

Topic: Population health, determinants of health.

Presentation format: oral session with discussant.

## **Working conditions and anxiety.**

### **An analysis on Sixth European Working Conditions Survey data**

*Nunzia Nappo*<sup>1</sup>

Approximately the 16% of the European workers report they experienced anxiety. Since most people spend the majority of their time working, work and work related factors might contribute to produce workers' anxiety (Plaiser et al. 2007; Rusli et al. 2008).

The aim of the paper is studying the association between working conditions and anxiety for European workers, using data from the Sixth European Working Conditions Survey realised in 2017. The Survey presents the varied picture of Europe at work over time across countries, occupations, gender and age groups. To the best of our knowledge, it is the first time that this release of the data has been employed for this kind of investigation. Following the ILO definition, working conditions cover a "broad range of topics and issues, from working time (hours of work, rest periods, and work schedules) to remuneration, as well as the physical conditions and mental demands that exist in the workplace".

The paper has as theoretical reference the Demand-Control model (Karasek and Theorell 1990) and the Effort-Reward Imbalance model (Siegrist 1996). The dependent variable is "anxiety" - a subjective indicator of health - collected through individual interviews. Interviewed responded to the question: "Over the last 12 months, did you have any of the following health problems?"

Anxiety was one of the possible answers and responses could be expressed as Yes or Not.

As regards independent variables, the selection of appropriate explanatory variables is driven by theory. The theoretical hypothesis concerning the association between working conditions

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<sup>1</sup> Department of Political Science, University of Napoli Federico II. Email: [nunappo@unina.it](mailto:nunappo@unina.it). Via Rodinò 22 - 80134 Napoli. Tel 0039 081 2538223.

and anxiety is tested using a standard probit model. Outcomes of the econometric analyses describe a correlation rather than a cause-and-effect relation between anxiety and working conditions.

Main results show that men and workers with a high level of education have a lower probability of reporting anxiety. Having both a contract of unlimited duration and a contract of limited duration imply a lower probability of reporting anxiety than having an apprenticeship or other training scheme and no contract. Workers who experience stress in their job have a higher the probability of reporting anxiety. Feeling exhausted at the end of the working day is associated with a higher probability of reporting anxiety. Workers satisfied with work conditions have a lower probability of reporting anxiety. Receiving sometimes helps and supports by the manager is associated with a lower probability of reporting anxiety.

Results show that mostly encouraging working conditions are associated with lower problems of anxiety. Working conditions should be constantly monitored and governments should not underestimate the profitability of investments in their improvements.

### ***Bibliography***

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