




Work-Related Stress (WRS)

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Work-Related Stress and quality of work


- **WRS essential part of quality of work, related to many other issues**
- **WRS urgent issue**
 - EWCS 2000/Bilbao Agency: 2nd most common work-related health problem
 - serious societal effects and costs
 - in EU-15 28% of workers affected


EU and quality of work





- 1997: EC Green Paper on partnership new work organisation
- 1998: European Employment Strategy (EES)
- 2000: Lisbon goals, “more and better jobs”
- 2000: EC Guidance on WRS
- 2001: EC Communication on promoting quality in work, 10 main indicators
- 2001: EU Health ministers: special attention to WRS and depression
- 2005: EC Guidelines for growth and jobs, linking employment with quality at work









EU quality of work regulation

- **Basis: Framework H&S Directive 89**
- **WRS not mentioned in EU framework**
- **2004: voluntary agreement on WRS by social partners**
- **National legislation beyond Directive 89, related to WRS prevention: BE, DK, GE, NL, SW**
- **Bipartite arrangements in BE, DK, GE, NL, SW, UK**

WRS: the concept

- **causal model**
stressors → job strain (work pressure)
→ work-related stress → burnout
- **imbalance job demands – individual competencies and resources**
- **3 major danger zones:**
 - high strain jobs (Karasek)
 - passive jobs (Karasek)
 - combination passivity and sudden high strain
- **prolonged exposure: serious long-term consequences**
 - musculoskeletal disorders
 - RSI (repetitive strain injuries)
 - burnout

WRS outcomes WageIndicator 2006

	Work physically exhausting	Work mentally exhausting	Work at very high speed	Work to tight deadlines	Work cannot be finished in allocated time
Belgium	2,67	3,20	3,47	3,39	2,65
Denmark	2,98	3,43	3,39	3,43	2,65
Finland	2,67	3,45	3,64	3,61	2,47
Germany	2,67	3,49	3,38	3,41	2,59
Netherlands	2,59	2,98	3,53	3,10	2,24
Spain	3,29	3,90	3,32	3,40	2,49
United Kingdom	not available	not available	3,66	4,07	2,81

