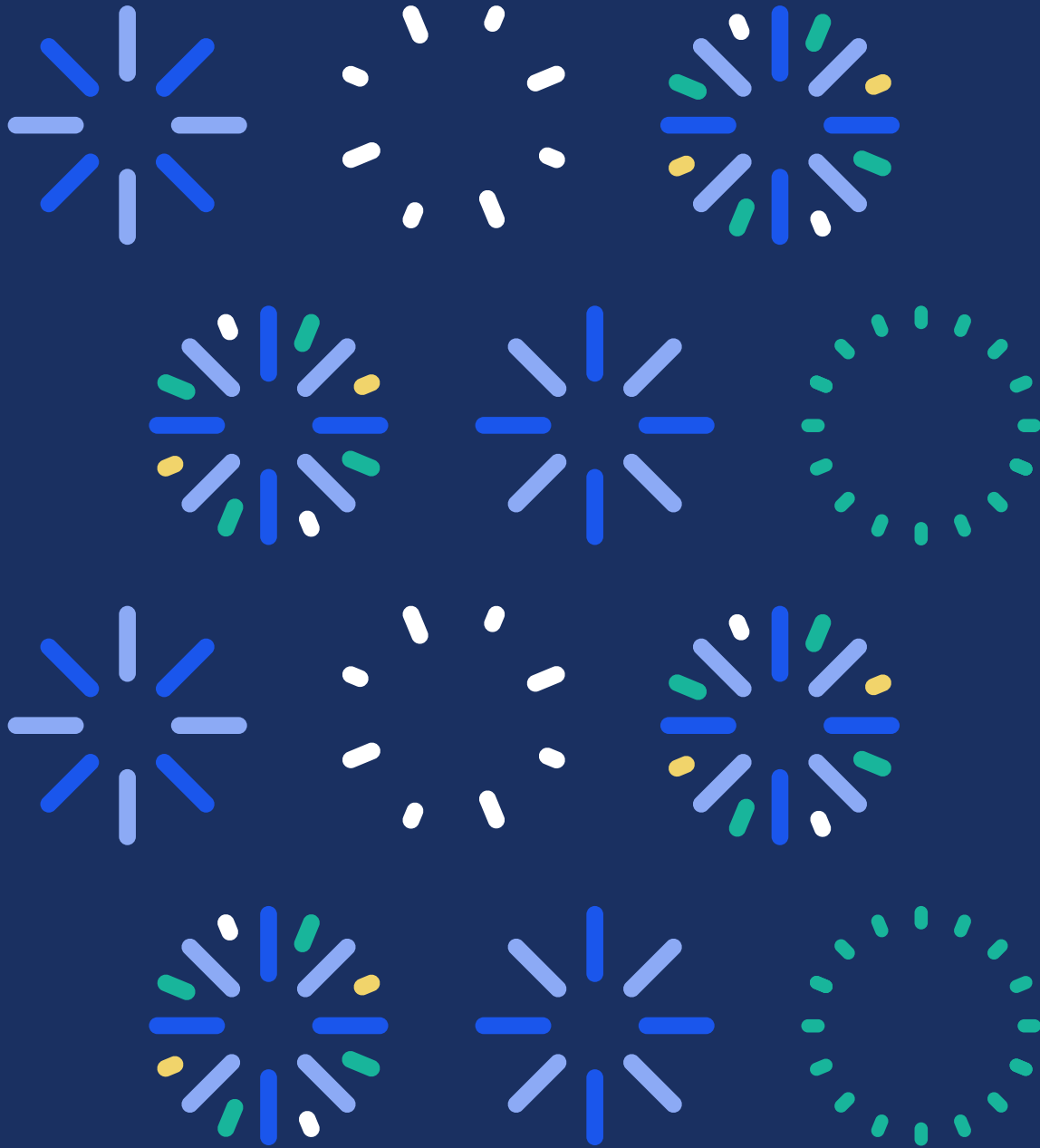


Administrative and survey data integration for work statistics

Case Finland: Some Perspectives on the Use of
Register Data in the Labour Force and Quality of Work
Life Surveys

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Labor Statistics, ILO-KOSTAT

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Content of presentation

Background

- Work statistics in StatFin
- Right to use register data in Finland

FI LFS and Quality of Work Life Surveys (QWLS)

- Basic facts of surveys
- Present state of using administrative data in data collection
- Sources of variables in general
- Example of use of admin data
- Challenges and future development

Work-related statistics in StatFin

- StatFin has c. 10 work-related official statistics (including wage, excluding National Account), measuring work as employment
 - In addition to that, experimental statistics on Main activity of the population (monthly register-based labour status)
- Two of them are household/individual based sample survey, namely Labour Force Survey and Quality of Work Life
- They are also the statistics describing most widely employment
 - The monthly release of the **Labour Force Survey**, which have continued for decades, makes the Labour Force Survey the most significant statistics publishing labour market indicators
 - The **Quality of Work Survey** is a unique time series of key working conditions data, getting external funding from users

Broad use and linkage of register data in Finnish Official Statistics is lawful and mandatory

- The **Statistics Act** requires administrative data to be used primarily and gives Statistics Finland statutory rights of access and use, including personal identifiers for linking
- The **EU Statistics Regulation 223/2009** supports and mandates the use and integration of registers for statistical purposes
- The **GDPR** and the Finnish **Data Protection Act** provide the legal basis for processing personal data as a task in the public interest, and permit identity codes for linkage
- **Statistical secrecy and purpose limitation rules** ensure that the data are never used for administrative decisions or control of individuals, and that research access is only possible under strong safeguards
- The data must be obtained from the registers, if any



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LFS and QWL Surveys and Linking register data

Basic facts

- ❖ Questionnaire follows strictly minimum EU content requirements
- ❖ 5 round panel of 15 months for individuals, 5th also household survey
- ❖ CAWI and CATI methods with 48% and 52% responding shares
- ❖ 87,000 respondents in 2024
- ❖ Nonresponse high: 43.3% (2024), but panel attrition quite small
- ❖ Nonresponse clearly higher among lower educated and immigrants

LFS

- A subsample from the LFS every fifth year (1977-2023 so far)
- 3,000–5,800 employee respondents per data set
- Response rate 68-91% (from LFS final sample)
- CAWI from 2021
- Core questionnaire remains the same over time

QWLS

Using administrative data in LFS data collection

- Stratified systematic sampling, based on the Central Population Register
- Reweighting method: calibration of weights by utilizing the latest available population data (gender, age, region and native language)
 - Minimum requirements of weighting factor in the EU Regulation: gender, five-year age group, NUTS 2 level
 - Regulation does not otherwise specify what kind of data can be used for weighting, but not LFS variables
- Additional information in calibration of weights

1st step

- Population register: Language (3 categories)
- Statistics Finland's Register of Completed Education and Degrees: level of education (3 categories)
- StatFin's register-based data repository: person's main economic activity (5 categories)

2nd step

- Employment Service Statistics (job-seeker status: 5 categories)
- Tax Administration's Incomes Register (monthly salary: 11 categories)

Using administrative data in LFS data collection

- NACE: StatFin's Business register data for classification of employed person's industry (as dependent interviewing) (an example next page)
- ISCO: Employment statistics data (as dependent interviewing)
- ISCED: Most often data come from register (highest level and field of education)
- Registration at a public employment service (PES)
- Income: employees' earnings (monthly salary) from Incomes Register

Example: Dependent interviewing with register information

NACE3D

- “According to the employment statistics, your workplace is:

KONE corporation

Keilasatama 3 [address]

02150 Espoo [post code and city]

Is this information still correct?” Y/N

Unfortunately, the data are not very timely: they lag behind by one to three years



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The source of EU data variables and Examples of use of data

Collecting EU-LFS variables (116)

- FI-LFS is applied because EU-LFS is a regulation-based statistics
- The biggest user of data LFS is Eurostat and its clients
- EU regulation prohibits the acquisition of labour market status data from the register

“Information on the variables WKSTAT, ABSREAS, JATTACH, SEEKWORK, ACTMETNE and AVAILBLE ... shall be obtained by interview.” (EU) 2019/2240 art. 8 § 2
- Examples of variables in EU-LFS Explanatory Notes ([Link](#))
 - The use of many EU variables is very low in Finland, e.g. former work of inactives
- The absolute value of EU-LFS is in its traditional role in defining actual labour market status

EU variables by source in FI-LFS (2026)

Type by source	Number of EU variable	Percent
Question	62	53,4
Register	13	11,2
Both (Q and R)	14	12,0
Derieved (Deducted)	27	23,2
<i>Total</i>	<i>116</i>	<i>100</i>

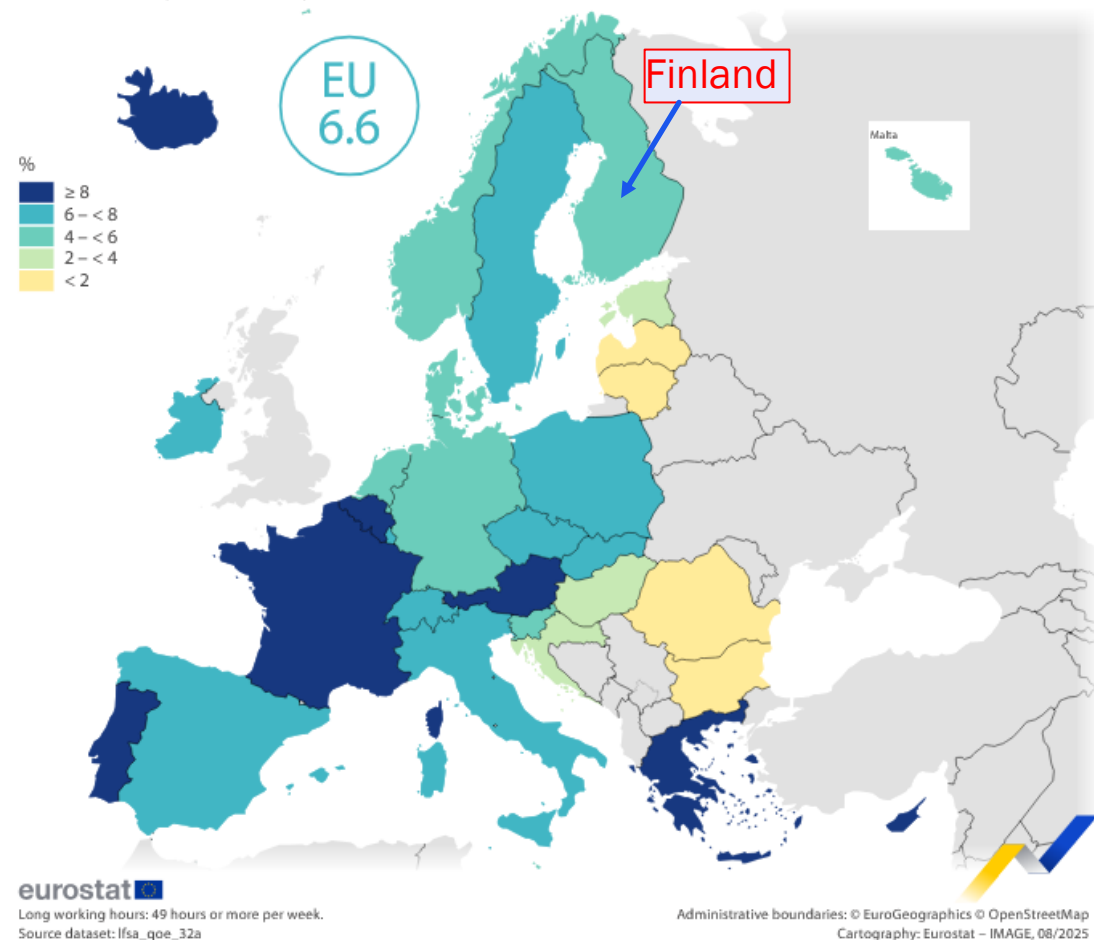
Examples of use of FI-LFS data combined with register data, including a link to the research

Dataset used, in addition to LFS	Research Focus	Link
Pensions and employment register	Employment trends among older workers	Link
Pensions and employment register	Development of employment contract durations	Link
Register of Completed Education and Degrees	Comparing educational attainment and LFS data	Link
Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment registers	Youth employment and labor market policy analysis	Link

Example of Eurostat news article (EU-LFS)

Employed people working long hours in 2024

(% of all employed people aged 20-64)



- Long working hours: 49 hours or more weekly
- “The share of self-employed people who worked long hours (27.5% of total self-employed people) was higher than that of employees (3.4% of total employees)”
- Could/can we use/combine register (in FI-LFS, under the ILO definitions)?
 - Employees and occupation: yes
 - Self-employed: in some extend
 - Working hours: probably no
 - Worked hours: never

Examples of use of FI-QWLS data combined with register data, including a link to the research

Register data combined	Research focus	Link
Finnish Center for Pensions' register	Impact of job quality on early retirement and extension of working careers	Link
Population / death statistics	Self-reported work-ability and long-term morbidity by working conditions	Link
Employment statistics	Work Place discrimination and later work careers	Link
Population statistics	Impact of temporary employment on family formation	Link



Challenges and Development with Incomes Register

The Latest **Challenges** of Work Statistics in StatFin

- Because costs need to be reduced
 - Ongoing plans in the FI-LFS*
 - Intensification of interview work, e.g. through responsive data collection design
 - Reduce/renew sampling or sample size
- Because admin data must be utilized (minimizing respondent burden)
 - In some extend, to replace employment/unemployment ILO-defined statistics, using more register-based statistics (from Incomes Register) in publicity
- Because not based on law or regulations
 - Quality of Work Life statistics: non-mandatory, relies on external funding by stakeholders

Incomes Register as a source of LM data

Includes all paid salaries

- Reported to the register within 5 days by the employer
- LFS's income variable is constructed almost entirely from register data
- Only those holding multiple jobs are asked to report their wages
- However, the register does not include entrepreneurial income

Being almost free for statistics, it is clear that Statistics Finland would like to use Incomes Register data to measure employment, instead of expensive interviewing work

We are aware that this is not the same employment as ILO-based information direct from respondents

In unemployment, register-based information differs even more from the ILO definition

Concluding final thesis

Direct data collection has evolved and is evolving, but is becoming difficult (nonresponse & financial matters)

You can still adapt to the situation in direct data collection by

- Improving the efficiency of sampling or calibration in a register-assisted manner, where this is still possible
- Increasing the use of the self-filling method (CAWI), despite increasing quality problems

Also, international communities need to consider ways to produce (more harmonized) work statics from registers instead of interviews

Thank you!



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hanna.sutela@stat.fi → Quality of Work Life Survey