

**Empirical measures of social  
stratification positions:  
*social classes, prestige ratings,  
socioeconomic indexes***

# What is the base of differences between people in modern societies?

- Socio-economic inequalities in the labour market
- What are jobs? Occupations – nominal categories
  
- The transfer of classification of occupations into sociologically meaningful variables
  - *How to transform nominal categories into ordinal or continuous (measured) variables?*
  
- result 1: **social classes**, categorical approach to social reality
- result 2: **prestige ratings**, hierarchical/continuous approach
- result 3: **socioeconomic indexes** – hierarchical/continuous approach
  
- All these measures are ISCO based

# ISCO – International Standard Classification of Occupations

## - ILO: International Labour Organization in Geneva

- original idea comes from 1921, the need for an ISCO
- the first elementary version of ISCO has been proposed in 1958
- ISCO68 -ISCO88 -ISCO08

## - ISCO – 4 digits

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### ISCO-08 major groups

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- 1 Managers
  - 2 Professionals
  - 3 Technicians and Associate Professionals
  - 4 Clerical Support Workers
  - 5 Services and Sales Workers
  - 6 Skilled Agricultural, Forestry and Fishery Workers
  - 7 Craft and Related Trades Workers
  - 8 Plant and Machine Operators, and Assemblers
  - 9 Elementary Occupations
  - 0 Armed Forces Occupations
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#### 9 Elementary Occupations

- 91 Cleaners and Helpers
  - 911 Domestic, Hotel and Office Cleaners and Helpers
  - 912 Vehicle, Window, Laundry and Other Hand Cleaning Workers
- 92 Agricultural, Forestry and Fishery Labourers
  - 921 Agricultural, Forestry and Fishery Labourers
- 93 Labourers in Mining, Construction, Manufacturing and Transport
  - 931 Mining and Construction Labourers
  - 932 Manufacturing Labourers
  - 933 Transport and Storage Labourers
- 94 Food Preparation Assistants
  - 941 Food Preparation Assistants
- 95 Street and Related Sales and Services Workers
  - 951 Street and Related Services Workers
  - 952 Street Vendors (excluding Food)
- 96 Refuse Workers and Other Elementary Workers
  - 961 Refuse Workers
  - 962 Other Elementary Workers

#### 1 Managers

- 11 Chief Executives, Senior Officials and Legislators
  - 111 Legislators and Senior Officials
  - 112 Managing Directors and Chief Executives
- 12 Administrative and Commercial Managers
  - 121 Business Services and Administration Managers
  - 122 Sales, Marketing and Development Managers
- 13 Production and Specialized Services Managers
  - 131 Production Managers in Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries
  - 132 Manufacturing, Mining, Construction and Distribution Managers
  - 133 Information and Communications Technology Services Managers
  - 134 Professional Services Managers
- 14 Hospitality, Retail and Other Services Managers
  - 141 Hotel and Restaurant Managers
  - 142 Retail and Wholesale Trade Managers
  - 143 Other Services Managers

# Categorical approach to occupation stratification

- Class approach
- Limited number of discrete categories
- External heterogeneity (members differ from other members)
- Internal homogeneity (similarity to other members of the same category)
- Criteria that define heterogeneity and homogeneity are tested in empirical research
  - Conditions (income, working time, vacation time, type of contract)
  - Opportunities (mobility odds, financial bonuses, promotions)
- How social classes are relevant for description and explanation of social phenomena
- Social classes = social mobility
  - Multidimensionality, social mobility patterns differ
- Social classes are theoretical concept that is empirically tested

# Continuous approach to occupation stratification

- Hierarchical approach
- Indexes are similar to prestige scales, but differences in construction
- Unlimited number of distinctions among occupational groups
- Differences in occupations can be captured in one dimension
  - Represented by one parameter is statistical modeling
  - Advantage when external heterogeneity and internal homogeneity do not work in the case of social classes
- Can solve the problem of “intervening” variable in mobility analysis (gender, age, ethnicity)
- Indexes (ISEI) = status attainment process
- Reproduction is part of attainment process, social mobility is not directly measured

# Social classes: categorical approach

- Generally: social classes are connected to modern society
  - In market economies: occupations are fundamental for social inequalities
  - Life-chances are largely determined by the position in the labour market
- The labour market is the axis of modern life
- Job = money that are necessary for life in society = the level of quality of life
  - living conditions
- Jobs (and labour markets in nation states) mean the organization of life, time and individual biographies

# Social classes in modern societies

- Social classes are groups of people in the same labour market position
- People with the same labour market chances
  - The same odds to get certain type of work
  - The same odds to get the similar salary
  - The same odds to do certain type of paid activity
- Are social classes the social groups today?
  - Is job/employment so important that makes social class?

# Fathers of social classes: Karl Marx and Max Weber

- **Karl Marx (1818–1883)**, German philosopher, economist, sociologist.
- Two classes in modern society: class antagonisms under capitalism between the *bourgeoisie* and *proletariat*
- Classes are defined by the relationship to production
  - Bourgeoisie owns means of production
  - Proletariat owns just labour power
- Structural specification of social classes
  
- **Max Weber (1864–1920)**, German sociologist, philosopher, and political economist
- Class position means the labour market position
- Jobs
- Many classes and specific cultural behaviour (explanation!)
- Cultural specification of social classes



# Theory of social classes

- Theory of social classes must answer two key questions:
- What criteria and why these criteria differentiate positions in the labour market?
  - How many social classes?
- Who belongs to which social class?
  - Does the social class exist as a social group? What have social class representants similar?

# Empirical measurement of social classes

- Up to 1980's huge distance between class theory and empirical indication of class differences
- A lot of authors wrote about class differences in the modern labour markets but the problem was how to indicate them
- Need of a common socio-economic classification based on employment relations
  
- Purpose is to arrange a set of entities into groups, so that
  - each group is as different as possible of all other groups
  - each group is as internally homogeneous as possible
  
- Empirical indication of class differences = operational definition
  - operationalization
- Theory is a base of concept of social classes
  
- *Why social classes cannot be derived from empirical reality?*

# Empirical social class schemas

- EGP and ESeC => ESeG
  - The most popular social class empirical indications today
- EGP (Erikson, Goldthorpe and Portocarero)
  - Origins in 1980s
  - It was developed for occupational structure for Great Britain in 1980s.
- ESeC is updated EGP
- ESeC is developed for contemporary european countries

# What is the ESeC?

- The Harmonized European Socio-economic Classification
- A statistical tool for for understanding the differences in social structures and socioeconomic inequalities across the EU
- Completed in 2006 by Eurostat
- Consortium of academics from six different EU countries
  
- *Why is ESeC needed?*
  - Monitoring social structure and social change
  - Unifying role (common language) , international comparisons
  - Discriminatory analytic tool and allows us to see if the effects on life-chances of social organization (position in labour market) are significant
  - Background variable in social statistics
  - Explanatory tool in social research
  - Cross-national patterns of life-chances
  - Politic recommendations

# The ESEC Classes

- There are *4 main distinctions*:
  - 1. Employers:** Buy the labour of others and assume some degree of authority and control over them
    - Large
      - Professional
      - Non-Professional
    - Small
      - Professional
      - Non-Professional
  - 2. Self-Employed:** Neither buy labour nor sell their own labour to an employer
    - Professional
    - Non-Professional

**3. Employees:** Sell their labour and thus place themselves under the authority of their employer

- Different *labour market situation* and *work situation*
- Categories defined by how employees *are regulated by employers* through employment contracts
- There are 2 main *employment regulation*:

- ***Labour contract***

- wage

- ***Service relationship***

- salary

- ***Mixed***

- Employment regulations respond to 2 problem faced by employers:

- ***Work monitoring***

- ***Asset specificity***

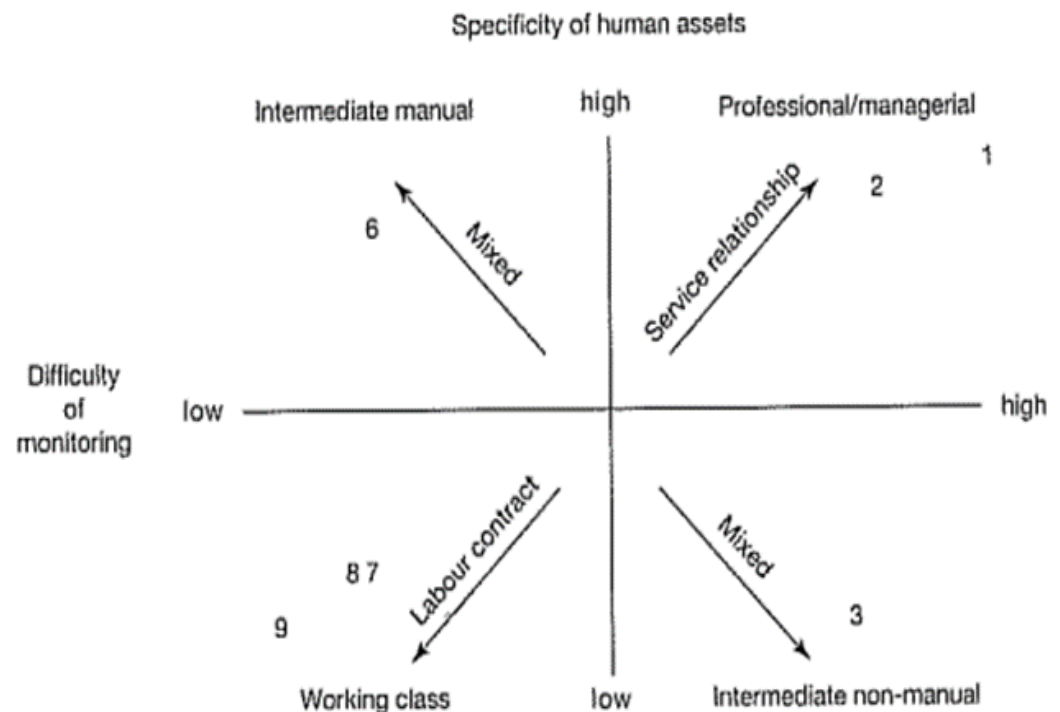


Figure 1.1 Difficulty of monitoring, specificity of human assets and the ESeC classes

#### 4. The Excluded: Are barred from an employment relationship because they have never worked (involuntarily) or are long-term unemployed (retired, sick and disabled, maternity leave, short-term unemployed, students)

*The European Socio-economic Classification: a prolegomenon* 13

Table 1.1 The European Socio-economic Classification

<i>ESeC class</i>	<i>Common term</i>	<i>Employment regulation</i>
1 Large employers, higher grade professional, administrative and managerial occupations	Higher salariat	Service relationship
2 Lower grade professional, administrative and managerial occupations and higher grade technician and supervisory occupations	Lower salariat	Service relationship (modified)
3 Intermediate occupations	Higher grade white-collar workers	Mixed
4 Small employer and self-employed occupations (exc. agriculture, etc.)	Petite bourgeoisie or independents	Not applicable
5 Self-employed occupations (agriculture, etc.)	Petite bourgeoisie or independents	Not applicable
6 Lower supervisory and lower technician occupations	Higher grade blue-collar workers	Mixed
7 Lower services, sales and clerical occupations	Lower grade white-collar workers	Labour contract (modified)
8 Lower technical occupations <sup>a</sup>	Skilled workers	Labour contract (modified)
9 Routine occupations <sup>a</sup>	Semi- and non-skilled workers	Labour contract
10 Never worked and long-term unemployed	Unemployed	Not applicable

Table 1.2 Collapsing ESeC from 10 to 6 to 5 to 3 class models

<i>ESeC class</i>	<i>10-class version</i>	<i>6-class version<sup>a</sup></i>	<i>5-class version</i>	<i>3-class version</i>
Higher salariat	1	1+2	1+2 ✓	1+2
Lower salariat	2			
Higher white collar	3	3+6	3+6 ✓	3+4+5+6
Petite bourgeois	4	4+5	4+5 ✓	
Small farmers	5			
Higher grade blue collar	6	<del>3+6</del>	<del>3+6</del>	
Lower white collar	7	7	7	7+8+9
Skilled manual	8	8	8+9	
Semi-/non-skilled	9	9		
Unemployed	(10)	(10)	(10)	(10)

*Note*

<sup>a</sup> A 7-class version could be created by not combining classes 1 and 2, of course.

# Operationalizing the model

- Information needed for empirical identification of ESeC position:
  1. Occupation
  2. Employment status
  3. Size of organization (mainly for employers)
- Each combination of *occupation*, *employment status* and *size of the organization* is then assigned an ESeC class position



# Empirical variables for identification of ESeC positions

- Questions for questionnaire

- ISCO

In your main job, what kind of work do/did you do most of the time?

**WRITE IN**

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- Additional questions:

In your main job are/were you... **READ OUT...**

...an employee,  
self-employed,  
or, working for your own family's business?  
(Don't know)

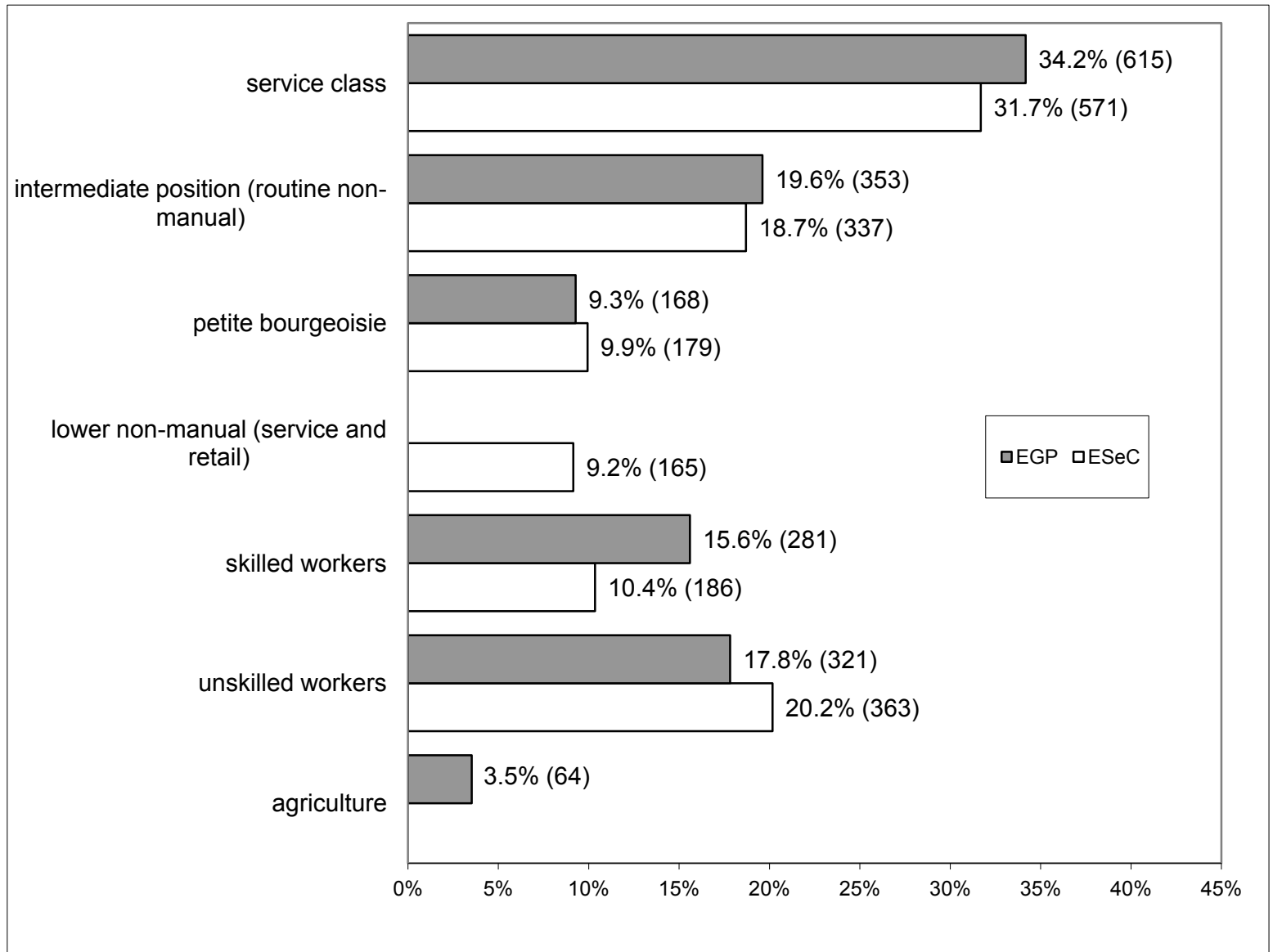
How many people are/were you responsible for?

**WRITE IN:**

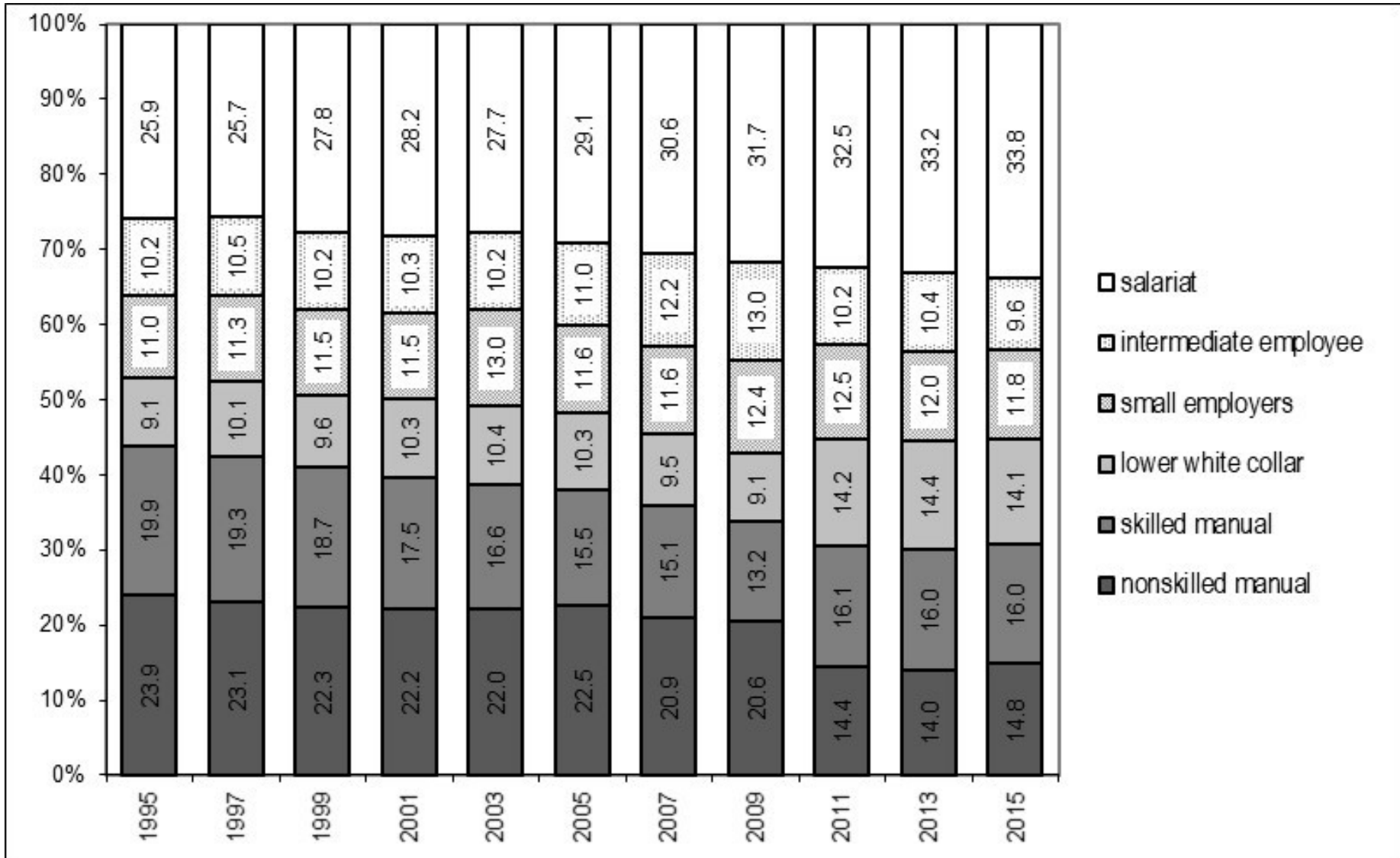
How many employees (if any) do/did you have?

**WRITE IN number of employees:**

# Proportion of ESeC and EGP in the Czech Republic (6 class version, 2012)



# Trends in ESeC in the Czech Republic (6 class version)



# Prestige ratings - SIOPS

- SIOPS - Standard International Occupational Prestige Scale (SIOPS) scores
- constructed by Donald J. Treiman: *Occupational Prestige in Comparative Perspective* (1977)
- averaging the results of prestige evaluations from 60 countries
  - evaluative judgments
  - sample of population or experts
  - prestige judgments of occupations
  - general desirability of occupations
- ISCO code = prestige rating code

```
/* SPSS comments:  
** recode of isko-88 into treimans prestige scale  
** Date of last revision: Summer 1996  
  
** Please cite use of our conversion tools as:  
** "Ganzeboom, Harry B.G.; Treiman, Donald J.,  
** International Stratification and Mobility  
** File: Conversion Tools. Utrecht: Department of Sociologie,  
** http://www.fss.uu.nl/soc/hg/ismf." Date of last revision.  
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# ISEI: International Socio-economic Index of Occupational Status

- ISEI is generated on the base of optimal scaling procedure
- EDUCATION -> occupation -> INCOME
- EDUCATION -> ISEI -> INCOME
- Zero correlation EDU-INCOME
- ISEI is empirical concept without theoretical support

```
/* original SPSS comments:
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# New class scheme?

- YT video with Mike Savage about research of social classes in Britain: <https://youtu.be/m1rSJedkoQ4>



The image shows a YouTube video player interface. The video content features Professor Mike Savage, a man with glasses, speaking. In the top right corner of the video frame, there is a logo for the Royal Geographical Society with IBG and the website www.rgs.org. A blue overlay at the bottom of the video frame contains the text "Mike Savage" and "Mobile middle class". The video player controls at the bottom show a play button, a progress bar at 0:01 / 13:03, and various icons for volume, settings, and full screen. Below the video player, the title "The BBC Great British Class Survey: Professor Mike Savage, LSE" is displayed. Underneath the title, it says "7 974 zhlédnutí • 24. 7. 2015 • Professor Mike Savage, LSE, discusses the results of the BBC's great British class survey." To the right of the title, there are icons for likes (53), comments (2), share (SDÍLENÍ), save (ULOŽIT), and a menu icon.

**The BBC Great British Class Survey: Professor Mike Savage, LSE**

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