

The WOCCQ : **W**orking **C**onditions and **C**ontrol Questionnaire

The WOCCQ – *W*orking *C*onditions and *C*ontrol *Q*uestionnaire (I. Hansez) – is a Belgian psychosocial risk diagnostic aid developed at Liège University's Psychology of Work and Business Department (Prof. V. De Keyser). It can be used both to measure existing stress levels, and as groundwork for a prevention policy by identifying stressors in working conditions. It is a questionnaire-based method most suited to medium-sized and large firms. The basic tool consists of a questionnaire to measure control over working conditions (the WOCCQ), a standardized stress gauge, and a problem spotting guide. Other questionnaires can be added to refine the diagnosis according to the firm's specific features.

Work psychology research shows that stress develops when workers feel they lack what they need to cope with unavoidable job requirements. It can readily be imagined how the feeling of lacking control over aspects of one's work is likely to cause stress. Based on this premise, the WOCCQ evaluates workers' feelings of control over different aspects of their work, like resources, the future, work planning, task management, risks and time management. Using the findings, ideas for appropriate solutions for ways of reducing stressors can be suggested.

A workplace-specific flanking approach is also implemented, which entails getting all the different workplace actors directly involved. The kingpin of this approach is the steering committee. It is composed of company resource persons (personnel or human resources manager, workers' representatives, occupational health doctor, etc.) and supports the survey process, adapts it to the workplace, and puts in place a communication plan to ensure maximum participation by the workers.

A database (currently comprising over 8000 subjects) is being developed out of the surveys, which enables each new firm that uses it to be positioned against a reference set.

The method has received public funding both in the design (from the Federal Office for Scientific, Technical and Cultural Affairs) and promotion phases (jointly-funded by the Federal Ministry for Labour and Employment, and the European Social Fund). It has been used to acclaimed success both in Belgium and abroad, especially in France and Switzerland.

Further details of the WOCCQ from :

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**The questionnaire is available in French and Dutch at :
www.woccq.be/index.jsp**