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Bases scientifiques

# **Indicators on working conditions in the healthcare sector from the Swiss Labor Force Survey (SAKE/ESPA)**

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# Presentation context and objectives

- I am not an expert on working conditions in healthcare and have not reviewed the relevant literature.
- However, I was asked to provide a descriptive analysis of ESPA data in the healthcare sector, which I have updated for this presentation.
- This analysis allows us to discuss the potential of ESPA data in understanding major trends in healthcare, in the field of working hours, schedules and health risks.
- The trends have been known for a long time, but it is good to be able to quantify them.

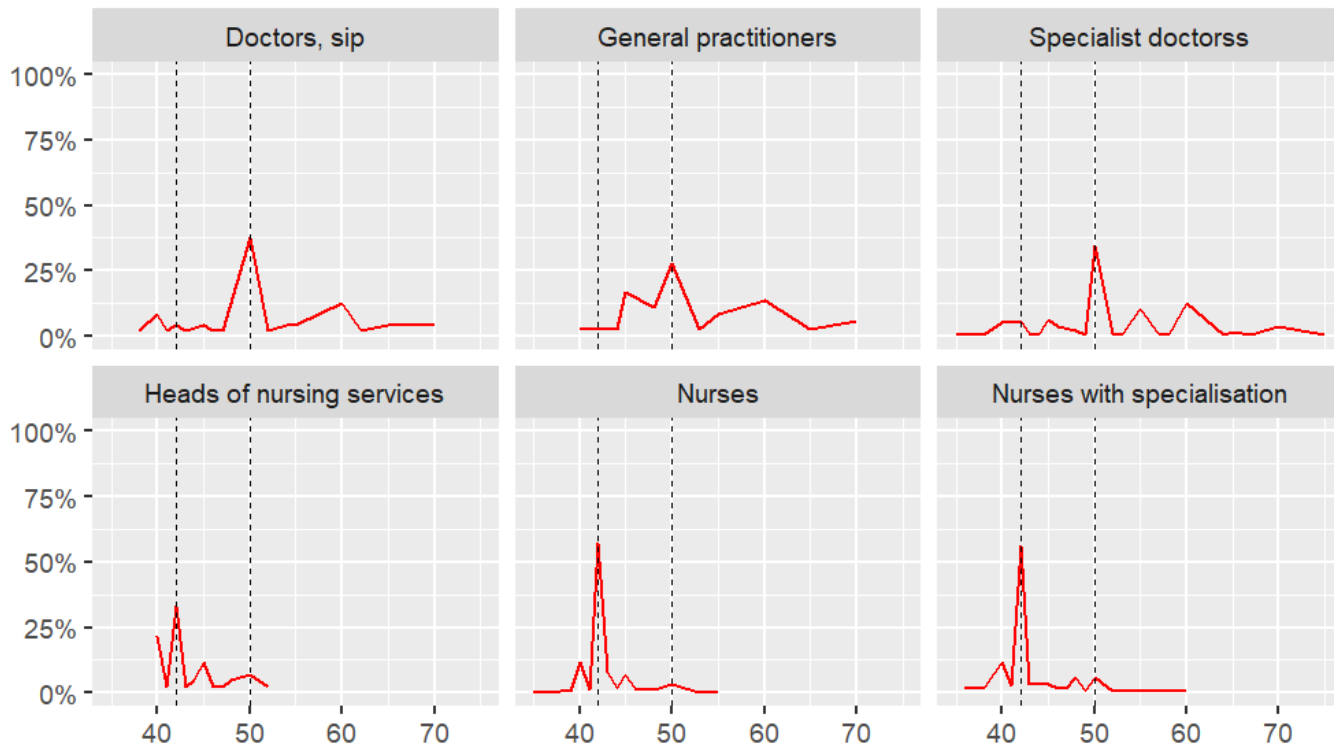


# Presentation of ESPA data

- Working hours and schedules
  - ESPA 2024 (after the pandemic)
  - Working population: N = 65'874
  - Active healthcare professions: N = 1'597
    - including hospital doctors (N = 64), general practitioners (N = 73), specialist doctors (N = 401), heads of healthcare services (N = 62), Nurses (N = 765), Specialised nurses (N = 232)
- Physical and psychological risks in the workplace
  - ESPA 2020 (first year of the pandemic)
  - OSH module, professionally active workers: N = 6'362
  - Health and social care (all professions combined): N = 1'014

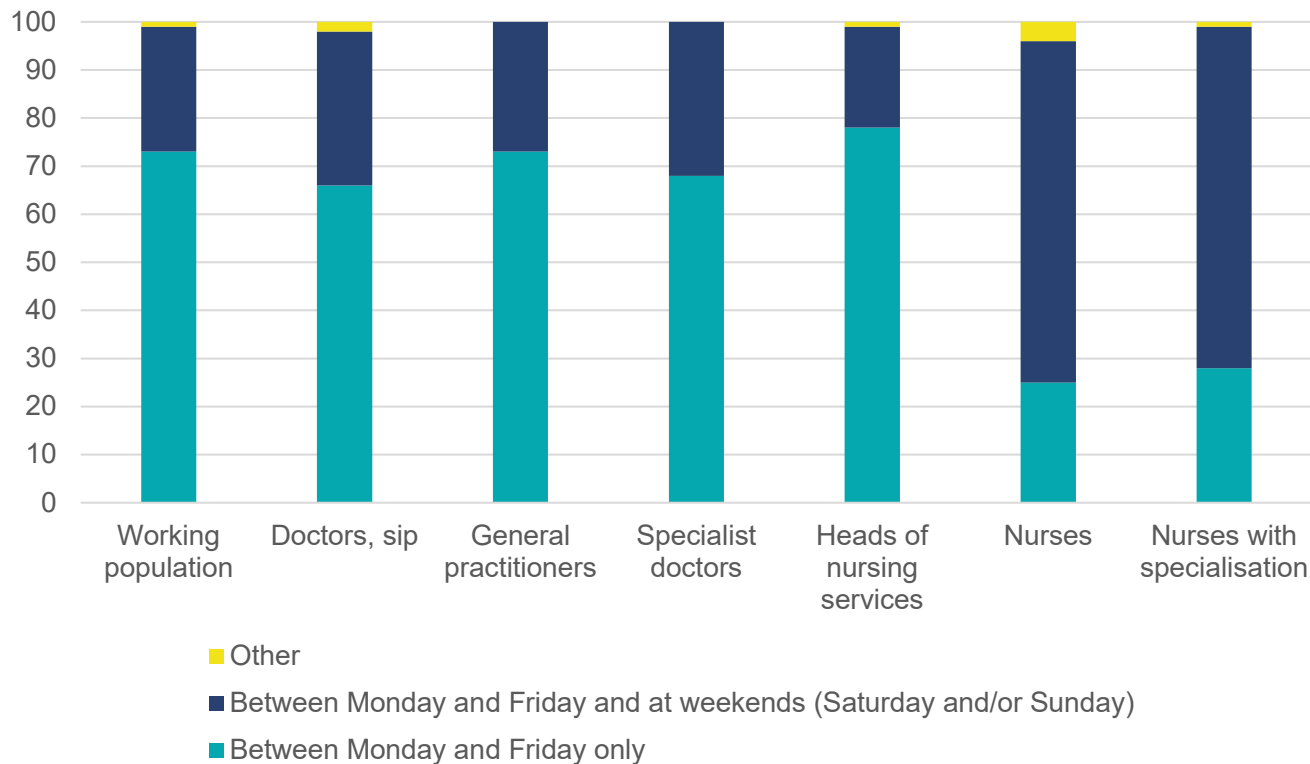


# Working hours for full-time employees



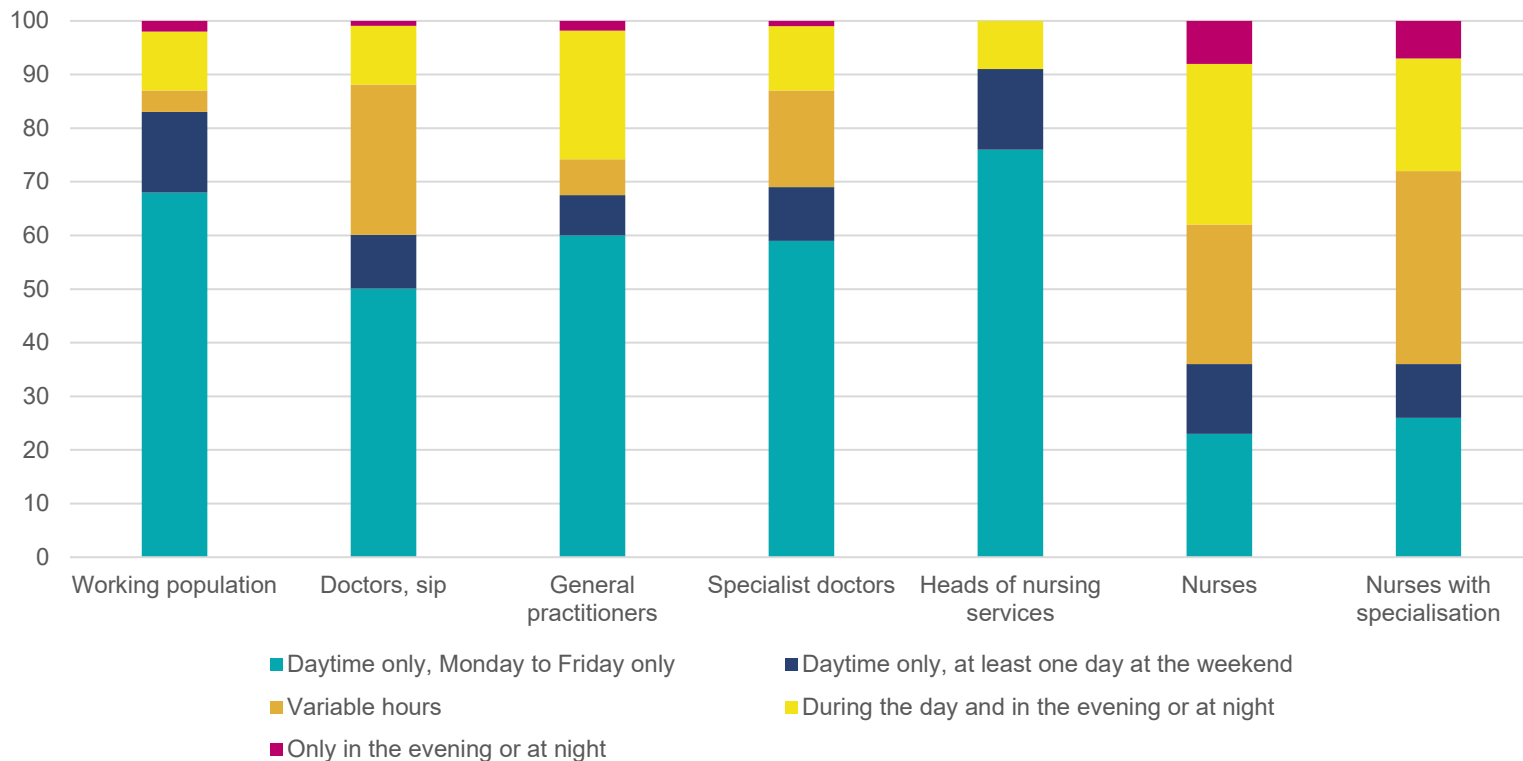


# Type of weekly schedule



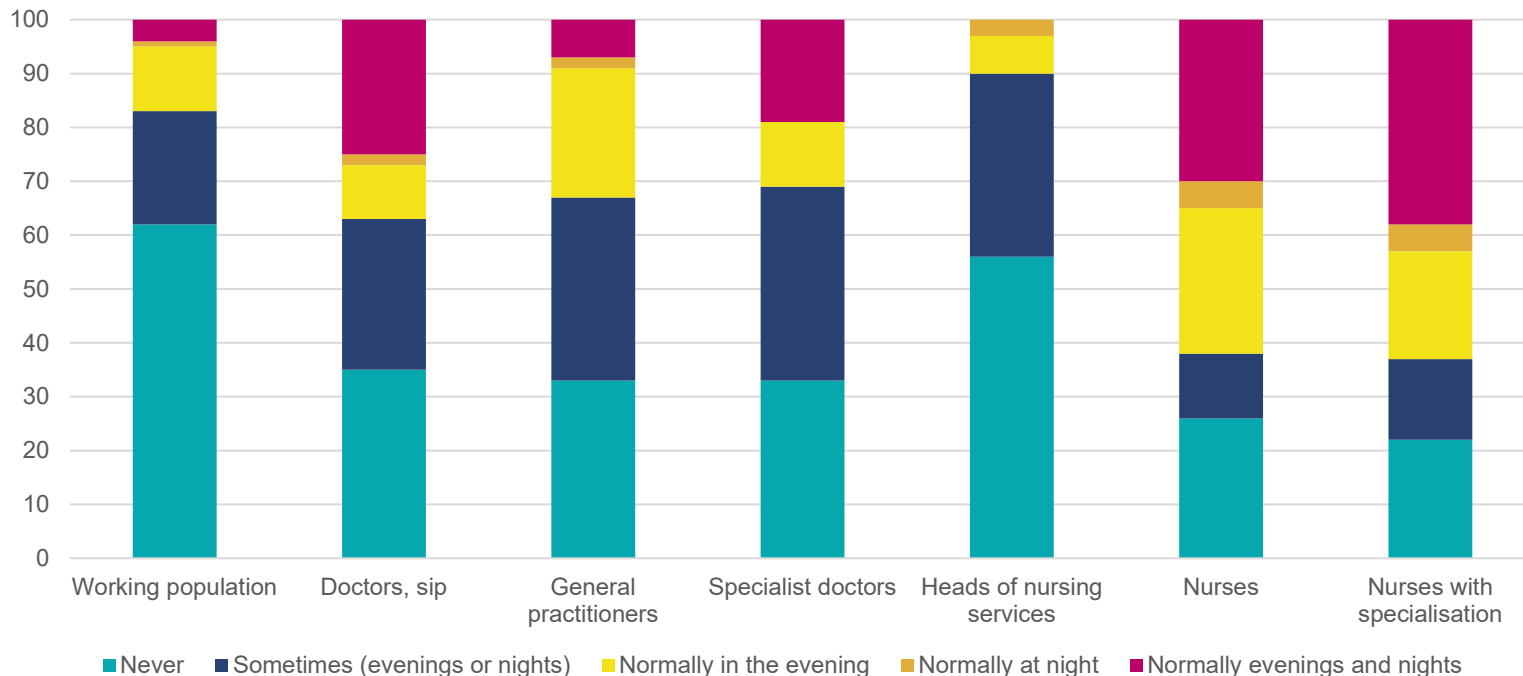


# Type of daily schedule



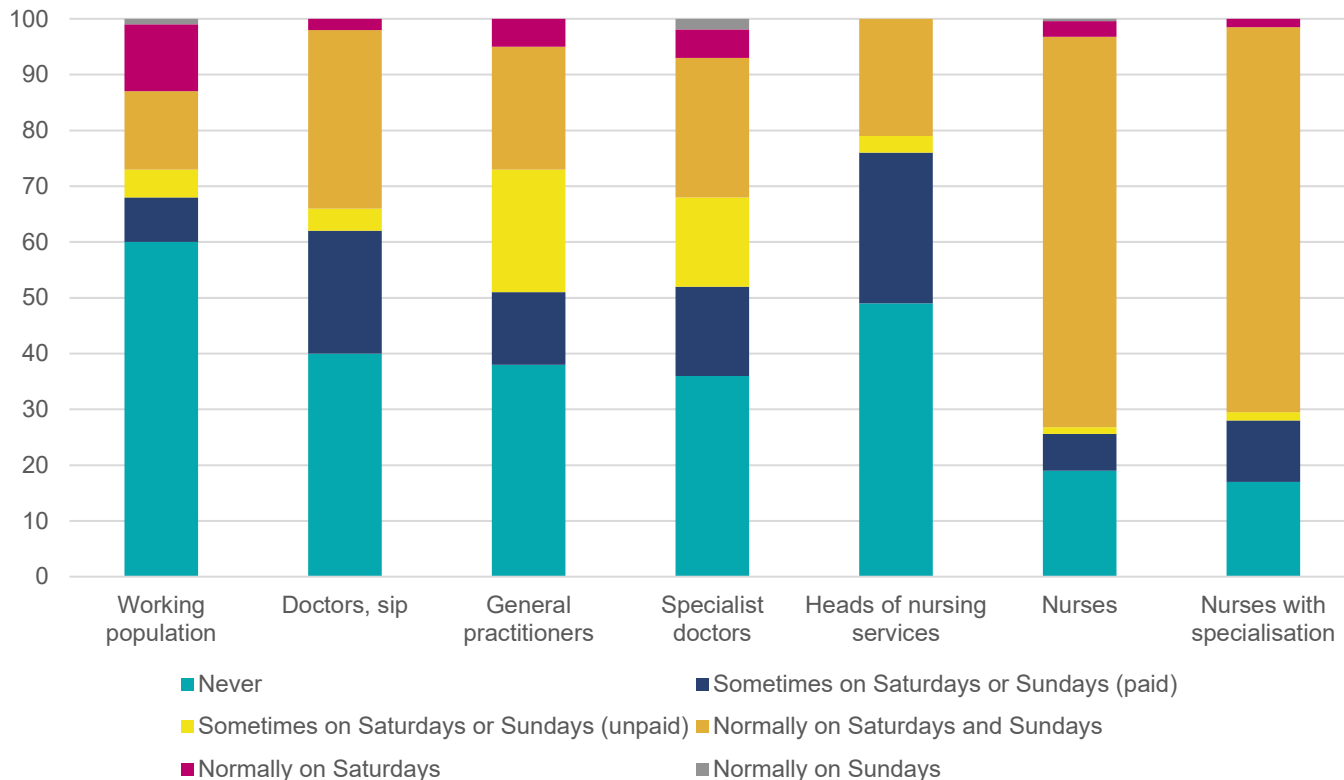


# Work in the evening and/or at night





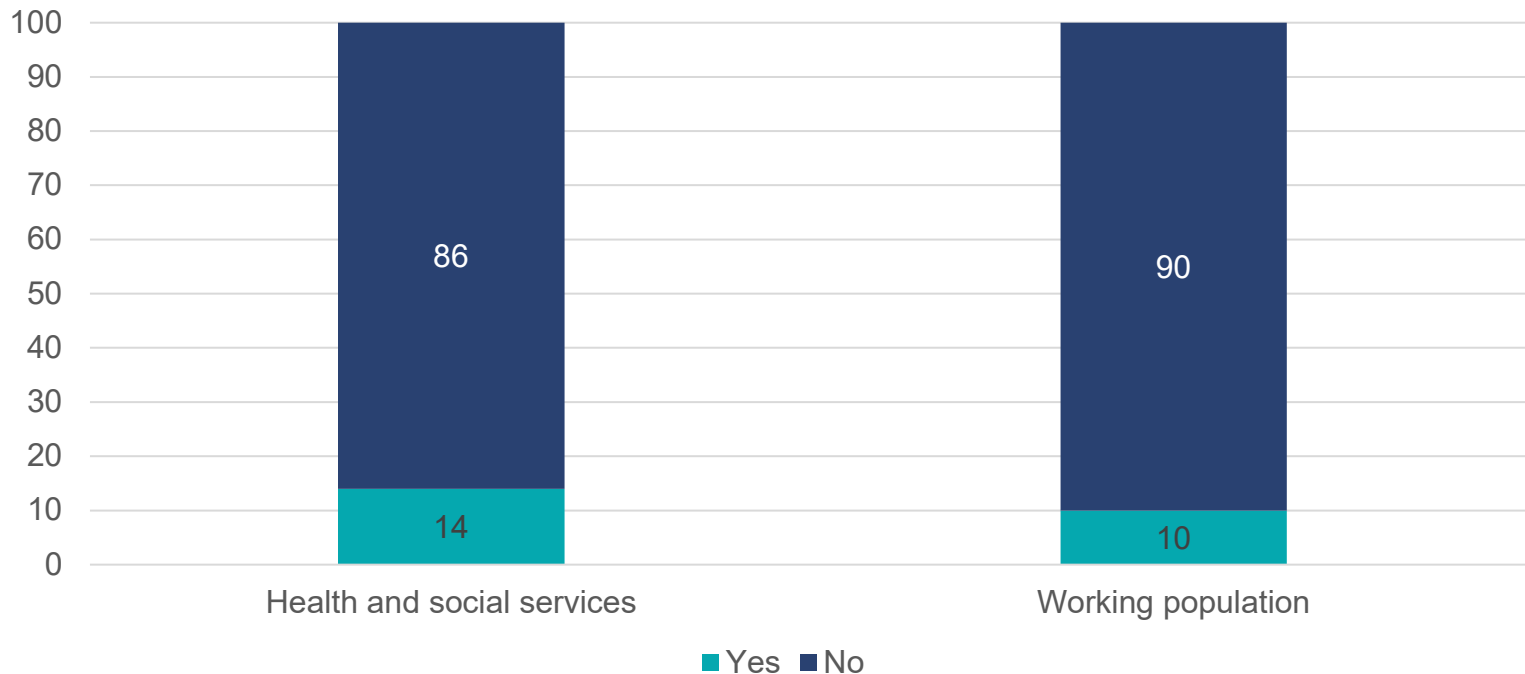
# Work performed at weekends





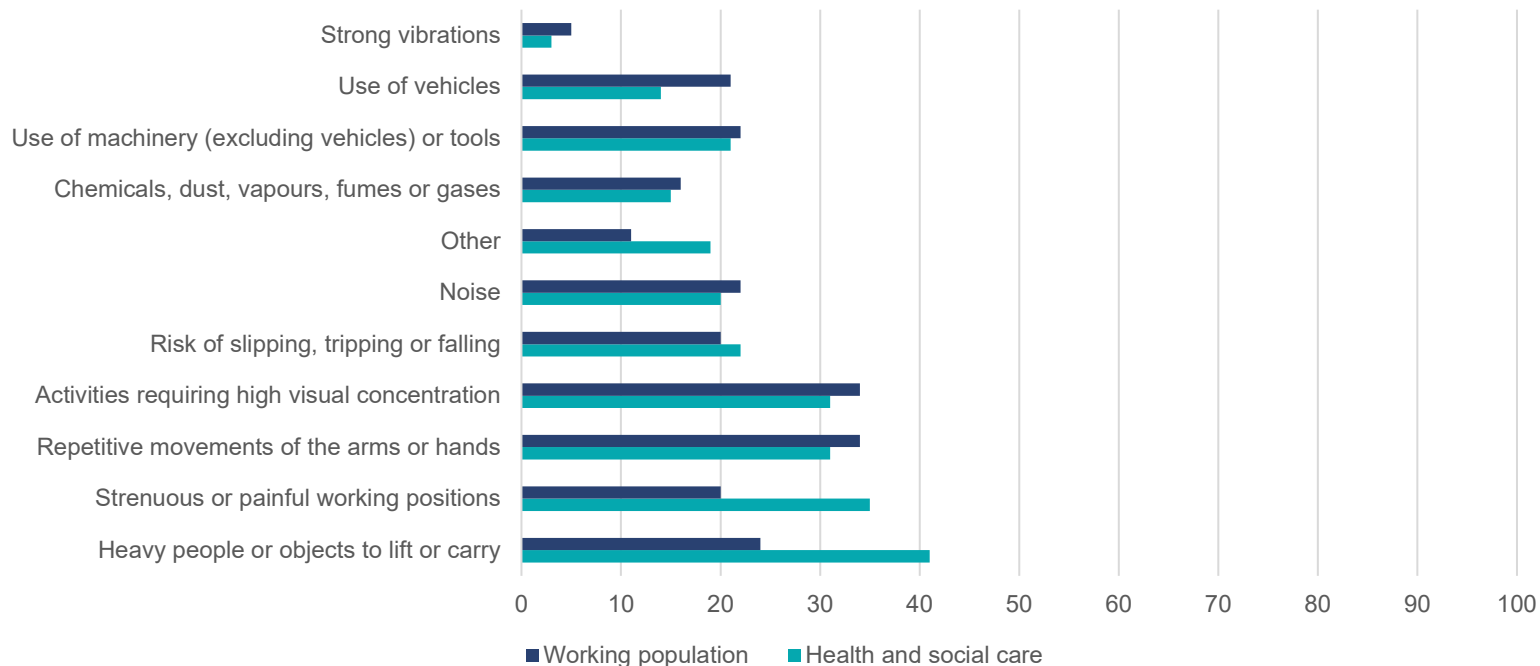


# Health problems during the last 12 months caused by professional activity (excluding accidents)





# Risk factors for physical health in the workplace





# Risk factors for mental health in the workplace





# Discussion

Doctors work long hours and, to a lesser extent, evening and/or night shifts and weekends.

- Certain categories of doctors and heads of healthcare departments are under-represented in the sample: their situation would require more in-depth analysis.
- The situation of junior doctors is unclear (cf. NZZ, 20.2.2023).

Nursing staff are heavily affected by atypical working hours

- Non-standard schedules, evening and/or night shifts, and weekend work being very common, but to for heads of nursing services.
- However, weekly working hours do not appear to be excessive.

These data do not consider the intensification of work!



# Discussion

The health and social care sector is exposed to:

- psychological risk factors (difficult interactions with patients, high time pressure, high emotional strain)
- physical risk factors (heavy people and objects to carry and strenuous or painful working positions).

Exposure to these risk factors is confirmed by other surveys such as the ESS 2017 and the EWCS 2021.

While the health and social services sector as a whole is particularly vulnerable to these cumulative risks, differences are likely to exist between professional groups. Resource factors should also be considered.



# Discussion

- More in-depth analyses (quantitative and qualitative) are needed to better understand the specific situation of certain social and professional groups in the health sector.
- The healthy worker effect (HWE) must be considered in light of the high constraints
- Some relevant variables are not considered in this presentation (gender, age, canton, etc.).
- A specific database should be created to better consider working conditions in the health sector (SCOHPICA, etc.).



# Conclusion

- A descriptive analysis of ESPA data allow to identify that there is a divide between professional groups (doctors vs nurses) regarding working hours and schedules, which are two important issues.
- It would be possible to expand on these analyses using ESPA data relating working hours and schedules as dependent variables.
- A comparison with ESPA data could be useful to validate observations made by SCOHPICA data, which is not representative.
- ESPA are collected each year: how are trends evolving over time? Can we observe the impact of the pandemic?
- ESPA data are incorporated into Eurostat: is there any interest in comparing Switzerland to other countries?