%). In the private sector, enterprises in foreign ownership (64%) distinguish themselves in this respect, too, from those operating in Finland only (35%). This is also indicated when the results by size of establishment are examined, for 66 per cent of the workplaces employing more than 1,000 people have adopted some kind of a system for appraising the requirement level of work.

It is difficult to detect clear differences between occupations, but teaching (14%) and social services (21%) are fields where the requirement levels of work are not much appraised as yet. Nevertheless, in these fields such systems are being planned more frequently than the average, among 21 per cent of the workplaces in the field of social services.

The survey answers indicate that **appraisals of personal work performance** are applied less but, quite naturally, in the same fields as appraisals of the requirement level of work, as these two are often components of the same system. Appraisals of personal work performance are clearly more typical in men's (35%) than in women's (23%) work. This may be due to the difficulty of assessing work performances in the typically female work that involves human contacts: there cannot actually be any quantifiable performances. However, quantitative assessments of work performances have at least thus far been easier to apply.

When the application of appraisals of work performance is examined by employer sector, the difference is the greatest between the central government (41%) and the local government (14%), with the private sector settling in between these two (33%). The high percentage for the central government sector is probably explained by the systematically introduced pay system reviews that have been implemented within it. Lack of quantitative measures makes appraising difficult in the central government sector, too, but the responsibility for the appraising has been increasingly assigned to supervisors. Again, there is a large difference in this between foreign-owned (52%) and domestic (28%) enterprises in the private sector. Examined by size of establishment, those with over 200 employees apply appraisals of personal work performances clearly more (approx. 50%) than those with fewer than ten employees (17%).

Among men, assessments of personal success are applied clearly more frequently to highly educated employees (44%) than to those with basic level of education (28%). There is no such clear disparity among women, for the respective proportions are only 28 per cent among those with high level of education, 22 per cent for those with basic level of education and 18 per cent for those with upper secondary education. Examined by occupation, the proportions are under 15 per cent in teaching, health care and social services, which are the typical women's fields requiring high education where assessing performances is difficult.

A third element of pay studied with the Quality of Work Life Surveys has been systems of bonus **payments by results or profit-sharing**. The survey contains a number of questions about this to establish whether such systems are used at workplaces, employees are covered by them, which groups receive such bonuses, whether employees had received them for the previous year and how much. Thirty-two per cent of all wage and salary earners state that such a system is in use at their workplace and 29 per cent say that they are personally covered by them. There is a very clear difference between men and women in this, for such systems are used at the workplaces of 42 per cent of men (cover-

ing 38% of men personally), whereas the respective proportions at the workplaces of women are 23 and 20 per cent. This is obviously a key contributor to pay differentials between women and men.

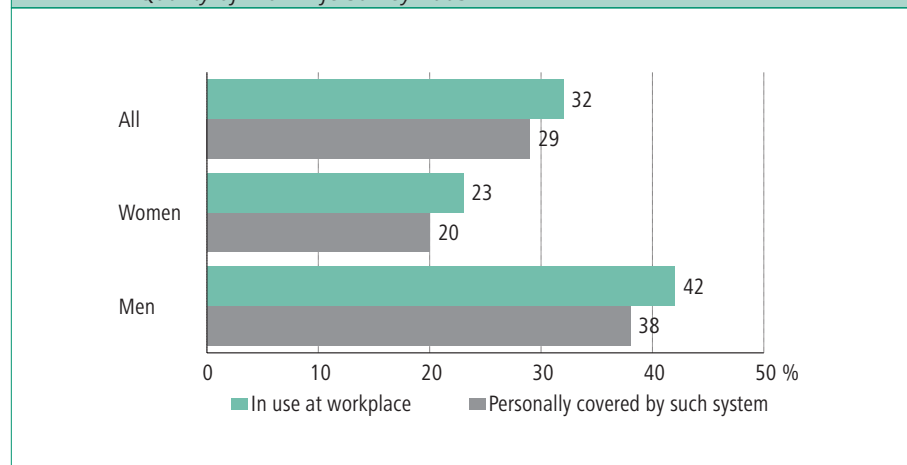
Employees with different levels of education are covered fairly evenly by systems of bonus payments by results, so that only men with high level of education (48%) differentiate clearly from men with basic level of education only (31%). The occupational groups that stand out are manufacturing work, commercial work, and technical and scientific work in which payment of bonuses by results is most widespread.

However, the rule that men are covered by these systems more usually than women applies in all occupational fields: for instance, in commercial work 55 per cent of men and 41 per cent of women, and in manufacturing work 44 per cent of men and 41 per cent of women. For women, these are the fields where they are most likely to be paid bonuses by results.

Payment of bonuses by results is naturally most widespread in the private sector, where 38 per cent of the respondents are covered by them, but even in the central government sector the respective proportion is 25 per cent. In the local government sector the proportion is small, only seven per cent. In the private sector, payment of bonuses by results is most widespread among foreign-owned enterprises, in which 61 per cent of employees receive them. In multi-national enterprises the proportion is 58 per cent and in domestic enterprises 32 per cent.

The way in which bonuses by results are paid varies considerably. Eleven per cent of all wage and salary earners say that the bonuses are paid to individual persons, ten per cent state that they are paid to groups and another ten per cent that they are paid to all employees of the organisation. The answers vary by the competence requirement level of work so that highly educated employees say more often than those in other educational groups that performance-based rewards are paid to individual persons (15%) and to groups (12%). By contrast, the statement that bonuses are paid to all employees of the organisation is distributed evenly across the different educational groups. This applies best to men, whereas for women payment of bonuses to all employees of the organisation is most typical among those with basic level of education

Figure 71 System of payment by results at workplace
Quality of Work Life Survey 2003



and in manufacturing occupations. All forms of payment are used most in the private sector, and in foreign-owned enterprises within it.

Figure 72 shows **amounts of performance-based bonuses** by gender. The summary figures highlight the differentials between women and men, for men are not only paid bonuses more often but the sums they are paid are also larger. Thirteen per cent of male wage and salary earners had received at least EUR 1,000 for the previous year, whereas the respective proportion among women was only five per cent. This differential is repeated in the medium sized bonuses of between EUR 500 and 1,000.

If there are large differences in the paying of bonuses between sectors, these become even more pronounced in the bonus amounts. In the private sector, 13 per cent but in the central government sector only two per cent and in the local government sector under one per cent of employees received at least EUR 1,000. Examined by occupation, employees doing administrative management work, 29 per cent of men and 17 per cent of women, have received large bonuses of over EUR 1,000 most often.

Especially among men, large bonuses tend to converge into upper while-collar employees, the private sector and foreign-owned enterprises. For instance, 37 per cent of the male employees of foreign-owned enterprises received bonuses of at least EUR 1,000 while the respective proportion among the female employees of domestic enterprises was only six per cent.

Men not only receive more pay and diverse additional bonuses, but also **propose more frequently pay increases for themselves**. Figure 73 shows that 44 per cent of them, but only 29 per cent of women, had made such proposals in the last five years. There is no clear correlation between proposals for pay increase and competence requirement level of work, or employer sector. Examined by occupational group, teaching would seem to be a field where both women and men make fewer pay rise proposals than elsewhere.

On the other hand, pay increase proposals are made equally at large and small workplaces, and in foreign and domestic-owned enterprises.

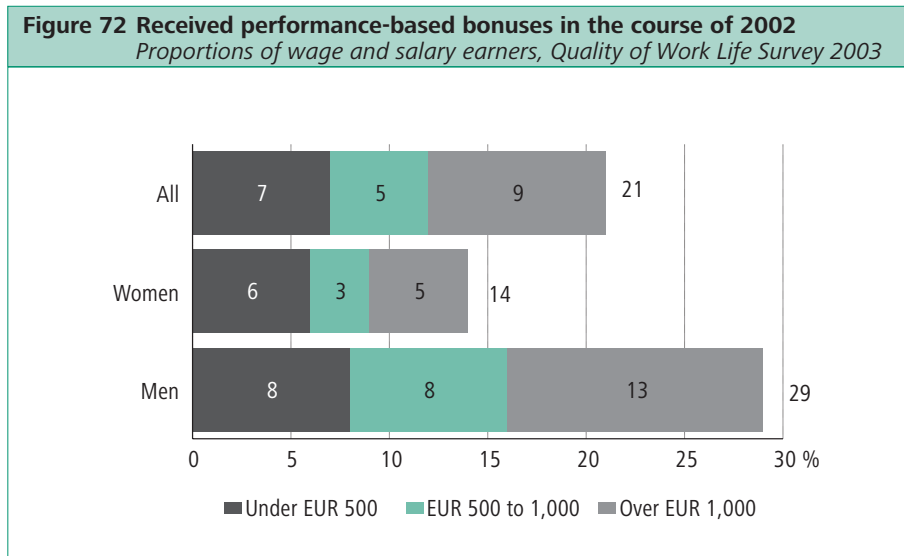
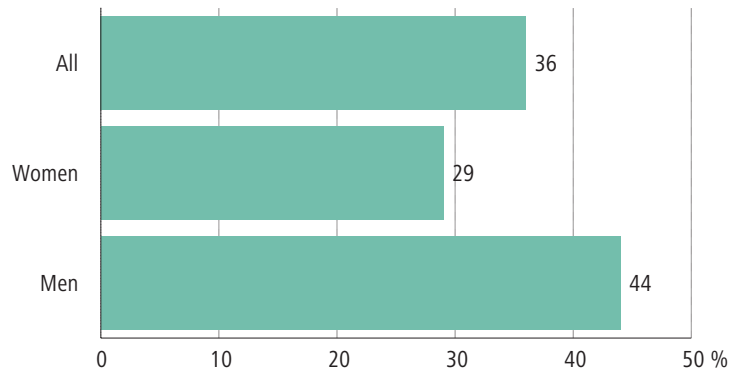
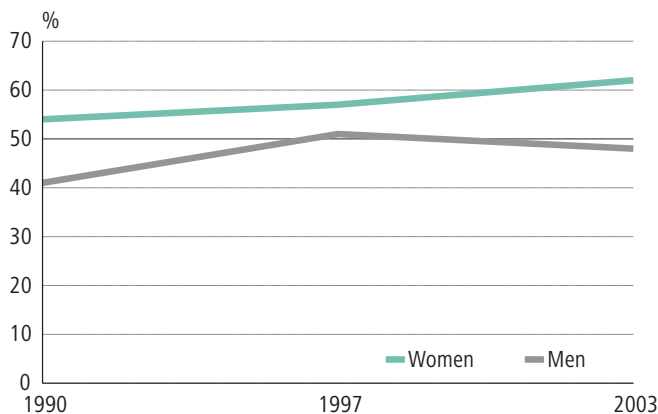


Figure 73 Proposed a personal pay increase
In the last five years, Quality of Work Life Survey 2003



It is interesting to contrast the making of pay increase proposals with personal **opinions about the fairness of own pay** in comparison with the remuneration paid in other occupations. Figure 74 shows data from three survey rounds on this subject. It reveals that proposals for a pay increase do not coincide with how fair pay is regarded. Women regard their pay too low more often than men do, but have also made fewer pay increase proposals. Among both women and men, opinions regarding insufficient pay kept increasing up to the year 1997, but since then men have become clearly more satisfied and women more dissatisfied with their own pay. In 2003, a clear disparity between women and men already became evident: 27 per cent of women but

Figure 74 Regards own pay too low in comparison with remuneration paid in other occupations
Somewhat or clearly too low, Quality of Work Life Surveys 1990, 1997 and 2003



only 16 per cent of men regarded their pay as definitely too low. Especially female lower white-collar employees complain about their pay, for 31 per cent of them regarded it as absolutely too low.

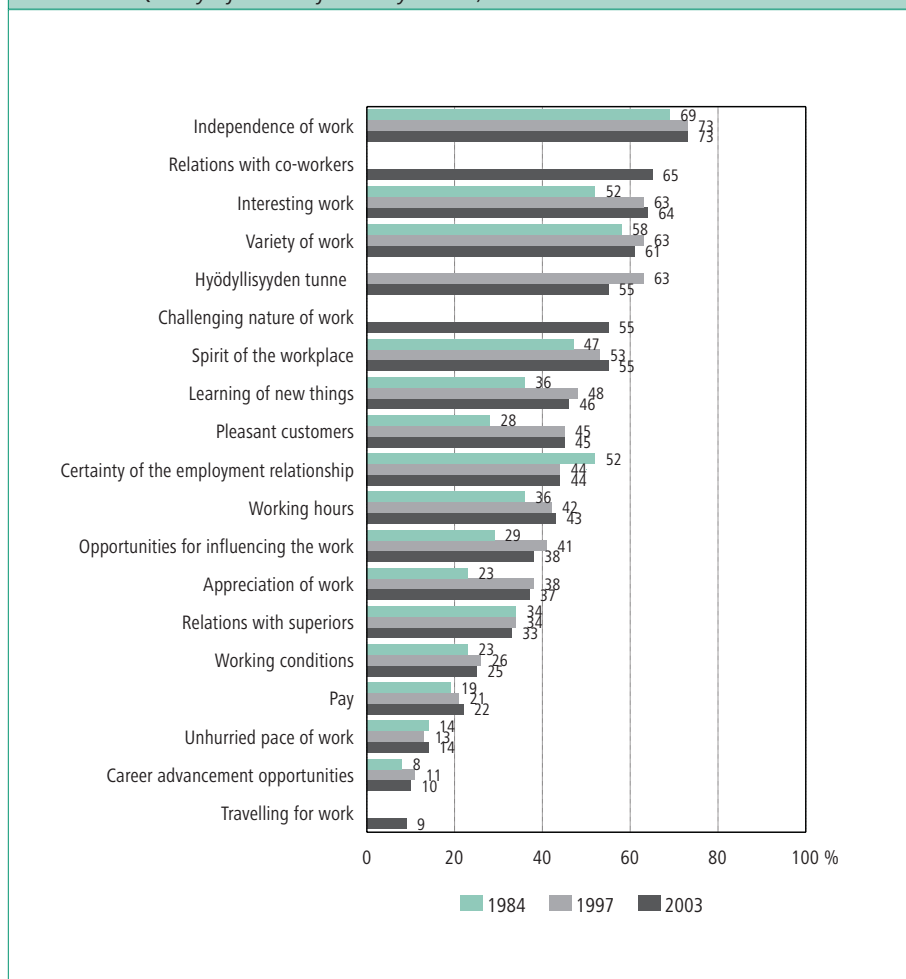
The local government sector stands out most in this, for 40 per cent of all local government employees regard their pay as clearly too low, whereas the respective proportions in the central government and private sectors were 24 and 14 per cent. In the local government sector, fifty per cent of the female respondents employed in health care work, 41 per cent of those working in social services and 34 per cent in teaching occupations thought their pay was clearly too low.

Factors increasing and decreasing enjoyment at work

In the 1984, 1997 and 2003 Quality of Work Life Surveys respondents have been inquired about factors that make their work more enjoyable or less enjoyable by giving them two cards listing twenty or so different aspects of work. From the first card, the respondents have been asked to point out the factors that lessen their enjoyment at work and from the second card those that add to it.

Independence of work is the aspect that stands out above all others when Finnish wage and salary earners consider the **factors that make their current job more enjoyable**. Almost three out of four employees, men slightly more frequently than women (74 vs. 71%), mention it as a factor that adds to their enjoyment at work. (Figure 75)

Figure 75 Factors making current job more enjoyable
Quality of Work Life Surveys 1984, 1997 and 2003



Almost as important for women are relations with co-workers (68%). Interesting work (64%), variety of work (62%) and feeling of achievement and usefulness (60%) are also mentioned frequently as factors making work more enjoyable.

Men put these factors in a different order: independence of work is followed by interesting work (63%), relations with co-workers (62%) and variety of work (61%).

If the results are compared with the beginning of the time series in 1984, especially pleasant customers are now mentioned clearly more frequently as a factor adding to enjoyment at work. There has also been a considerable increase in the experiencing of interesting work, appreciation of work, opportunities for influencing work and spirit of the workplace as factors that make work more enjoyable – despite the fact that minor decreases took place in respect of some of them from 1997 to 2003.

Regarding certainty of the employment relationship as a factor increasing enjoyment at work has become rarer since 1984. A diversity of thoughts is provoked by the fact that fewer wage and salary earners than in 1997 mention the feeling of achievement and usefulness as a factor making their work more enjoyable in 2003.

Comparing the two latest surveys of 1997 and 2003 shows that hardly any of the listed factors improve women's enjoyment at work more in 2003 than they did at the time of the previous survey. Only interesting work and unhurried pace of work are mentioned by a one percentage point larger proportion of respondents than in 1997. Moreover, women mention many of the listed factors less frequently than before: feeling of achievement and usefulness, in particular, is brought up less frequently than before (60 vs. 67%), as well as working conditions (23 vs. 27%). Good opportunities for influencing work, relations with superior, appreciation of work, independence of work, and pay are also mentioned less frequently than before and the proportion mentioning learning of new things, pleasant customers and variety of work has dropped by a percentage point or so.

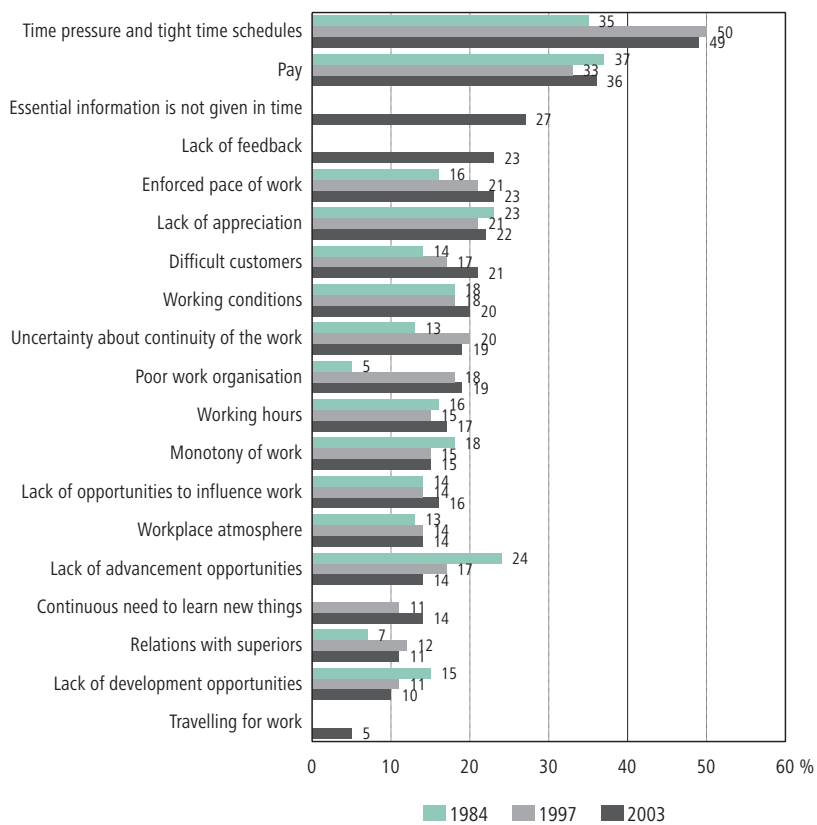
By contrast, many of the listed factors appear to have increased men's enjoyment at work since the previous survey round. Men mention more often than before working hours, pay, spirit of the workplace, pleasant customers, unhurried pace of work and its independence, working conditions and certainty of the employment relationship as factors adding to their enjoyment at work. Decreases among men have happened in the mentioning of variety of work, learning of new things, opportunities for career advancement and influencing, and feeling of achievement and usefulness.

The enjoyment of Finnish wage and salary earners at work is reduced above all by time pressure and tight time schedules. (Figure 76) Around half (49%) of the respondents mention these as factors making their work less enjoyable. The next most frequently mentioned factor reducing enjoyment at work is pay, more often among women (39%) than men (32%). Women's enjoyment at work is also quite frequently reduced by lack of appreciation (25%), enforced pace of work (25%) and difficult customers (24%). Among men, the equivalent factors include likewise enforced pace of work (21%), as well as working conditions (21%).

Compared with 1984, larger proportions of respondents now mention especially time pressure and tight time schedules, difficult customers, uncer-

tainty about continuity of work, relations with superiors and enforced pace of work as **factors making their current job less enjoyable**. By contrast, clearly fewer respondents than before now feel that lack of advancement and development opportunities reduce their enjoyment at work.

Figure 76 Factors making current job less enjoyable
Quality of Work Life Surveys 1984, 1997 and 2003



Recurrent aches and pains

Two in five (43%) wage and salary earners suffer from recurrent neck and shoulder pain, one in three (31%) from repeated pain in the lumbar region and one in four (24%) from frequent pain in arms and legs. (Figures 77–80)

A time series on the recurrent aches and pains of wage and salary earners is available since the 1977 Quality of Work Life Survey. The prevalence of aches and pains in the neck and shoulder region has increased steadily throughout the period covered by the surveys, while that of aches and pains in hands and arms has varied somewhat from survey to survey. However, slightly more of them were reported in the 2003 survey than twenty-five years earlier. There was al-

Figure 77 Recurrent ache and pain in neck or shoulders
Quality of Work Life Surveys 1977, 1984, 1990, 1997 and 2003

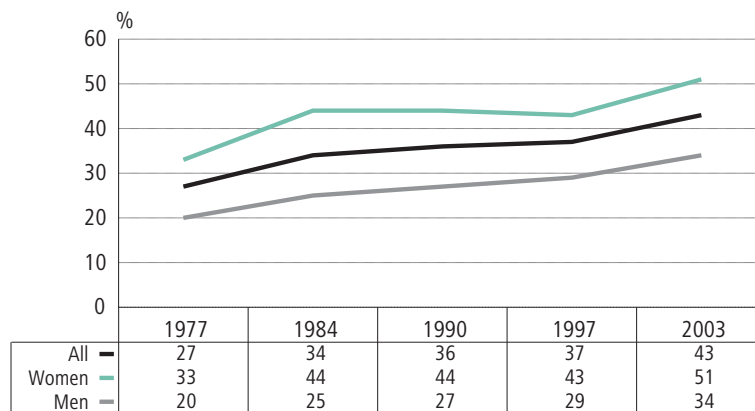


Figure 78 Recurrent ache and pain in hands or arms
Quality of Work Life Surveys 1977, 1984, 1990, 1997 and 2003

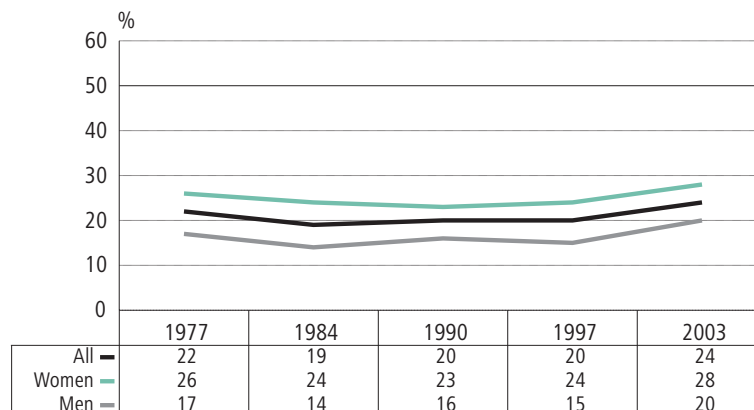


Figure 79 Recurrent ache and pain in lumbar region
Quality of Work Life Surveys 1977, 1984, 1990, 1997 and 2003

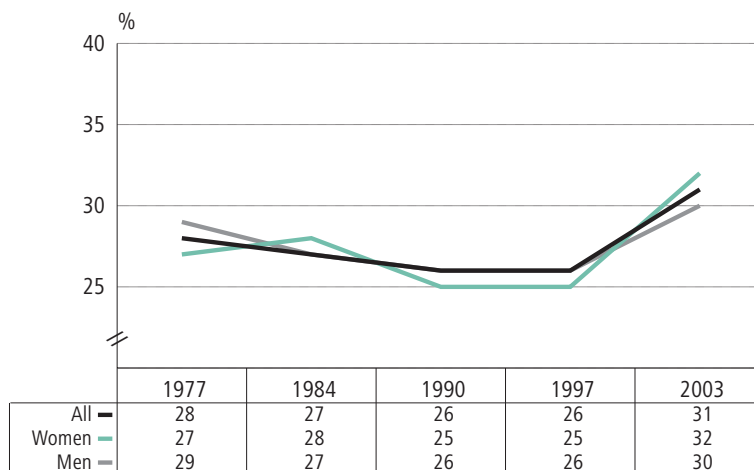
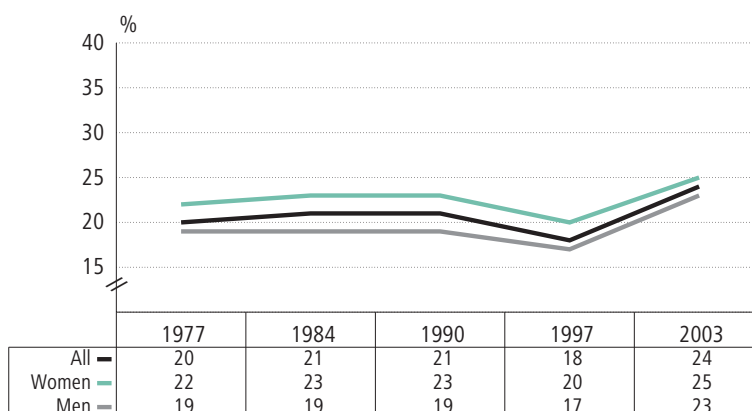


Figure 80 Recurrent ache and pain in legs, including hips
Quality of Work Life Surveys 1977, 1984, 1990, 1997 and 2003



ready a declining trend in repeated pain in the lumbar region and legs and hips right up to the 2003 survey, which showed growth in their frequency again.

All in all, the types of aches and pains inquired about have all become more widespread since the 1997 survey.

Age correlates clearly with the prevalence of especially leg, hip and arm pains: the older the age group, the more frequent such aches and pains are. The same also applies to pains in neck, shoulder and lumbar region, although the differences according to age are not as clear.

However, the increased prevalence of pains cannot be explained away by the ageing of the wage and salary earning population alone, because between

1997 and 2003 aches and pains have grown more frequent in all age groups, with the clearest increase among the youngest employees aged under 25.

Recurrent aches and pains are more common among women than men. Differences between the genders are clearest in neck and shoulder pain and hand and arm ache. Altogether half (51%) of male and two thirds (64%) of female wage and salary earners suffer from some recurring aches and pains. Such complaints are commonest in social service occupations, and in transport, service and manufacturing work.

Psychological and somatic symptoms

All Quality of Work Life Surveys have included questions about diverse psychological and somatic symptoms.

The survey results indicate an increasing trend in certain psychological symptoms, especially sleeping difficulties. (Figures 81 and 82) More than one female employee in three (36%) and over one male employee in four (27%) today suffer from difficulties in falling asleep or recurrent awakenings at night. Feeling fatigue, apathy or lack of energy weekly is these days also more frequent, especially among women, than it was at the beginning of the surveys. On the whole, these are the most widespread of all the inquired symptoms.

Figure 81 Women's psychological symptoms

Suffers from at least once a week, Quality of Work Life Surveys 1977, 1984, 1990, 1997 and 2003

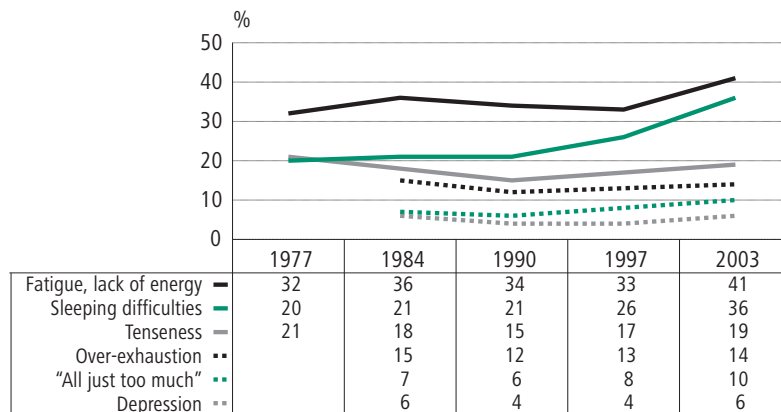
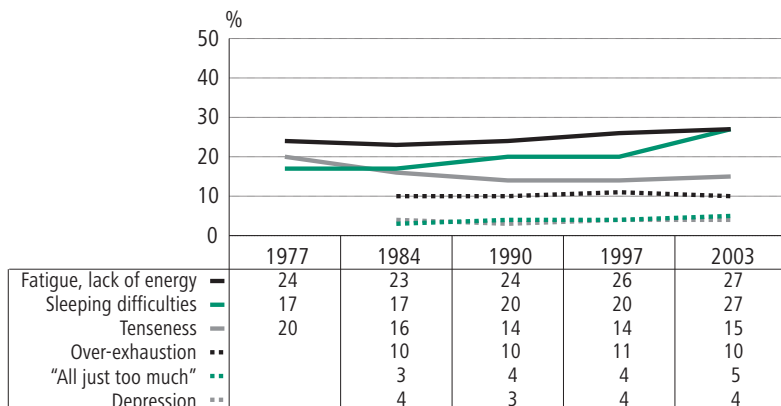


Figure 82 Men's psychological symptoms

Suffers from at least once a week, Quality of Work Life Surveys 1977, 1984, 1990, 1997 and 2003



Slightly more men and women than before also feel weekly that “all is just too much” for them. One woman in ten and five per cent of men get this feeling weekly. The prevalence of tenseness showed a decline at the start of the surveys, but has begun to increase again since the 1990s. In respect of over-exhaustion and depression the proportions feeling them are almost the same in 2003 as when the surveys were first started.

By contrast, there has been a decline in the weekly occurrence of **somatic symptoms** among men since the start of the surveys. Women’s symptoms also decreased at first. (Figures 83 and 84) However, in the 1997 survey the occurrence of headache showed an increase among women again. In 2003, this was followed by growing prevalence of palpitations of irregular heartbeat, dizziness and stomach pains. Ageing of the wage and salary earning population may

Figure 83 Women's somatic symptoms

Suffers from at least once a week, Quality of Work Life Surveys 1977, 1984, 1990, 1997 and 2003

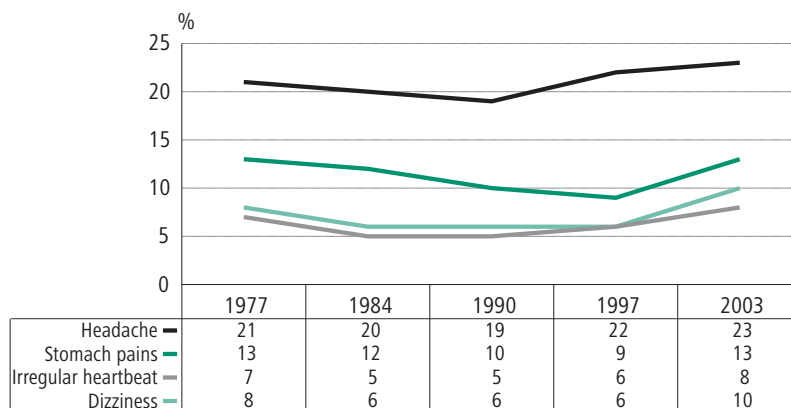
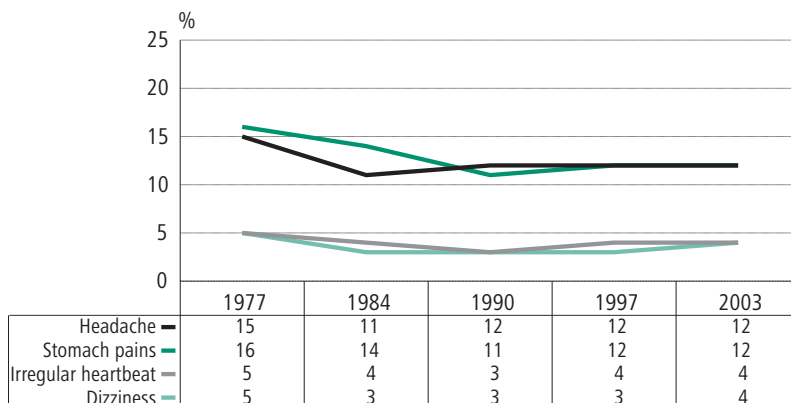


Figure 84 Men's somatic symptoms

Suffers from at least once a week, Quality of Work Life Surveys 1977, 1984, 1990, 1997 and 2003



have a bearing on the growing prevalence the latter mentioned symptoms, as they are most widespread among ageing employees.

Women suffer from all the listed psychological and somatic symptoms more than men. The exception is heartburn and stomach pains, which are equally familiar to women and men. The age and socio-economic group of the respondent influence the frequency of psychological and somatic symptoms relatively little. Although the differences are minor, they do indicate that somatic symptoms are more widespread among ageing employees and psychological symptoms among young employees.

Palpitation, irregular heartbeat, heartburn and stomach pains, as well as dizziness, over-exhaustion and sleeping difficulties are symptoms that trouble most employees aged over 45. By contrast, the occurrence of fatigue and lack of energy, tenseness, feeling that “all is just too much” and, of the somatic symptoms, headache are the more prevalent the younger the respondents. Especially female wage and salary earners aged under 25 suffer from these symptoms: more than half (56%) of them suffer from lack of energy, more than one in three (35%) from headache and almost one in four (23%) from tenseness weekly.

Although age seems to have a slight bearing on the prevalence of different psychological and somatic symptoms, the connection between bullying and these symptoms is many times clearer. The interesting thing is that this connection is even stronger among men than among women.

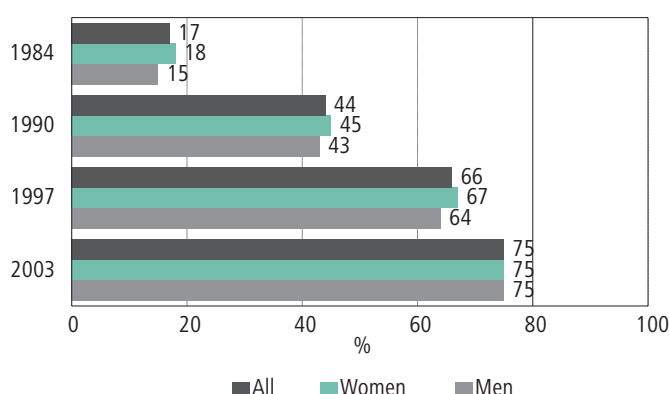
Use of information technology and data transmission equipment

The invasion of information technology has happened quite rapidly in Finnish working life. When the question about the **use of information technology** was first included in the Quality of Work Life Survey of 1984, the proportion of employees using it was 17 per cent. (Figure 85) In 2003, the work of three employees in four (75%) involved the use of information technology. In all previous Quality of Work Life Surveys women have been slightly ahead of men in the use of information technology, but according to the latest survey of 2003, equal proportions of women and men now use IT in their work.

Among women, office work was the field which computers entered first. Almost half of the women in this occupational group were already using computers in the early 1980s. One in three doing administrative management work were also already using new information technology at that time. Today, all employees in this occupational group use computers, as also do almost 100 per cent of women doing office work. The growth has been strongest in teaching work. In technical and scientific work, men were early users of computers. However, even among men, the growth in computer use has been strongest in teaching, although it has also increased in health care, administrative management and commercial work.

In the early 1980s, information technology was applied in men's work to more demanding tasks than in women's work. Among women, information technology was first introduced into simple work, such as data entry and copy typing. These kinds of tasks have diminished with time as upper white-collar employees have increasingly started to use computers themselves. Today, there are hardly any differences in the educational structure of the women and men who use information technology, or the difference is reversed from the early days of computer use when the vast majority of the women using them only had basic level of education. This indicates that the competence requirement levels of women's and men's tasks are these days more or less equal.

Figure 85 Proportion of employees using information technology in work
Quality of Work Life Surveys 1984, 1990, 1997 and 2003



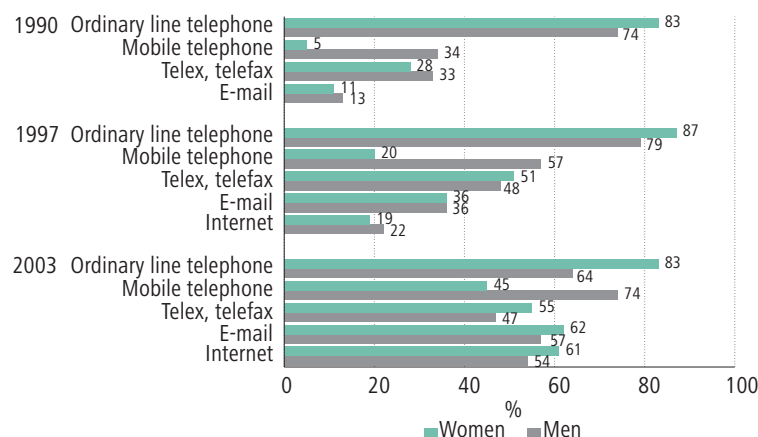
Women use information technology slightly more intensively than men: over half (59%) of all the women but around half (52%) of the men who use information technology in their work say that they use it for at least half of their working time. Early on, in 1984 the disparity was much greater. At that time 49 per of women and 31 per cent of men used the computer for at least half of their working time.

Besides use of the computer, the advancing information technology at workplaces also comprises the penetration of diverse pieces of **electronic data transmission equipment**. The Quality of Work Life Surveys have inquired about the use of such communications equipment as one element portraying changes in working life. The equipment concerned include the telephone, mobile telephone, telefax, email and the Internet, the use of some of which may, in fact, overlap with computer use. The extent of the use of data transmission equipment has only been asked about in the Quality of Work Life Surveys since 1990, with the exception of the telephone on the use of which questions were already included in 1984. The Internet was included as a new IT tool in 1997.

In the 1990s, increases have been especially phenomenal in the use of mobile telephone, fax and email. Figure 86 depicts the development trends in these. Use of the email has grown five-fold between 1990 and 2003. Use of the mobile telephone has also multiplied many times over, for the proportion of its users has risen from 34 to 74 per cent among men and from 5 to 45 per cent among women. Exploitation of the Internet has also spread fast. In 2003, every second employee, slightly more women (61%) than men (54%), reported that they use it in their work.

Examining all the data transmission equipment that is used in work, women and men participate fairly equally in communications in the information society. The only factor differentiating the genders is employer's mobile telephone, which was more typical among men at least still in autumn 2003. The predictions and fears of women falling behind as information technology advances have thus not come true in Finland.

Figure 86 Use of data transmission equipment in work
Quality of Work Life Surveys 1990, 1997 and 2003



Commitment to work

The importance of work to Finnish wage and salary earners was discussed at the beginning of this report. Basing on the findings of these surveys, gainful employment continues to be highly valued by and is an important area of life for the vast majority of wage and salary earners. Although increasing significance is being attached to home, family life and leisure hobbies, work has clearly retained its position.

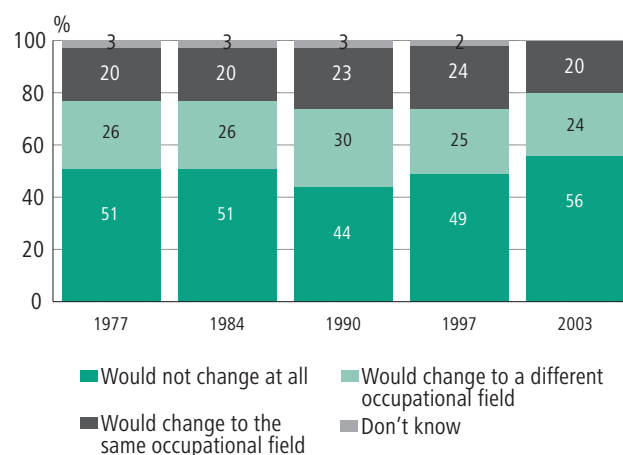
On the other hand, the chapter on labour market position showed that the faithfulness of people in Finland to their job and occupation has kept growing despite the views that emphasise the importance of increased mobility. Unless very short-term employment contracts or other insecurity factors dictate change of workplace, Finns attach great value to remaining at the service of one employer. This could also be interpreted as strong commitment to current work.

Commitment is rated high in social policy debates and workplace strategies. Employees should stay in working life and continue their working careers for as long as possible, and the view is that the productiveness and innovativeness of an organisation will benefit from the commitment of its employees. This puts growing emphasis on well-being at work and on general discussion about the factors that promote commitment. Commitment is striven for at the same time as international competition enforces growing flexibility and mobility, and increasingly individually agreed contracts and pay arrangements. In the wildest forms of such arrangements, employees work almost as entrepreneurs, only committed to advancing on their own career. (Sennet 2001, Bauman 2002, Beck, Giddens and Lash 1996.)

The Quality of Work Life Surveys have studied commitment to work with a number of questions, but it is most clearly measured by the question concerning the respondent's **willingness to change jobs**. Figure 87 describes the responses obtained to this throughout the time period covered by the surveys

Figure 87 Willingness to change to another job

At the same pay, Quality of Work Life Surveys 1977, 1984, 1990, 1997 and 2003



and shows that the proportion of those not willing to change jobs at all is the largest today at 56 per cent.

The changes in the figures reflect the same new enthusiasm towards own work that arose during the recession of the 1990s as was expressed at the beginning of this report in comments about the general importance of work.

The figure does not show separately women's and men's willingness to change jobs, but there is hardly any difference in it: 56 per cent of both women and men do not want to change their job. Among women, 21 per cent and among men 18 per cent would like to change to the same occupational field, whereas 23 per cent of women and 24 per cent of men would like to change to a different occupational field. Thus, men are slightly more prepared to change their field completely. This set-up has been the same throughout the entire series of Quality of Work Life Surveys.

Different background variables have no essential bearing on the willingness to change jobs. For example, the only differences by level of education and occupational group can be detected among the employees with basic level of education only and among blue-collar employees whose desire to change is directed more than of others to a different occupational field, whereas upper white-collar employees and those with highest level of education would like to keep their occupational field but change their place of work. This is probably related to acquired education and reluctance to abandon the field concerned. Examined by employer sector, willingness to change jobs is highest in the private sector, but even in this respect commitment shows no major differences: 54 per cent of employees in the private sector, 60 per cent in the local government sector and 62 per cent in the central government sector have no desire to change jobs.

Commitment certainly varies by age. Young people are more willing than others to change and what is more to a different occupational field. Thirty-six per cent of young men and 32 per cent of young women aged 15 to 24, but only 24 per cent of all wage and salary earners would like to change their occupational field. By contrast, only 11 per cent of men and 13 per cent of women aged 55 to 64 are willing to change the field of occupation. The conclusion that could be drawn from this is that the ageing of the wage and salary earning population explains the reduced willingness to change. However, this is not the case because commitment to current job has increased most among young employees.

Commitment differentiates by occupational group so that the willingness to change to the same occupational field is greatest in health care and administrative management work while that to change to a different occupational field is highest in transport and manufacturing work.

Some earlier studies have observed that commitment to the organisation is related to at least influencing opportunities and satisfaction with supervisory work. (Jokivuori 2002) The Quality of Work Life Survey indicates the same insofar that 69 per cent of those employees who are very satisfied with the work of their superior, but only 34 per cent of those dissatisfied with it, do not want to change jobs at all. The proportions are almost identical among both genders. On the other hand, an examination against answers to the question of whether the employee receives support and encouragement from the superior produces a similar result: 69 per cent of those who always receive support but only 39 per cent of those who never receive it give this same answer. Lack of support from co-workers does not influence the willingness to change jobs to the same extent:

63 per cent of those saying they always receive support and 45 per cent of those answering they never receive it do not want to change jobs at all.

The findings of the Quality of Work Life Survey also indicate that the ability to influence certain elements of work increases commitment. This influence is slightly stronger in men's than in women's work.

By contrast, there is a clear connection between diverse problems at work and the willingness to change jobs. The willingness is increased, for example, by the degree to which time pressure hampers work, paucity of information about changes, and workplace bullying. If time pressure hampers work extensively, 56 per cent of wage and salary earners would like to change jobs, whereas the average proportion is 44 per cent. If information about changes is only received after they have taken place the proportion is 52 per cent, or if there is continuous bullying at the workplace the share of those willing to leave is 63 per cent. The respective proportion among those being currently bullied themselves is 64 per cent.

Commitment to current job can also be measured with the number of employees having thought about **starting a business or becoming self-employed**. Figure 88 shows that distinctly fewer employees have thought of this today than at the beginning of the 1990s. The reduction in employees' dreams about own business is likely to be connected with the same commitment to current job on which clear proof exists from the post-recessionary time period according to the answers to various questions. Current work is perceived as important and job changes have become rarer.

There is a clear difference between women and men in this, so that men are far more interested in setting up their own business, for 14 per cent of them but only 10 per cent of women have often thought about it.

Among both men and women, the numbers of those having thought about becoming self-employed are largest among employees doing commercial work and administrative management work. Among men, 60 per cent of those working in administrative management and 59 per cent of those in commercial work say that they have thought about it at least occasionally. Among women, the proportions are 46 per cent in administrative management and 40 per cent in commercial work. Level of education or occupational status do not appear to have a connection with thoughts about opting for self-employment.

A lot of concern has been expressed in Finland about the growing desire to retire early. In fact, the 1990 Quality of Work Life Survey was largely inspired by this issue. The Working Conditions Committee which sat at that time had been set up to find out what was wrong in Finnish working life as employees could not cope with or did not enjoy working until the normal retirement age. The adjacent graphics (Figure 89) on how many employees had at least occasionally **considered retiring before retirement age** shows that thoughts of this kind are still quite widespread. In 1990 and 1997, the proportion of those having often considered early retirement was approximately 15 per cent, but in 2003 it was slightly higher at 19 per cent.

This matter is strongly tied to age so that young employees naturally think about early retirement less while the numbers of employees with such thoughts have been much higher in older age groups during all survey rounds.

Employees without post-basic level of education have considered early retirement clearly more than others.

Figure 88 Thought about starting own business or becoming self-employed
Thought about occasionally or frequently, Quality of Work Life Surveys 1990, 1997 and 2003

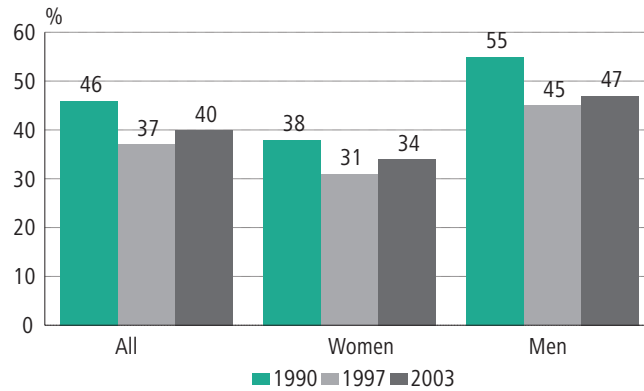
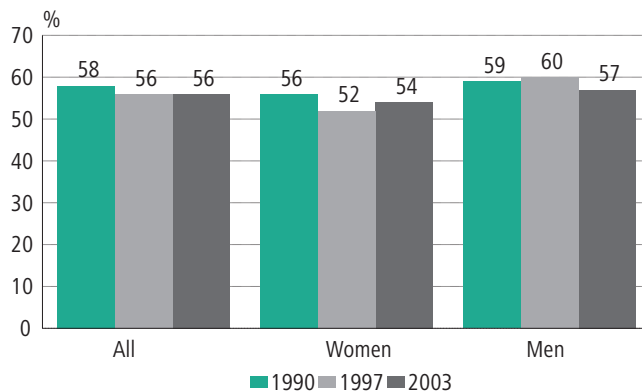


Figure 89 Thought about retiring before retirement age
Thought about occasionally or frequently, Quality of Work Life Surveys 1990, 1997 and 2003



At least this is indicated by the proportion of them having thought often about exiting from working life early, for it is 24 per cent, as against the respective proportion of 18 per cent among those employees with tertiary educational qualifications. There is a considerable difference between men and women in this, for 19 per cent of the women but 16 per cent of the men with tertiary educational qualifications have thought often about the possibility of early retirement.

Examined by occupation, the largest proportions of employees having thought often about early retirement can be found in transport work, office work, manufacturing work and construction work. Looked at by employer sector, the private sector has more employees who have at least occasionally thought about retiring earlier than normal: 57 per cent, as against 50 per cent in the central government sector and 54 per cent in the local government sector. With their 59 per cent share, men in the private sector lead in this matter.

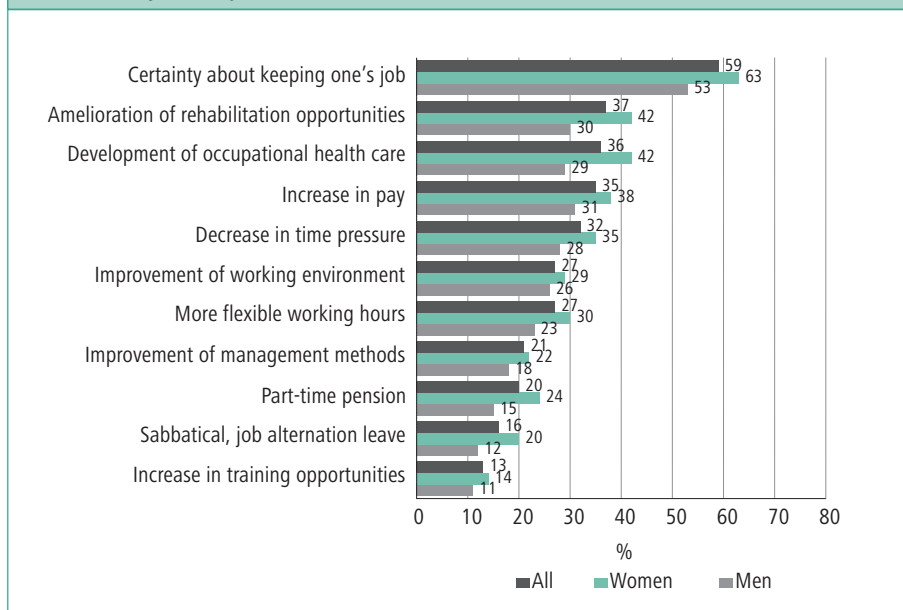
Thoughts about retiring early correlate clearly with working conditions. If time pressure hampers work extensively, 30 per cent have considered early retirement often, whereas if time pressure is no problem, the respective proportion is only 16 per cent. Likewise, 30 per cent of those employees who perceive their work mentally very strenuous have also considered retiring. Up to 32 per cent of the women and 24 per cent of the men feeling like this have thought often about retiring early.

What, then, would help employees **cope personally at work for as long as possible**? Figure 90 depicts the results obtained with the question concerning this. The question lists certain possible factors or measures that might help this and the respondents were asked separately how important they regarded each of them. Only respondents aged 45 and over were asked this question. As can be seen, women attached more importance than men to all the listed measures. By far the most important for both genders was **certainty about keeping their job**. Women regard it particularly important in manufacturing and transport work and men in private services work.

The next most important for women are **amelioration of rehabilitation opportunities and development of occupational health care**. The difference to men in these is fairly large, for men regard **increase in pay** as the second most important factor. Increased rehabilitation opportunities are desired especially by women doing transport, service and health care work and men doing construction work.

Increased occupational health care is desired most by women working, surprisingly enough, in health care, and by men doing service work. Increase in pay would also help men stay in service work longer. Increase in pay would motivate most the women doing especially health care, manufacturing and service work.

Figure 90 What would help coping at work for as long as possible
Respondents aged over 45 considering as very important, Quality of Work Life Survey 2003



There is also a fairly large difference in the amount of importance women and men attach to **decrease in workload and time pressure**. Women view it as more important, which is quite natural as they also regard time pressure as a more problematic aspect of work. Women regard decreasing of time pressure as important in precisely the same occupational fields where experiences of it are also most widespread, in other words, health care and teaching. Men in these same fields also emphasise the importance of decreasing time pressure most.

The desire for **improvement of working environment** is distributed fairly evenly across different occupations and between the genders. By contrast, women in particular wish for **more flexible working hours**, and very evenly across different occupational groups. Men would like to see more flexible working hours especially in administrative management and health care work. **Improvement of management methods** is wished for by men in teaching occupations, in particular, but by women more evenly in all occupations.

Nearly one employee in five consider **part-time retirement and job alternation leave** as important ways to help coping longer at work. Women regard them clearly more important than men do. Possibility for part-time retirement is emphasised especially by women in health care occupations and by men in the construction field. Job alternation leave is desired most by women in health care and service work and by men in teaching occupations. In this survey, respondents aged over 45 did not regard **increase in training opportunities** as a very important measure to help coping at work. However, there are clear differences between occupational fields in this and health care work stands out as one where increased training opportunities are wished for.

Summary

The Quality of Work Life Surveys carried out by Statistics Finland in 1977, 1984, 1990, 1997 and 2003 are extensive interview inquiries involving between 3,000 and 5,700 wage and salary earners. They describe the Finnish employees' experiences of their physical, mental and social working environments. The surveys also study the changes that have taken place due to employees' labour market positions, work organisations and working tools, as well as examine reconciliation of work and family life and experiences of equality or discrimination. The latest survey placed specific emphasis on the studying of working hours, flexibility in them and plans concerning retirement, along with issues related to coping at work in general.

In considering the long-term changes in working life over the 25 years covered by these surveys, some positive trends are important. Employees are much better educated today than 25 years ago, and experiences in development opportunities and in-house training have increased all the time. Positive development can also be seen in opportunities to influence one's work, although opportunities to influence the pace of work have decreased since the 1990 survey.

It is of some concern that various demands and threats of work have also grown. Time pressure has increased continuously since 1977, with the latest survey only showing a slight alleviation. Threat of severe work exhaustion, as well as fear of subjection to physical violence at work continue to grow. The latest alarming finding is that employees are no longer informed sufficiently or early enough about coming changes at their workplace. Clearly fewer employees than before say that they are informed about such changes at the planning stage. This concerns all wage and salary earners, including those who are well-educated and in good positions. The private sector seems to be the least well-informed in this sense.

Behind these uncertainties, threats and demands are presumably the ever tougher competition in the private sector and lack of resources in the public sector. The outcomes of such demand are clear: social relationships have suffered, as has the health of employees. Symptoms, such as sleeping difficulties, fatigue, tensions, and neck and shoulder pain have been on the increase, especially among women.

These results mean that action for better working life and well-being has become more urgent. Physical work environment problems have still to be resolved, while many new, more social and psychological problems have also arisen. The task of the Quality of Work Life Surveys is to reveal the connections between the many changes in the working environment in order to help towards improving circumstances.

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Appendix 1

Quality of Work Life survey 2003, response and non-response

The 2003 Quality of Work Life Survey was implemented as personal face-to-face interviews in connection with the October and November rounds of the monthly Labour Force Survey. At the end of the telephone interview of the Labour Force Survey, those respondents who proved to be wage and salary earners were invited to participate in the Quality of Work Life Survey and appointments were made with them for separate face-to-face interviews.

A total of 4,104 interviews were conducted, and the average duration of one interview was 63 minutes. The interviews were mainly carried out from October to December 2003, but a few were postponed to the beginning of January 2004.

The target population was selected from persons aged 15 to 64 among the respondents in the third, fourth and fifth rotation groups of the October Labour Force Survey and in the fourth and fifth rotation groups of the November Labour Force Survey. The inclusion in the sample of the Quality of Work Life Survey from among the interviewees of the Labour Force Survey was not established until during the Labour Force Survey interview. The wage and salary earners whose normal weekly working hours amounted to at least five hours were selected from the population of the Labour Force Survey into the sample of the Quality of Work Life Survey, and were invited to participate in it.

The group that proved problematic in determining the sample for the Quality of Work Life Survey were the target persons from whom interviews were not obtained for the Labour Force Survey due to refusal or non-contact (n=502). The age and gender of these persons were known but not whether they should be included in the sample of the Quality of Work Life Survey on the basis of their occupational status, i.e. whether they were wage and salary earners and what their normal weekly working hours were.

However, the proportions by age and gender of the persons meeting the criteria on inclusion in the sample of the Quality of Work Life Survey could be calculated from the target persons of the Labour Force Survey from whom interviews were obtained. This information makes it possible to estimate what proportion of the persons from whom even Labour Force Survey interviews were not obtained would have also belonged to the sample of the Quality of Work Life Survey, and what proportion represented overcoverage. These estimates were calculated by 5-year age groups by gender. Estimated in this way, the sample size of the Quality of Work Life Survey was 5,270 persons and the response rate was 77.9 per cent.

Table 13 shows the numbers of obtained interviews and the response rates according to gender and 10-year age group. The refusals are those who refused outright to participate in the Quality of Work Life Survey interview. The group "No appointment" contains those wage and salary earners who did not refuse to participate outright but with whom a suitable time could not be fixed for the interview, or if an appointment could be fixed, did not turn up. "Not reached" refers to those target persons of the Labour Force Survey who were

estimated to have met the criteria on inclusion in the sample, but from whom Labour Force Survey interviews were not obtained for some reason or another and who, therefore, could not be invited to participate in the Quality of Work Life Survey, either. "Other reason" contains the wage and salary earners included in the sample of the Quality of Work Life Survey who could not be interviewed due to illness or language difficulties.

In this survey, too, the response rate was higher for women than men. The response rate was lower for the youngest age groups than for those aged 30 and over, and the oldest wage and salary earner groups produced the highest response rates. Examined by socio-economic group, the response rate was slightly lower among blue-collar employees than among white-collar employees. The response rate went up as the level of education rose. There was no difference in the response rate when examined against part-time or full-time employment, and hardly any difference according to permanent or temporary employment relationship. The wage and salary earners interviewed for the Labour Force Survey who defined gainful employment as their main activity were clearly more willing to participate in the survey than those wage and salary earners classifying themselves students.

Table 13 Response and non-response by gender and age
Quality of Work Life Survey 2003

	Responded		Refused	No appoint- ment	Not reached	Other reason	Total	
	%	N	%	%	%	%	%	N
Total	77.9	4,104	14.4	1.4	5.7	0.6	100	5,270
Gender								
Women	80.5	2,167	13.1	1.4	4.5	0.6	100	2,692
Men	75.1	1,937	15.8	1.5	6.9	0.6	100	2,578
Age group								
15–24	68.2	320	21.5	3.2	6.8	0.2	100	469
25–34	76.6	929	14.6	1.4	6.8	0.6	100	1,213
35–44	76.3	1,069	15.1	1.5	6.3	0.7	100	1,401
45–54	80.5	1,166	12.4	1.1	5.1	0.7	100	1,448
55–64	83.9	620	12.0	0.9	3.1	0.5	100	739