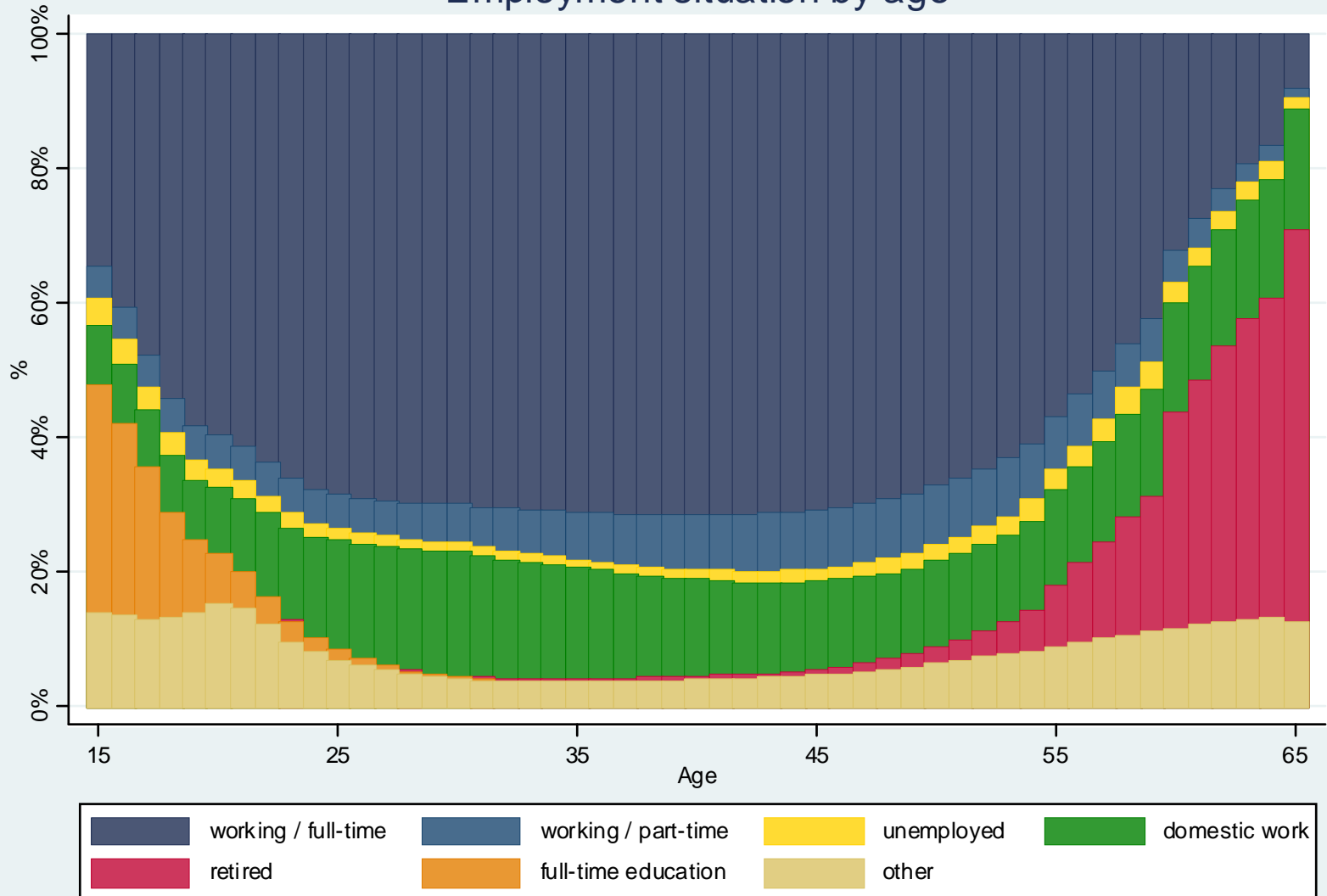




# The role of employment in the life course: SHARELIFE data

Employment situation by age

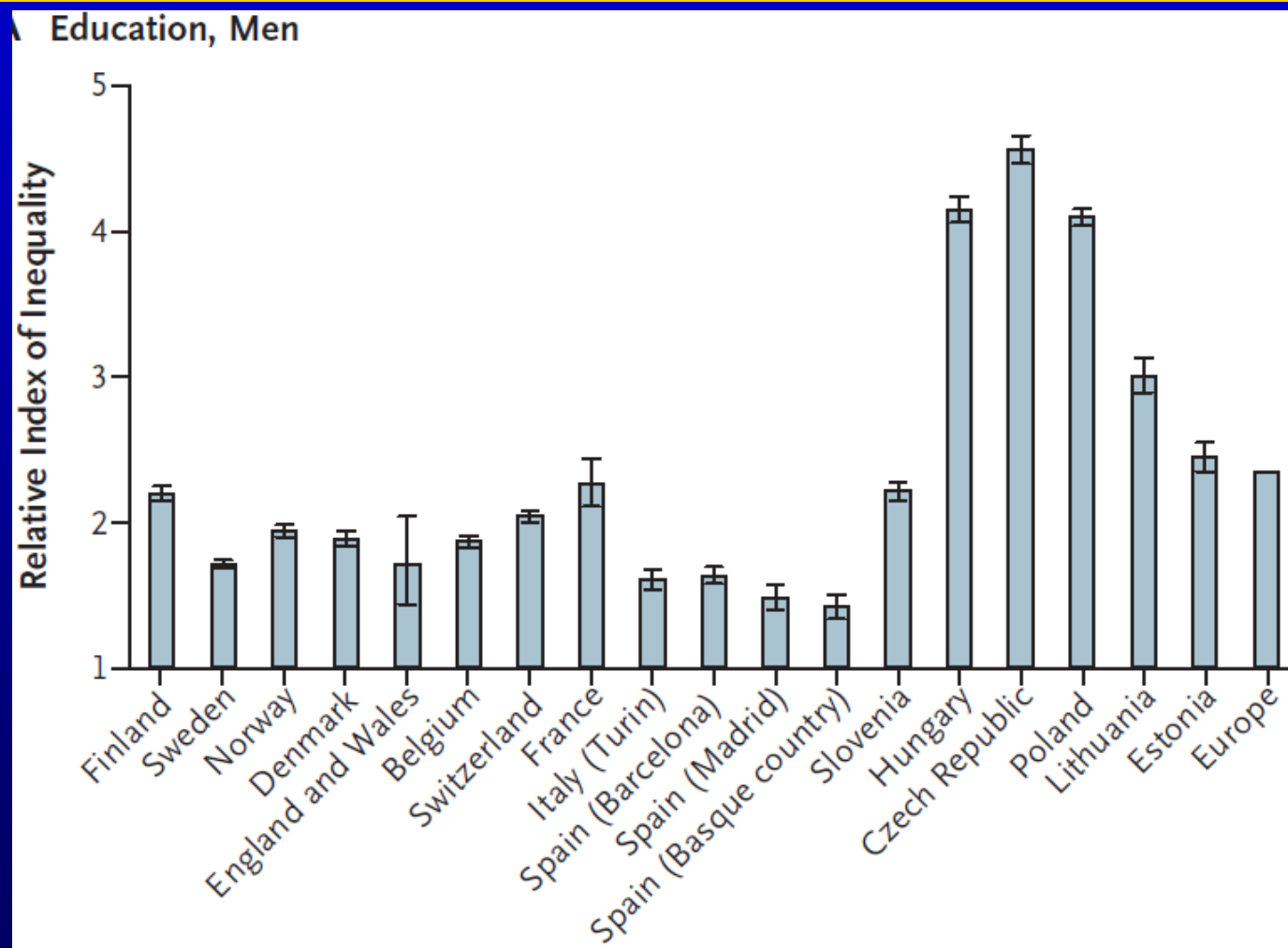


# Strong social gradient: the lower people's socioeconomic position, the less favourable their employment and working conditions

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- higher risk of job loss and long term unemployment
- higher risk of precarious, low paid job (excessive demands, high instability)
- higher risk of exposure to physical, biological or chemical hazards and stressors
- higher risk of exposure to an adverse psychosocial work environment

# Relative inequality of all cause mortality among men with lowest vs. highest educational degree (16 European countries, 30-74 years)



Source: Mackenbach J et al (2008) N Eng J Med 358: 2468-2481



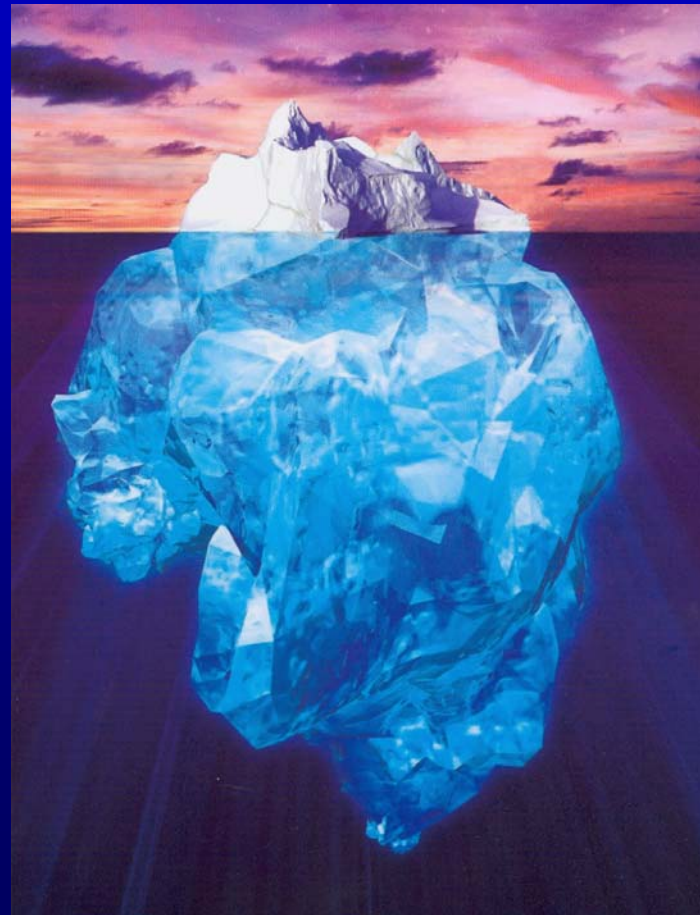
# **Adverse health effects produced by stressful conditions of work and employment (“Iceberg“)**

**Unemployment**

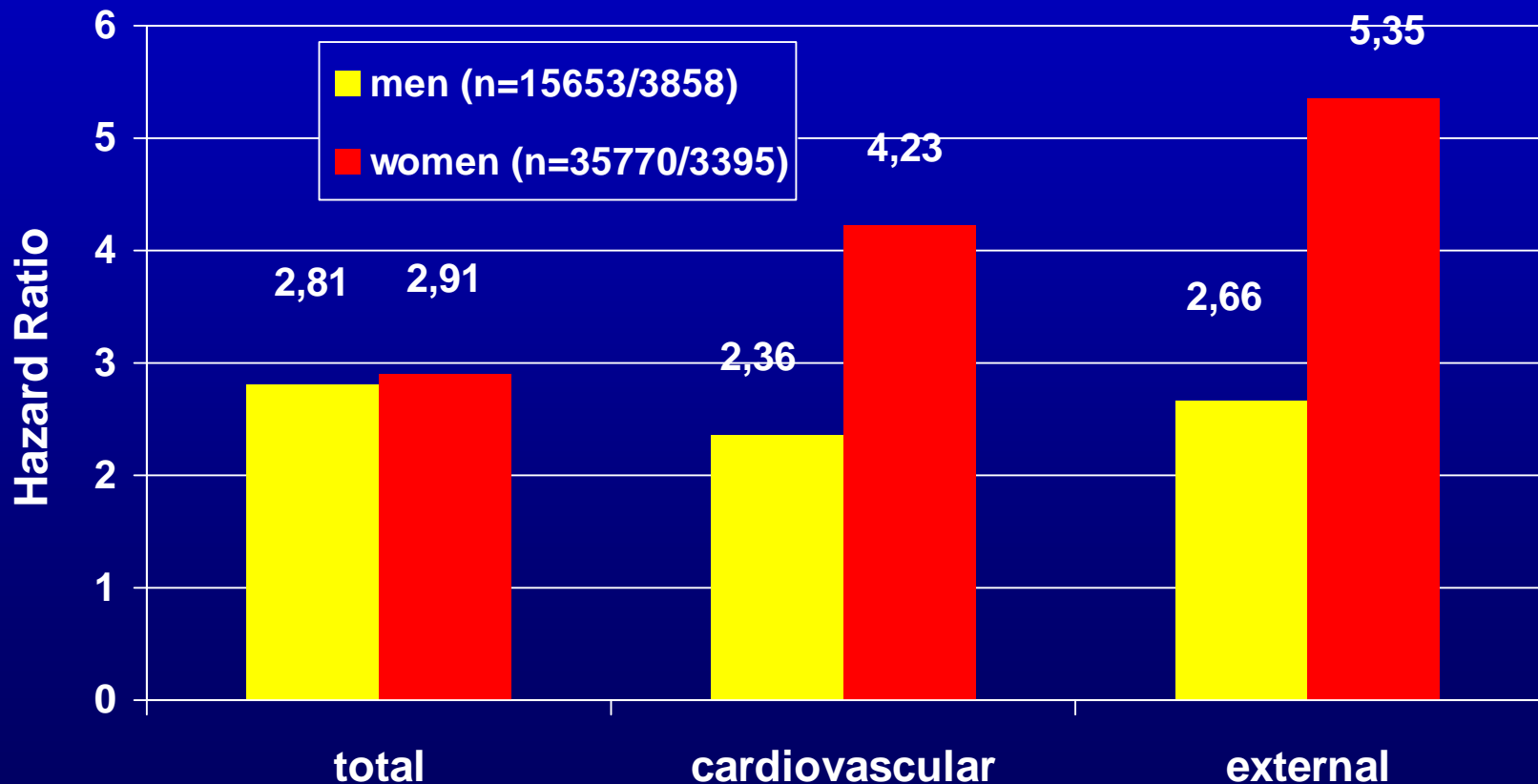
**Precarious work /  
instability**

**Physically demanding  
hazardous work**

**Stressful psychosocial  
work**

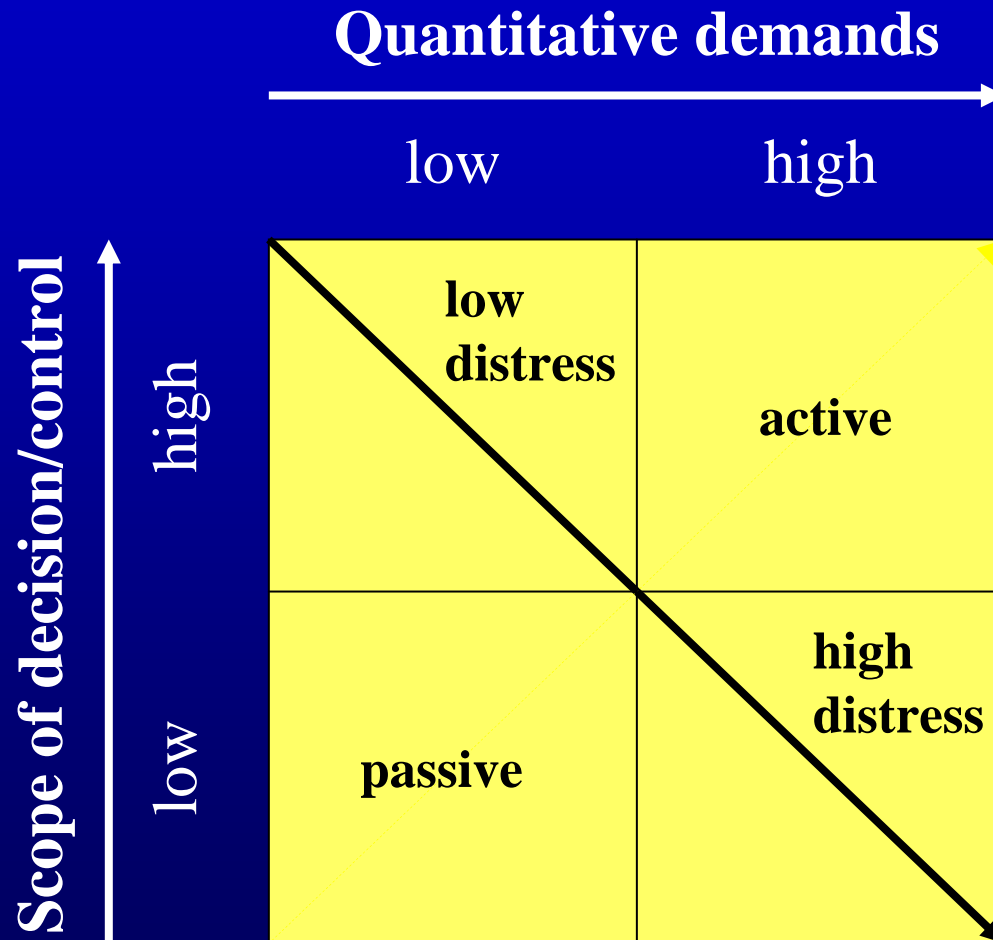


# Mortality among long-term unemployed (>1 yr.) compared with permanently employed (10 yrs. follow up 1990-2000)



# The demand-control model

(R. Karasek 1979; R. Karasek & T. Theorell 1990)

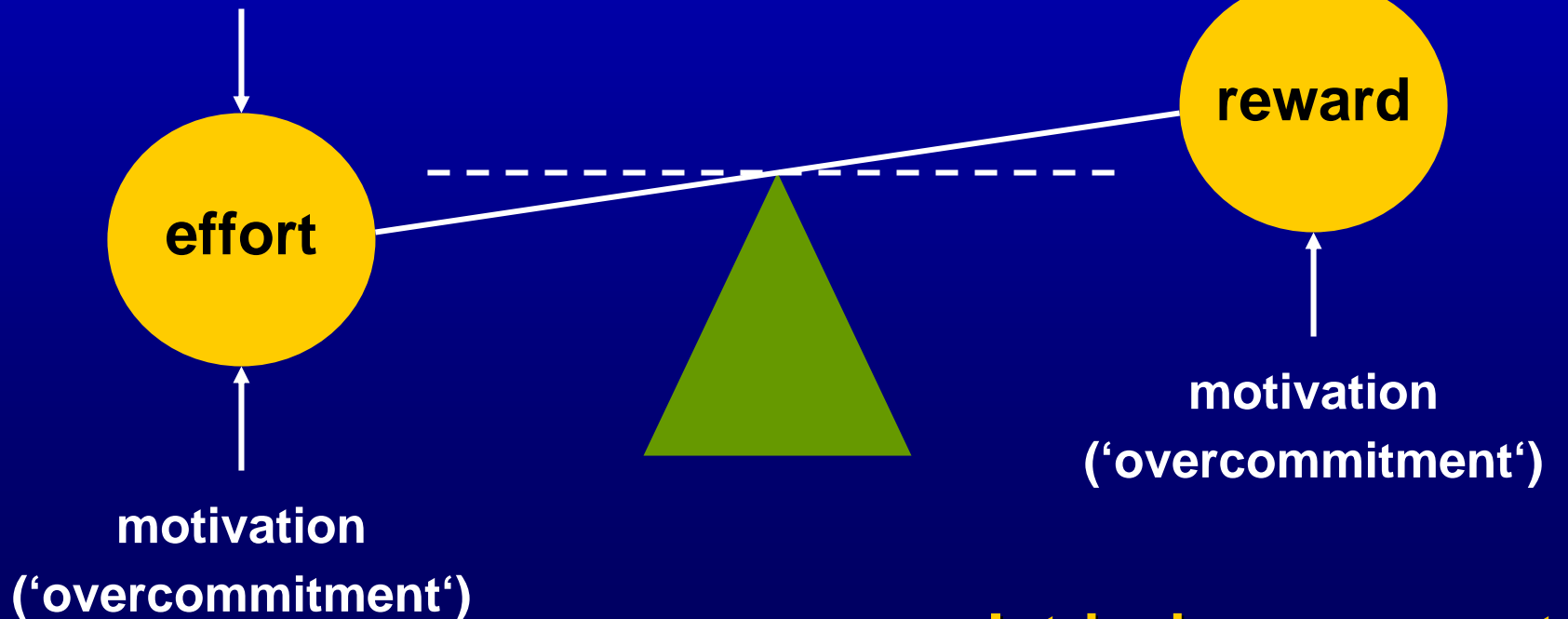


# The model of effort-reward imbalance (J. Siegrist 1996)

## Extrinsic components

- labour income
- career mobility / job security
- esteem, respect

demands / obligations



Intrinsic component



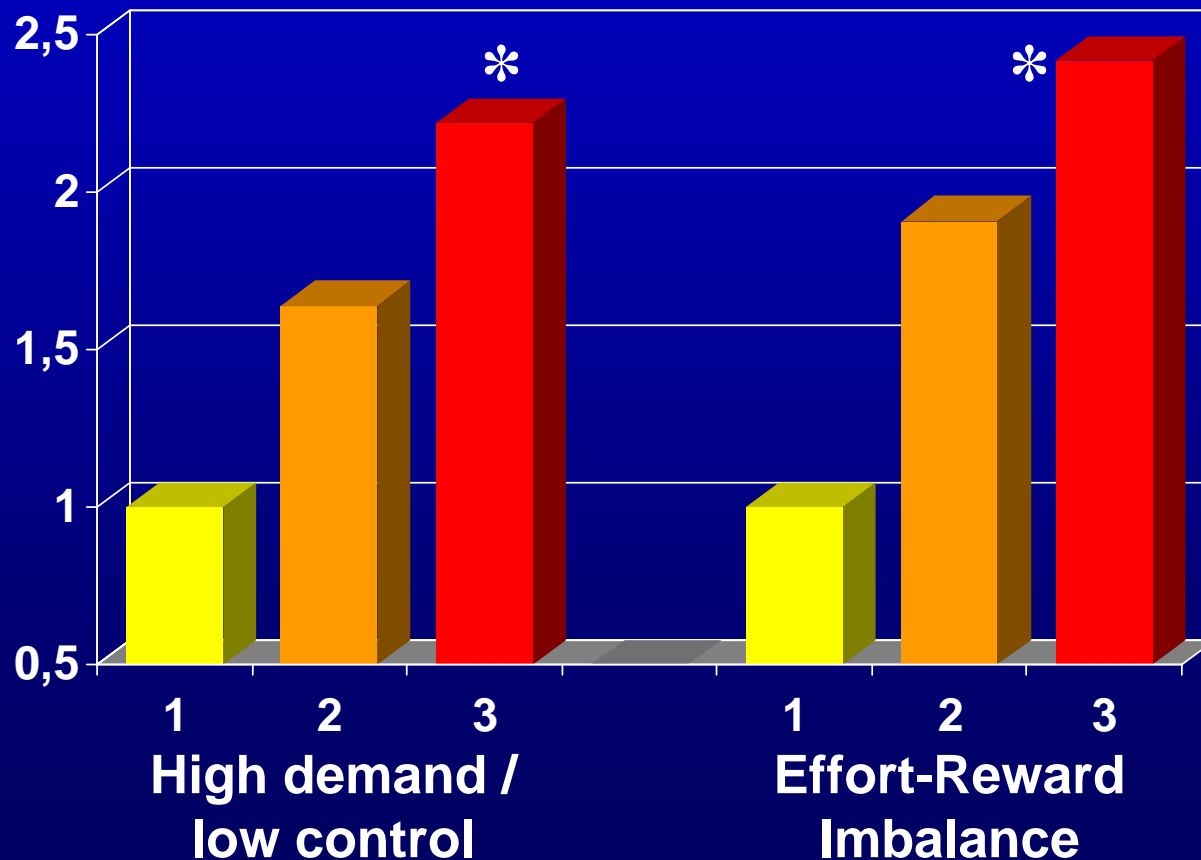
# Elevated risks of morbidity in stressful jobs: Summary of evidence from European prospective studies

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- Measurement of stressful job: Demand-control and/or effort-reward imbalance model (Odds ratios varying from 1.5-3.5)
- Coronary heart disease
- Depression
- T2-Diabetes
- Musculo-skeletal disorders
- Sickness absence
- Poor functioning
- Sleep disturbances
- Disability pension

# Adjusted hazard ratios for cardiovascular mortality by levels of work stress#

Nmax=812 (73 deaths); mean follow-up 25,6 years

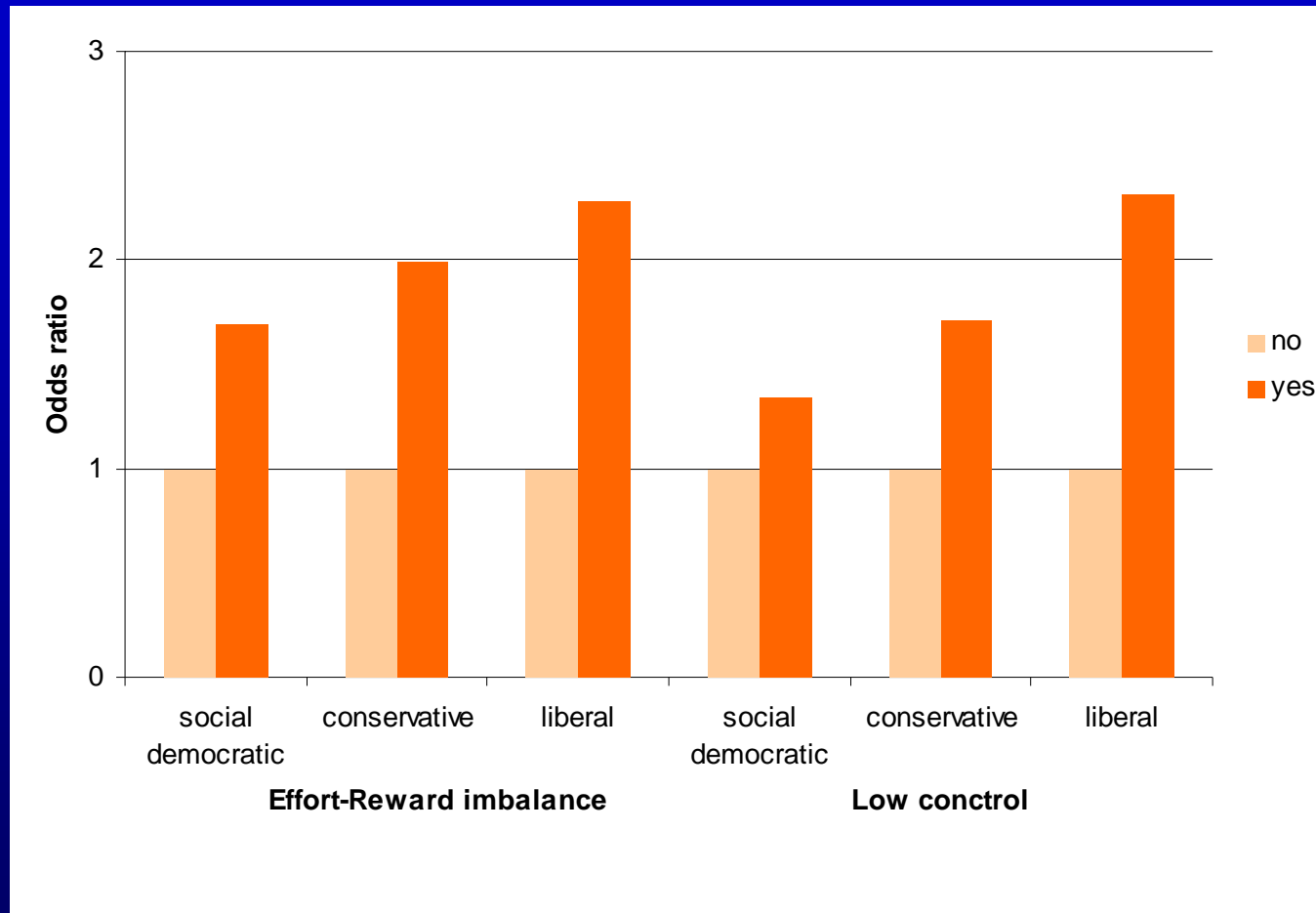


Tertiles  
1 = low;  
2 = intermediate;  
3 = high

#adj. for age, sex,  
occupational group,  
smoking, physical  
activity, SBP,  
total chol., BMI

\* p < .05

# Effects of stressful work on depressive symptoms: variation according to welfare system?



Stressful work: Tertiles, effort-reward ratio or low control

Depressive symptoms: Odds ratios adjusted for SEP, age and gender.

Data: SHARE-study; unpublished results, J. Siegrist et al. 2009

# Improving monitoring data on work and health: recent initiatives

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- England
  - National statistics socio-economic classification
  - Health & Safety Executive: standardised measure of stressful work
- Denmark
  - 24-sector specific standardised measures of health adverse work (Nat Res Centre for the Working Environment)
- France
  - National initiative of implementing a standardised measure of health adverse work
  - Project CONSTANCES
- EU
  - Committee of Senior Labour Inspectors initiative
  - European wide scientific studies, e.g. SHARE

# Conclusions

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- **Efforts towards monitoring health-endangering employment and work conditions need to be strengthened at the national European levels, taking account of available evidence from scientific and administrative sources.**
- **Actions aiming at the extending fair employment and ‘good’ working conditions are required to reduce health inequalities in adult populations.**
- **These actions include appropriate measures of social protection and access to health care for all employed people, as well as measures of reintegrating sick, disabled and unemployed people.**