i-BEST

International Barometer on the Health and Well-being of Education Staff

2026 Edition



Education International
Internationale de l'Education
Internacional de la Educación
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Education Support

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About I-BEST

The International Barometer of Education Staff (I-BEST) is a periodic survey that investigates the working conditions, health, and well-being of education staff around the world. Following two previous editions (2021 and 2023), this 2026 report extends the scale and scope of our collective understanding of the global education workforce.

I-BEST partners

Education International

Education International (EI) is the Global Union Federation representing teachers and other education personnel worldwide. Founded in 1993, it brings together 375 member organisations across 180 countries and territories, representing more than 33 million teachers and education support personnel across all levels of education, from early childhood to higher education and research.

Fondation d'Entreprise MGEN pour la Santé Publique

The *Fondation d'Entreprise MGEN pour la Santé Publique* (MGEN Corporate Foundation for Public Health) is a multidisciplinary scientific research organization established in 2002 by MGEN. As the only public health research team affiliated with a mutual insurance provider, it brings together complementary expertise—including epidemiology, health economics, and statistics—to study population health and its risk factors, and contributes to guiding health promotion and prevention initiatives. Among its priority areas is the occupational health of education personnel, which has been at the heart of its research programs since its creation.

Education Support

Education Support is a UK-based organization founded by teachers for teachers. For 148 years, it has been dedicated to improving the mental health and well-being of education staff across the United Kingdom, driven by the belief that better mental health leads to better education. It supports individuals, advises schools and universities, conducts research, and advocates for policy change that benefits education personnel.

Cover art by Clara Luneau

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Argentina	Confederación De Educadores Argentinos
	Confederación de Trabajadores de la Educación de la República Argentina
	Sindicato Argentino de Docentes Privados
Belgium	Centrale Générale des Services Publics - secteur Enseignement
	Confédération des Syndicats Chrétiens - Enseignement
	Syndicat des Employés, Techniciens et Cadres - Secteur de l'Enseignement Libre
	Syndicat Libre de la Fonction Publique-Enseignement
Cameroon	Fédération camerounaise des syndicats de l'éducation
	Cameroon Teacher's Initiative for Mutual Assistance
Canada	Canadian Teachers' Federation / Fédération canadienne des enseignantes et des enseignants
	Centrale des syndicats du Québec
	Fédération nationale des enseignantes et des enseignants du Québec-CSN
Costa Rica	Asociación Nacional de Educadores y Educadoras
Ethiopia	Ethiopian Teachers' Association
France	CFDT Fédération Éducation Formation Recherche Publiques
	UNSA Éducation
	SNETAA Force Ouvrière Nouvelle-Calédonie
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	Syndicat des enseignant·es romand·es
United Kingdom	Educational Institute of Scotland
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Zimbabwe	Zimbabwe Teachers' Association

Table of Contents

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY **1**
HOW THIS REPORT IS STRUCTURED **2**
RESEARCH DESIGN **2**
Key information - survey data 2
Key information – focus group data 3

PART 1 — KEY FINDINGS **5**
I. Recognition and well-being **5**
II. Educator stress **6**
III. Workload and work–life balance **8**
IV. Job satisfaction **9**
V. Violence and safety at work **12**

PART 2 – NARRATIVE EXPLORATION OF MAJOR SURVEY THEMES **13**
I. Profile of the workforce – demographics **13**
II. Working conditions and environment **14**
II.1. Country environment 14
II.2. Local contextual environment 14
II.3. Violence at work 16
II.4. Decision-making at school level 16
II.5. Autonomy at school level 17
II.6. Use of digital tools 18
II.7. Career opportunities 19
II.8. Financial considerations 19
III. Health and well-being **20**
III.1. Quality of life 20
III.2. Health conditions 20
IV. Psychological well-being **21**
IV.1. Happiness 21
IV.2. Purpose and meaning at work 21
IV.3. How society views the education profession 22
IV.4 Stress at work 22
IV.5. Stressors in the workplace 23
IV.6. Workload and work-life balance 24
IV.7. Other indicators of poor well-being 25

V. Needs and support 25
V.1. Who cares about the well-being of education staff? 25
V.2. Support 26

PART 3 – DETAILED SURVEY FINDINGS 28
I. Profile of the staff who participated in the survey 28
II. Working conditions and environment 33
II.1. Organisational and motivational factors 33
II.2. Social relationships at work 38
II.3. Personal safety and violence at work 41
II.4. Physical environment 45
II.5. Digital tools 50
II.6. Work/life interface 51
III. Health and well-being 55
III.1. Health and well-being at work 55
III.2. Overall health and well-being 58
IV. 2026 focus: psychological well-being 61
IV.1 Psychological well-being at work 61
IV.2 Positive aspects of work 62
IV.3 Sources of difficulties at work 64
IV.4 Resources / psychological support at work 69
IV.5 Depressive symptoms 70
V. Needs identified by education staff 72
V.1 Interpersonal support 72
V.2 Occupational health support 73
V.3 Financial difficulties and access to care 76
VI. Trends over the years 2021-2023-2026: an overview for teachers 78
VI.1. Size of teacher samples by survey edition 78
VI.2. Sample characteristics by survey edition 79
VI.3. Trends in key-indicators 80

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The International Barometer of Education Staff (I-BEST) 2026 surveyed **45,995 education staff** across **17 countries** between January and June 2026. Survey respondents work as teachers, principals, support staff and administrators across a wide range of country settings and were reached through trade unions and professional organisations. To complement the survey data, the project team conducted two focus groups with 19 participants from a range of the surveyed countries.

Across key data sets, the variation between countries is striking, leaving us in no doubt that context really matters. One consistent and positive theme is the extent to which education **staff feel a strong sense of purpose and meaning** in their work. Between 82% and 96% of staff in every country say that their work is purposeful and meaningful, even where working conditions are perceived as difficult, or stress is high.

Across the survey, four factors stand out as linked to staff well-being: **recognition**, **workload**, **work-life balance** and **personal safety**.

Key findings include:

Most education staff feel undervalued by society. In 14 out of 17 countries a majority disagrees that society values their profession. Those countries in which more staff feel **valued** by society and/or managers are also the countries in which fewer staff report frequent negative feelings.

Stress is a key feature of the education landscape. In every one of the 17 countries surveyed, most education staff described their jobs as at least moderately stressful. In 10 countries, the majority described their job as quite or very stressful.

Workload is the most consistently reported source of stress. Countries in which staff feel able to meet their family commitments are also the countries reporting higher levels of job satisfaction.

Job satisfaction is higher in countries where training opportunities, material conditions and relationships with management are relatively positively viewed. It is lower where workload, staff shortages and accountability are negatively experienced. Job satisfaction is closely related to whether staff would choose the profession again.

Violence is a problem for the education workforce. In 13 of the 17 countries, more than a third of respondents had witnessed violence at work in the past year. In six participating countries, at least one in five staff rarely or never feel safe at work.

Despite clear challenges in the working environment, less than half of those surveyed have access to training or prevention **resources**, and fewer than a third have access to resources for psychological **support**.

In the light of the global strain on teacher recruitment and retention, we urge policymakers to act on the challenges identified within their own settings: no education system can do well for students unless education staff are properly supported and resourced to do their jobs.

HOW THIS REPORT IS STRUCTURED

Part 1 highlights the most important relationships identified across the international dataset.

Part 2 is a narrative exploration of the major survey themes.

Part 3 provides a detailed presentation of the findings for each survey question.

RESEARCH DESIGN

Key information - survey data

- **Dissemination period:** January – June 2026
- **Distribution channel:** online questionnaire disseminated through local partners. Survey respondents were reached through national education unions and professional organisations, rather than through random sampling
- When applicable, participating countries are displayed in alphabetical order of their designation in English:

Country	Number of respondents
Argentina	3380
Belgium	2263
Cameroon	509
Canada	4562
Costa Rica	575
Ethiopia	508
France	4912
The Gambia	325
Mexico	13254
Morocco	654
Paraguay	514
Portugal	2381
Singapore	507
Spain	2171
Switzerland	3248
United Kingdom	5706
Zimbabwe	526
Total	**45995**

Source: I-BEST 2026, EI/FESP. Field: education personnel

Figure 1.0 - total survey respondents, by country

- The data are self-reported and therefore reflect individual perceptions and personal viewpoints at one moment in time.

- The questionnaire, originally developed in French, was translated into English and Spanish, taking into account certain linguistic and cultural specificities. Translations into other official languages used across the countries covered by the survey (Portuguese, Italian, German and Arabic) were entrusted to local partners.
  Any interpretation of the differences observed between countries must take into account potential language or culture-related artifacts (e.g., the term "violence" encompasses different realities across countries) which may affect the way in which staff answer questions, as well as what is experienced in different countries.

- Due to the specific involvement of certain regional partners, participation was not homogeneous across the entire territory in Canada and the United Kingdom (with higher participation in Quebec and Scotland respectively). In these countries particularly, aggregated statistics should be interpreted with caution.

- All statistics presented below are weighted to take into account, to the extent possible, gender, age group, and level of education (primary, secondary). Weighting is subject to the availability of national staff figures for these cross-categorized groups in OECD or UNESCO sources. Such adjustment limits response bias and increases the representativeness of the results.

- All figures are weighted percentages and are rounded, so components will not always sum to exactly 100.

- Correlations illustrated in Part 1 are country-level associations (n=17) across the participating countries — they describe how national figures move together, not cause and effect, and not the behaviour of individuals.

- Comparison with 2023 data in parts 1 and 2: where a comparable question exists, changes since the 2023 edition are shown *only for the nine countries surveyed in both editions* (Argentina, Belgium, Cameroon, Canada, France, Morocco, Spain, Switzerland, United Kingdom). Because eight countries are new to the 2026 edition and two (Japan and the Canadian province of Quebec) are not included in the 2026 data presented in this international report[1], no all-country "since 2023" average is presented — such an average would reflect changes in which countries took part rather than real change over time.

Key information – focus group data

To further illuminate some of the issues education staff face at work, two online focus groups were held.

Focus groups held: March 2026

Number of participants: 19 (five countries fielded more than one participant)

Participation: Voluntary (participants were given the opportunity to fully consent to take part before the groups were held, including the video recording of the groups, with confidentiality and anonymity being assured)

[1] Japan did not participate in the 2026 edition while data from Quebec have been included under Canada in the 2026 international report.

Recruited by:	Local partner organisations, co-ordinated by Education International
Group details:	Group 1 was held in the languages of English and French and lasted 107 minutes. Group 2 was held in English and Spanish and lasted 122 minutes. Both groups used simultaneous language interpretation.
Facilitated by:	Chief Executive of Education Support

The discussions were wide-ranging and, where relevant, quotations have been included in this report to add depth and context to the survey findings.

PART 1 — KEY FINDINGS

Alongside important data across the full range of questions explored in this year's survey, five headline themes emerge.

I. Recognition and well-being

Whilst we don't claim that the relationship is causal, we note an association across the 17 participating countries between the extent to which education staff feel recognised and valued, and their professional well-being.

Two dimensions of recognition are explored in these data: societal and managerial.
In both cases, countries where a higher proportion of staff feel valued tend to have a lower proportion of staff reporting frequent negative feelings.

Conversely, those where staff feel less recognised and valued report a higher incidence of negative feelings.

The first dimension relates to recognition by society. Across the participating countries, the majority of staff working in 14 out of 17 countries disagree they feel valued. The proportion of staff that agree that their profession is valued by society is strongly negatively correlated with the proportion that frequently experiences negative feelings (*see Part 3, Section III.2*) such as anxiety, depression and hopelessness (r = -0.82)[2].



Figure 1.1 – comparison between staff who feel their profession is valued by society and staff who often or always experience negative feelings, with the trendline illustrated in blue.

[2] In this report, we show how strongly two measures move together using a correlation coefficient (r). This number measures the strength and direction of a straight-line relationship between two different variables. It ranges from -1 to +1. A positive value means that as one measure rises, the other tends to rise too. A negative value means that as one rises, the other tends to fall. The closer r is to +1 or -1, the stronger the relationship; values near 0 mean little or no relationship. We treat values of 0.7 or more (whether positive or negative) as a strong correlation, 0.3 to 0.7 as a moderate correlation and below 0.3 as a weak correlation (NB: A correlation does not show that one measure causes the other.) All 17 countries are included in each comparison.

"We need to respect teachers again. And the government needs to do something because they are not giving [teachers] the prestige that our profession should have" (Focus group participant 2: Argentina)

"Teaching is a profession that produces all the other professions and, as our colleagues earlier mentioned, that is so little valued" (Focus group participant 2: Canada)

The second dimension relates to a more immediate experience of recognition in terms of staff relationships with local managers or supervisors (*see Part 3, Section II.1*). The pattern at country level (r = -0.86) mirrors the experience of societal recognition. We note that this relationship is observed between countries, not necessarily within them (topic not explored in the present report). These findings illustrate that the experience of being valued by society or by managers, is related to well-being across the countries surveyed.

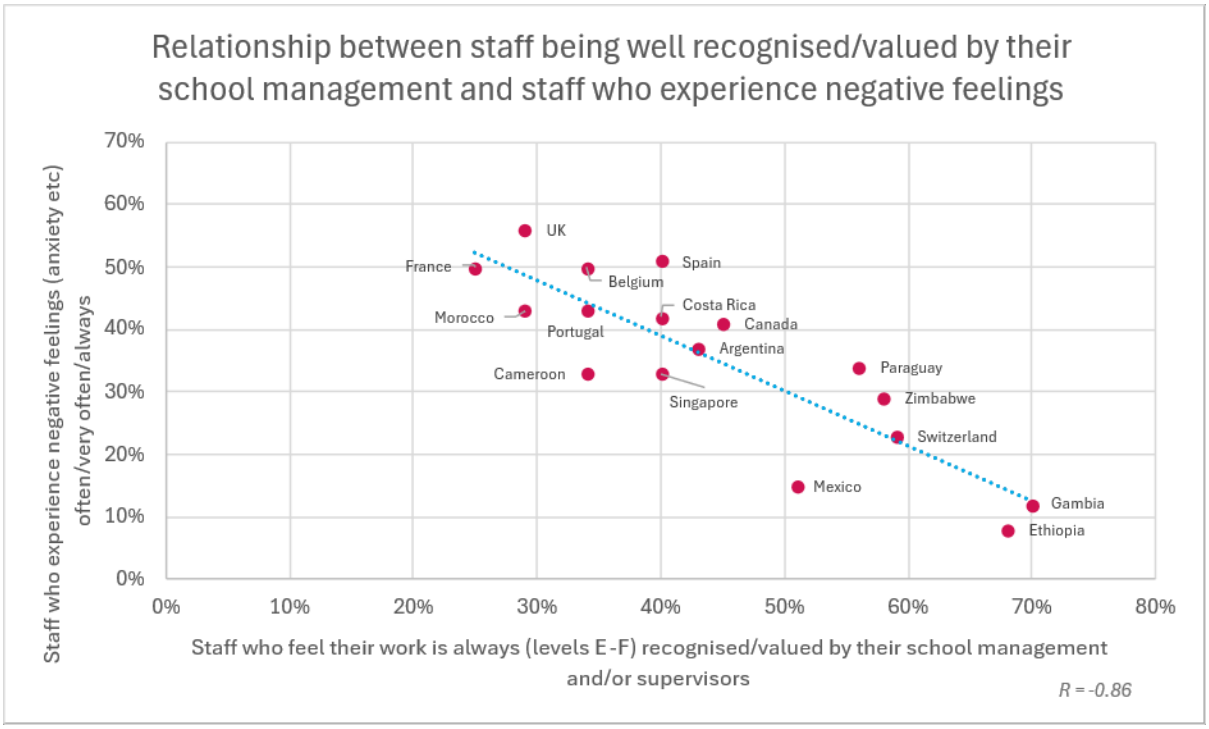


Figure 1.2 - comparison between staff who feel recognised by management and staff who often or always experience negative feelings, with the trendline illustrated in blue.

Recognition matters beyond well-being. The OECD TALIS 2025 findings indicate that teachers who feel that their profession is valued by society are less likely to consider leaving it[3]. These findings sit comfortably within the wider literature relating to teacher supply.

II. Educator stress

Survey respondents reported a wide range of experiences of stress at work, with significant differences evident between countries: as few as 19% of staff considered the job quite or very stressful in Ethiopia, with 80% of staff in the United Kingdom considering the job quite or very stressful since the start of the school year (*see Part 3, Section III.1*).

[3] OECD (2025), Results from TALIS 2024: The State of Teaching, TALIS, OECD Publishing, Paris, https://doi.org/10.1787/90df6235-en, p240.

Overall, the stress of the job stands out as an important finding of this report. In 11 out of the 17 countries surveyed most education staff described their jobs as at least moderately stressful. Whilst there are common drivers of stress across countries, there are also material differences (*see Part 3, Section IV.3*) that policymakers ought to understand.

Notwithstanding the range of experiences visible in these data, workload is the factor most consistently associated with job stress. Overall job stress (*see Part 3, Section III.1*) is reported at higher levels in countries where educators perceive that workload (r = 0.93) (*see Part 3, Section IV.3*) is a source of stress. We note this with caution given that both questions ask educators about their experience of stress. Nonetheless, where educators identify a source of stress, workload tends to be the most reported factor.

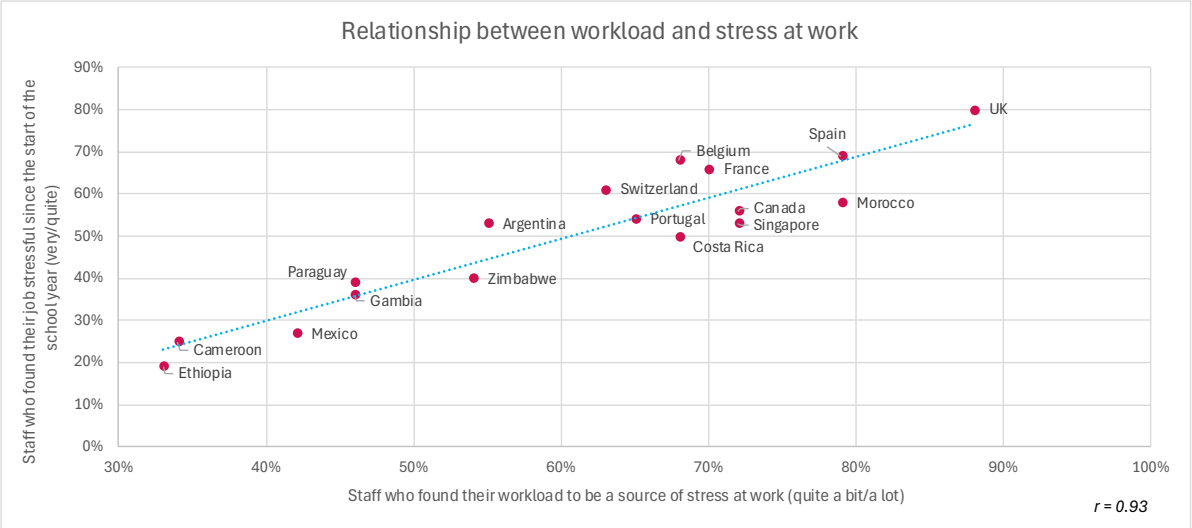


Figure 1.3 - comparison between staff who perceive workload as a significant source of stress and staff who consider the job stressful, with the trendline illustrated in blue.

Stress and/or burnout is associated with reduced teacher health (physical and mental), reduced job satisfaction and can affect a teacher's ability to do their job[4]. It is also negatively related to student achievement[5],[6]. For policymakers, the relationship between teacher stress and student outcomes suggests that a focus on workload management may be an important policy lever in many countries.

> *"Teachers aren't tired of students, they're tired of systems which don't support them in the classroom so that they can teach"* (Focus group participant 2: UK)

[4] Education Support and Education International. (2024). Teacher well-being: A global understanding. Education Support; Education International.

[5] Madigan, D. J. & Kim, L. E. (2021). Does teacher burnout affect students? A systematic review of its association with academic achievement and student-reported outcomes. International Journal of Educational Research, 105

[6] Klusmann, U., Richter, D., & Lüdtke, O. (2016). Teachers' emotional exhaustion is negatively related to students' achievement: Evidence from a large-scale assessment study. Journal of Educational Psychology, 108(8), 1193–1203

III. Workload and work–life balance

Whilst workload is closely associated with stress, it matters for other reasons as well, including well-being and wider health outcomes.

The wider research literature indicates that the perception of heavy workload is often related to long working hours[7],[8]. Our research captured weekly working hours across respondents, split by educational setting (3-11 year olds and 11-18 year olds):

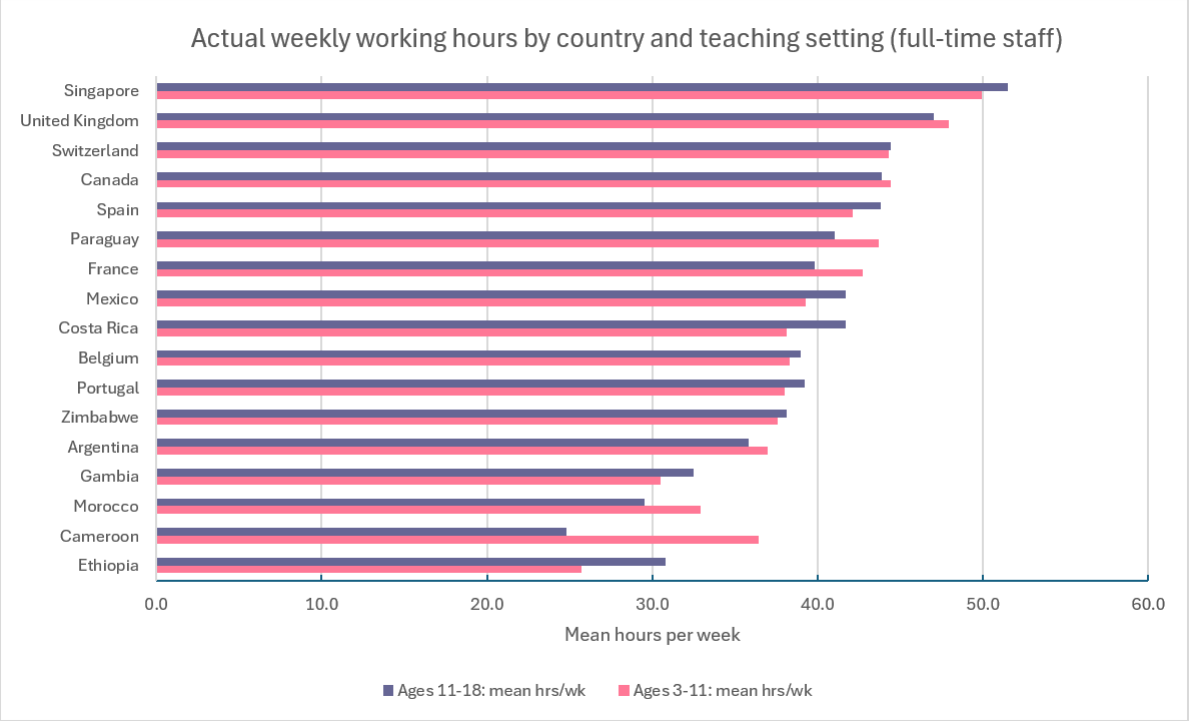


Figure 1.4 - average working hours/week of full-time staff by country, ordered by total working hours

A large variation in the number of hours worked was found by country, with staff in Singapore working the most hours with both younger and older students.

> *"We spend too much time with papers and meetings and assessment and evaluation and we are missing the time to prepare very interesting or motivating lessons."* (Focus group participant 1: Portugal)

A 2021 WHO/ILO systematic analysis[9] established that working 55 or more hours per week constitutes a serious health hazard, associated with elevated risk of stroke and heart disease.

The mean of actual hours worked in countries surveyed for this report falls below that 55 hour threshold of concern. We note that the reported averages describe the middle of a range.

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7 Jerrim, J. and S. Sims (2021), "When is high workload bad for teacher wellbeing? Accounting for the non-linear contribution of specific teaching tasks", Teaching and Teacher Education, Vol. 105, Article 103395, https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tate.2021.103395

8 OECD (2025), Results from TALIS 2024: The State of Teaching, TALIS, OECD Publishing, Paris, https://doi.org/10.1787/90df6235-en

9 Pega, F., Náfrádi, B., Momen, N. C., et al. (2021). Global, regional, and national burdens of ischemic heart disease and stroke attributable to exposure to long working hours for 194 countries, 2000–2016: A systematic analysis from the WHO/ILO Joint Estimates of the Work-related Burden of Disease and Injury. Environment International, 154, 106595

In countries with relatively high average working hours, we would expect that some staff are working beyond the level that the WHO/ILO flag as a serious health risk.

> *"We lack time, a lot of stress, a lot of tasks to perform and teachers, educators would like to have more time to dedicate to actual teaching and less administration or organisational tasks, for example"* (Focus group participant: Switzerland)

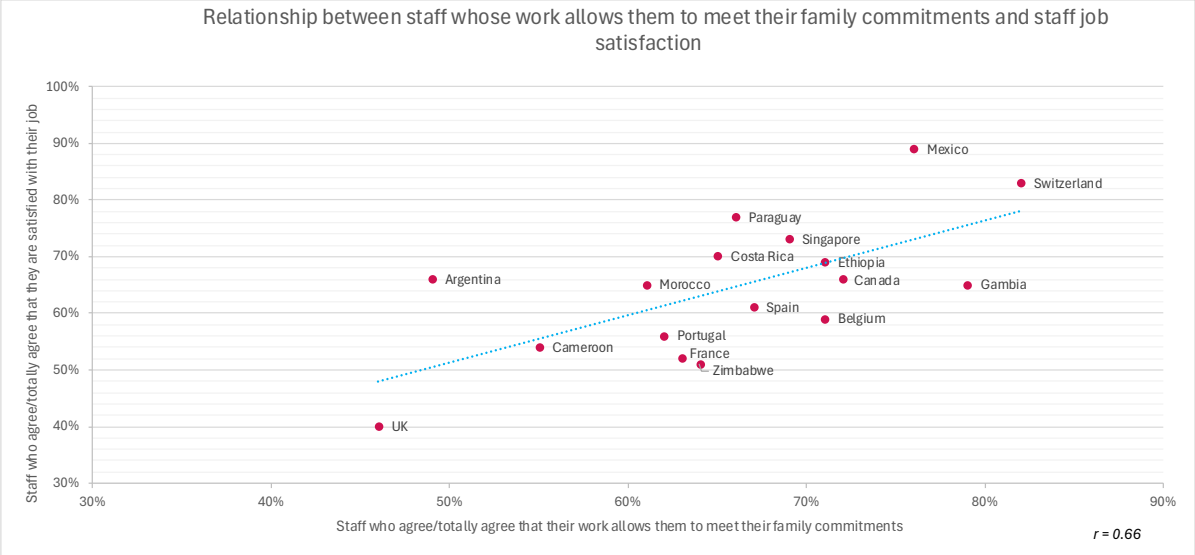


Figure 1.5 – comparison between staff who feel their work allows them to meet their family commitments and overall job satisfaction, with the trendline illustrated in blue.

Working hours are clearly important in their own right and affect the health of educators. They are also related to work-life balance.

A positive correlation (r = 0.66) has been found between those staff who agree that their work allows them to meet their family commitments (*see Part 3, Section IV.2*) and staff who are satisfied with their job (*see Part 3, Section III.1*). Countries with staff who feel allowed to meet their family commitments tend to be the countries with relatively higher levels of reported job satisfaction. This holds true even for countries that report relatively high perceptions of workload (e.g. Switzerland and Singapore).

Poor work life balance is associated with lower well-being. The World Happiness Report (2017) noted that, "*Those who have a job that leaves them too tired to enjoy the non-work elements of their lives report levels of positive affect in their day-to-day lives that are substantially lower than those who do not*[10]".

IV. Job satisfaction

Job satisfaction is about more than the personal well-being of an individual. Evidence suggests that it can be related to performance within a role[11],[12]. In the case of educators, performance in

[10] De Neve, Jan-Emmanuel, and George Ward. "Happiness at Work." World Happiness Report 2017, edited by John F. Helliwell, Richard Layard, and Jeffrey D. Sachs, Sustainable Development Solutions Network, 2017, p170

[11] Judge, T. A., Thoresen, C. J., Bono, J. E., & Patton, G. K. (2001). The job satisfaction–job performance relationship: A qualitative and quantitative review. Psychological Bulletin, 127(3), 376–407

[12] De Neve, Jan-Emmanuel, and George Ward. 2025. Why Workplace Well-being Matters: The Science Behind Employee Happiness and Organizational Performance. Boston: Harvard Business Review Press

a role can include direct learning support or welfare and health support, and is related to student learning and well-being outcomes.

Participants in this survey provided feedback on a range of work-related factors, explored more fully in Part 3 of this report. When looked at alongside job satisfaction (*see Part 3, Section III.1*), some of those factors are more likely to be present in countries where more staff are satisfied (figure 1.6). A different constellation of factors are reported more frequently by staff in countries where lower job satisfaction is also reported (figure 1.7).

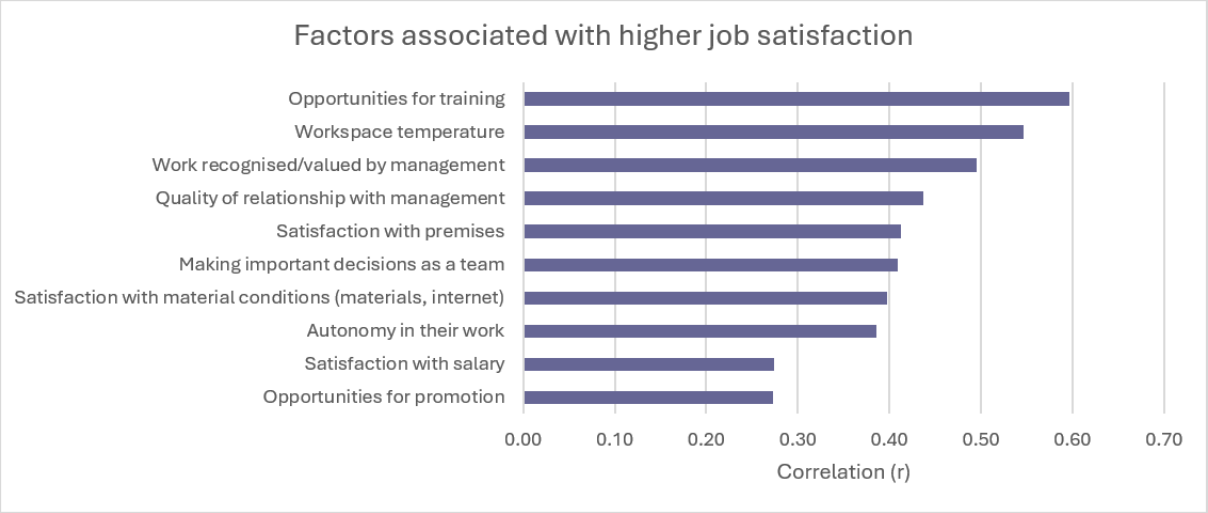


Figure 1.6 – factors most closely correlated with high job satisfaction

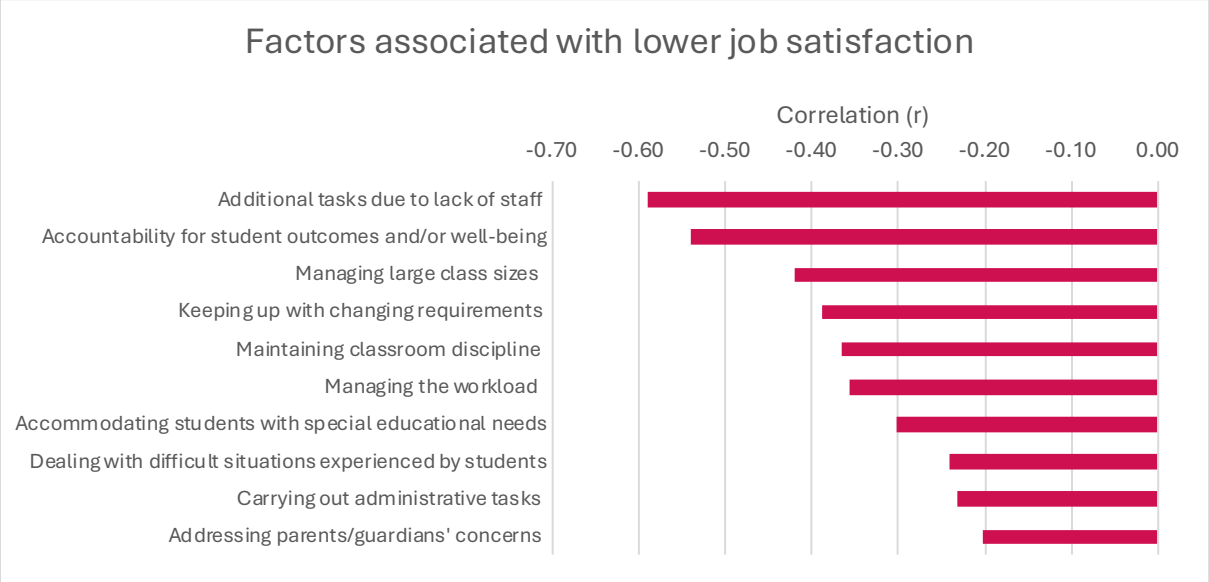


Figure 1.7 – factors most closely correlated with low job satisfaction

In terms of the factors relating to higher job satisfaction, material conditions matter (including workplace temperature, premises and other site-specific material conditions).
The day-to-day experience of management relationships is significant, and opportunities to undertake professional development/training appear particularly important.

> *"In the absence of lifelong learning to update knowledge and update practices in the classroom, it's very difficult to have quality education"* (Focus group participant: Morocco)

When looking at the factors associated with lower job satisfaction, workload is both an explicit and implicit issue: for example, aside from workload itself, "additional tasks due to lack of staff" clearly relates to extra work requirements.

Survey respondents reported a strong and resilient sense of purpose in their work. A minimum of 82% (Cameroon) and a maximum of 96% (Portugal, Morocco and The Gambia) across all 17 countries reported that their work is purposeful and meaningful (*see Part 3, Section IV.2*). Across all countries, the vast majority of respondents report good quality relationships with students (*see Part 3, Section II.2*).

In spite of this clear sense of purpose and the strong relationships with students, feeling held accountable for student's achievement and/or well-being is one of the factors most closely associated with lower job satisfaction.

> *"So the teacher is blamed for virtually everything that happens in the life of a student. And yet the teacher has got no control over the behaviour of that kind of a student."* (Focus group participant 2: Zimbabwe)

Through our conversations with education staff in the focus groups, it was clear that educators are not unwilling to take responsibility for learners. Rather, they highlighted the challenges that arise when expectations exceed available time, resources or support.

> *"So we are social workers, we are counsellors, we are trauma practitioners. We are all of these other things that need to be addressed before the kids are ready to learn"* (Focus group participant 2: Canada)

Finally, in light of global challenges of teacher supply[13] it is striking to note the relationship between job satisfaction (*see Part 3, Section III.1*) and long-term commitment to the profession (*see Part 3, Section III.1*). Countries with higher reported rates of job satisfaction tend to also have a higher proportion of staff say that they would choose the profession again. Job satisfaction – and the factors that shape it – is an important consideration for policymakers and local school management to support workforce retention and future recruitment.

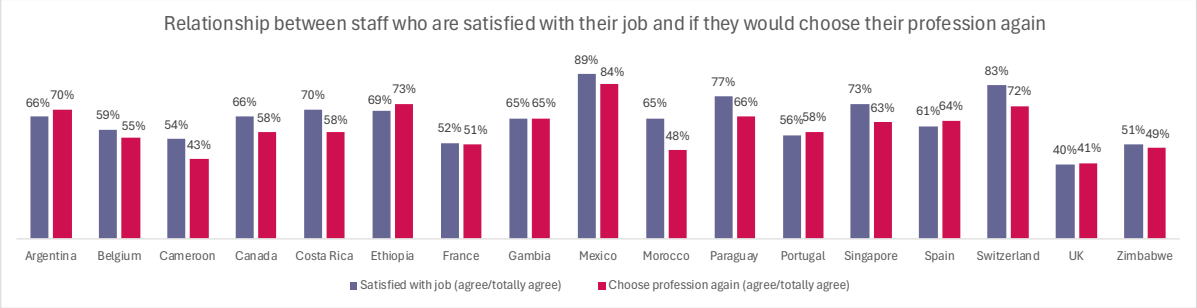


Figure 1.8 – relationship between staff who are satisfied with their job and propensity to choose the profession again

Again, we note that local context is critically important here since the factors affecting job satisfaction will vary in different countries or regions. By reducing the impact of factors associated with lower job satisfaction, and enhancing those associated with higher job satisfaction, paths to improvement may be possible within national systems and within local school environments. The wider literature suggests that this in turn can lead to improved

[13] UNESCO & International Task Force on Teachers for Education 2030 (2024), Global Report on Teachers: Addressing Teacher Shortages and Transforming the Profession, UNESCO

teacher job satisfaction, better staff retention and recruitment and better overall institutional performance[14].

V. Violence and safety at work

Violence at work is harmful to anyone who experiences it. This edition of I-BEST confirms that it remains a serious workplace issue that affects teachers and education support personnel across a wide range of contexts internationally. In 13 out of the participating 17 countries, more than one third of respondents had witnessed violence in the past 12 months. At least one in ten respondents in every country reported experiencing violence at work in the past 12 months; in nine of the 17 participating countries, at least a quarter of respondents reported experiencing violence at work in the past year (*see Part 3, Section II.3*).

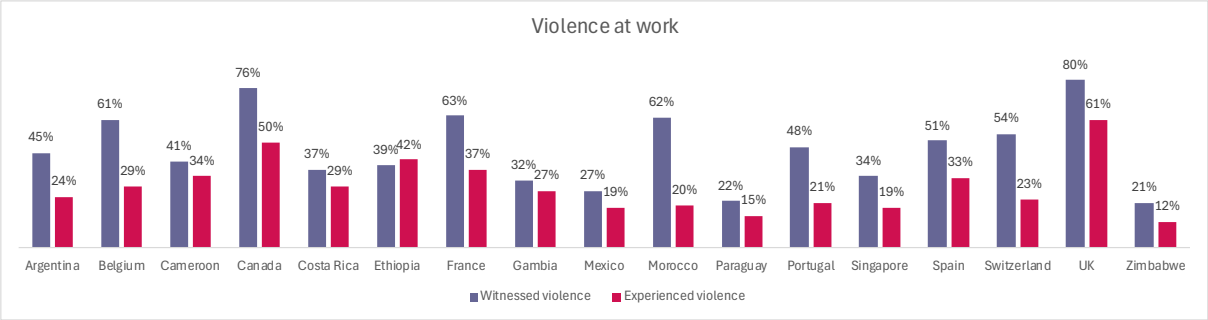


Figure 1.9 – comparison between staff that witnessed violence and those that experienced violence at work

> *"We see violence in the classrooms, lots of colleagues are suffering violence, are suffering attacks, and [the] students, nobody says anything to them. And this is not good for the community on its whole, because I believe we need to share values and respect is a key value in our societies"* (Focus group participant 2: Argentina)

For staff who indicated they had experienced violence, students were the main perpetrators of the violent acts – particularly important for the UK and Canada who reported the highest levels of violence. In six countries, at least 1 in 5 educators reported that they *rarely or never* feel safe at work: Cameroon, Costa Rica, Ethiopia, Morocco, Paraguay and Zimbabwe (*see figures in Part 3, Section II.3*).

Workplace violence is a recognised workplace hazard and is associated with poor mental health and increased sickness absence[15]. Education professionals are recognised as being at particularly high risk of violence across a range of European studies[16]: The findings of this report are consistent with the wider literature and require urgent attention from policymakers.

[14] De Neve, Jan-Emmanuel, and George Ward. 2025. Why Workplace Well-being Matters: The Science Behind Employee Happiness and Organizational Performance. Boston: Harvard Business Review Press, p169

[15] Nyberg, Kecklund, Magnusson Hanson & Rajaleid (2021), Workplace violence and health in human service industries: a systematic review of prospective and longitudinal studies, Occupational & Environmental Medicine, 78(2), 69–81.

[16] Rugulies, R. (2025). Workplace violence: A complex challenge demanding a systemic response. Scandinavian Journal of Work, Environment and Health, 51(4), p349.

PART 2 – NARRATIVE EXPLORATION OF MAJOR SURVEY THEMES

I. Profile of the workforce – demographics

I.1. Profile of the survey respondents

The 2026 survey captured the experiences of 45,995 staff working in 17 different countries. The countries taking part were Argentina, Belgium, Cameroon, Canada, Costa Rica, Ethiopia, France, The Gambia, Mexico, Morocco, Paraguay, Portugal, Singapore, Spain, Switzerland, United Kingdom and Zimbabwe.

Full demographic details of the survey respondents can be found in Part 3, Section I. Below is a summary for each survey area noting where the majority of responses were received. The range of responses varied widely, with the highest and lowest country samples for each survey area shown.

Category	Majority of respondents	Highest and lowest country samples
Main activity	Teachers	99% - Singapore 70% - France
Gender	Women	80% - UK 40% - Ethiopia
Years of experience	5-20 years	75% - The Gambia 22% - Portugal
Ages of students taught	6-11 years old	59% - Zimbabwe 18% - Portugal
Mode of employment	Full-time	100% - Zimbabwe 41% - Switzerland
Working contract	Permanent/civil service	99% - Zimbabwe 59% - Costa Rica
School sector	Public sector	99% - Costa Rica, France, Mexico and Morocco 48% - Cameroon
School type	General	98% - Singapore 58% Cameroon
School environment	Urban	86% - Singapore 34% - Zimbabwe
Number of students in school	200-799 students	60% - Canada 22% - Ethiopia

I.2. Profile of the focus group participants

Two online focus groups were held to further illuminate some of the issues education staff face at work. Nineteen participants took part, five of whom were from the same country.

A summary of the focus group participants is shown below.

Category	Majority of participants	Details
Main activity	Teachers	89%
Gender	Women	53%
Years of experience	Over 20 years	74%
Ages of students taught	11-18	80%
Working contract	Permanent/civil service	95%
School sector	Public sector	84%
School environment	Urban	58%

II. Working conditions and environment

Staff working in the 17 countries indicated they had very different working environments and conditions. These related to their overall country environment, their local context, and to the school where they work.

II.1. Country environment

Educators work in very different physical environments, or areas of natural hazard, and face challenges in their environment well beyond the classroom.

Nearly two in ten staff (19%) working in Costa Rica reported working in seismic zones (prone to earthquakes). A similar number of staff working in Morocco (18%) reported working in areas exposed to extreme weather events. Staff working in Morocco and Paraguay reported working in flood zones (both 17%) and the highest risk of landslides was reported by staff working in Costa Rica (11%) (*see Part 3, Section II.4*).

The largest concentration of staff indicating they were working in conflict or insecurity zones was found in the Americas, specifically Costa Rica (49%) and Mexico (48%), but also to a lesser extent in Paraguay (28%) and Argentina (22%) (*see Part 3, Section II.3*).

II.2. Local contextual environment

The premises where staff work also directly affects their experience at work. In most countries (14 out of the 17), more than half of all staff were satisfied with their premises. More than eight out of ten staff working in Singapore and Ethiopia indicated they were satisfied with their premises, the highest levels observed. However, less than half of staff working in Morocco, Portugal and Spain were satisfied with their school premises (*see Part 3, Section II.4*).

Access to amenities (such as electricity, drinking water, etc.) are important aspects in staff's working lives and was found to be high. In most countries (15 out of the 17), more than two-thirds of staff were satisfied with their amenities. More than nine out of ten staff working in Singapore and Switzerland were satisfied with such amenities, compared to six in ten staff working in Argentina, Cameroon, Morocco and Zimbabwe (*see Part 3, Section II.4*).

The provision of general resources such as access to the internet, teaching and learning materials, workspaces etc, are material conditions which make a difference to the daily lives of education staff. A wider variation in staff's views about such resources was found compared to their views about their premises and amenities. In ten out of the 17 countries, more than half of staff reported they were satisfied with such material conditions. Nine out of ten staff working in Singapore indicated they were satisfied with the resources available to them at work, the highest level observed of all countries. However, less than half of staff working in Argentina, The Gambia, Morocco, Paraguay, Portugal and Spain indicated they were satisfied with such resources (*see Part 3, Section II.4*).

The importance of maintaining consistent provision of amenities and resources was an issue identified in the focus groups.

> *"Teachers are required to make use of internet connections to support the teaching and learning, but the availability of infrastructure, electric power supply … the electric power supply, is very limited. And, therefore, the schools have limited access to power, and [experience] internet disconnection."* (Focus group participant: Ethiopia)

Workspace temperature during both hot and cold seasons also plays an important part in staff satisfaction. In ten out of 17 countries, more than half of staff indicated they were satisfied with the temperature of their workplace. More than seven out of ten staff working in Cameroon, Ethiopia, Mexico and Singapore indicated they were satisfied with their workplace temperature. However, less than half of staff working in France, Morocco, Portugal, Spain and the UK indicated this was satisfactory (*see Part 3, Section II.4*).

The number of students taught in classrooms was found to vary considerably.
More than seven in ten staff working in Ethiopia, Zimbabwe, Cameroon and The Gambia indicated they had more than 30 students in a class. The findings for large class sizes in Cameroon in 2026 is consistent with the survey findings in 2023.

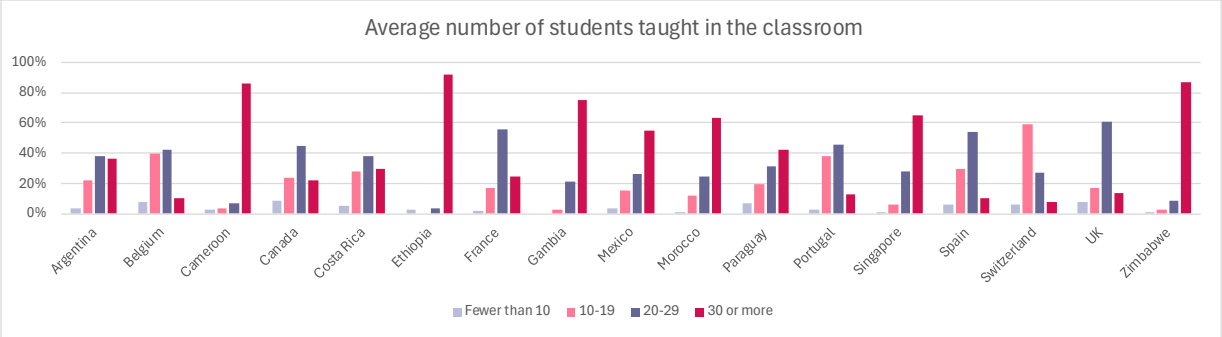


Figure 2.1 – average number of students taught in a classroom, indicated using the categories of fewer than 10 students, 10-20 students, 20-30 students, and 30 or more students.

Teaching in these countries is a very different experience to, say, staff working in Switzerland where more than half (59%) of staff taught 10-19 students in a classroom (*see Part 3, Section II.1*).

II.3. Violence at work

Part 1, Section V of this report highlighted that in 13 out of the participating 17 countries, more than one third of respondents had witnessed violence in the past 12 months. For staff who indicated they had experienced violence, in 12 of the 17 countries, students were the main perpetrators of the violence. In the remaining five countries, supervisors were the main perpetrators in Argentina and Paraguay, parents/legal guardians in Costa Rica and Morocco (NB staff in Morocco indicated the same levels for students and parents), and other members of educational staff in Mexico (*see Part 3, Section II.3*).

In six out of the participating 17 countries, one third or more had experienced violence. For many staff who had experienced violence, the pattern of violence was said to be 'occasional'. This is particularly the case for staff working in Singapore and The Gambia, where seven out of ten staff indicated this was the case. For staff working in Belgium, Spain and France, the pattern of violence was indicated to be more of a 'repetitive' or 'systemised' nature, with more than five out of ten staff indicating this to be the case (*see Part 3, Section II.3*).

The four most common types of violence reported across all countries were insults, threats, acts intended to humiliate and defamation/indirect insults. Sexual harassment/assault was the least common type of violence found across all countries (*see Part 3, Section II.3*).

The focus groups highlighted issues such as bullying in schools and threats made to education staff travelling to schools for work:

> *"Very recently in some schools we had female teachers who were bullied and it has a huge impact on the mental health … We need to identify strategies which will allow our teachers, our female teachers, to work in better conditions. And we need to avoid bullying and things of the kind. And I mean by bullying, the need to avoid, for example, any negative attitude from the administrative staff or from the hierarchy as well".* (Focus group participant 1: Cameroon)

> *"We are located in conflict areas and I think we should not be afraid to go to school. We should not be afraid to go to school because sometimes you will be threatened on the way back from school … Teachers and children should have an opportunity to get some support and should not be afraid to go to school or to go back home after school".* (Focus group participant 2: Cameroon)

II.4. Decision-making at school level

It is important that staff be informed in advance about important decisions which affect their life at work because this helps to build trust amongst staff[17] and can help to reduce levels of uncertainty and anxiety in times of change.

In 2026, more than seven in ten staff working in Ethiopia, Singapore and Switzerland agreed they were informed in advance about important work decisions, whereas four in ten staff working in France, Morocco and the UK indicated this (the lowest levels observed).

[17] Rawlins, B. (2008). Measuring the relationship between organizational transparency and employee trust. Public Relations Journal, 2(2), 1–21

More than one in ten staff working in Argentina, Costa Rica and Morocco indicated they were 'never' informed in advance.

In 2023, the highest levels of being informed were indicated by staff working in Japan, Switzerland and Morocco, and the lowest levels by staff working in France and the UK.
Staff working in France reported the lowest levels of agreement to being informed in advance about important decisions in both 2026 and 2023 (*see Part 3, Section II.1*).

Staff should also be involved in making decisions as a team, as decisions made directly affect their work and it builds a sense of ownership to the decisions made.
Eight out of ten staff working in The Gambia and Ethiopia agreed that they were involved in team decision-making in their schools, whereas only around half of staff working in Belgium, Costa Rica, Morocco, Portugal and the UK agreed this was the case.
More than one in ten staff working in Costa Rica, Argentina and Belgium indicated they were 'never' involved in team decision-making.

Making decisions as a team was found to be an important factor linked to job satisfaction in Part 1 of this report (*see figure 1.6*).

II.5. Autonomy at school level

Teacher autonomy is a key component of teacher professionalism[18].
It is generally positively related to self-efficacy and job satisfaction among teachers – two factors that enhance their motivation and commitment to providing successful learning opportunities for students[19].

The OECD TALIS 2025 report found that teachers with higher instructional autonomy are more likely to report higher adaptability in their instruction, greater job satisfaction, and greater well-being[20].

> *"Every year, every year group is different. And having that autonomy to teach certain concepts and certain things and deal with your class the way that you feel is best .... the building relationships in your teacher's autonomy in class, I think they're definitely the best, the best things"* (Focus group participant 1: UK)

The country reporting the highest levels of autonomy at work in both 2026 and 2023 was Switzerland (49% in 2026 and 46% in 2023).

In 2026, three in ten staff working in Cameroon, Zimbabwe and the UK indicated they had 'little' or 'no' autonomy at work. Similar levels were indicated by the staff working in Cameroon and the UK in 2023 (*see Part 3, Section II.1*).

Autonomy was found to be an important factor linked to job satisfaction in Part 1 of this report (*see figure 1.6*).

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[18] Demirkasımoğlu, N. (2010). Defining "teacher professionalism" from different perspectives. Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences, 9, 2047–2051. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.sbspro.2010.12.444

[19] Cirocki, A and Hallet, W (2024). "Professionalising English Language Teaching Concepts and Reflections for Action in Teacher Education", pp. 99 – 116. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1017/9781009350235.005. Cambridge University Press, UK

[20] OECD (2025), Results from TALIS 2024: The State of Teaching, TALIS, OECD Publishing, Paris, https://doi.org/10.1787/90df6235-en, p170.

II.6. Use of digital tools

The use of digital tools at work is an important part of many educators' lives and the pattern of support offered by employers varied.

Staff working in Singapore and Switzerland reported the highest level of employer support for the use of digital tools in 2026 (94% and 86%), whereas staff working in Cameroon and France indicated much lower levels of employer support (34% and 46%).

However, not all educators in the focus groups had access to digital tools in their classrooms in 2026:

> *"Here in The Gambia, we have a lot of challenges because right now, you can see the world is getting modern. Everything is about technology, but you'll be surprised to realise that in The Gambia, there are schools, most especially in the rural part of The Gambia, like places where I teach, that students don't have access to computers in their classes. They don't have access to IT tools."* (Focus group participant: The Gambia)

The use of digital tools at work can also be a source of stress.
In 2026, the highest levels of agreement to their use being a source of stress came from staff working in Spain and Singapore (54% and 47%). Staff working in Spain also reported the highest level of agreement to their use being a source of stress in 2023 (41%), which represents a large increase. Staff working in Argentina also indicated a large increase in their level of agreement to this between 2023 and 2026 (30% in 2023 and 45% in 2026).

The lowest level of agreement came from staff working in Cameroon, The Gambia and Zimbabwe (24%, 26% and 26%). Staff working in Cameroon also reported the lowest level of agreement to their use being a source of stress in 2023 (17%). It is notable that staff in Singapore were found to be well supported in their use of digital tools but were also among those reporting the highest levels of stress with their use (*see Part 3, Section II.5*).

The issue of digital tools being a source of stress was identified in the focus groups. Educators were concerned that students have more knowledge about their use and, given the pace of technological innovation, staff fear for their future jobs.

> *"There is even a little bit more of stress coming because the guide to the usage of technology, in some cases, students are even training teachers. The training that is being provided in colleges or universities are really not addressing this challenge .... So teachers are worried about that because they are hearing from the media [about] the use of those technology tools into education, whether they are going to be replaced by these technologies"* (Focus group participant: Ethiopia)

Digital tools have the potential to help improve relationships with students and their families. In 2026, more than eight out of ten staff working in Singapore and Zimbabwe agreed that this was the case, with the lowest level of agreement coming from around five in ten staff working in Belgium, France and Switzerland. However, it is notable that there has been large increase in such agreement by staff working in Belgium and France between 2023 and 2026 (a 17% increase by staff working in Belgium from 36% to 53%, and a 13% increase by staff working in France from 40% to 53%) (*see Part 3, Section II.5*).

II.7. Career opportunities

Opportunities for staff to have career advancement are important for their well-being, personal development and often it offers increased financial security. However, in only seven out of the 17 countries surveyed were more than half the staff satisfied with their career opportunities. The highest levels of satisfaction indicated were from seven in ten staff working in Cameroon and Ethiopia, whereas less than a quarter of staff who worked in Belgium, France, Morocco and Spain reported such satisfaction (*see Part 3, Section II.1*).

Staff satisfaction levels for career advancement in Morocco showed a very large decrease of 44% since 2023. A large decrease was also noted by staff working in Argentina of 29% since 2023 (*see Part 3, Section VI.3*).

II.8. Financial considerations

Satisfaction with the salaries paid to staff was found to vary considerably. In eight out of the 17 countries, more than half of staff were satisfied with their salaries. In Switzerland, Canada and the UK, seven out of ten staff indicated they were satisfied with their salaries. Staff working in Switzerland indicated the highest satisfaction with their salaries in both 2026 and 2023 (*see Part 3, Sections II.1 and VI.3*).

Low levels of satisfaction were indicated by staff working in France and Portugal, where three in ten staff indicated they were satisfied, and in The Gambia, where two in ten staff were satisfied. The lowest levels observed were found in Argentina and Zimbabwe where less than two in ten staff were satisfied with their salaries.

> *"[Teachers] are underpaid, they can't make ends meet with the meagre salaries that they earn"* (Focus group participant 1: Zimbabwe)

Staff were asked in the survey if, in the past 12 months, there had been times when they faced serious financial difficulties in meeting their basic needs (such as food, rent, electricity, loans, etc). Again, the financial situation of staff varied a great deal.
More than half of the staff working in Zimbabwe, Argentina and The Gambia indicated they regularly faced financial difficulties – they are also countries where staff indicated low levels of satisfaction with their salaries. However, less than one in ten staff working in Belgium, Canada, Portugal, Singapore, Spain, Switzerland and the UK indicated this. More than half of the staff working in Morocco indicated they occasionally faced financial difficulties.

III. Health and well-being

III.1. Quality of life

A ladder scale can be used to indicate staff's perceived quality of life, from the best to the worst quality of life. In 2026, staff working in Mexico and Switzerland indicated they had the highest quality of life (*see Part 3, Section III.2, sum of levels 6, 7 and 8*). In 2023, staff working in Switzerland again indicated they had the highest quality of life (*sum of levels 1, 2 and 3*[21]).

In 2026, staff working in Zimbabwe and Morocco indicated they had the lowest quality of life (*sum of levels 1, 2 and 3*), with around one in ten staff working in Zimbabwe and Ethiopia indicating they had the 'worst possible life' (*level 1*) (*see Part 3, Section III.2*). In 2023, staff working in Morocco and Cameroon indicated the lowest levels (*sum of levels 6, 7 and 8*[22]).

III.2. Health conditions

Staff were asked to indicate their general level of health. In 2026, four in ten staff working in Ethiopia indicated they had 'excellent' health, the highest level observed. When the levels of 'excellent', 'very good' and 'good' health are combined, staff working in Ethiopia, The Gambia and Switzerland reported the highest health levels and staff working in Morocco the lowest level.

In 2023, the highest levels indicated were by staff working in Switzerland, Argentina and the Canadian province of Quebec[23], and staff working in Cameroon the lowest level (*see Part 3, Section VI.3*).

Staff were asked if they were satisfied with access to healthcare in their country.
The results were found to vary widely. More than eight in ten staff working in Switzerland and Singapore indicated they were 'very satisfied' or 'satisfied' with their access to healthcare. However, much lower satisfaction rates were found for staff working in Paraguay and Morocco, where one in ten staff, or fewer, indicated the same (the lowest rates observed) - (*see Part 3, Section V.3*).

Staff were also asked if they had suffered from a health problem in the previous six months which limited their everyday activities in some way. In eight countries out of 17, more than half of staff indicated they had suffered a health problem in the previous six months. The highest levels were observed in Morocco and Cameroon, where more than seven out of ten staff indicated they had suffered health problems. The lowest levels were observed in the following nine countries, where around four out of ten staff indicated they had suffered health problems – Argentina, Canada, Ethiopia, The Gambia, Mexico, Singapore, Switzerland, UK and Zimbabwe (*see Part 3, Section III.2*).

For staff who had indicated health problems in the previous six months, sleep problems and significant fatigue were common. Staff working in Costa Rica and Portugal reported the most problems with their sleep and staff working in Belgium and France the most problems with significant fatigue. Staff working in Ethiopia, Cameroon and The Gambia indicated they

[21] Best/worst scale categories reversed in 2026
[22] As above, Best/worst scale categories reversed in 2026
[23] In 2026 respondents from Quebec formed part of the total number of respondents from Canada.

experienced the lowest number of symptoms across all categories. However, this may be due to differences in medical diagnosis and access to healthcare, rather than staff having better health (*see Part 3, Section III.2*).

IV. Psychological well-being

Education staff indicated a wide range of psychological well-being experiences, including differences in positive and negative emotions, a sense of meaning and purpose and levels of stress.

IV.1. Happiness

Workplace happiness plays a key role in the well-being of staff. To gauge how education staff had recently been feeling, they were asked how happy they felt at work during the past week. More than eight in ten staff working in Cameroon, Ethiopia, The Gambia, Mexico, Paraguay and Switzerland reported they were happy at work, with around a quarter of staff working in Ethiopia and Mexico indicating they were 'completely' happy at work.

> *"[Whilst] I would change many things in the educational policy, but the work it[self], as such, is amazing. I love it!"* (Focus group participant 1: Argentina)

> *"There is also the recognition of students and parents of our students. Recognition is something which might give us joy, I think, and happiness"* (Focus group participant: Morocco)

However, it should be noted that almost one in ten staff working in Costa Rica, France, Morocco and the UK reported being 'not at all' happy at work at that time (*see Part 3, Section IV.1*).

There was very strong agreement that staff liked working with children or adolescents. A very high percentage of staff (97% or more) working in Switzerland, Portugal, Belgium, Zimbabwe and The Gambia 'agreed' or 'strongly agreed' that this was the case. Happy educators are more likely to create positive, supportive classrooms which benefits students' learning and engagement (*see Part 3, Section IV.2*).

IV.2. Purpose and meaning at work

Having a clear sense of purpose and meaning can have a positive effect on educators' well-being and job satisfaction[24]. A very high percentage of staff (96% or more) working in Portugal, Morocco and The Gambia 'agreed', or 'totally agreed', that their job was purposeful and meaningful.

> *"We do the most beautiful job in the world, education, participating to the construction of the citizens of the future"* (Focus group participant 1: Cameroon)

However, well over one in ten staff working in Cameroon and France 'disagreed' (*see Part 3, Section IV.2*).

[24] Ryan, R. M., & Deci, E. L. (2000). Self-determination theory and the facilitation of intrinsic motivation, social development, and well-being. American Psychologist, 55(1), 68–78. https://doi.org/10.1037/0003-066X.55.1.68

IV.3. How society views the education profession

How society views the education profession can directly affect staff morale and well-being. The majority of staff working in 14 out of 17 countries disagree they feel valued by society.

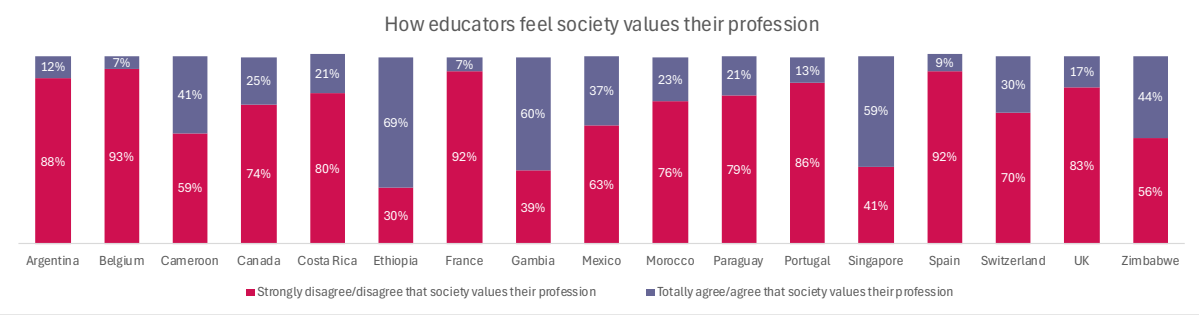


Figure 2.2 – how education professionals feel society views their profession

The highest levels of disagreement, from nine out of ten staff, were found in Belgium, France and Spain. The three countries where staff agreed they feel valued were Ethiopia, Gambia and Singapore (see *Part 3, Section III.1*). See also Part 1, Section I for the strong negative correlation found with the proportion of staff who frequently experience negative feelings.

IV.4 Stress at work

Working in schools and coping with the various demands made of staff can be stressful. Whilst some stress can be positive if managed correctly, if stress is excessive then it can affect a person's mood, body and relationships. Experiencing long-term stress, or severe stress, can lead to feeling physical, mental and emotional exhaustion, often called "burnout[25]."

Educators were asked about the level of stress they were experiencing at two points during the completion of the survey - firstly, related to the start of the school year (*see Part 3, Section III.1*) and, secondly, during the past week (*see Part 3, Section IV.1*).

Since the start of the school year, more than half of staff working in ten of the 17 countries surveyed indicated their work was 'very' or 'quite' stressful.

More than two-thirds of staff working in the UK, Spain, Belgium and France indicated they had found their work to be 'very' or 'quite' stressful, with the same four countries also reporting high stress levels in 2023. The UK reported the highest stress levels in both 2026 and 2023.

In contrast to this, nearly a quarter of staff working in Ethiopia reported their work was 'not stressful' since the start of the school year in 2026.

Staff were also asked to indicate how stressed they were feeling at work during the past week. In almost all countries (16 of the 17 surveyed), more than six in ten staff indicated they were stressed during the past week.

Three-quarters or more of staff who worked in the UK, Spain, Singapore, Portugal, Belgium and Costa Rica indicated they were stressed, with around a quarter of staff who worked in Costa Rica, Spain and the UK indicating they were 'completely' stressed in the past week. Again, in

[25] Maslach, C., Schaufeli, W. B., & Leiter, M. P. (2001). Job burnout. Annual Review of Psychology, 52, 397–422. https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev.psych.52.1.397

contrast to this, nearly two in ten staff who worked in Ethiopia and The Gambia reported their work was 'not at all' stressful during the past week.

Using both stress indicators, regardless of when staff are asked about stress during the academic year, staff working in the UK, Spain and Belgium appear to be at the greatest risk of experiencing high stress levels.

IV.5. Stressors in the workplace

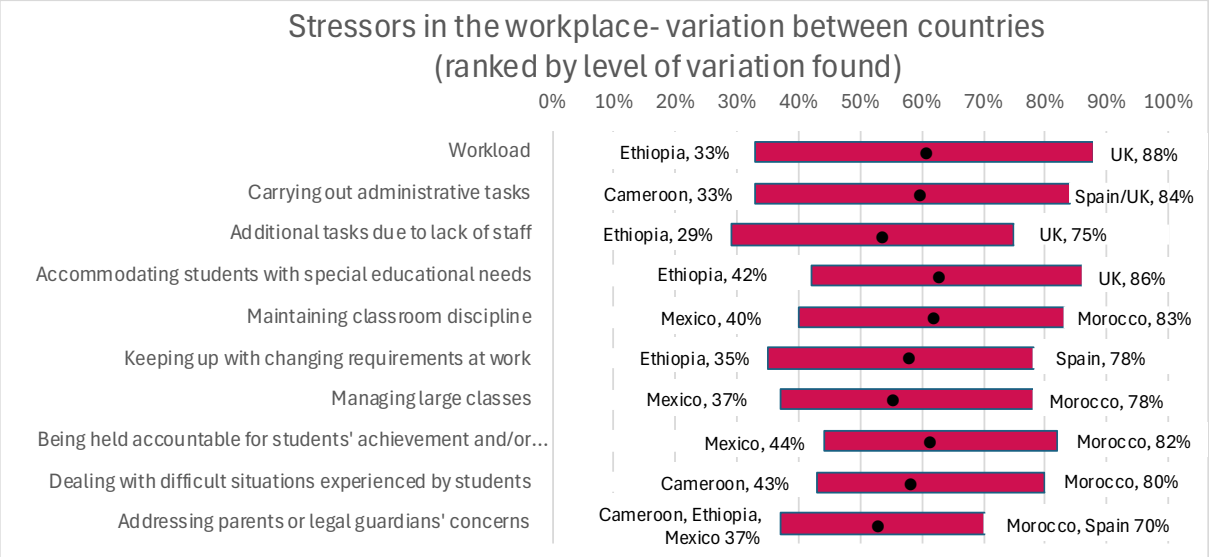


Figure 2.3 – sources of potential stress in the workplace with the variation shown by country (staff indicating that such sources caused 'quite a bit'/'a lot' of stress)

Figure 2.3 details the potential sources of stress for education staff. It displays the minimum and maximum percentages observed across participating countries, which were found to vary considerably. Workload had the largest difference: 88% of UK staff identified it as a source of stress, compared with 33% of staff in Ethiopia, a gap of 55 percentage points and the largest gap between countries identified (*see Part 3, Section IV.3*). The average for each source of stress is indicated by the black dot – all ten averages sit in the range of 52-62%.

Discussions in the focus groups touched on many of these issues, and some examples are shown below to further illuminate the statistical findings.

Accommodating students with special educational needs – meeting the diversity of needs in a classroom is an issue for many teachers, as is meeting the needs of students who have an undiagnosed issue:

> *"The diversity of needs amongst our learners, mainly in the rural areas, because it is something which is dear to my heart. Because when you don't have enough resources, it's quite difficult to meet the needs of those children because needs are quite varied, and it's quite difficult to respond to those needs ... we'll have school dropouts because there will not be education really fully in line with the needs of those children"* (Focus group participant 2: Cameroon)

> *"We have students who are undiagnosed and, because the healthcare system is free, we do have a shortage of specialists and, and doctors ... currently the wait time for*

diagnosis for special needs like autism or physical disabilities, or intellectual disabilities takes from four to five years" (Focus group participant 2: Canada)

Maintaining classroom discipline – one teacher shared the long process involved in formally reprimanding a student:

> *"So if you want to do what we call a 'participação', some kind of reprimand, you have to do it by writing it. So there is a document, a model you can use, and you have deadlines to give it to the Principal of the school. Some of the time people tend to not do it because of the bureaucracy … [but] you have to have the support of the Principal. You have to have the support of the administration or else you are doing work without any perdition or reprimand for the pupil"* (Focus group participant 2: Portugal)

Being held accountable for students' achievement and/or well-being:

> *"In Canada, parents can hold teachers accountable for their children's achievement. In Quebec to gain access to specific programmes or curricula, students need good marks or show they do not have behaviour or behavioural problems. And for the parents, if they (the students) do not have good marks with a view to have access to those specific curricula, teachers do get plenty of letters and complaints from parents and students and they ask teachers, 'well, could you tell us why my child did get this particular mark and why you did report a behavioural problem?', etc. So we need all the time to justify ourselves because there is the pressure of parents on teachers, the pressure is really huge"* (Focus group participant 1: Canada)

Dealing with difficult situations experienced by students, such as trauma, family issues and socio-economic hardship:

> *"Right now teaching is a lot of care. You know you have to (…) give more of yourself in teaching I feel than you do in other professions. With a lot of other professions you can leave it when you leave the, the building. You can leave it, but us teachers, we teachers, we have to worry about our students who have nothing to eat, who have bad family conditions, who have no place to stay, who have all of these things we are concerned about (…)"* (Focus group participant 2: Canada)

IV.6. Workload and work-life balance

Workload is often reported as a key contributor to staff stress in the education sector.

For more than four in ten staff working in Spain, Canada and France workload was considered to contribute 'a lot' to their stress levels at work, particularly so for staff working in the UK (63%) (*see Part 3, Section IV.3*). See Part 1, Section II, for further details the relationship between workload and job stress, and Part 1, Section III, for the relationship between workload and work-life balance.

In ten out of the 17 countries, more than half of staff indicated that work takes up so much energy and/or time that it 'often', 'very often' or 'always' had a negative impact on their private/family life. The highest levels, indicated by two-thirds or more of staff, were from staff working in Belgium, France, Morocco and the UK (*see Part 3, Section II.6*), with large increases

since 2023 being indicated by staff working in Morocco and UK (13% and 11% respectively) (*see Part 3, Section VI.3*).

IV.7. Other indicators of poor well-being

Apart from considering levels of stress, staff mental health and well-being can also be examined with reference to the frequency with which staff report levels of feeling 'down' or suffering from anxiety, depression, or hopelessness. The highest levels of suffering from these feelings 'very often', 'often' or 'always' were indicated by staff working in the UK, Spain, Belgium and France – which are the same four countries which reported the higher levels of stress since the beginning of the school year. Staff working in the UK and Spain also recorded notable increases in these levels since 2023 (*see Part 3, Sections III.2 and VI.3*).

Such negative feelings were investigated further to get a sense of how frequently staff suffered by 'feeling down', depressed or hopeless during the previous two weeks. One third or more of staff working in Morocco, Costa Rica and the UK indicated they had little interest or pleasure in doing things for *half the week or more*. One third or more of staff working in Morocco and Costa Rica indicated they felt down, depressed or hopeless for *half the week or more*. While more than a third of staff working in Cameroon and the UK had a poor opinion of themselves for *half the week or more* (*see Part 3, Section IV.5*).

> *"If we don't solve this issue of the well-being of the staff and the pupils, we will not improve teaching and school results"* (Focus group participant: France)

V. Needs and support

There is substantial variation in the needs of education staff and the support offered to them in their countries and schools.

V.1. Who cares about the well-being of education staff?

Staff were asked to indicate the extent to which various organisations – their educational authority, the educational institution's management, and their unions - were concerned about their health and well-being.

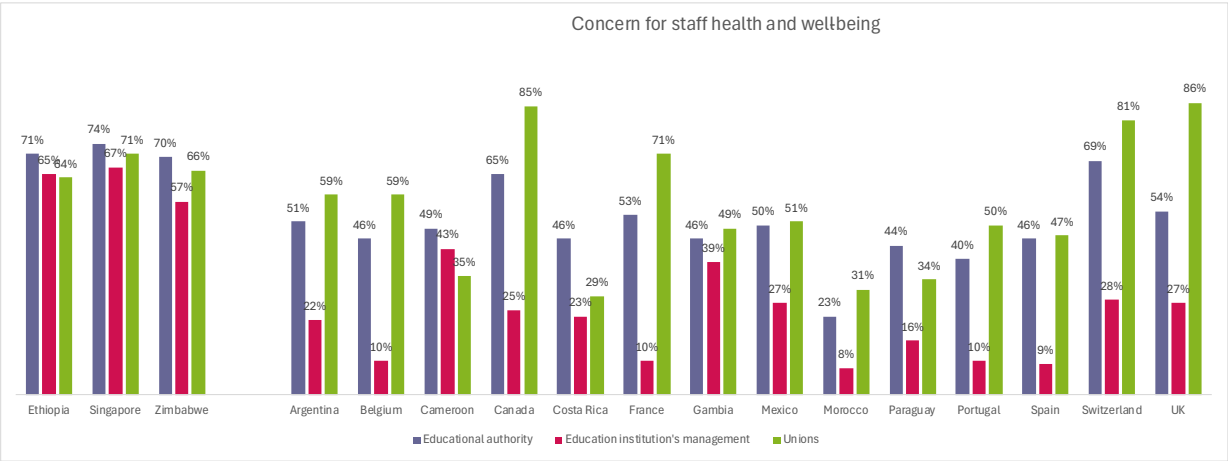


Figure 2.4 –comparison of the level of concern for staff health and well-being by educational authority, education

institution's management and the unions, where staff have indicated their level of concern is somewhat/very concerned.

It was found that in Ethiopia, Singapore and Zimbabwe, all three organisations were highly concerned about staff well-being. In other countries, one or two organisations might indicate concern, but not consistently across all three actors.
In most countries (15 of the 17), staff indicated that concern for staff well-being by their educational institution's management was lower than that shown by their education authority or unions.

The greatest concern for staff well-being by the education authority and educational institution's management was indicated by staff working in Singapore, Ethiopia and Zimbabwe, and union concern was the greatest in the UK, Canada and Switzerland (*see Part 3, Section V.2*).

V.2. Support

When staff need support, they indicated they were more likely to turn to their colleagues for support than to their supervisors or associations/unions (this was also found in 2023).

> *"The other aspect I think is very important, and sometimes we forget, is psychological support, help. So sometimes I joke with my colleague in school, she's psychology co-ordinator (for) students, sometimes I joke with her that I want to make an appointment with her. But this is a reality. Most of us need some kind of support and we don't have it, especially those who are isolated in some places"* (Focus group participant 2: Portugal)

The support of colleagues was indicated most highly by staff working in Switzerland, Zimbabwe, Canada, Singapore, Cameroon, Belgium and the UK, and support from supervisors by staff working in Zimbabwe. There was a large variation in the support from associations/unions, with the highest levels of support indicated in Mexico, Portugal and Canada and the lowest support in Cameroon (*see Part 3, Section V.1*).



Figure 2.5 – support available to staff at work from colleagues, supervisors and associations or unions.

Staff access to training and/or prevention resources on health/well-being is another important form of support. However, in the majority of countries (13 out of 17), less than half of staff indicated they had access to these resources. The highest level of access to was indicated by staff working in Singapore and Canada in 2026, and by staff working in Canada in 2023 (*see Part 3, Section V.2*).

> *So I think our mental health, must be taken into consideration. One of my colleagues mentioned the issue of burnout. We really get to the max and burnout and nobody sees*

those signals. That we are overworked that we need to rest, that we are now sick. We know, because mental health [trouble] is, it's a sickness on its own. We find that people get stressed, people become suicidal, they die, they kill themselves. That's because of work. So there is need for mental health to be really taken seriously when it comes to our profession" (Focus group participant 2: Zimbabwe)

More than eight out of ten staff working in Morocco, The Gambia and France indicated they had no access to training and/or prevention resources on health/well-being.

The overall access by staff to psychological support resources through their work was found to be even lower. In most countries (15 out of 17), less than half of all staff indicated they had access. The highest level of access to such resources was reported by staff working in Canada. Nine out of ten staff who worked in Morocco, Spain and Argentina indicated they had no access. (*see Part 3, Section IV.4*).

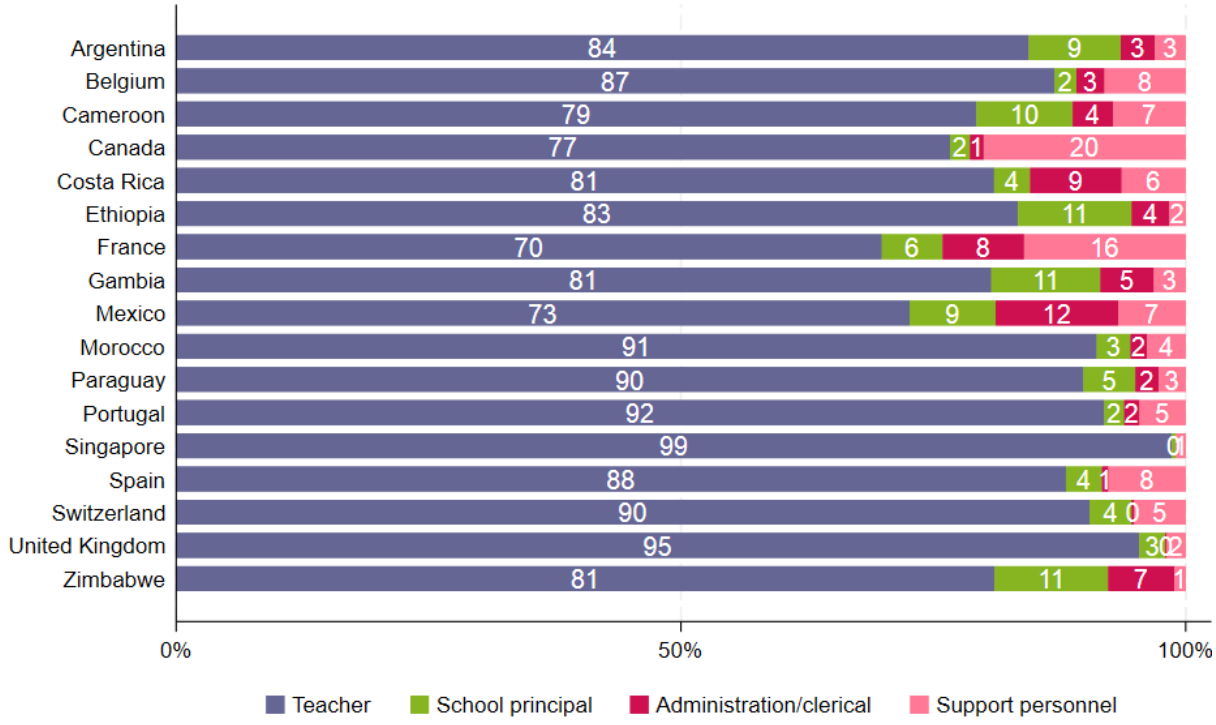
Support can also be offered by occupational health services in the respective countries. In nine of the 17 countries, more than half of staff indicated there was an occupational health service available. Of all those staff who had indicated this, more than half in nine countries had a yearly appointment for a health check-up, although more than eight in ten staff in four countries had never had a check-up.

It should be noted, however, that in four countries (Switzerland, Singapore, Morocco and Canada) half of staff, or more, did not know if there was an occupational health service available in their country (*see Part 3, Section V.2*).

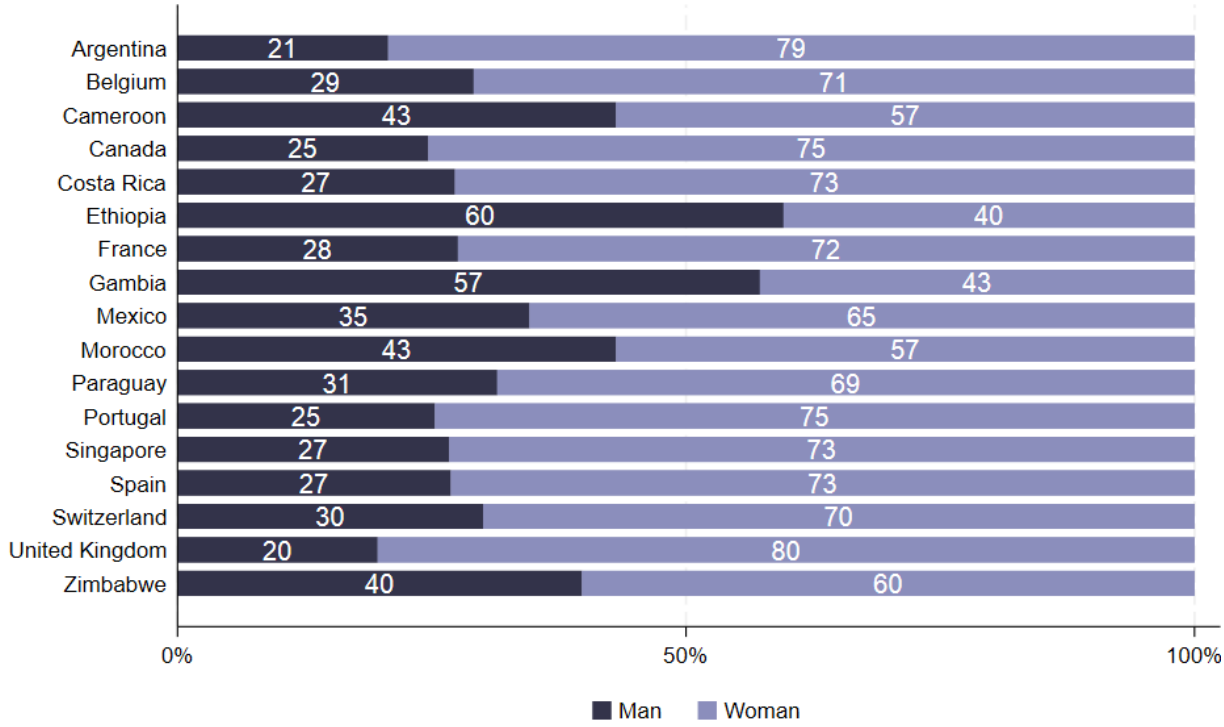
PART 3 – DETAILED SURVEY FINDINGS

I. Profile of the staff who participated in the survey

Main activity

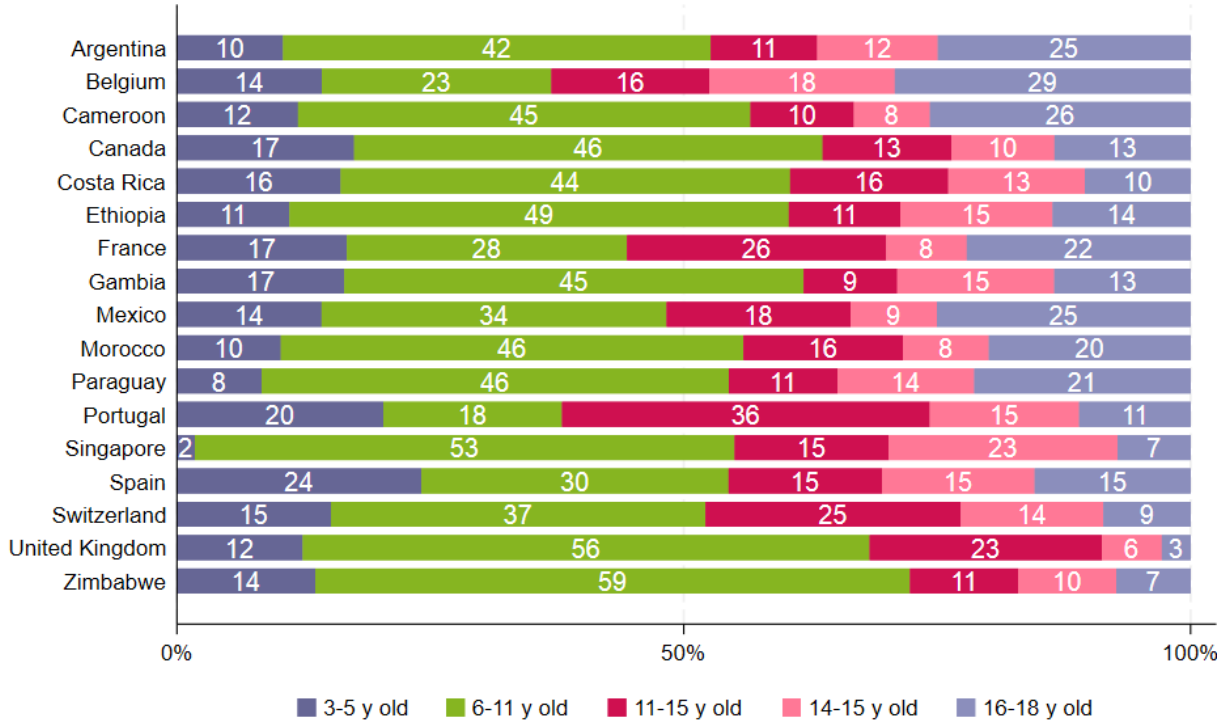


Gender

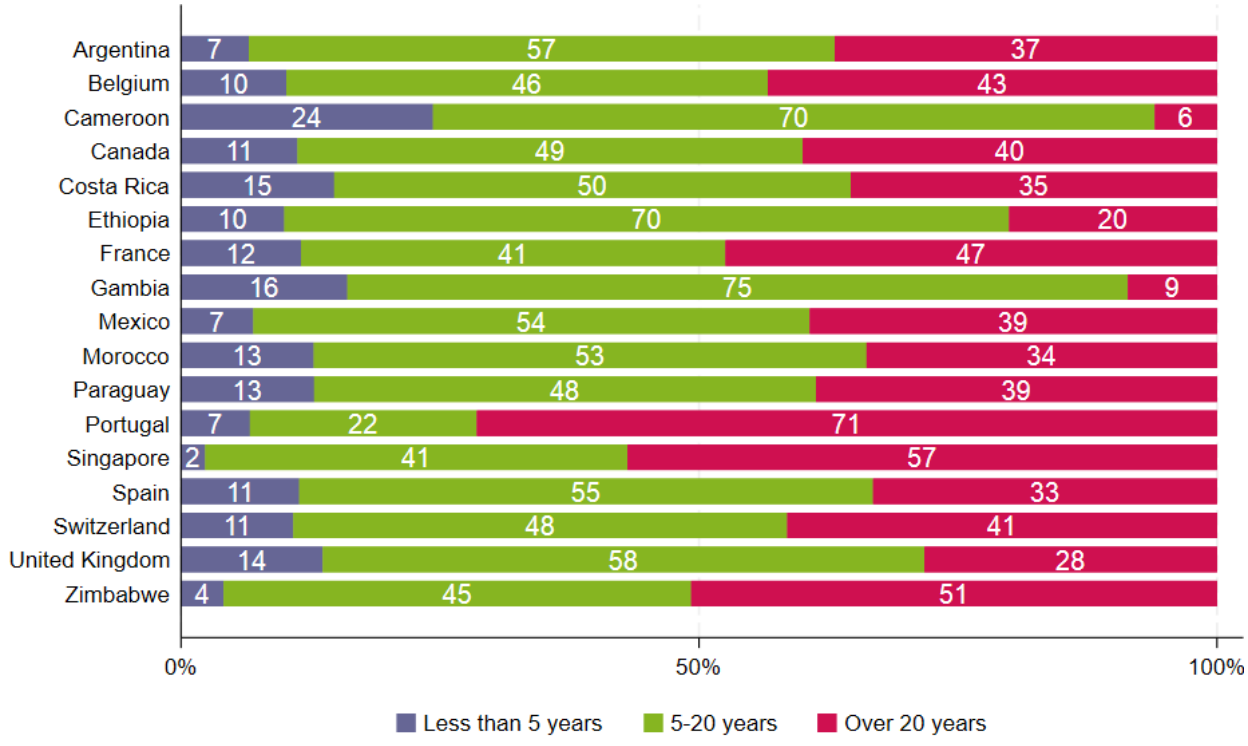


Source: I-BEST 2026, EI/FESP. Field: education personnel

Age of students

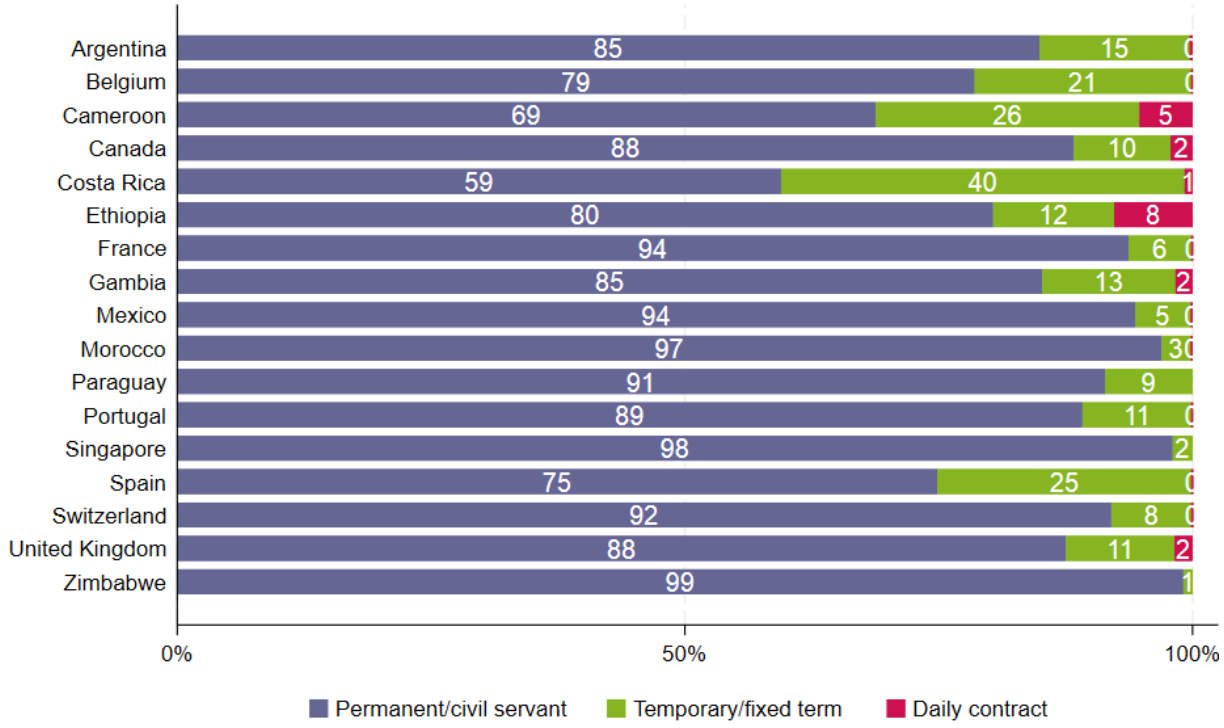


Years of experience

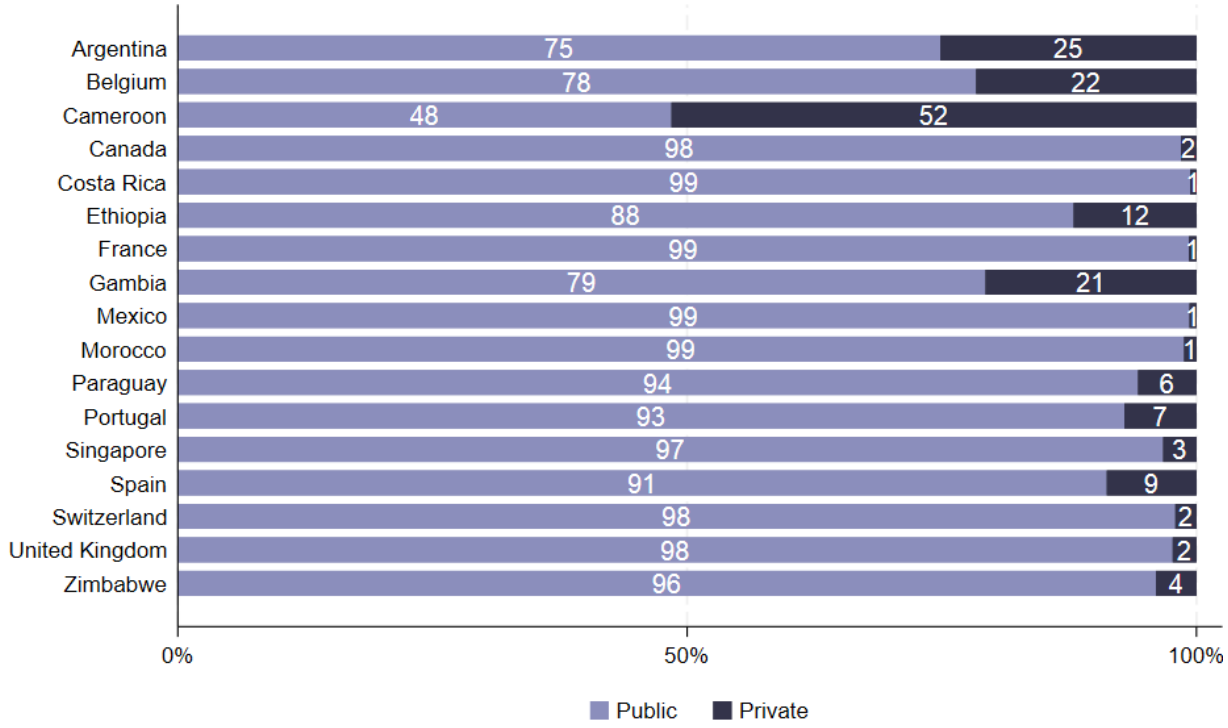


Source: I-BEST 2026, EI/FESP. Field: education personnel

Contractual status

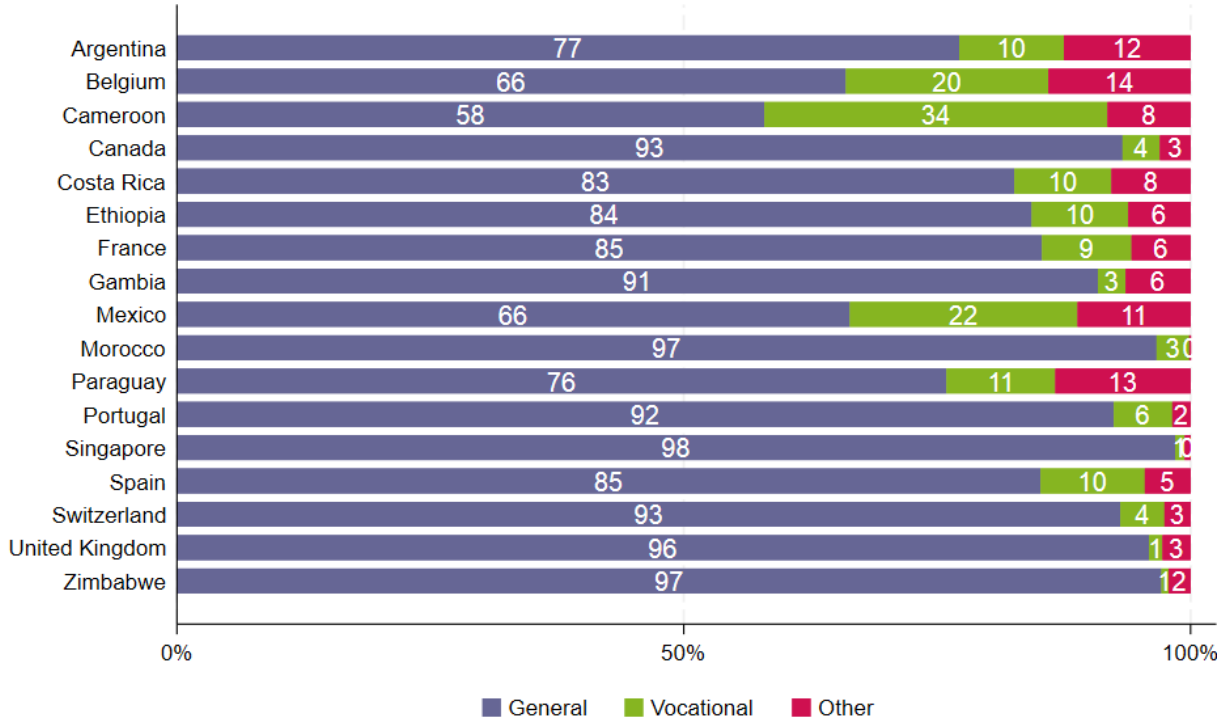


Sector of educational institution

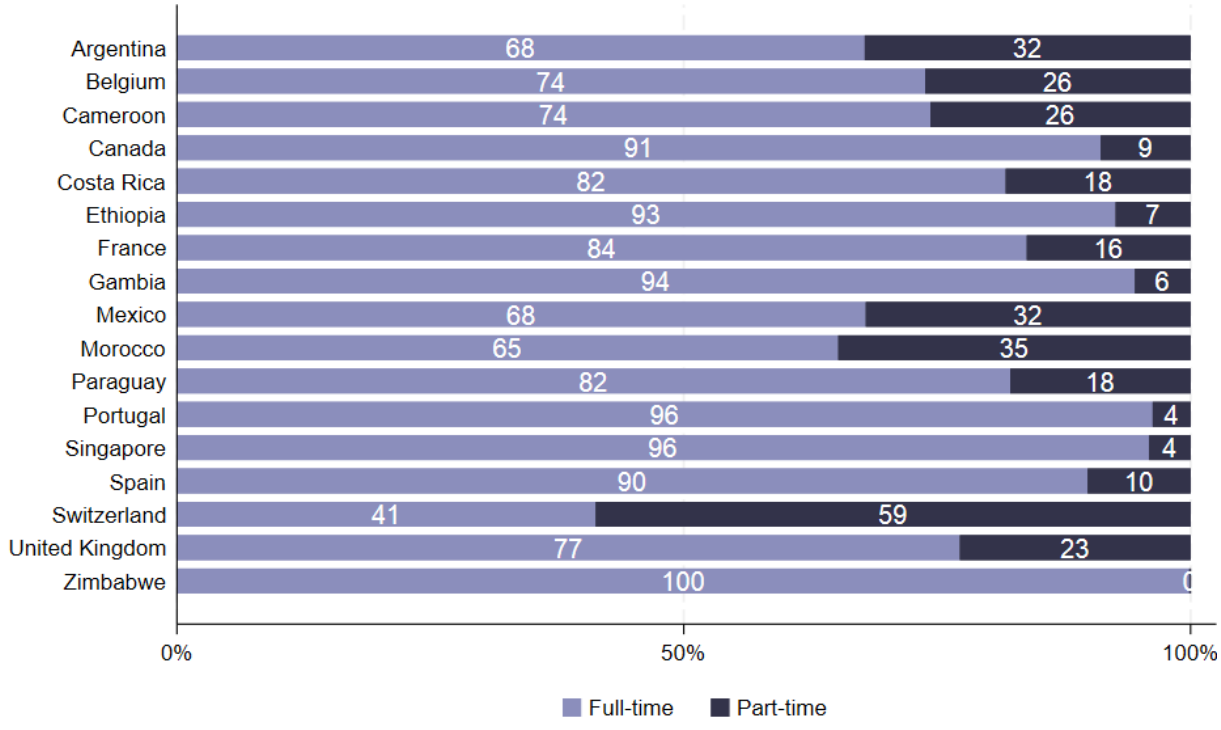


Source: I-BEST 2026, EI/FESP. Field: education personnel

Type of educational institution

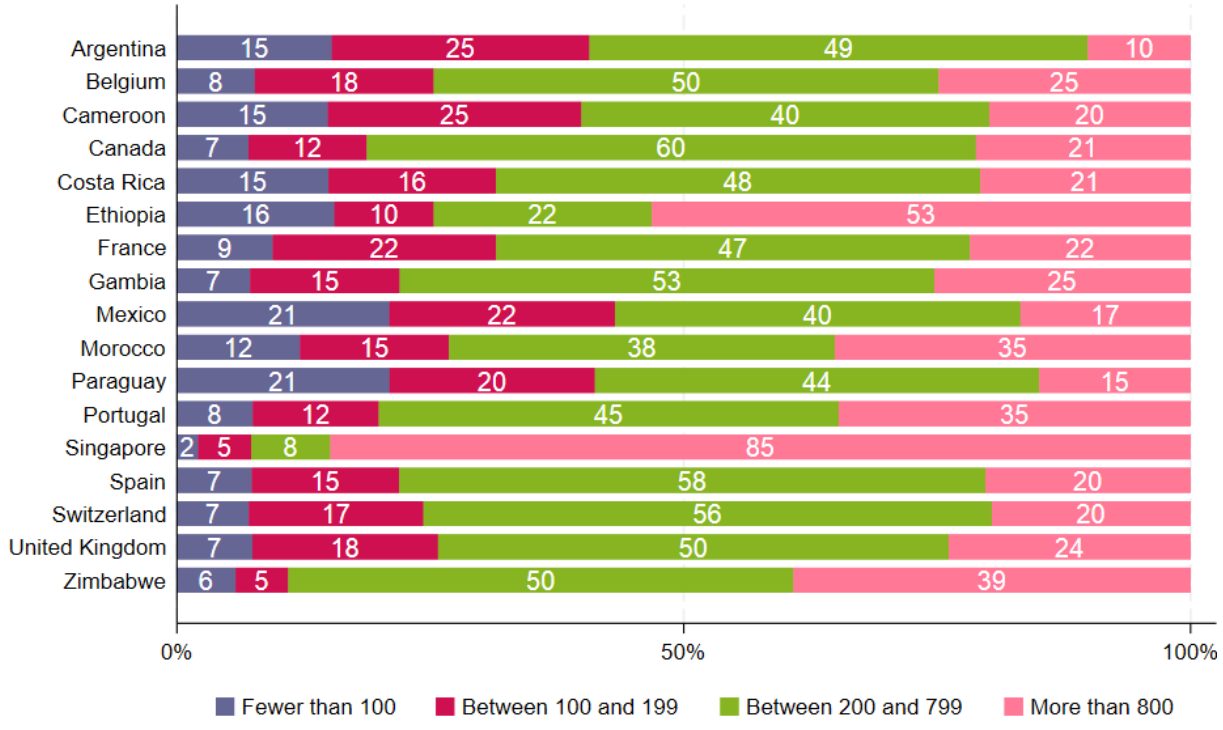


Full-time / Part-time

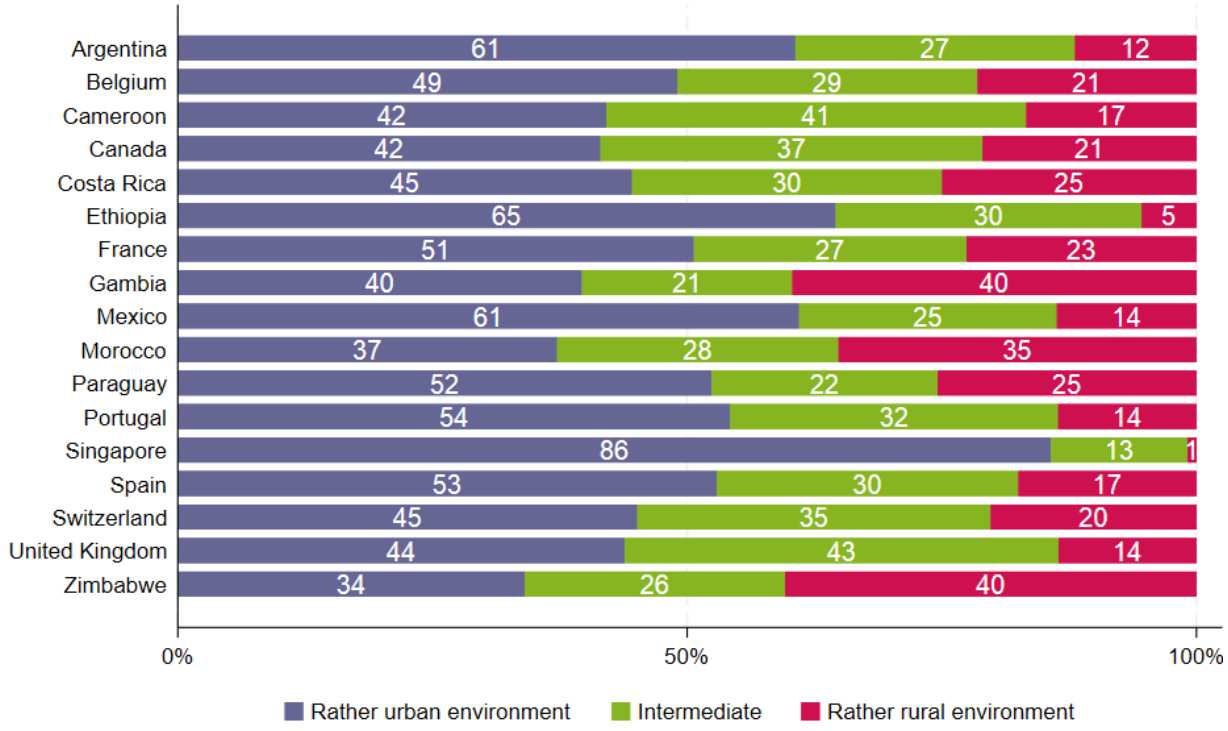


Source: I-BEST 2026, EI/FESP. Field: education personnel

Number of students in the educational institution



Environment of the educational institution



Source: I-BEST 2026, EI/FESP. Field: education personnel

II. Working conditions and environment

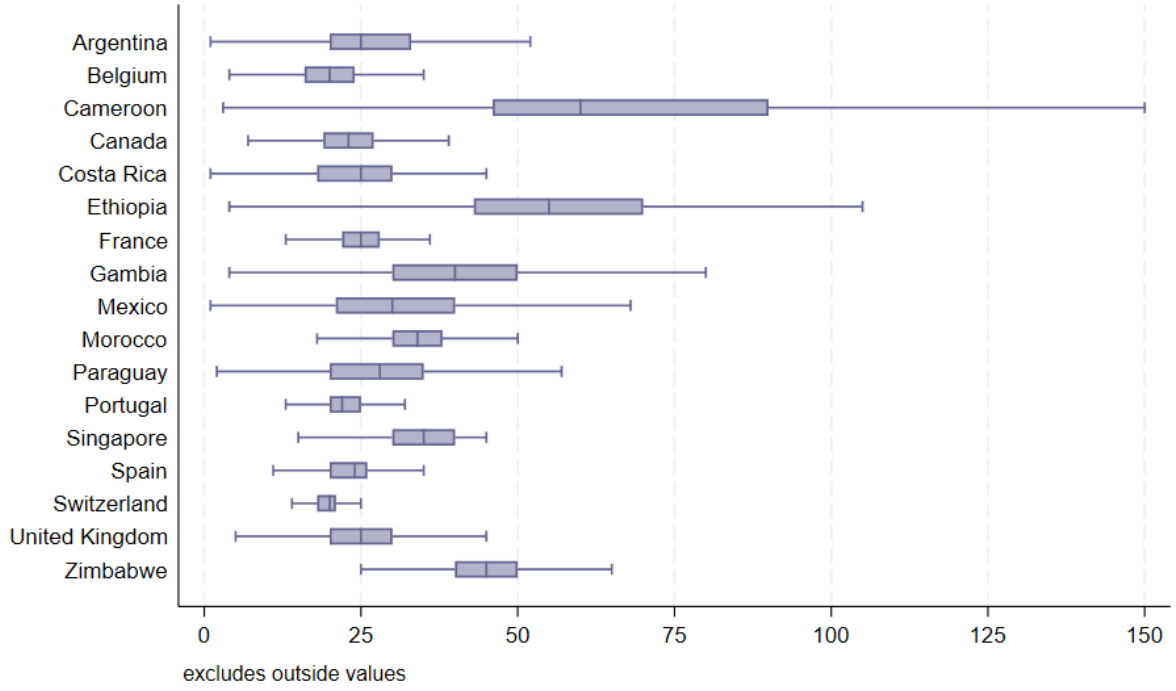
II.1. Organisational and motivational factors

*Number of actual hours worked per week**

	Age of students					
	3-11 years old			11-18 years old		
	Mean	Median	STD	Mean	Median	STD
Country						
Argentina	37.0	39.0	(20.2)	35.8	36.0	(17.9)
Belgium	38.3	39.0	(9.4)	39.0	40.0	(7.8)
Cameroon	36.4	40.0	(12.9)	24.8	21.0	(12.8)
Canada	44.4	44.0	(11.1)	43.9	40.0	(11.4)
Costa Rica	38.1	40.0	(19.1)	41.7	40.0	(16.3)
Ethiopia	25.7	21.0	(19.0)	30.8	32.0	(21.2)
France	42.7	42.0	(8.2)	39.8	40.0	(10.0)
Gambia	30.5	30.0	(17.1)	32.5	30.0	(23.3)
Mexico	39.3	30.0	(32.8)	41.7	40.0	(29.3)
Morocco	32.9	30.0	(8.5)	29.5	24.0	(11.7)
Paraguay	43.7	40.0	(25.1)	41.0	40.0	(25.6)
Portugal	38.0	40.0	(11.7)	39.2	40.0	(11.9)
Singapore	49.9	50.0	(18.3)	51.5	50.0	(17.5)
Spain	42.1	40.0	(15.5)	43.8	42.0	(15.8)
Switzerland	44.3	45.0	(9.4)	44.4	45.0	(9.6)
United Kingdom	47.9	47.0	(7.8)	47.0	45.0	(8.9)
Zimbabwe	37.6	40.0	(16.2)	38.1	40.0	(17.5)

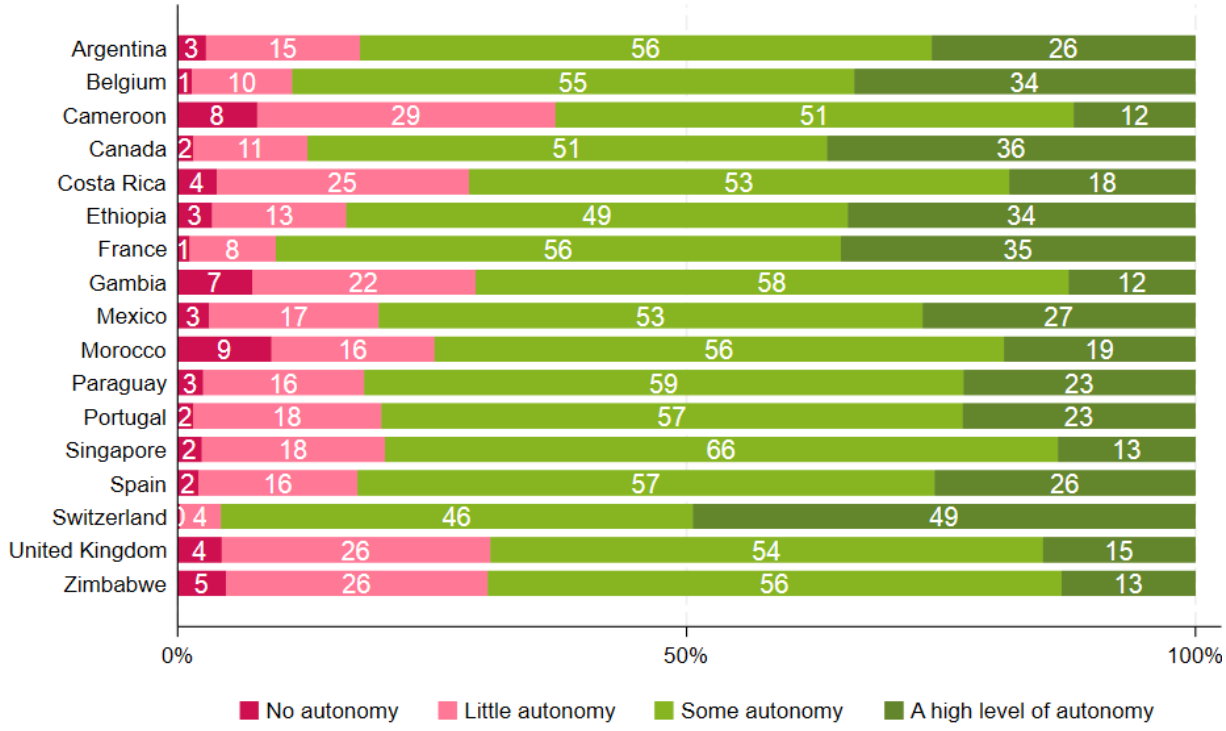
**Among full-time staff*
Median: central value of the responses. Mean: average value of all responses. STD= Standard deviation: measure of the dispersion of responses around the mean.
Source: I-BEST 2026, EI/FESP. Field: education personnel

*Number of students in classes taught**



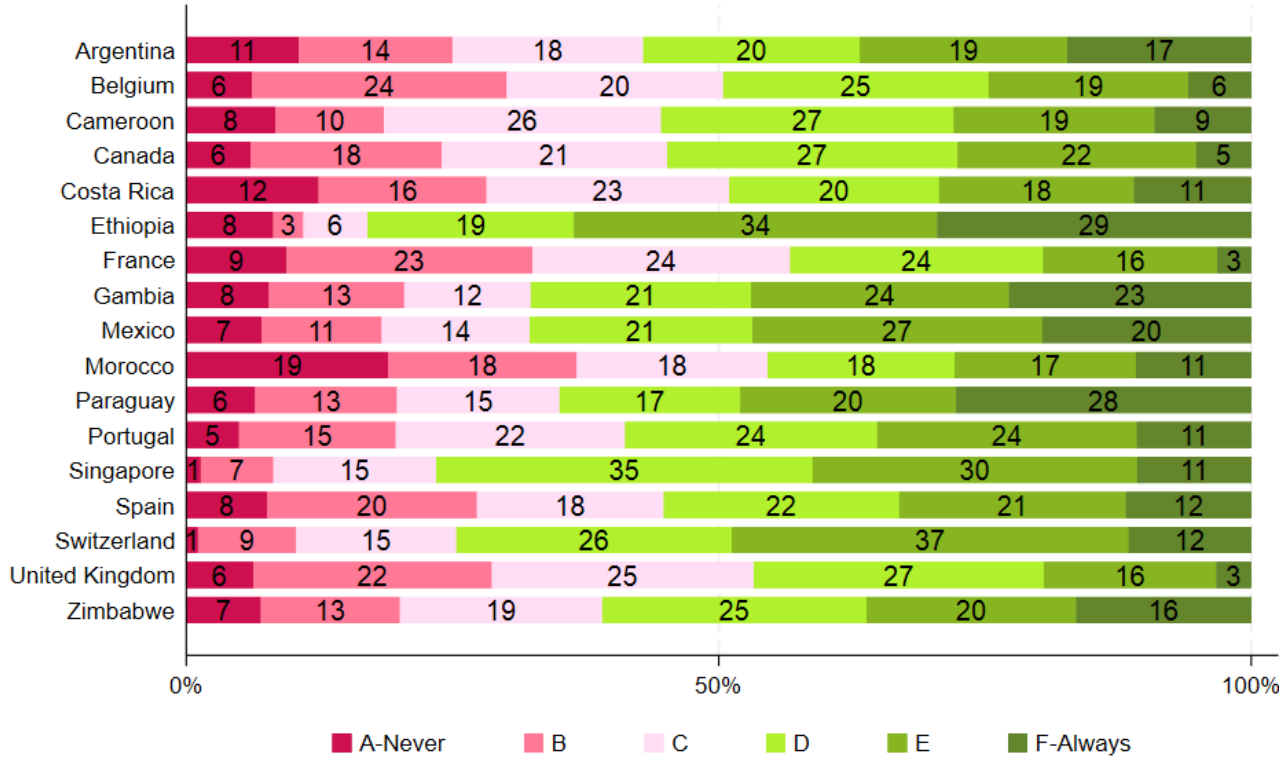
** The box represents the middle 50% of responses, with the lower and upper edges corresponding to the 25th and 75th percentiles. The line inside the box indicates the median. The whiskers show the spread of the data beyond the middle 50% (outliers not represented). A wider box indicates greater variability in responses.*

How much autonomy do you have in your work?

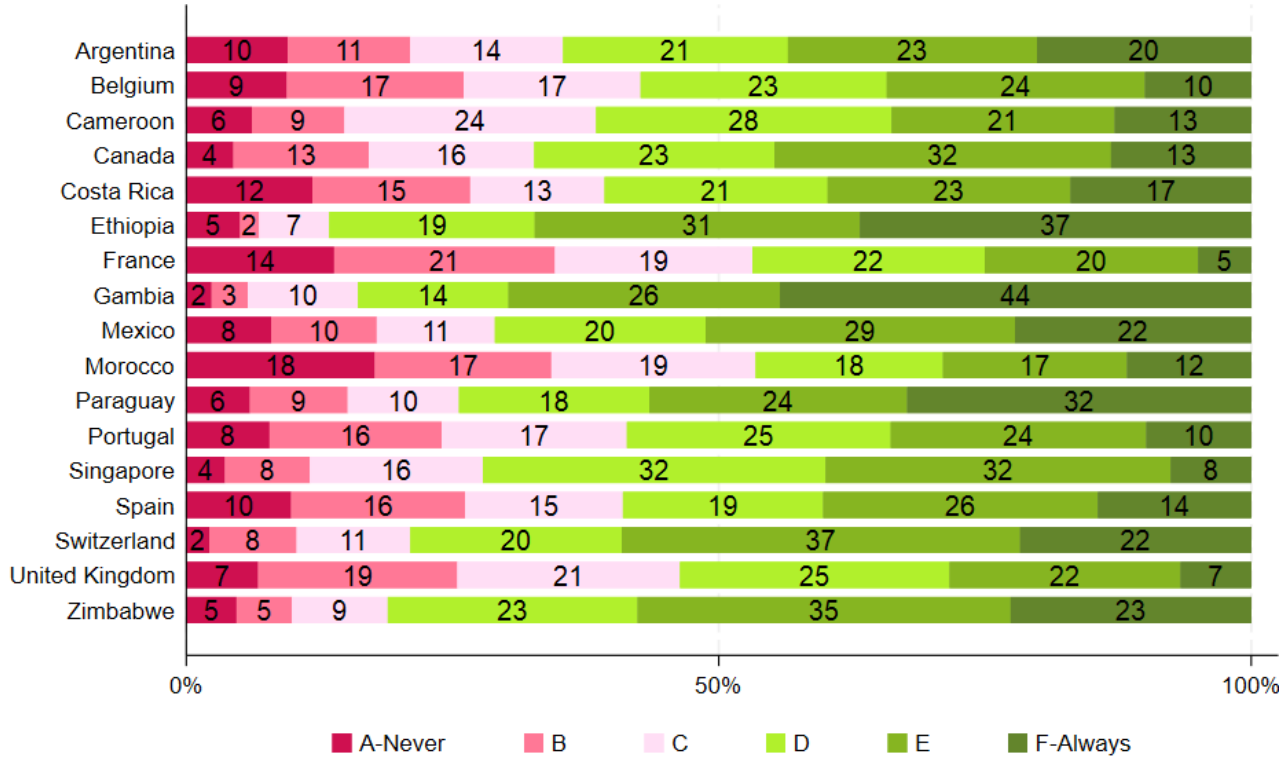


Source: I-BEST 2026, EI/FESP. Field: education personnel

At work, are you informed in advance about important decisions?

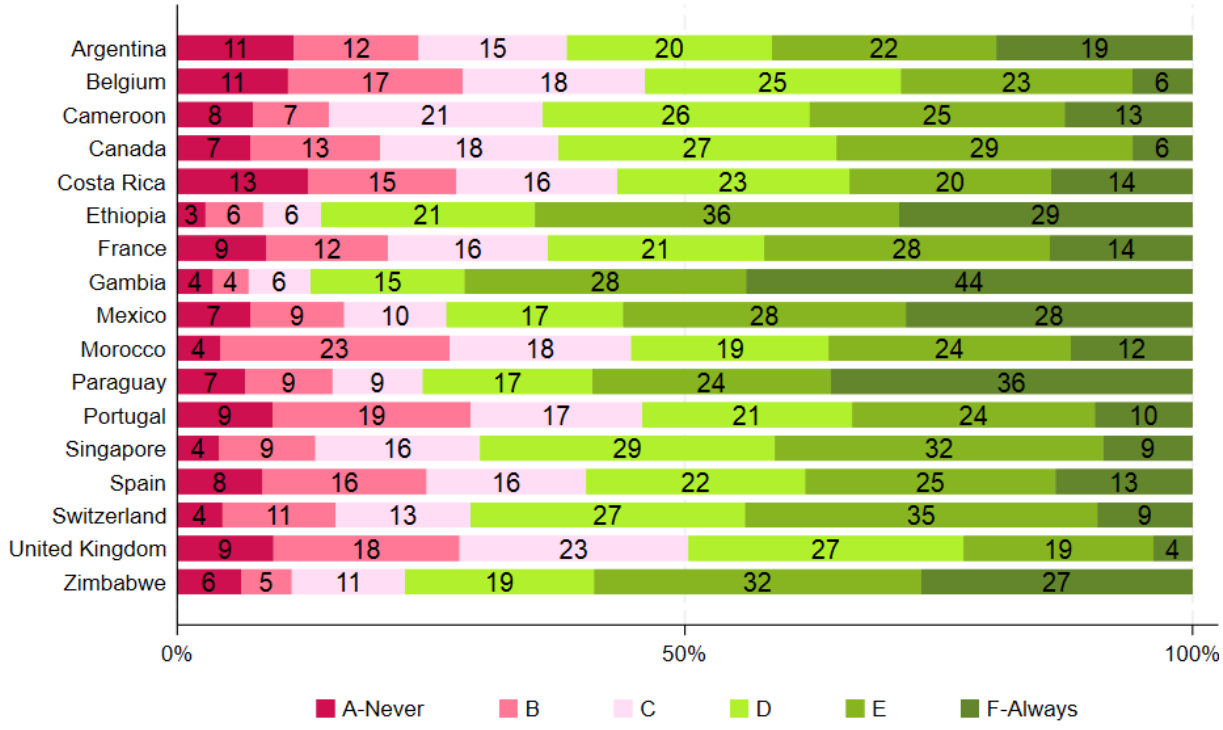


Is your work recognised/valued by the management/supervisors?

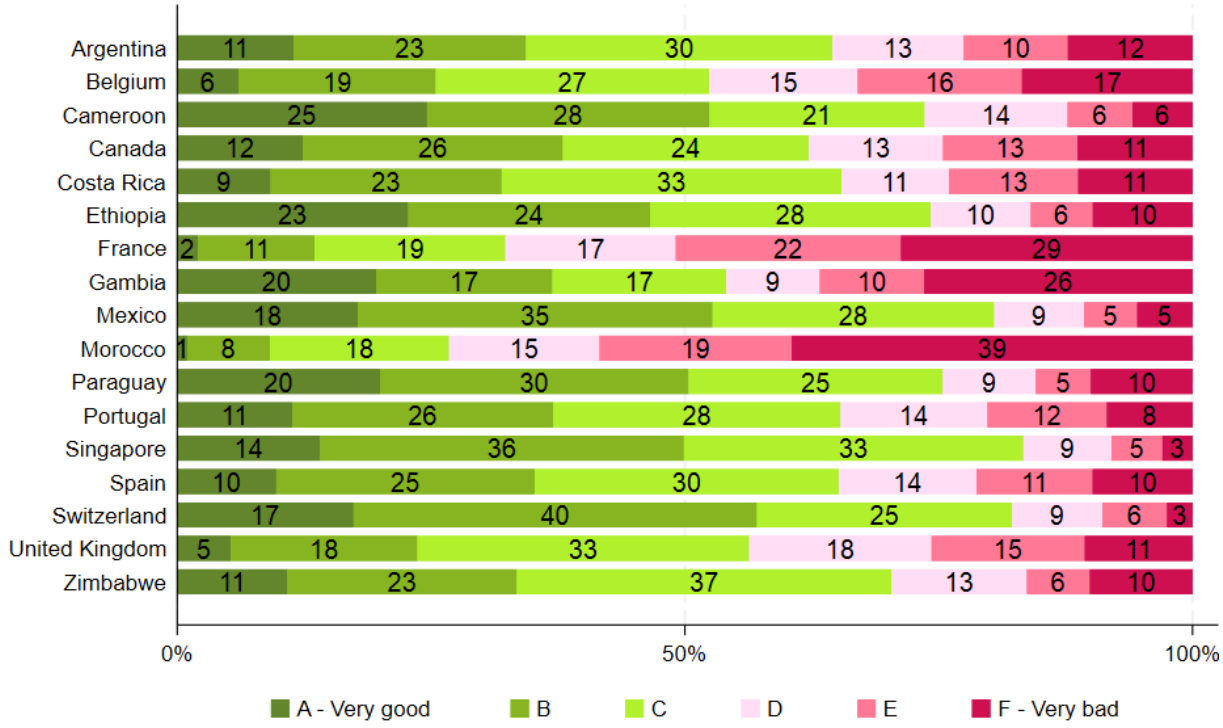


Source: I-BEST 2026, EI/FESP. Field: education personnel

In your educational institution, do you make important decisions as a team?

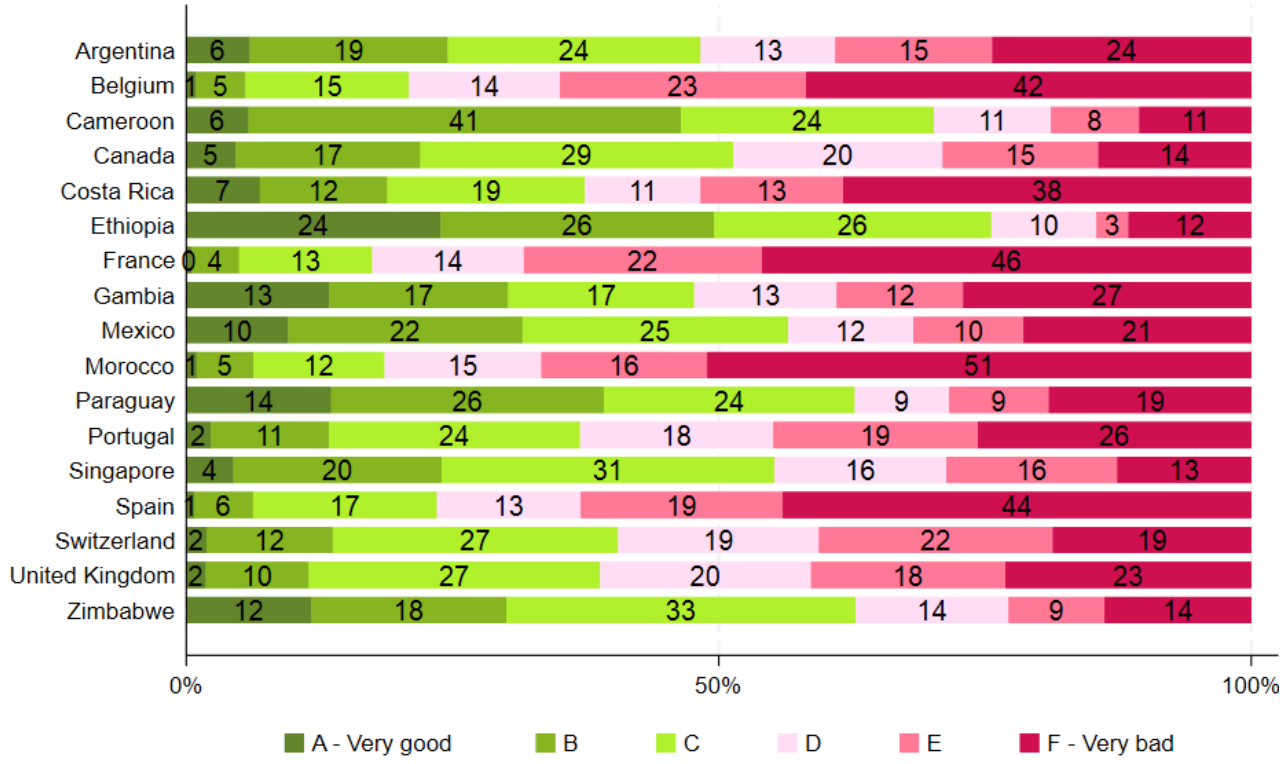


Evaluation of training opportunities

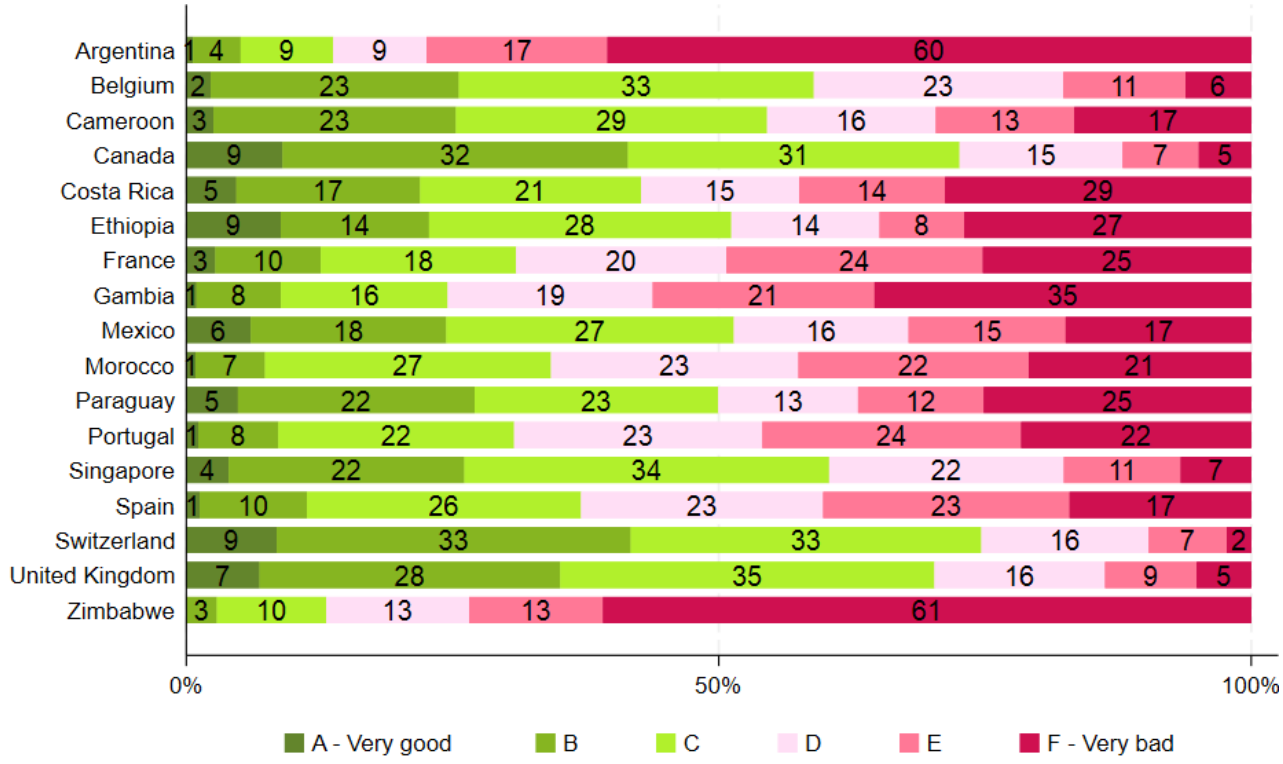


Source: I-BEST 2026, EI/FESP. Field: education personnel

Evaluation of the opportunities for career advancement



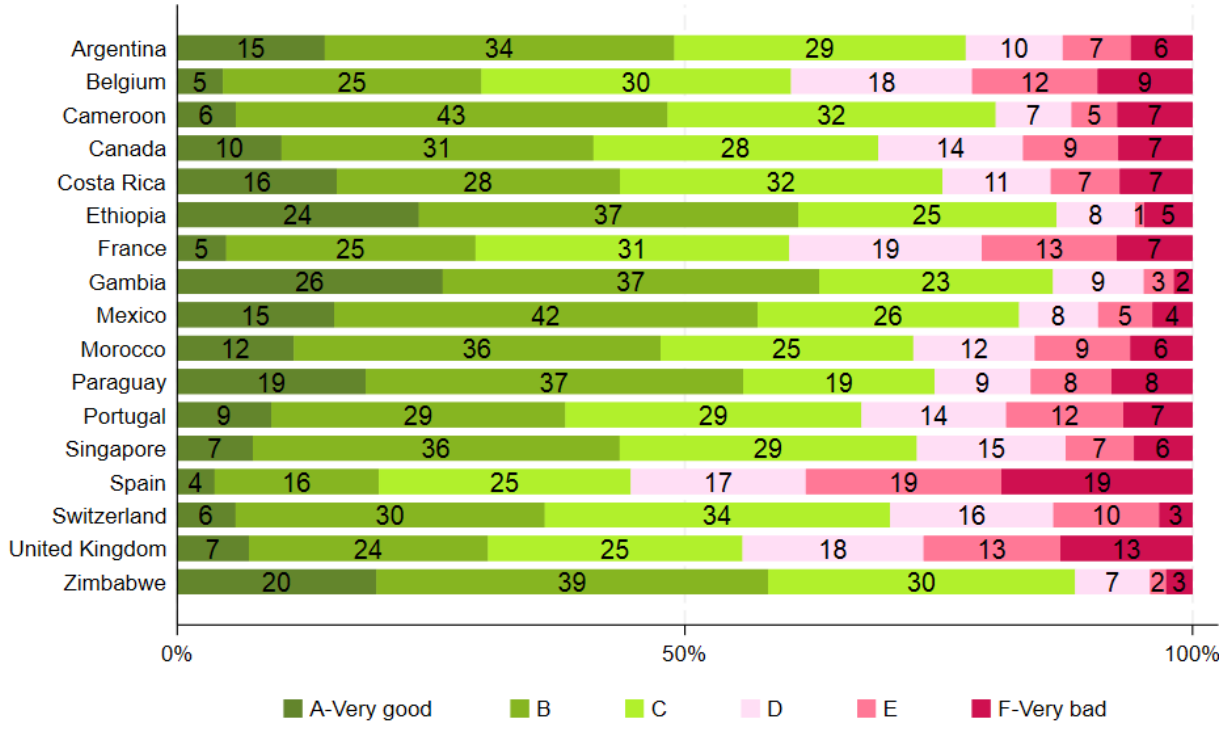
Evaluation of salary



Source: I-BEST 2026, EI/FESP. Field: education personnel

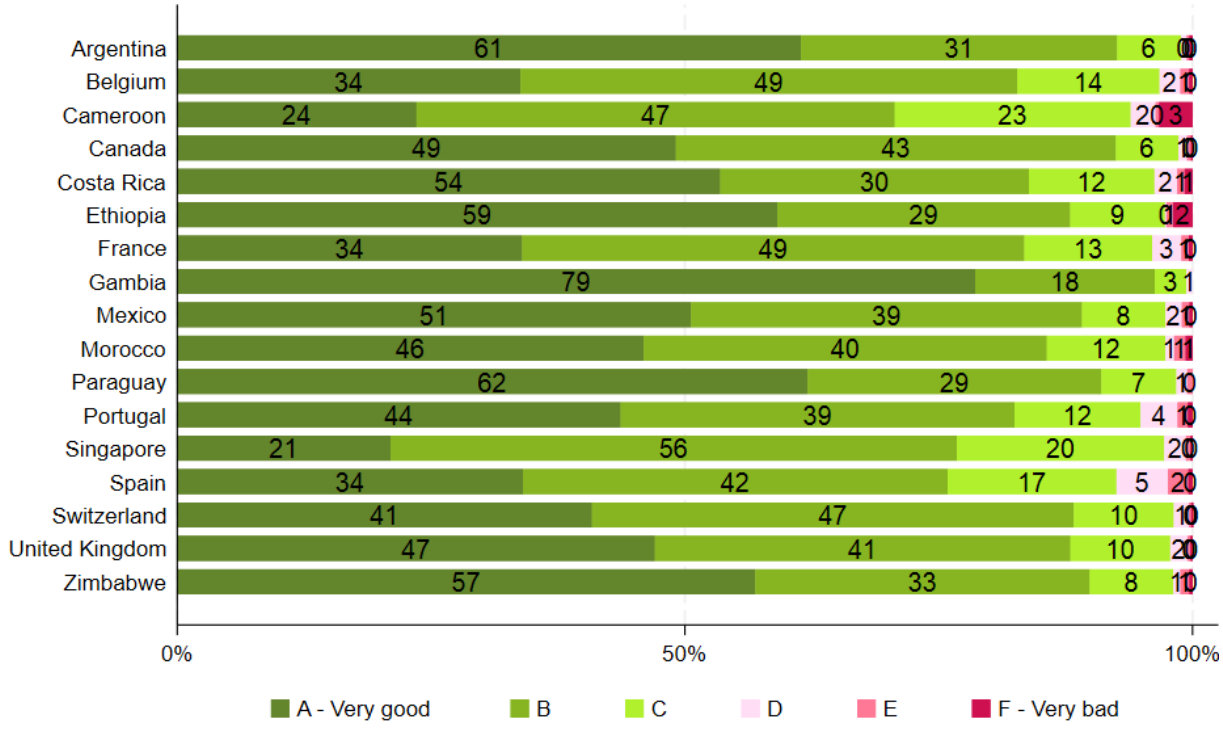
II.2. Social relationships at work

Student discipline



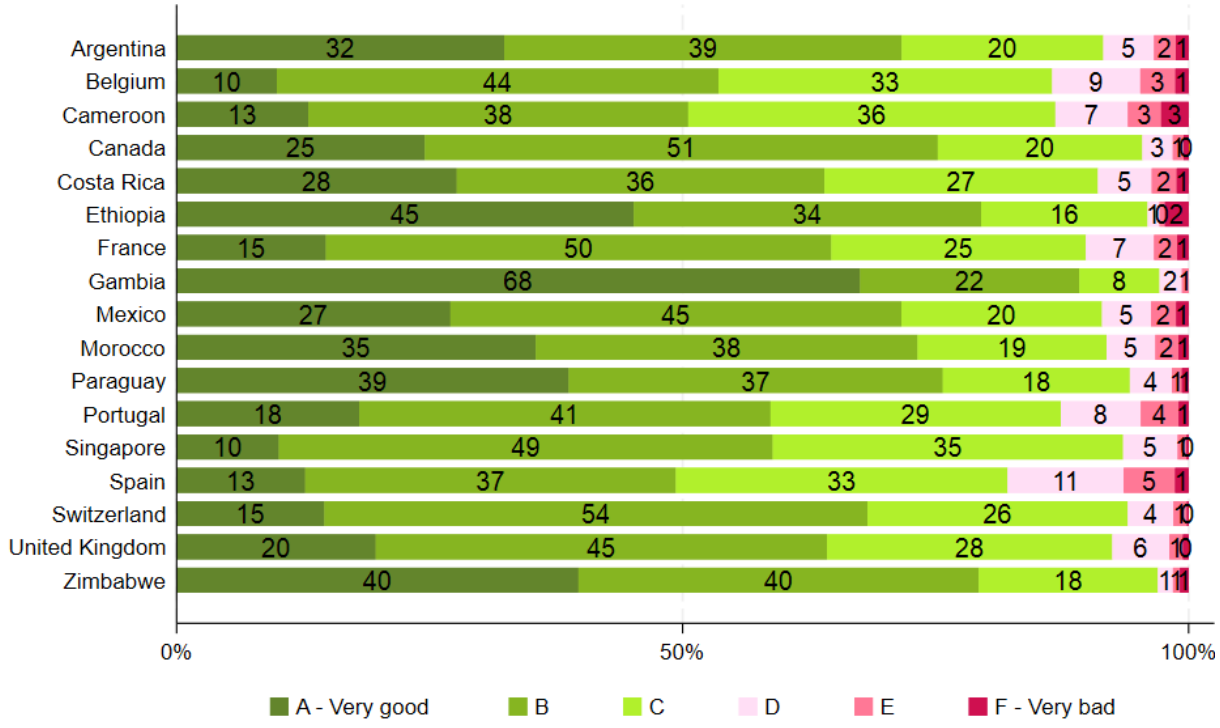
Currently, how would you rate the quality of your relationship with the following people?

Quality of the relationship with students

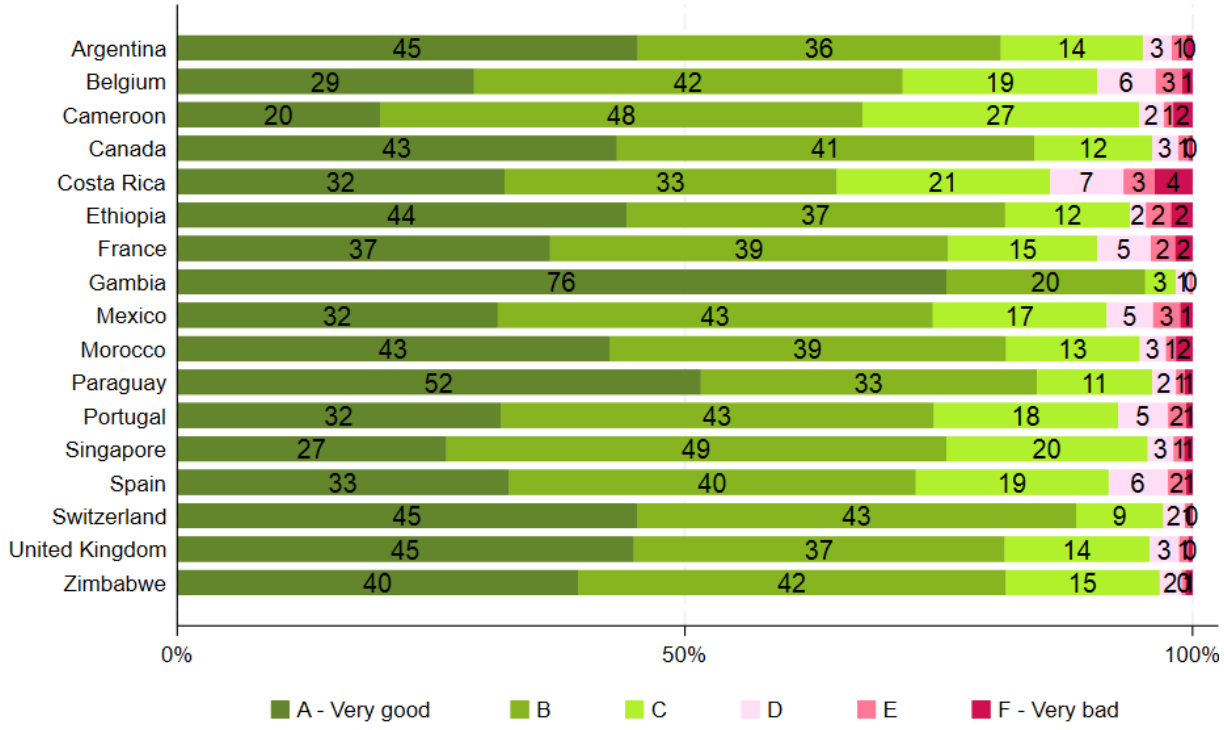


Source: I-BEST 2026, EI/FESP. Field: education personnel

Quality of the relationship with students' families

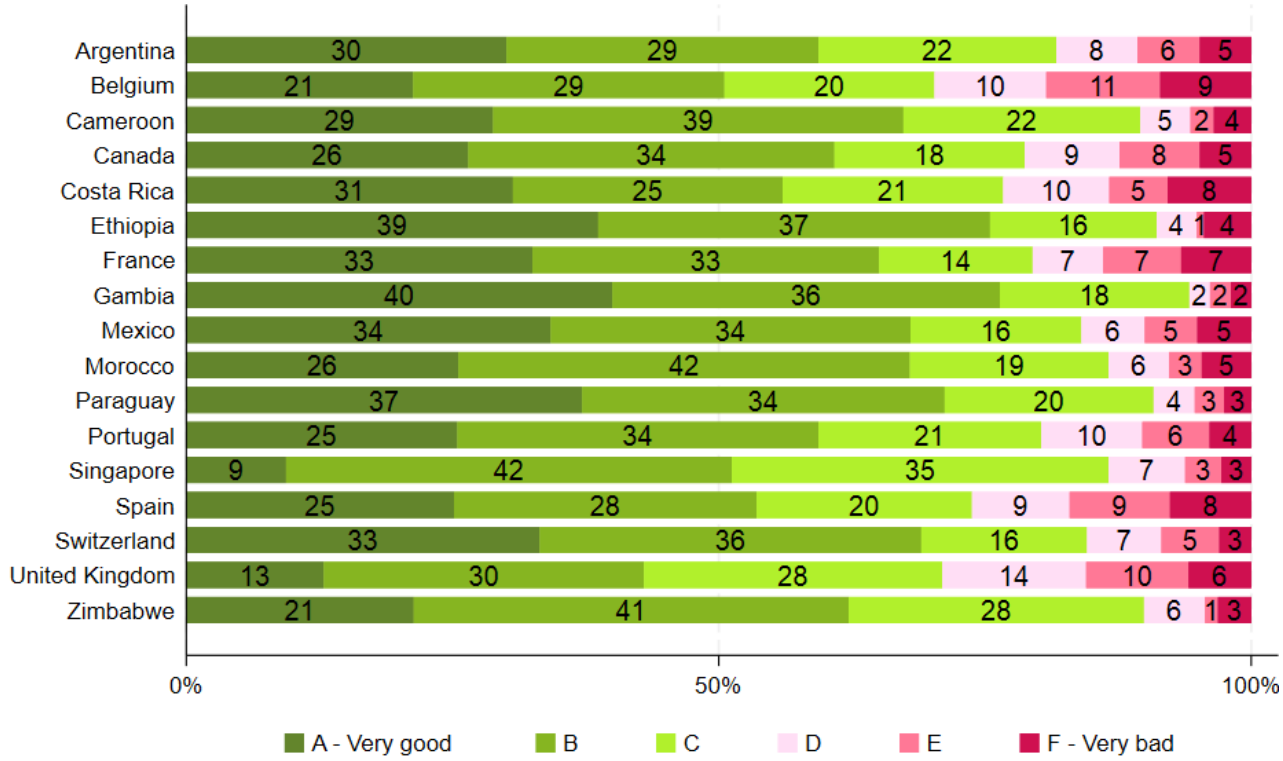


Quality of the relationship with colleagues

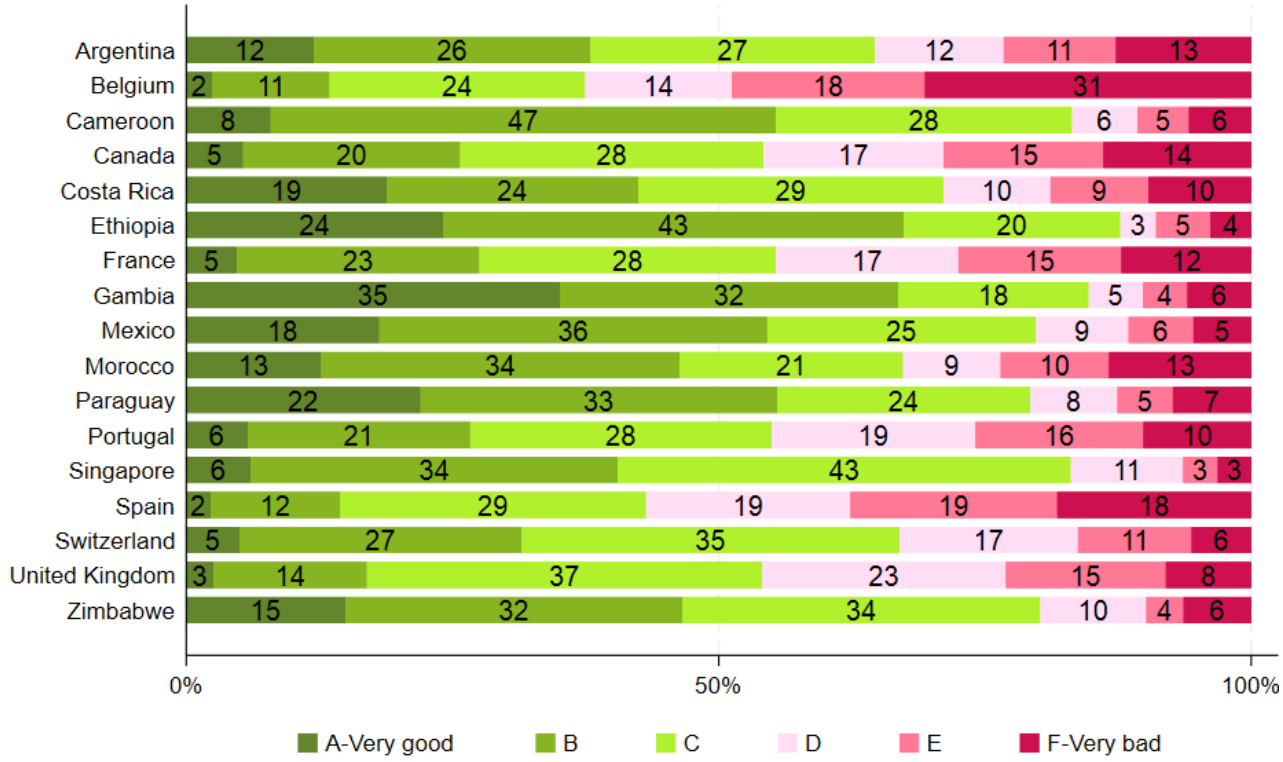


Source: I-BEST 2026, EI/FESP. Field: education personnel

Quality of the relationship with the educational institution's management



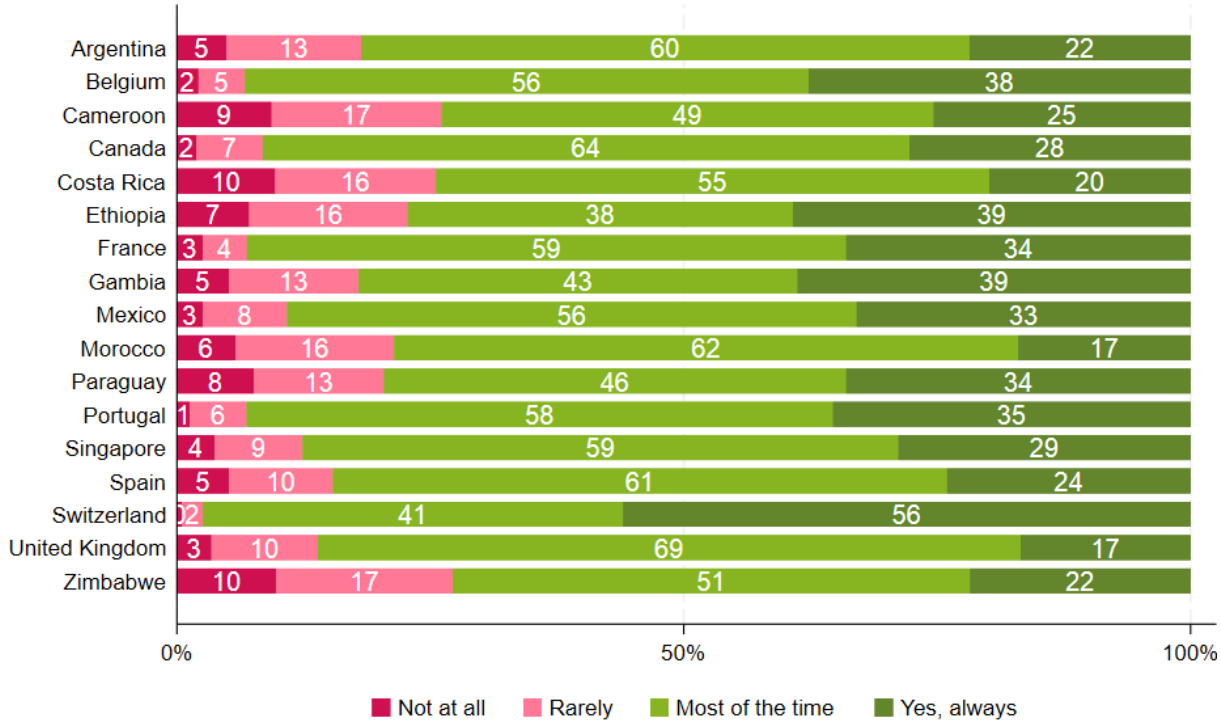
Quality of the relationship with the educational authority



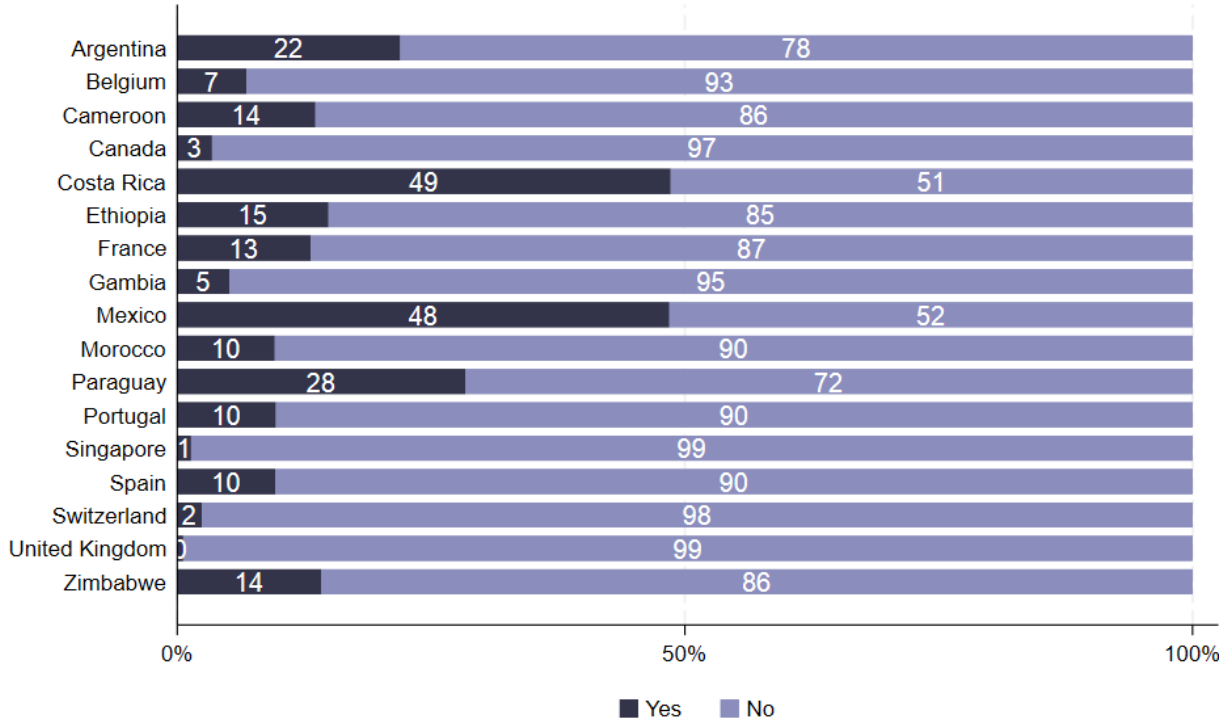
Source: I-BEST 2026, EI/FESP. Field: education personnel

II.3. Personal safety and violence at work

Do you feel safe at your workplace?

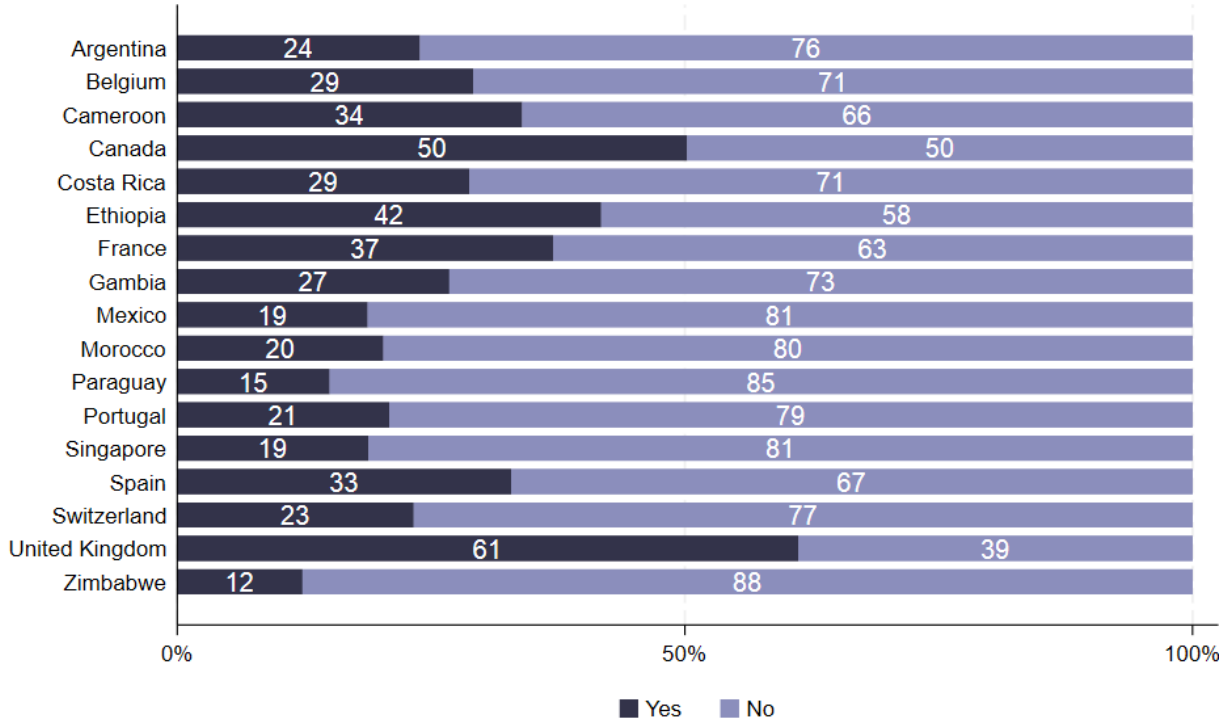


Educational institution in conflict or insecurity zone

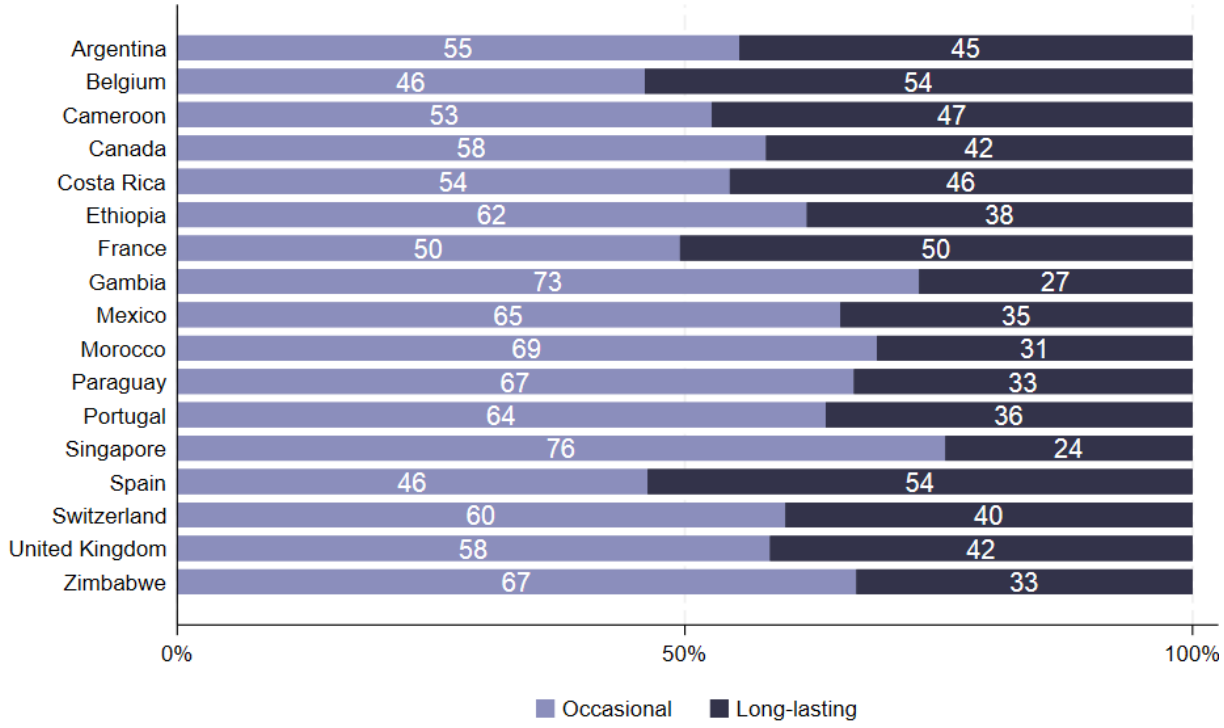


Source: I-BEST 2026, EI/FESP. Field: education personnel

Have you experienced any violence at work in the past 12 months?

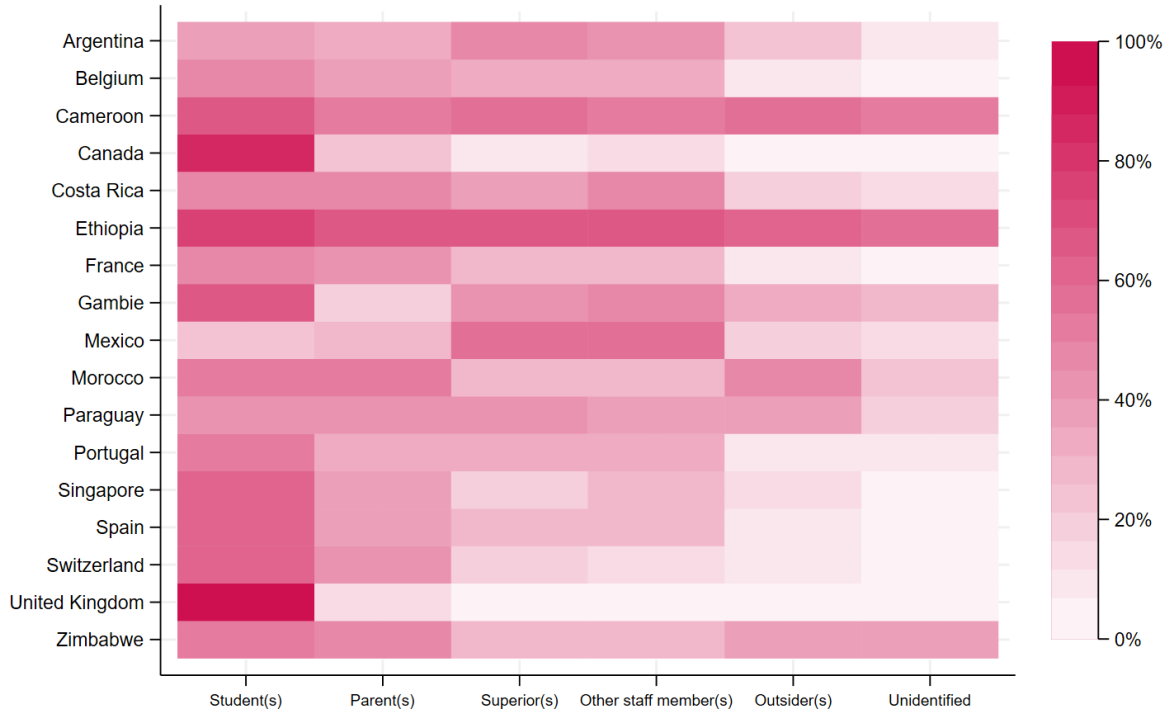


*Pattern of violence**



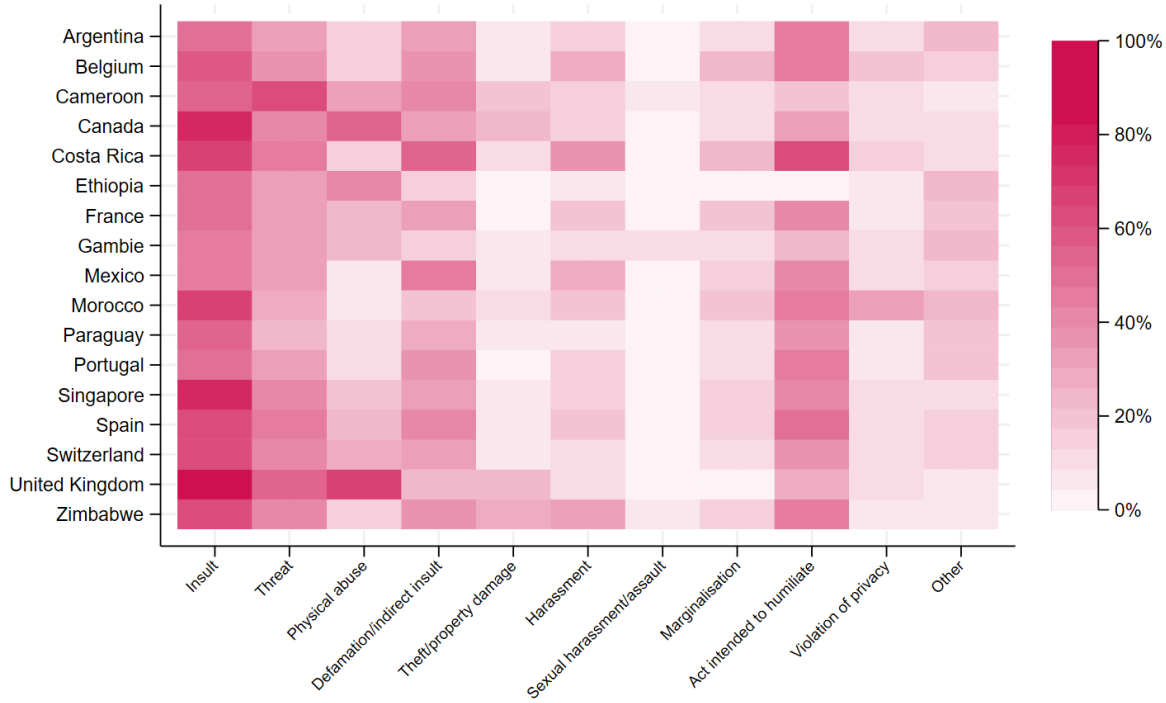
**Percentages calculated among the sample of respondents who had been victims of at least one act of violence*
Source: I-BEST 2026, EI/FESP. Field: education personnel

Who were the perpetrators of these acts of violence?*



**Percentages calculated among the sample of respondents who had been victims of at least one act of violence*

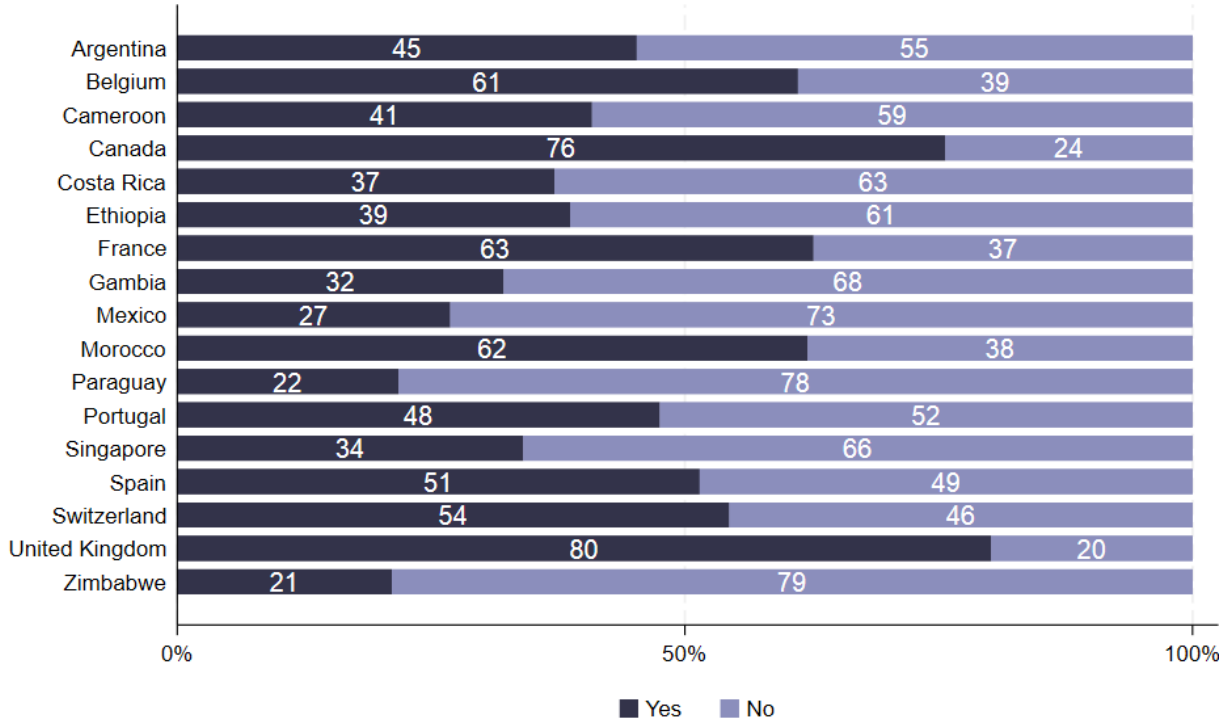
*What type(s) of violence** have you experienced?*



***Percentages calculated among the sample of respondents who had been victims of at least one act of violence, all perpetrator considered*

Source: I-BEST 2026, EI/FESP. Field: education personnel

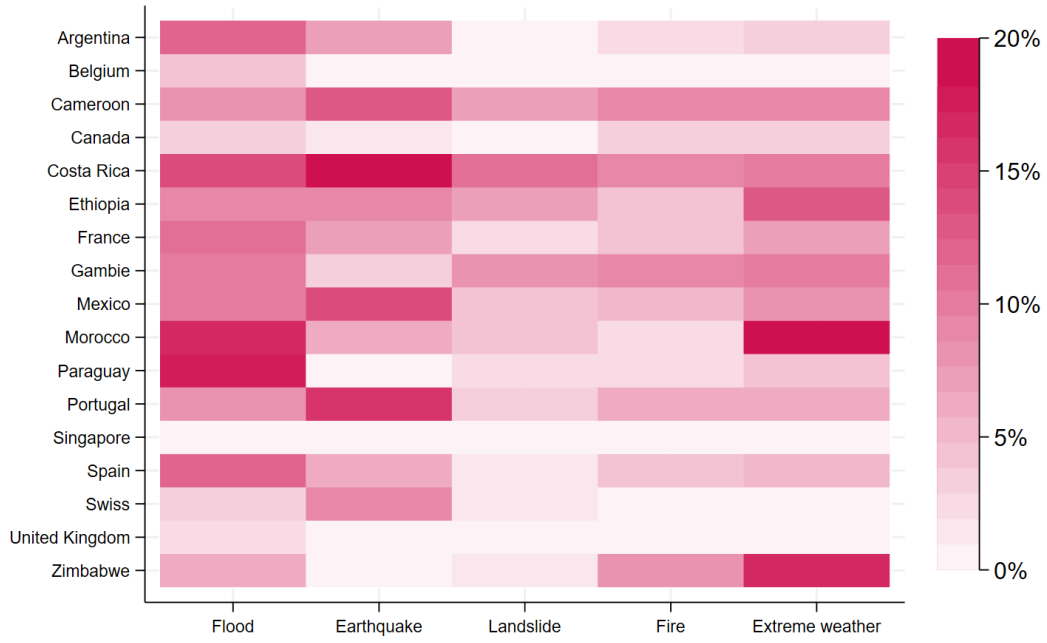
Have you witnessed violence at work in the past 12 months?



Source: I-BEST 2026, EI/FESP. Field: education personnel

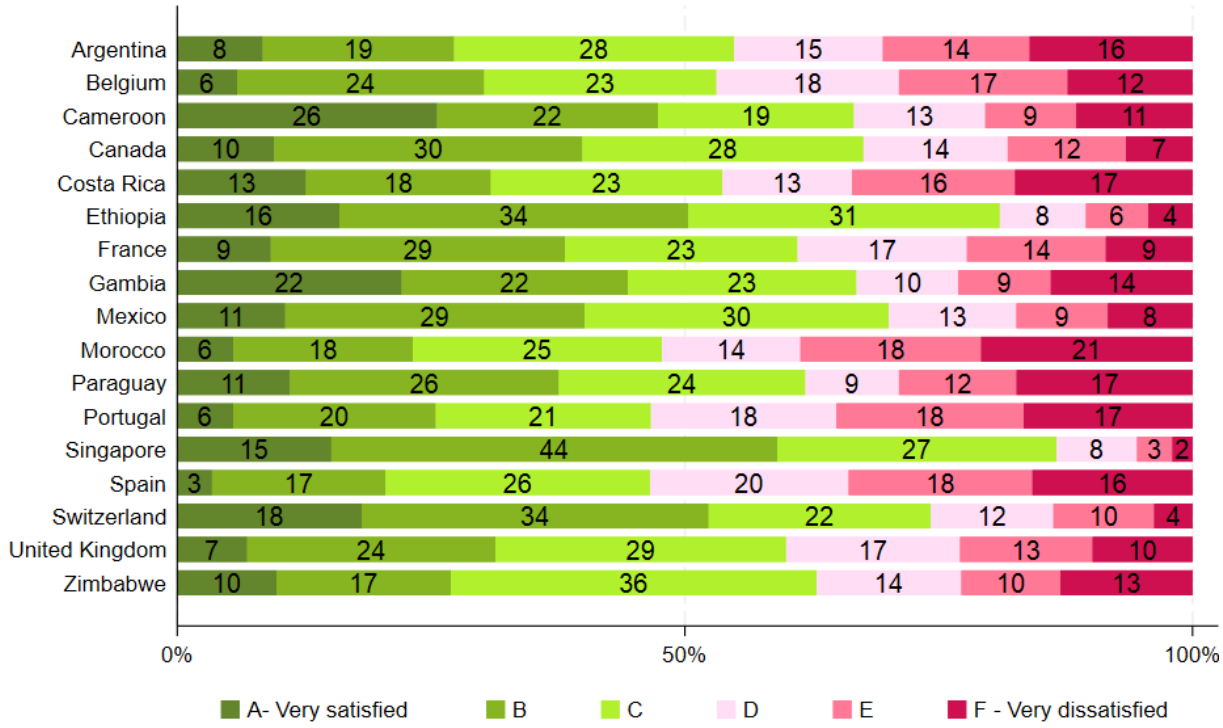
II.4. Physical environment

Educational institution located in an area of natural hazard



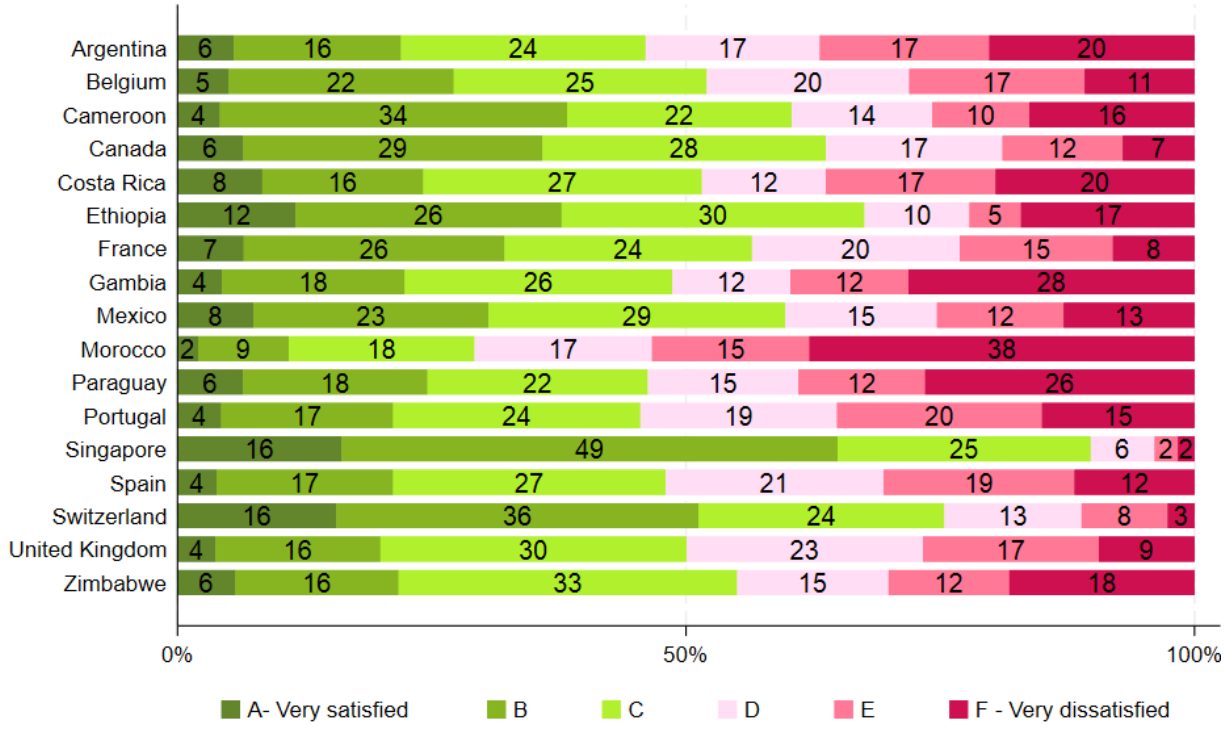
At your educational institution, are you satisfied with the following aspects?

The premises

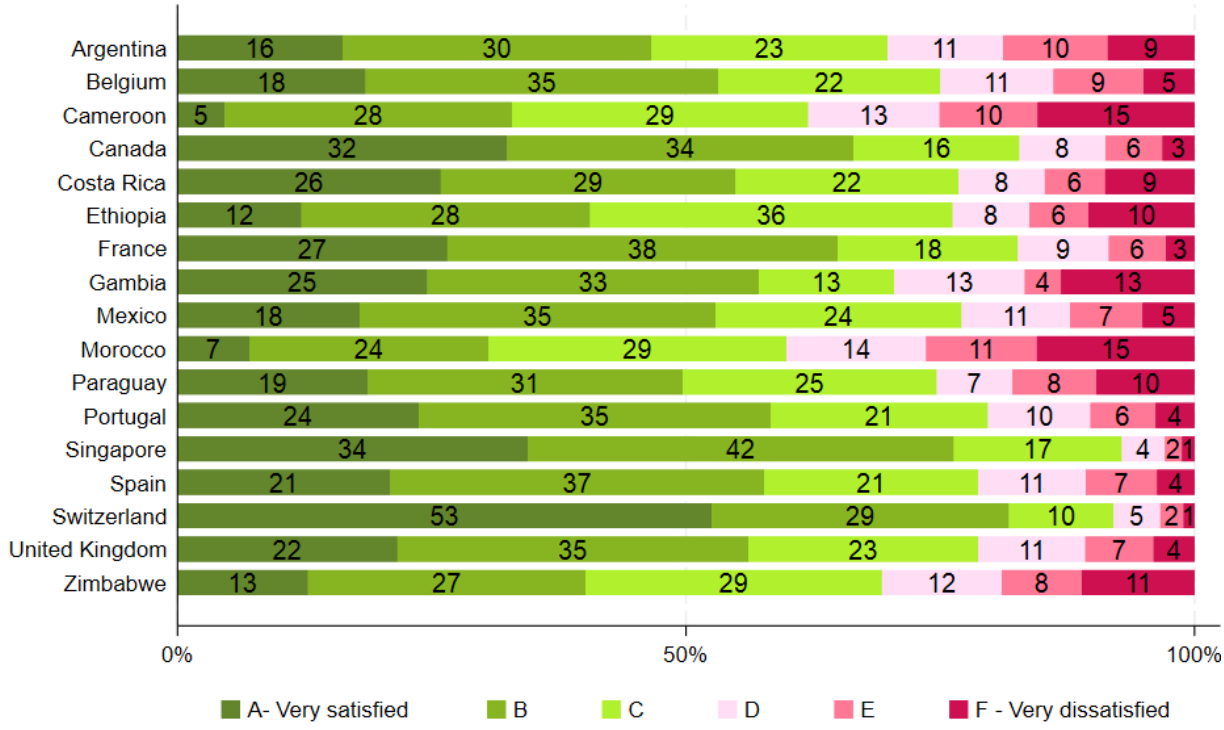


Source: I-BEST 2026, EI/FESP. Field: education personnel

Material conditions (workspaces, pedagogical material, Internet access...)

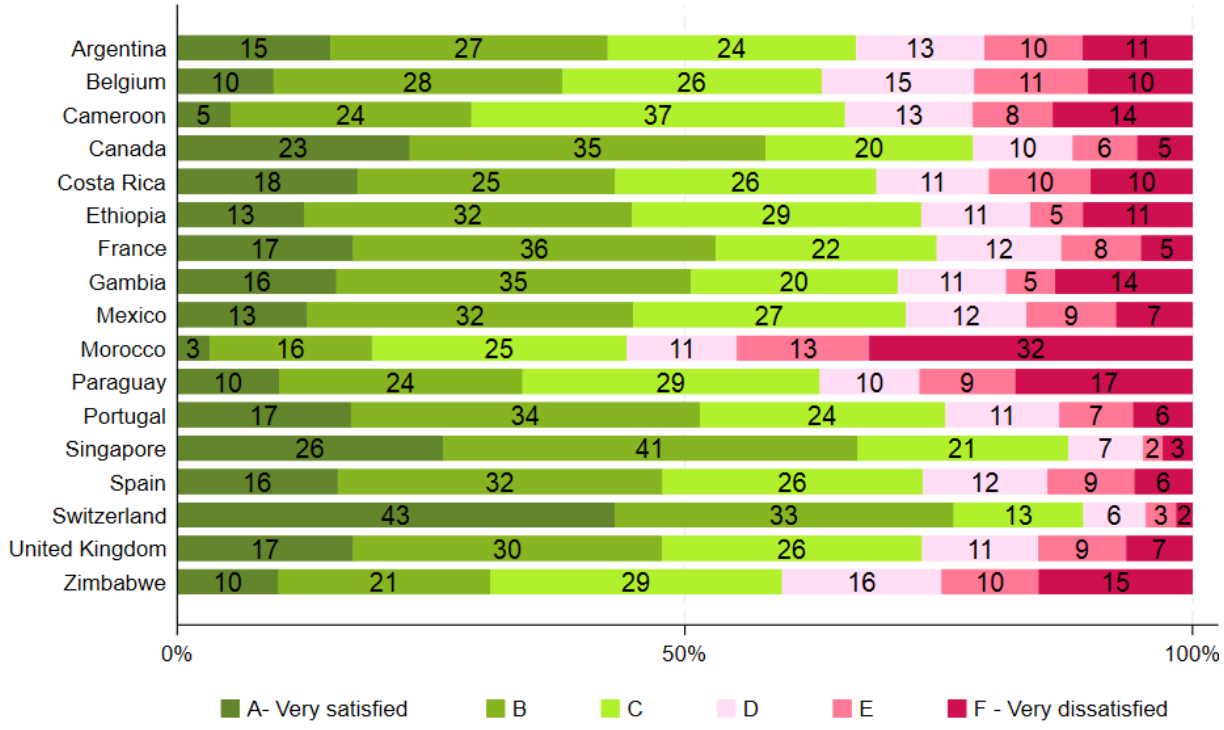


Amenities (electricity, drinking water...)

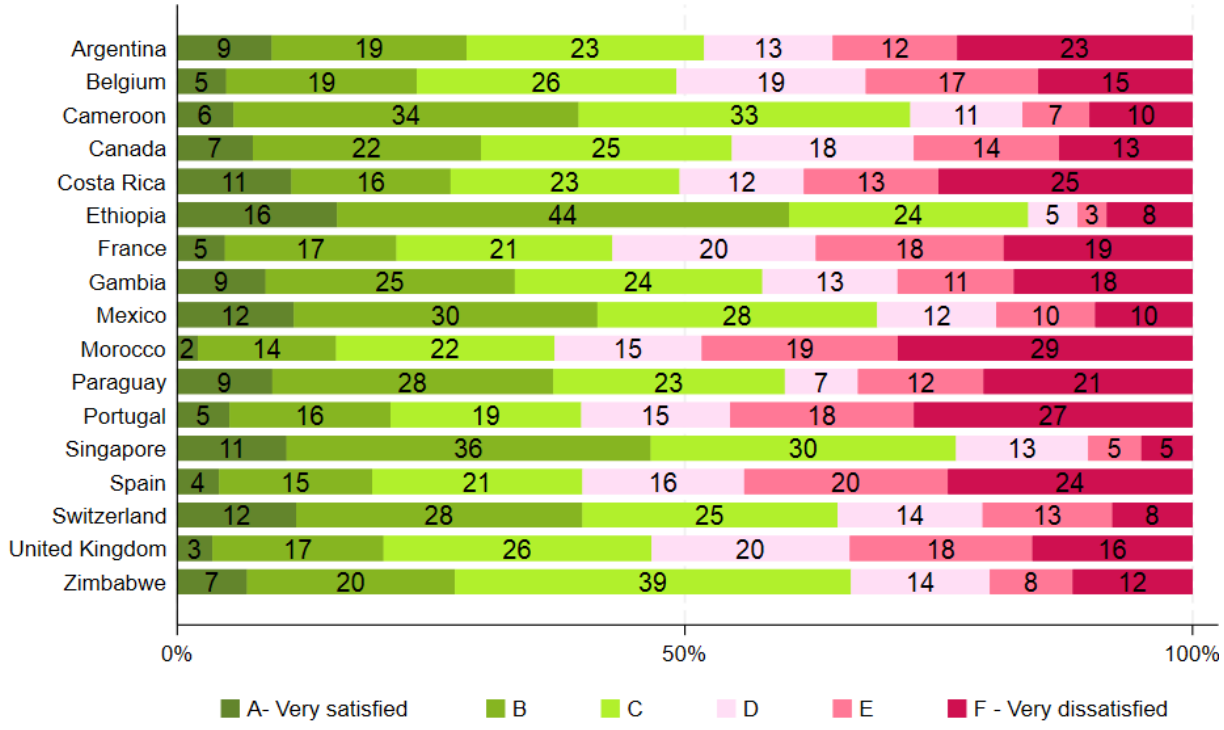


Source: I-BEST 2026, EI/FESP. Field: education personnel

Sanitation (toilets, sewage, waste management…)

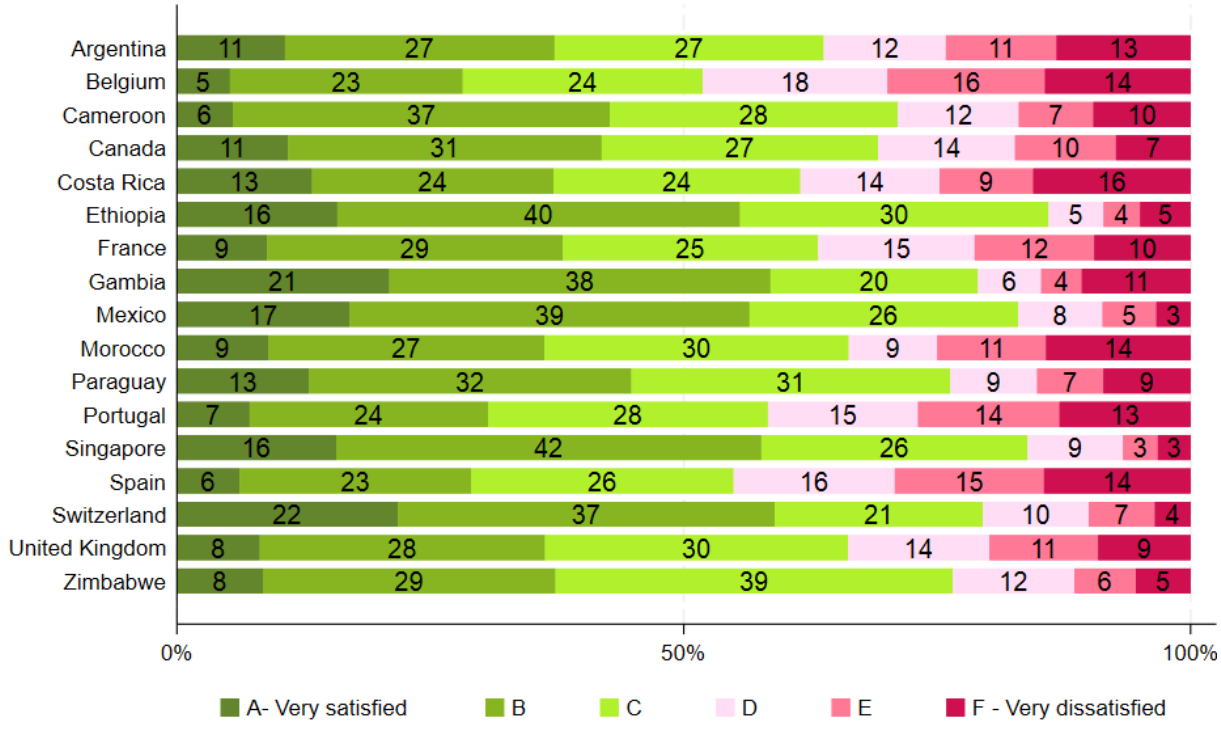


Temperature levels in your workspace

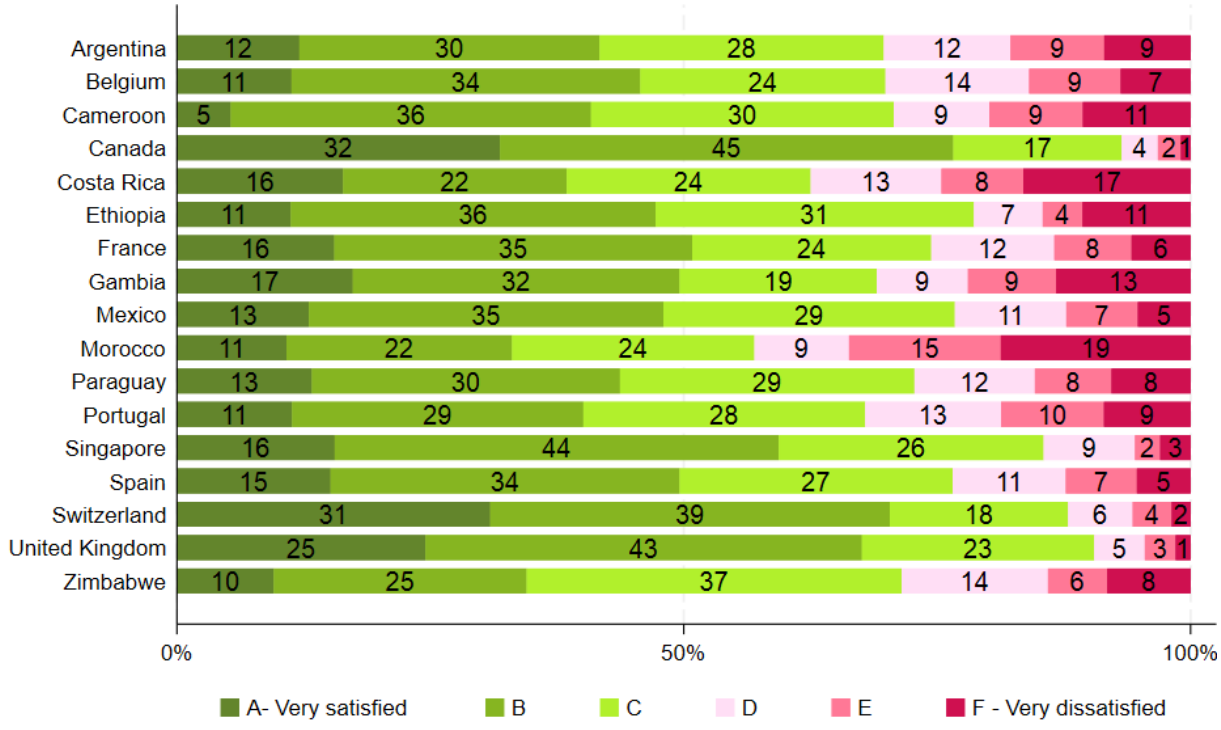


Source: I-BEST 2026, EI/FESP. Field: education personnel

Noise levels inside the buildings

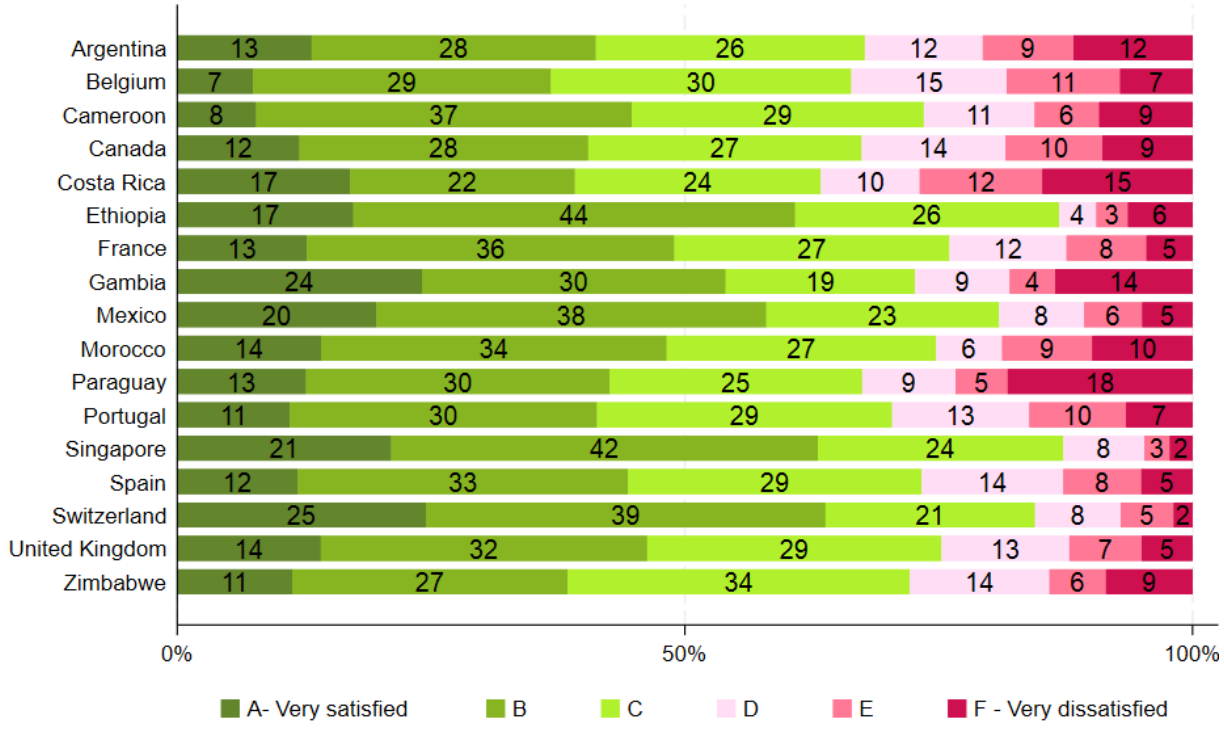


Noise levels outside the buildings

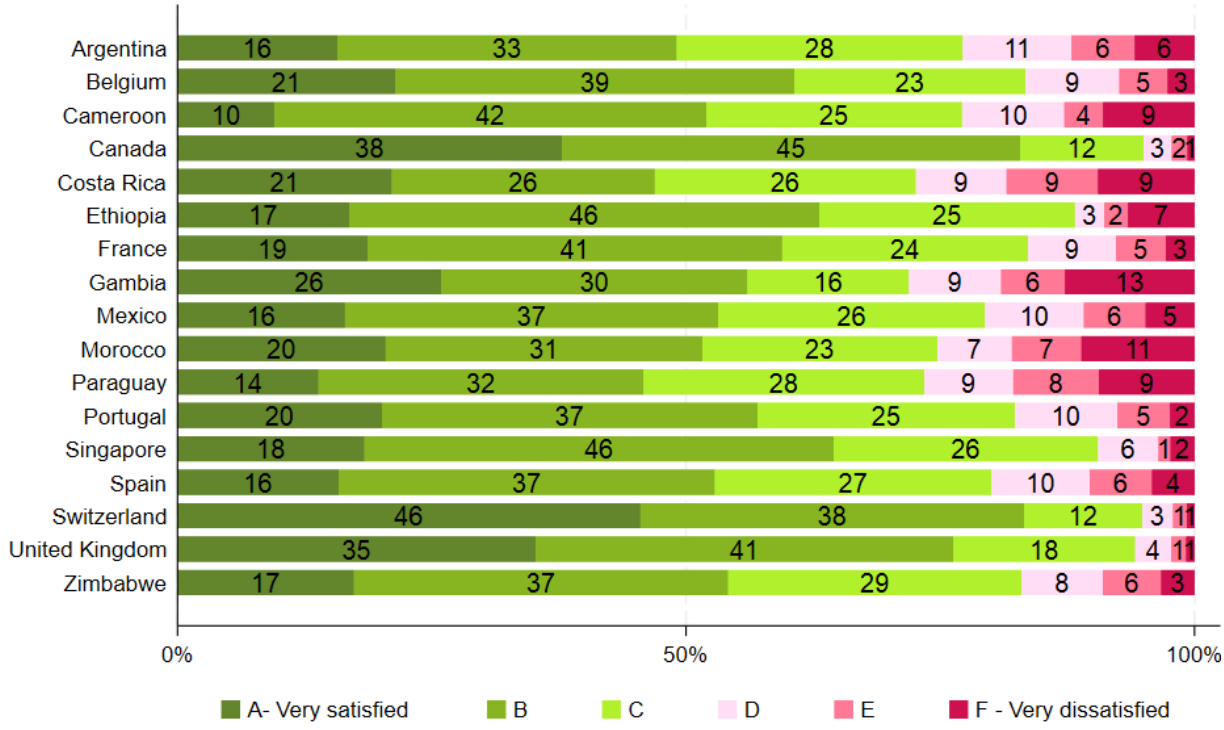


Source: I-BEST 2026, EI/FESP. Field: education personnel

Indoor air quality



Outdoor air quality

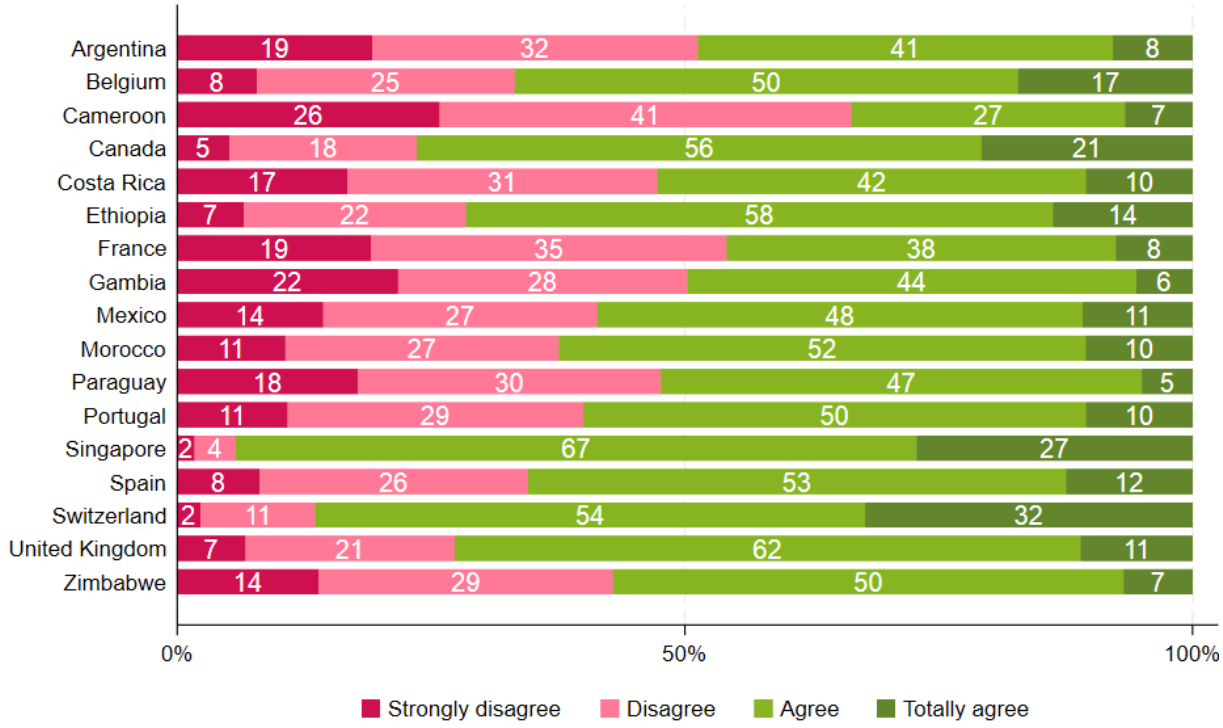


Source: I-BEST 2026, EI/FESP. Field: education personnel

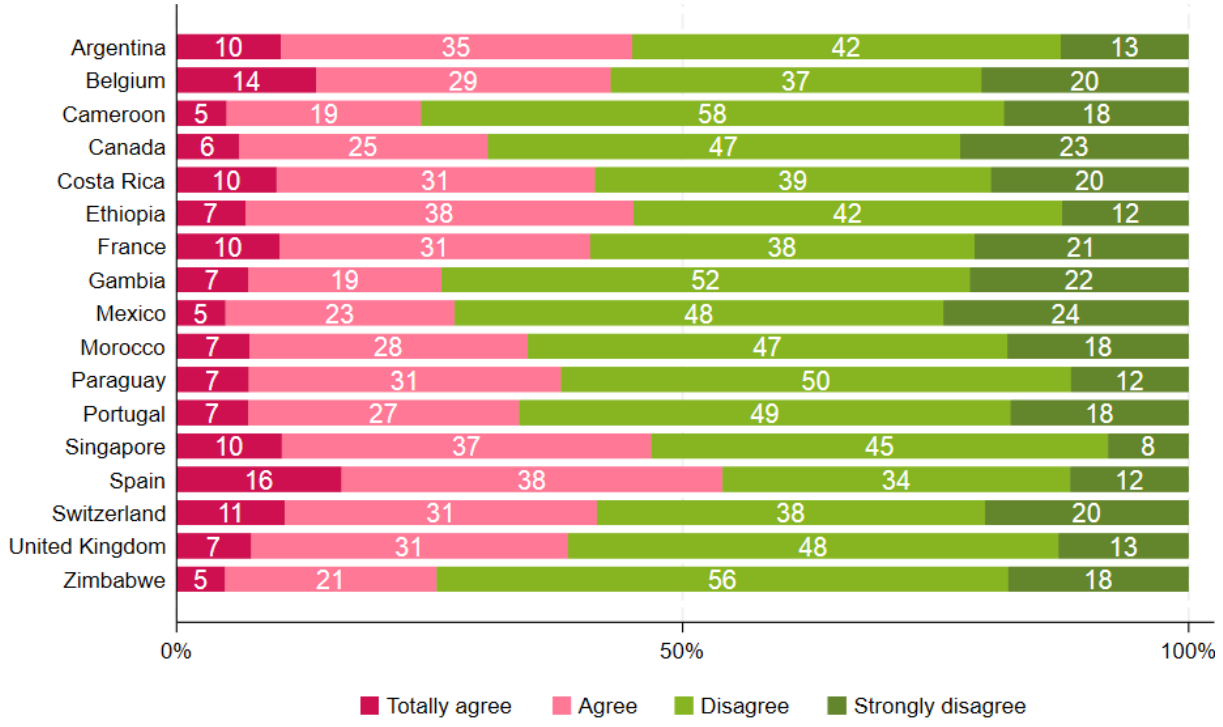
II.5. Digital tools

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

The use of digital technology in my work is supported by my employer

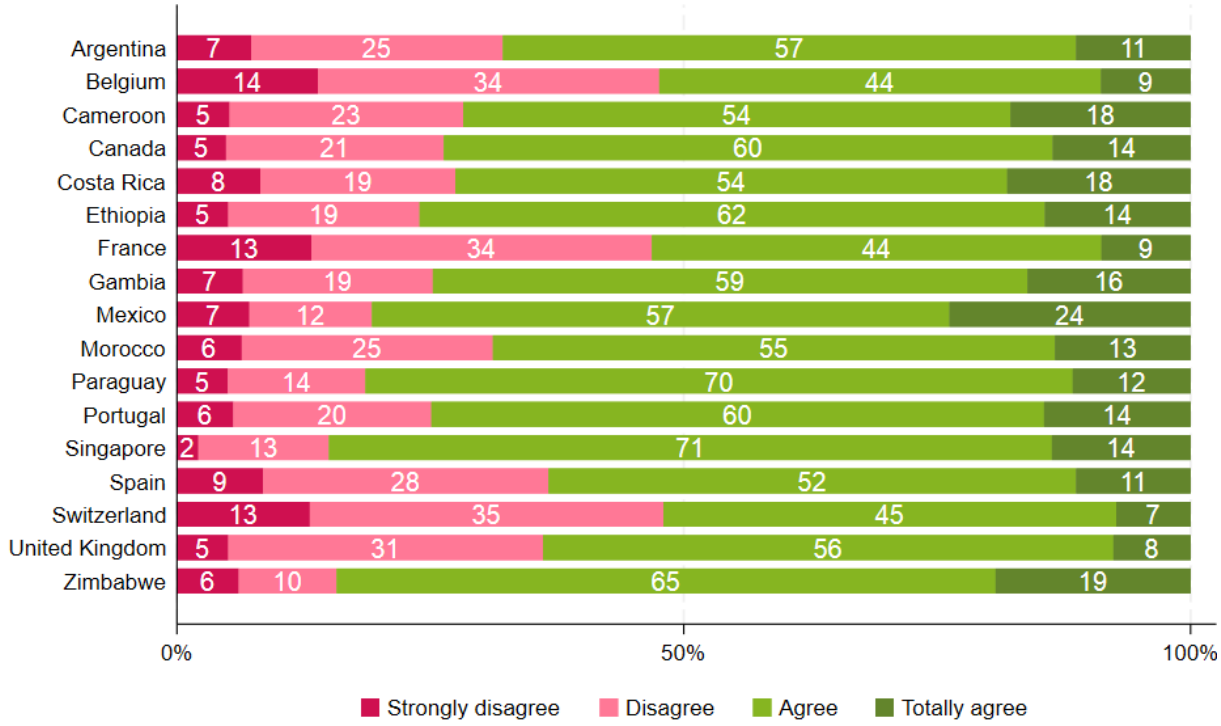


Using digital tools in my work is stressful for me



Source: I-BEST 2026, EI/FESP. Field: education personnel

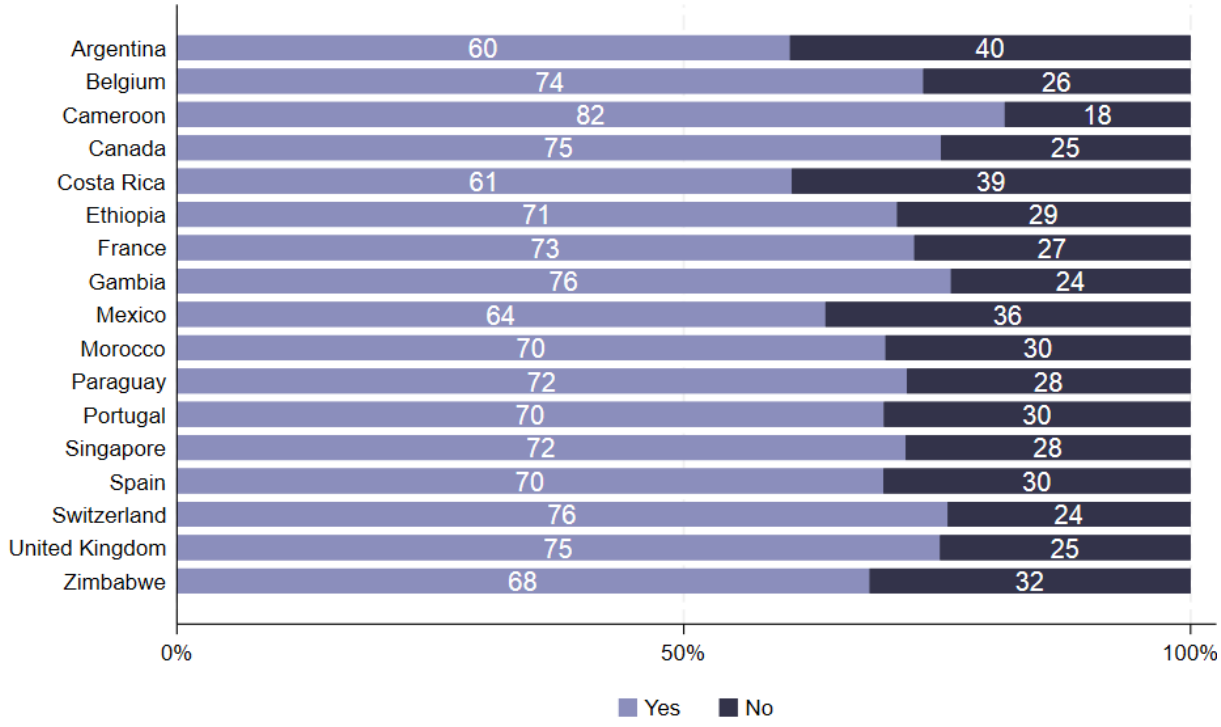
Digital tools have helped me improve my relationships with students/families



II.6. Work/life interface

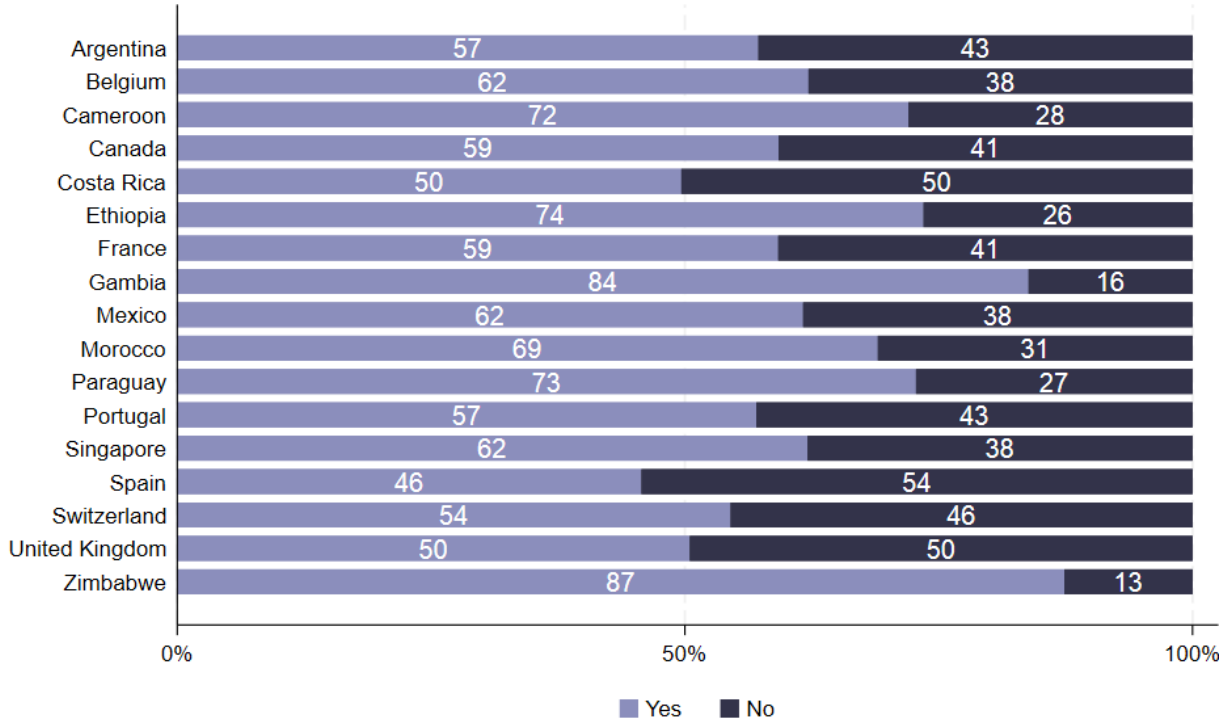
In your household, you live...

With a partner?

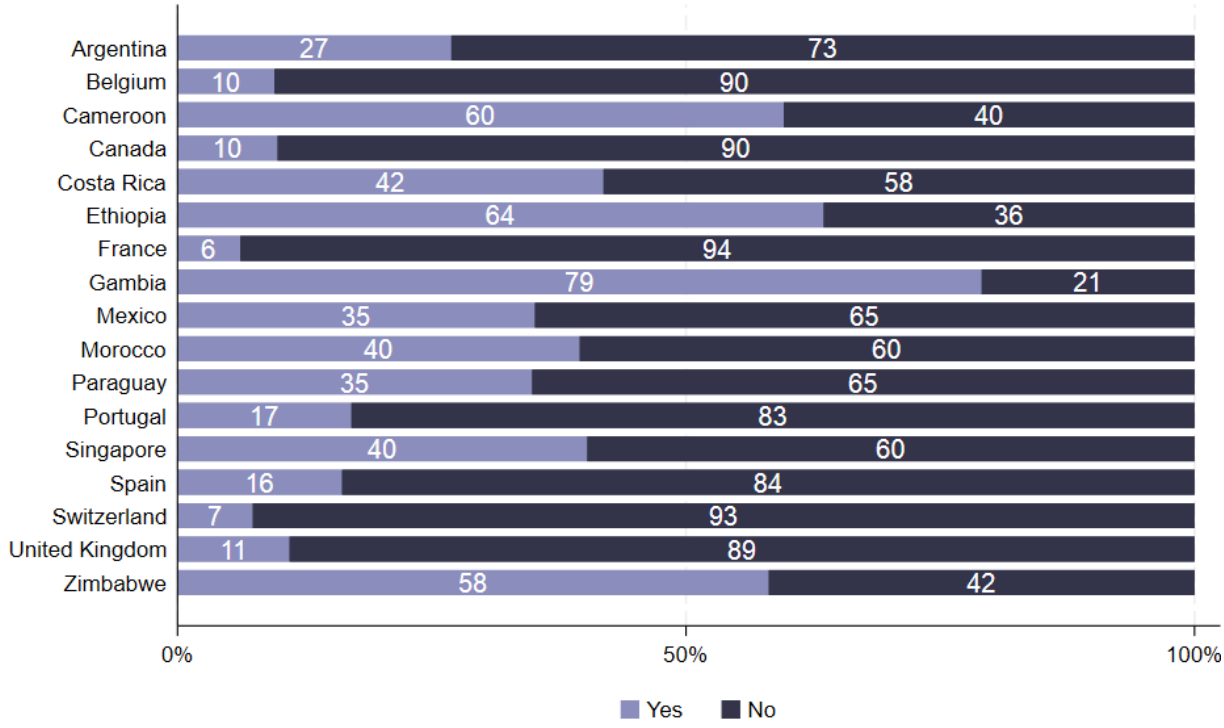


Source: I-BEST 2026, EI/FESP. Field: education personnel

With children?

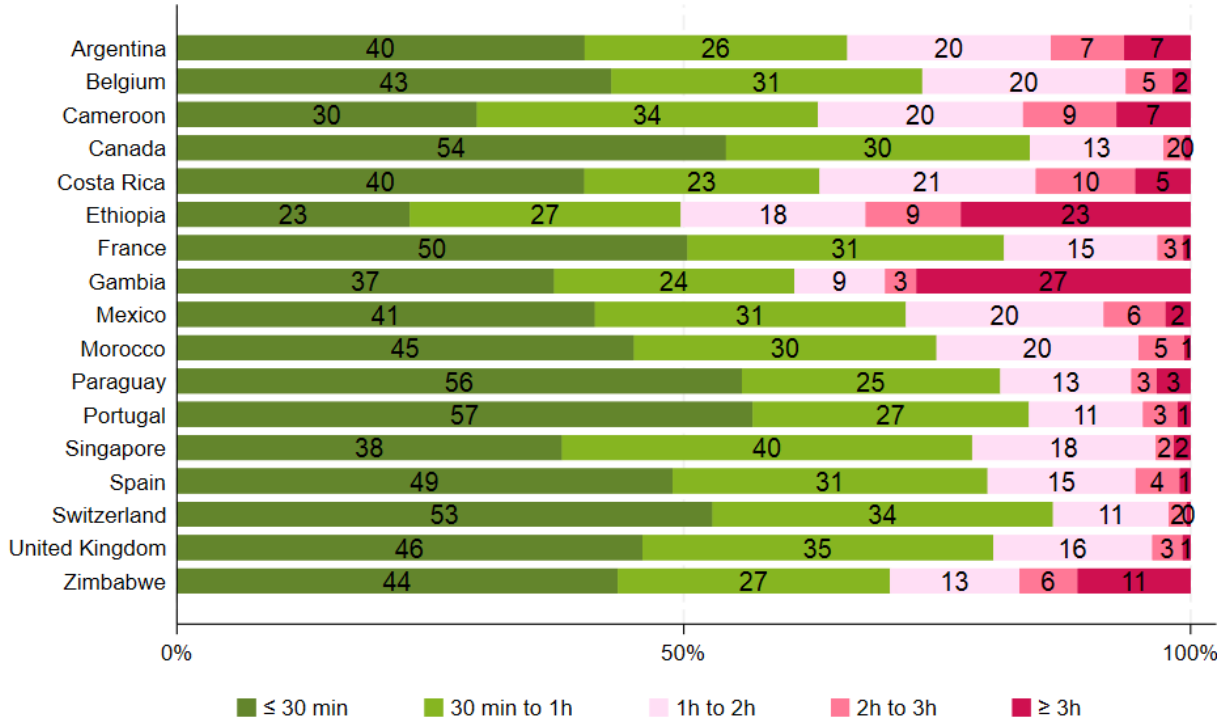


With other people (parents, relatives, friends, flat mates...)?

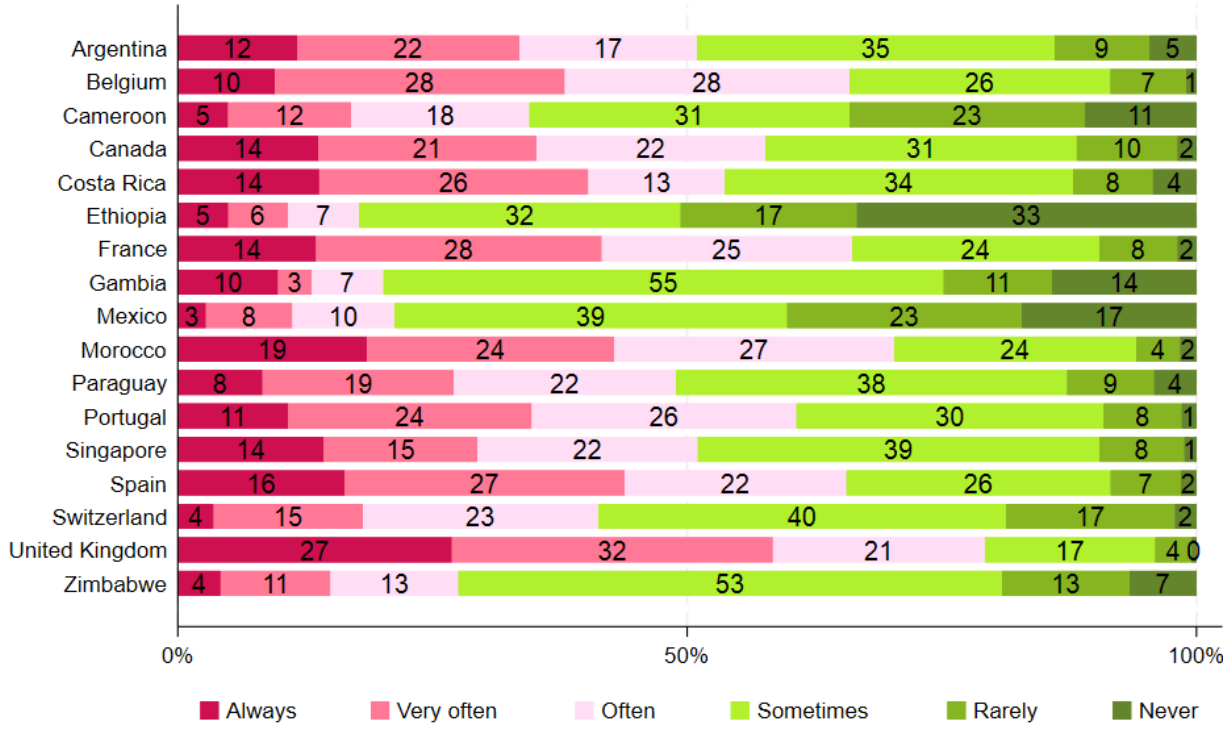


Source: I-BEST 2026, EI/FESP. Field: education personnel

Average time spent each day on work-related travel

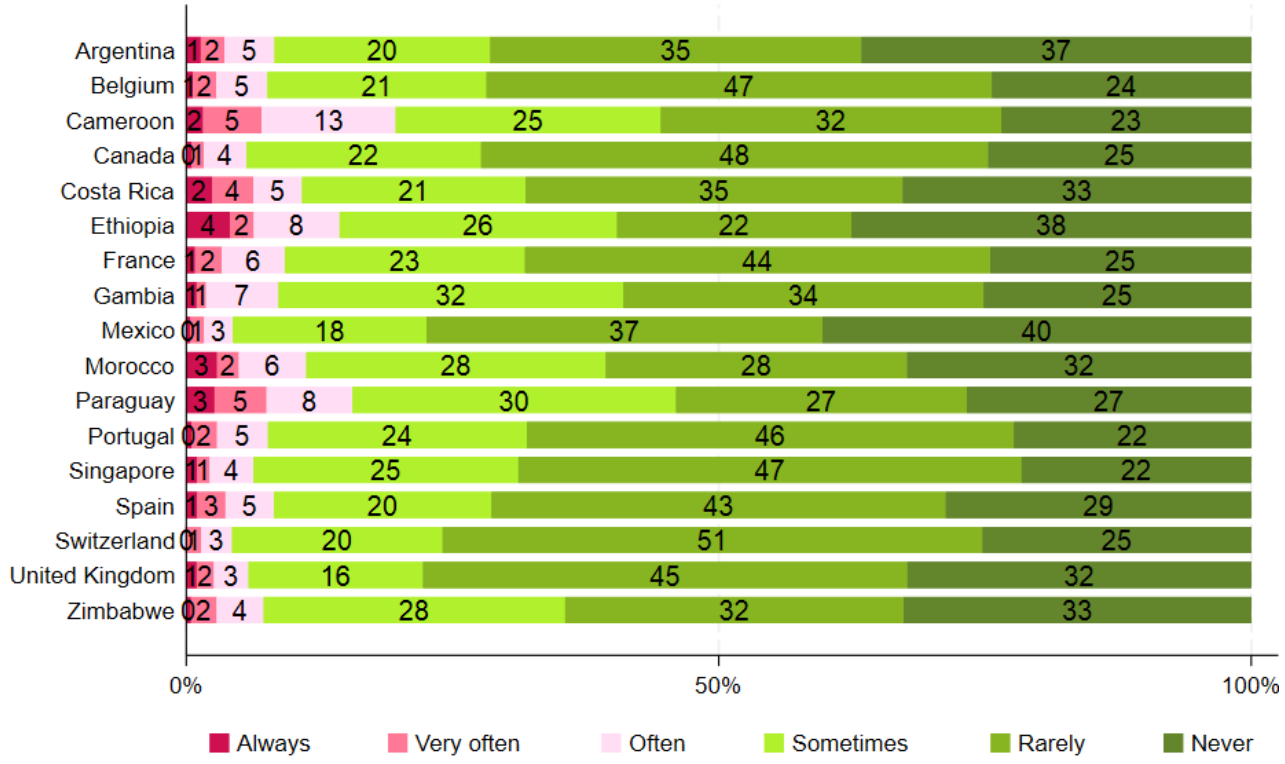


Negative impact of work on private life



Source: I-BEST 2026, EI/FESP. Field: education personnel

Negative impact of private life on work

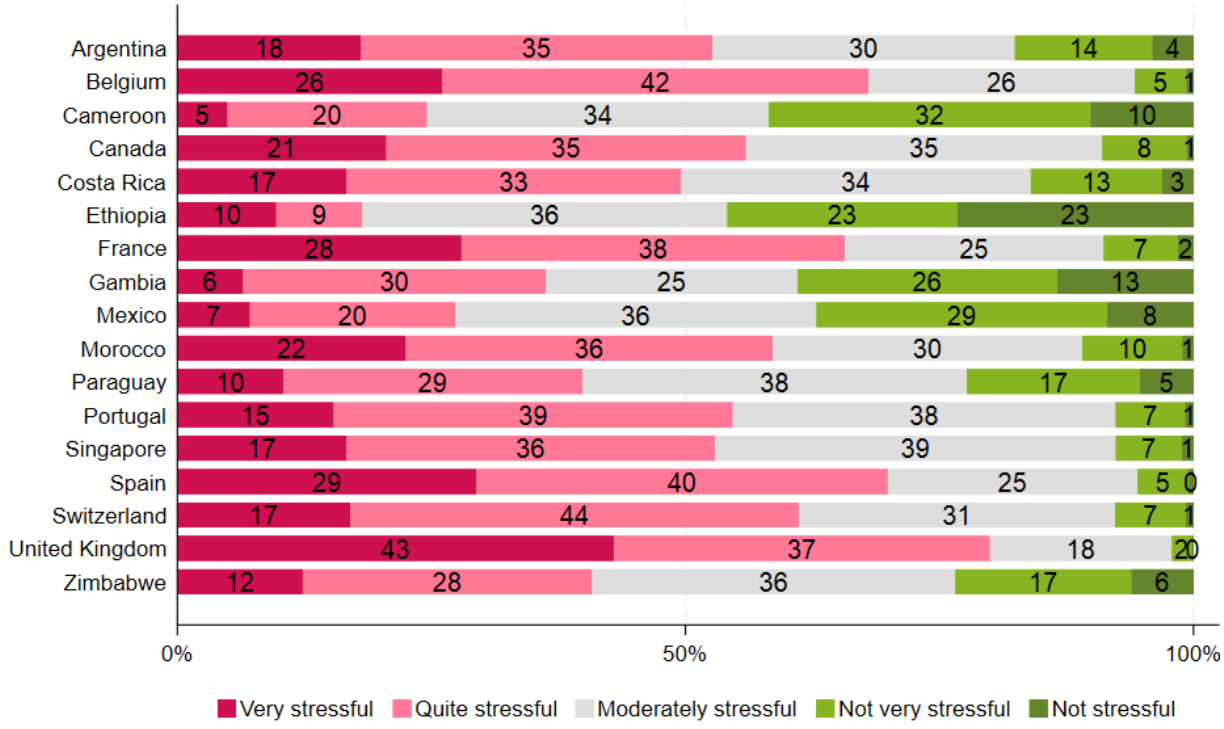


Source: I-BEST 2026, EI/FESP. Field: education personnel

III. Health and well-being

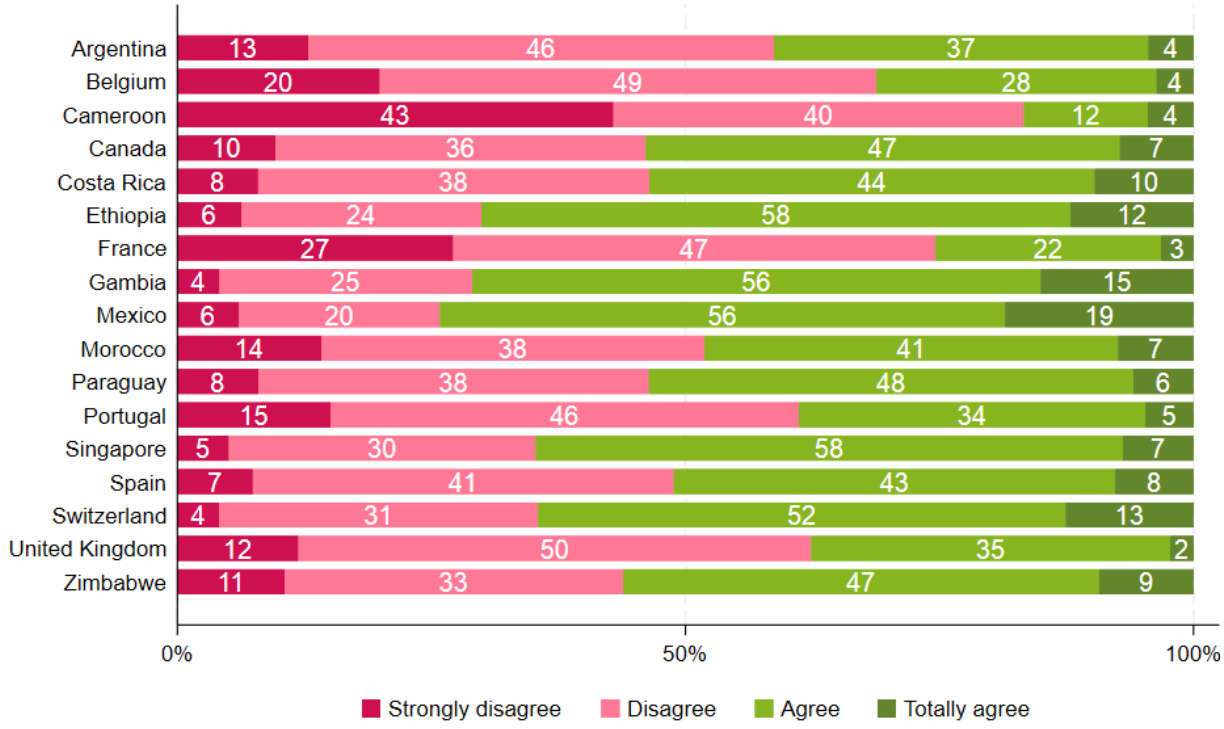
III.1. Health and well-being at work

How stressful has your job been since the start of the school year?



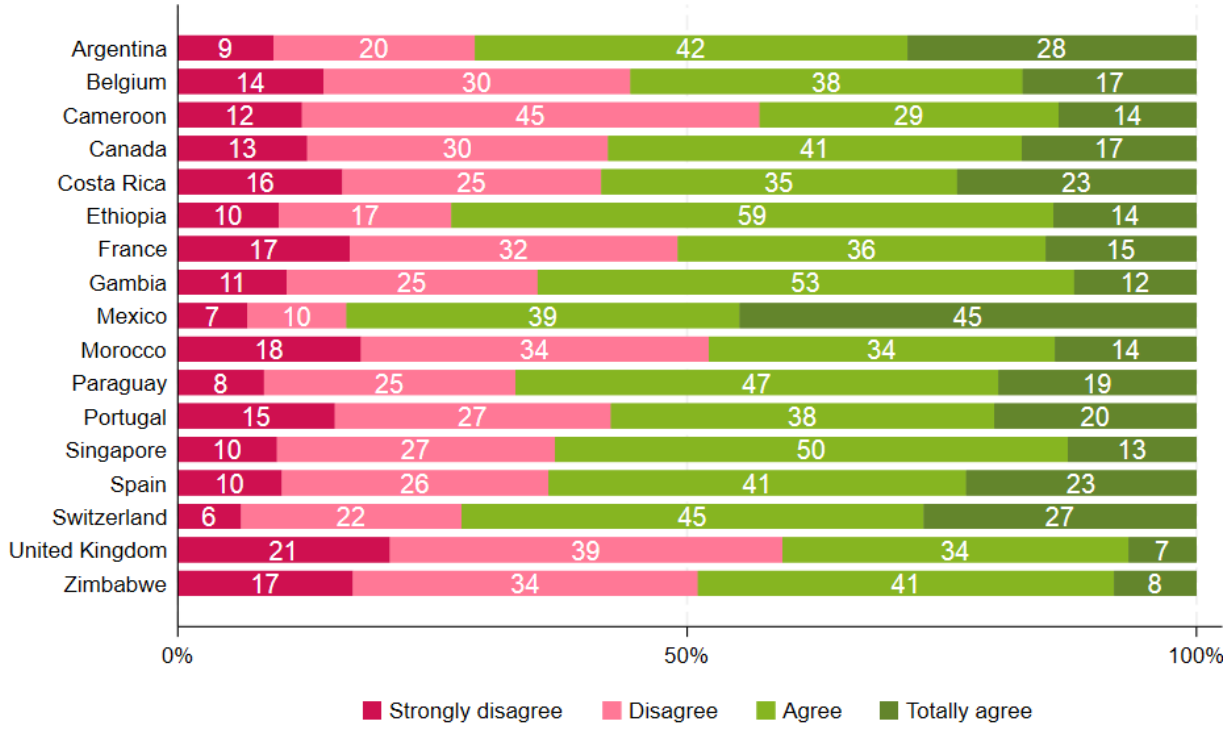
To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

The advantages of my profession far outweigh the disadvantages

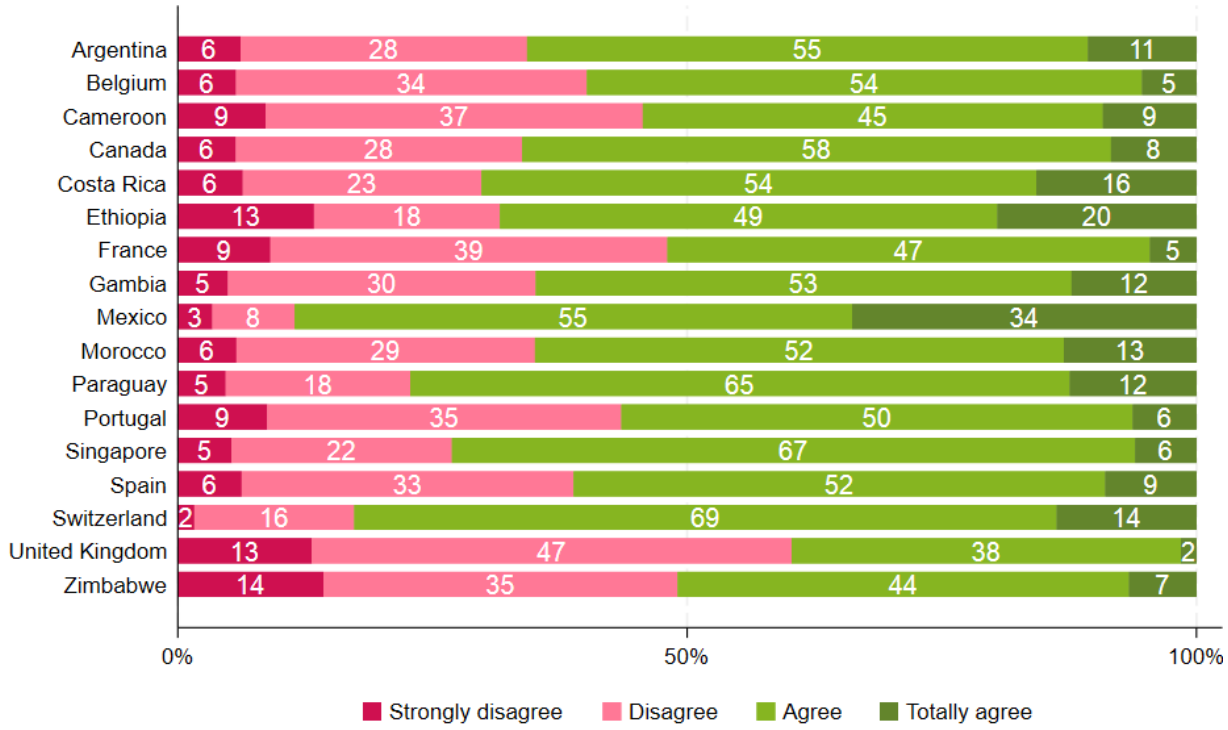


Source: I-BEST 2026, EI/FESP. Field: education personnel

If I had to do it all over again, I would choose my profession once more

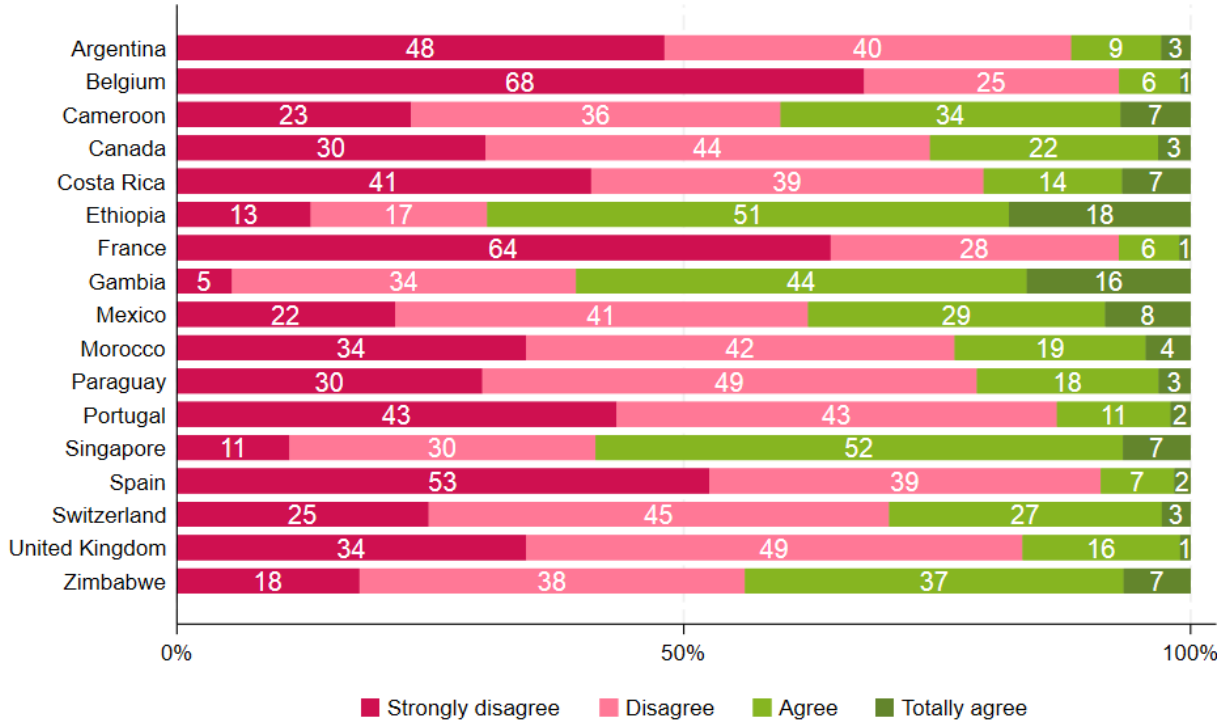


Overall, I am satisfied with my job

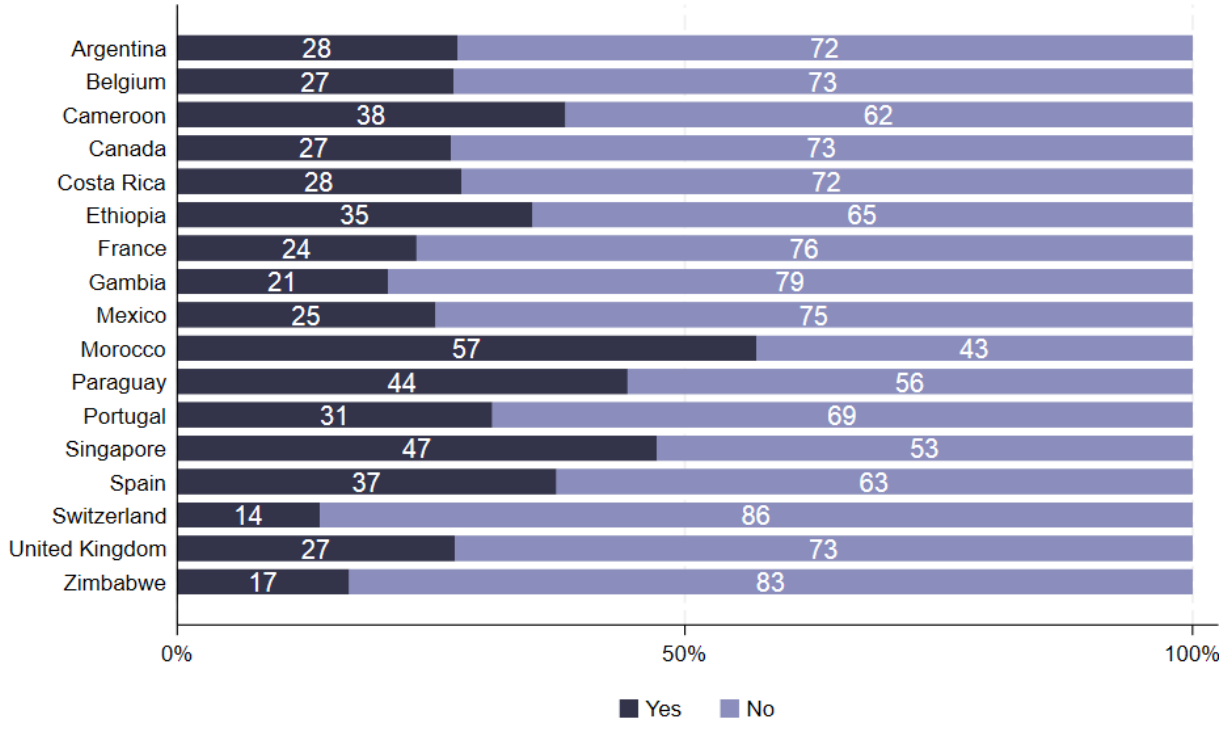


Source: I-BEST 2026, EI/FESP. Field: education personnel

I feel that society values my profession



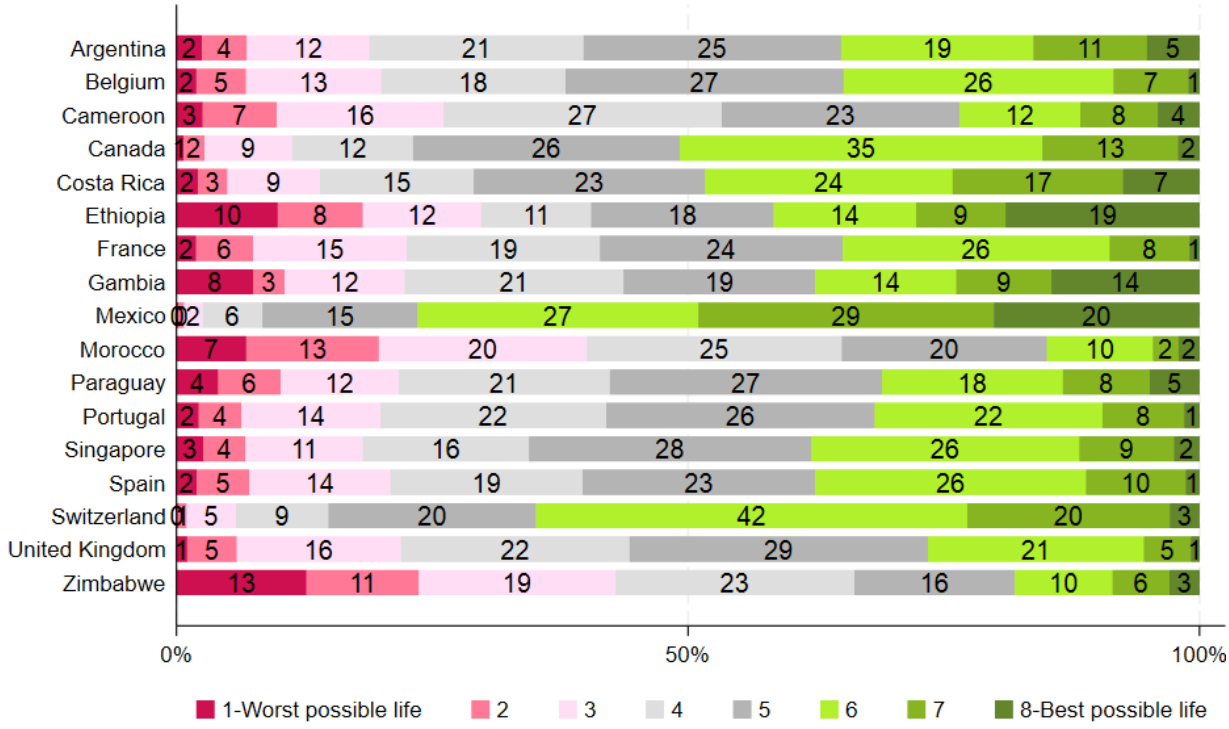
In the last 12 months, have you been unable to work because of a voice issue?



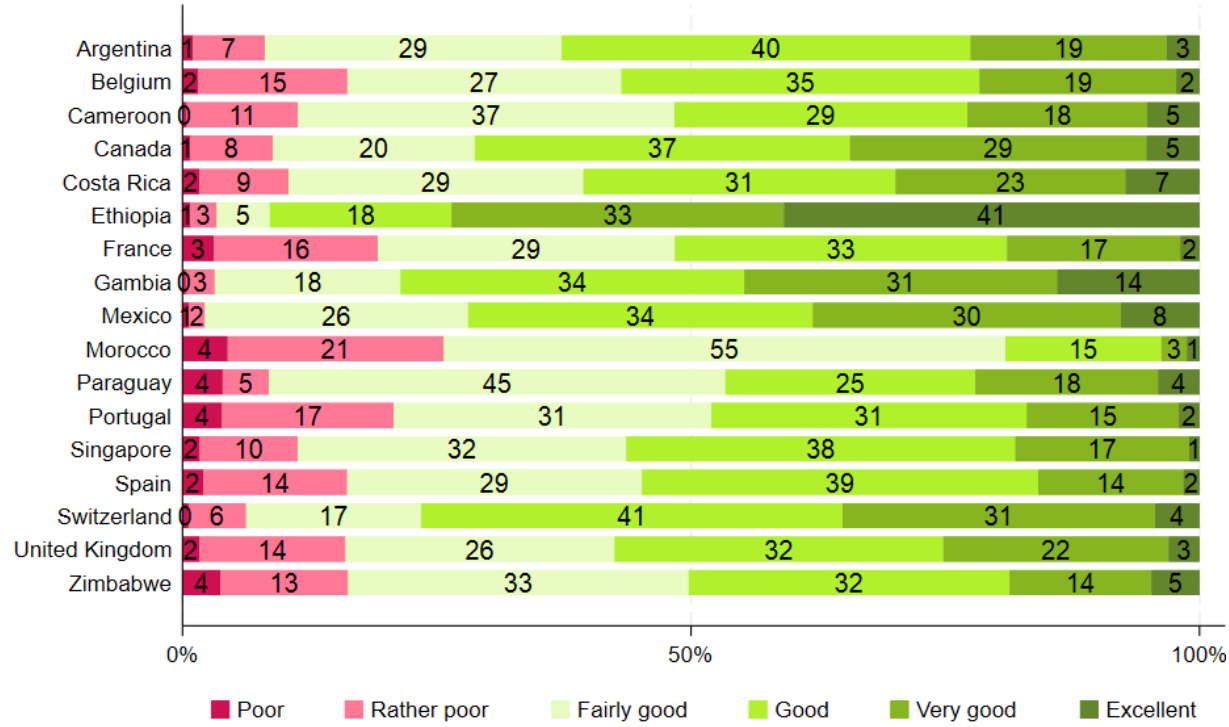
Source: I-BEST 2026, EI/FESP. Field: education personnel

III.2. Overall health and well-being

Quality of life: where do you feel you are now on the ladder?

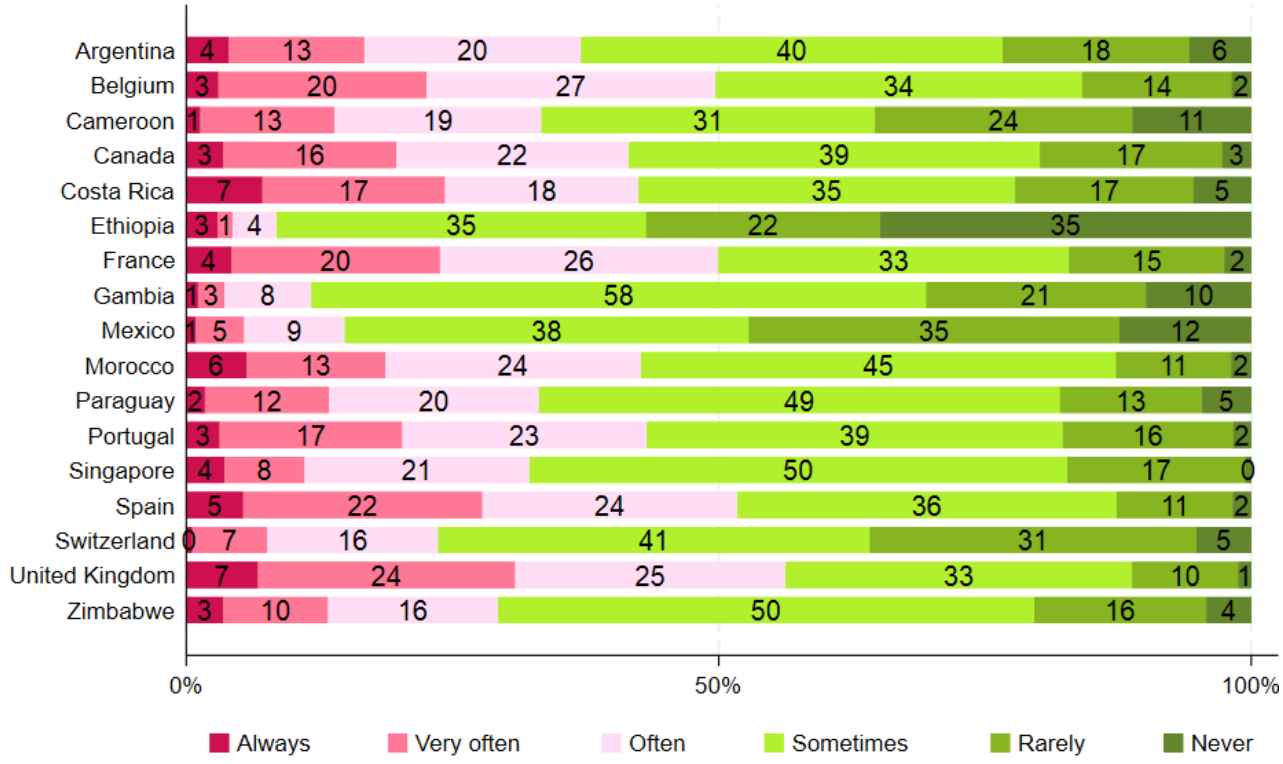


In general, would you say that your health is...

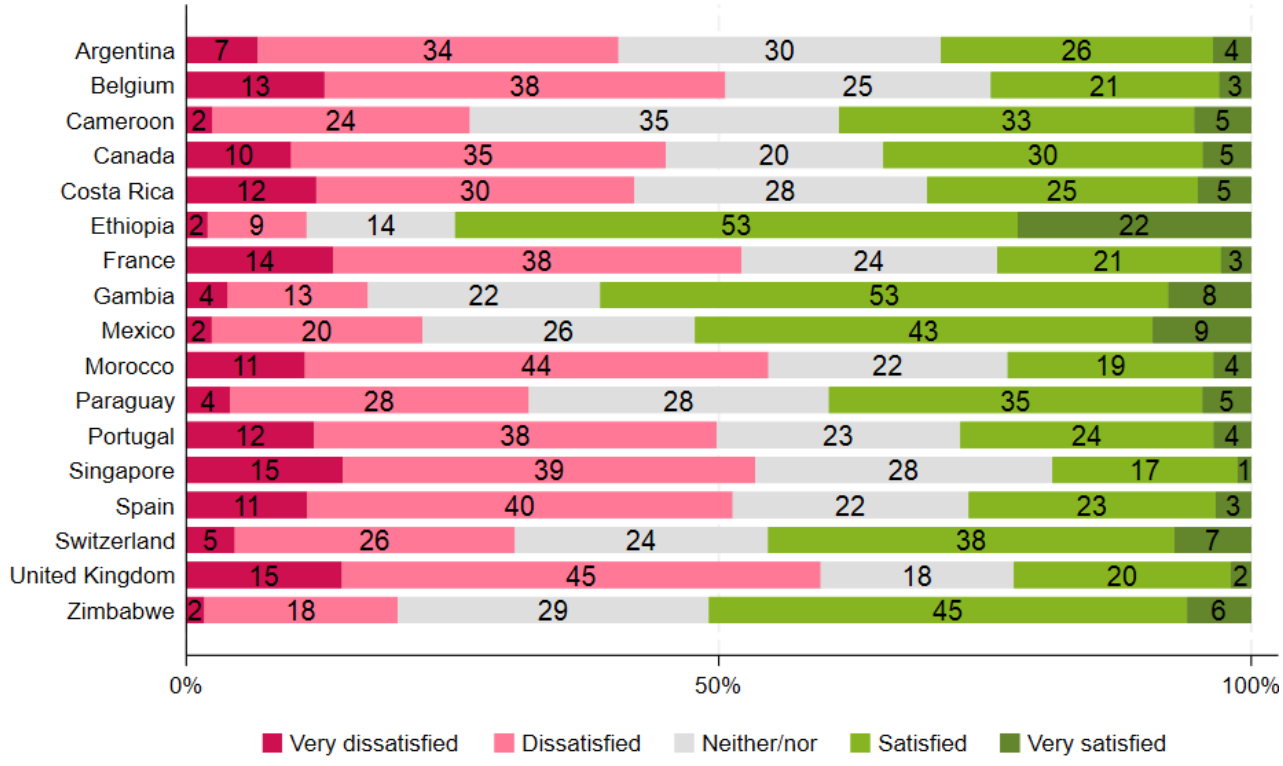


Source: I-BEST 2026, EI/FESP. Field: education personnel

Frequency of negative feelings (anxiety, depression, hopelessness...)

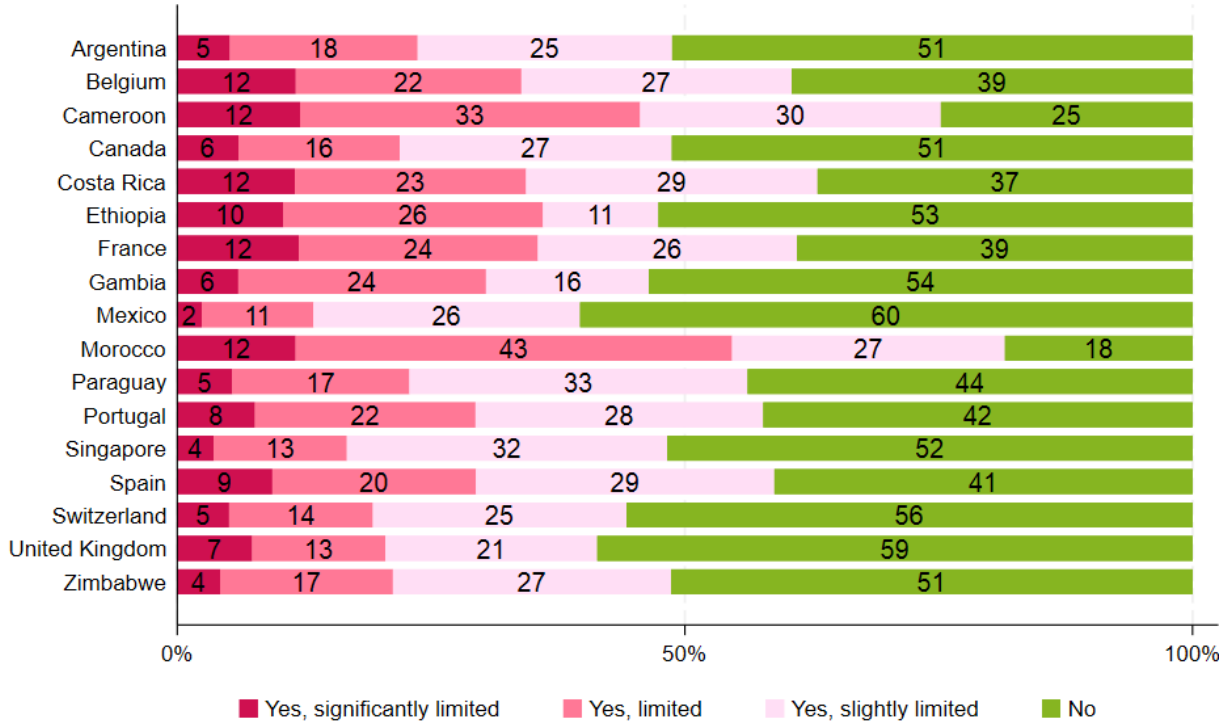


Satisfaction with sleep

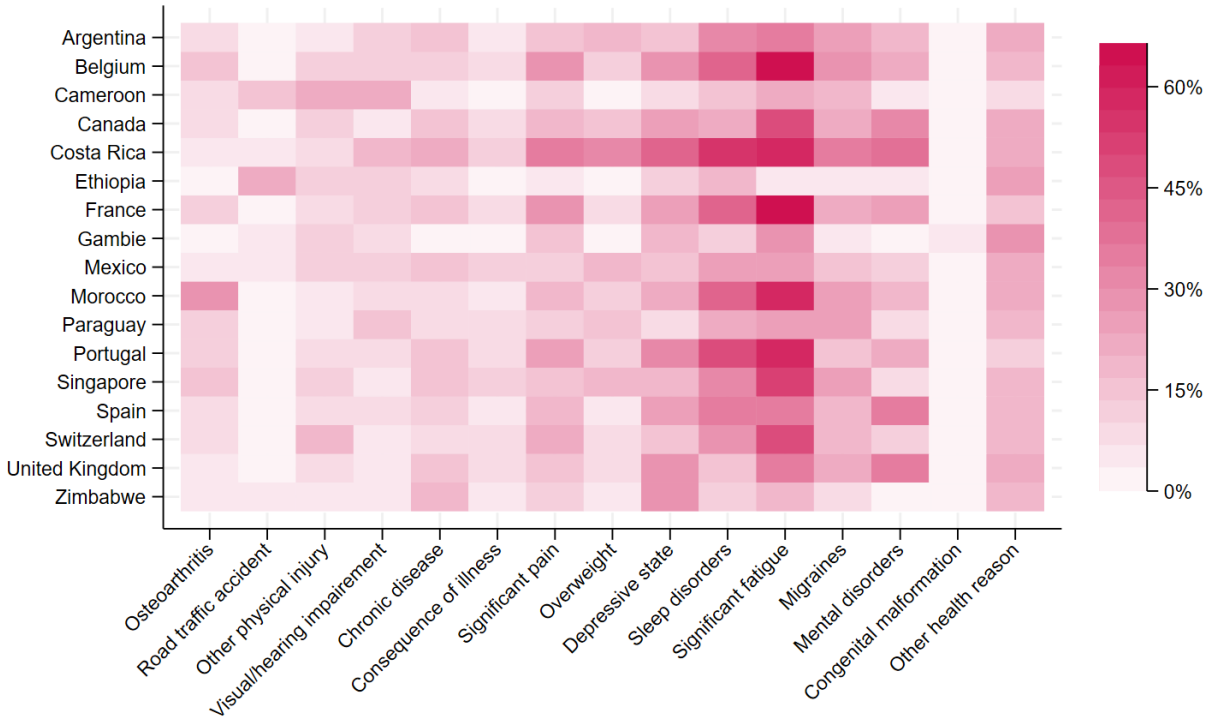


Source: I-BEST 2026, EI/FESP. Field: education personnel

Limitation in everyday activities due to a health problem (past 6 months)



If yes, for what reason(s)?



**Percentages calculated among the sample of respondents who reported a limitation*

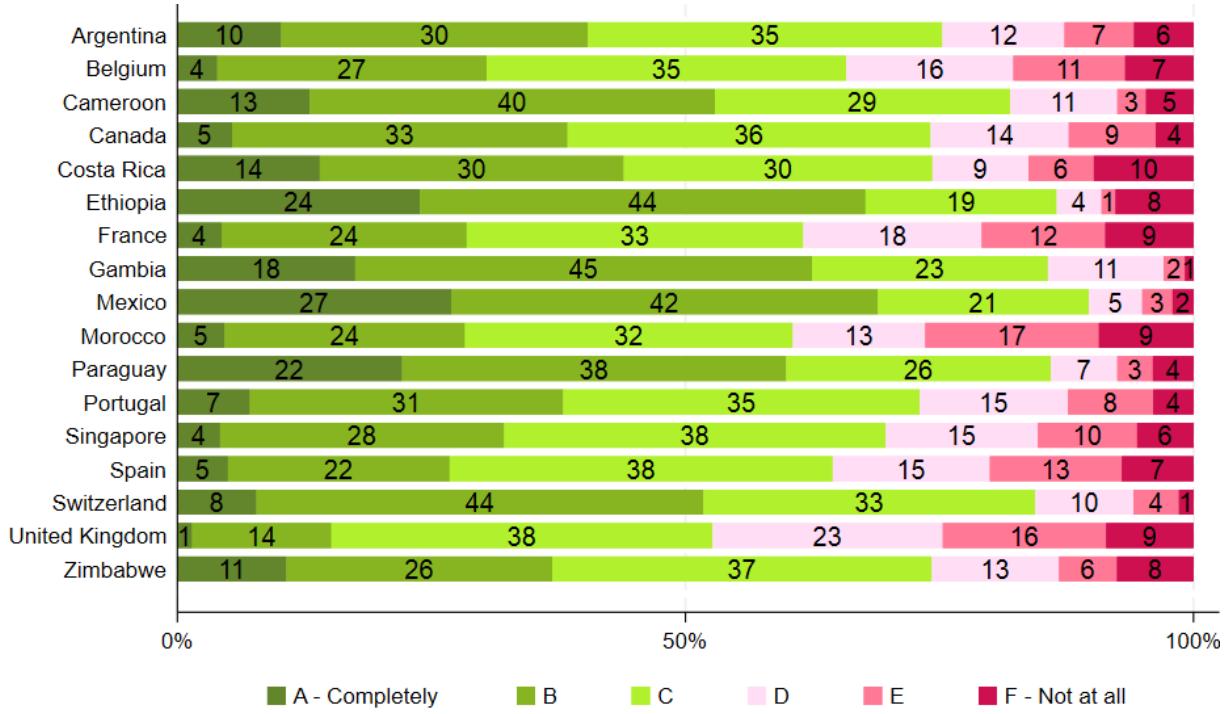
Source: I-BEST 2026, EI/FESP. Field: education personnel

IV. 2026 focus: psychological well-being

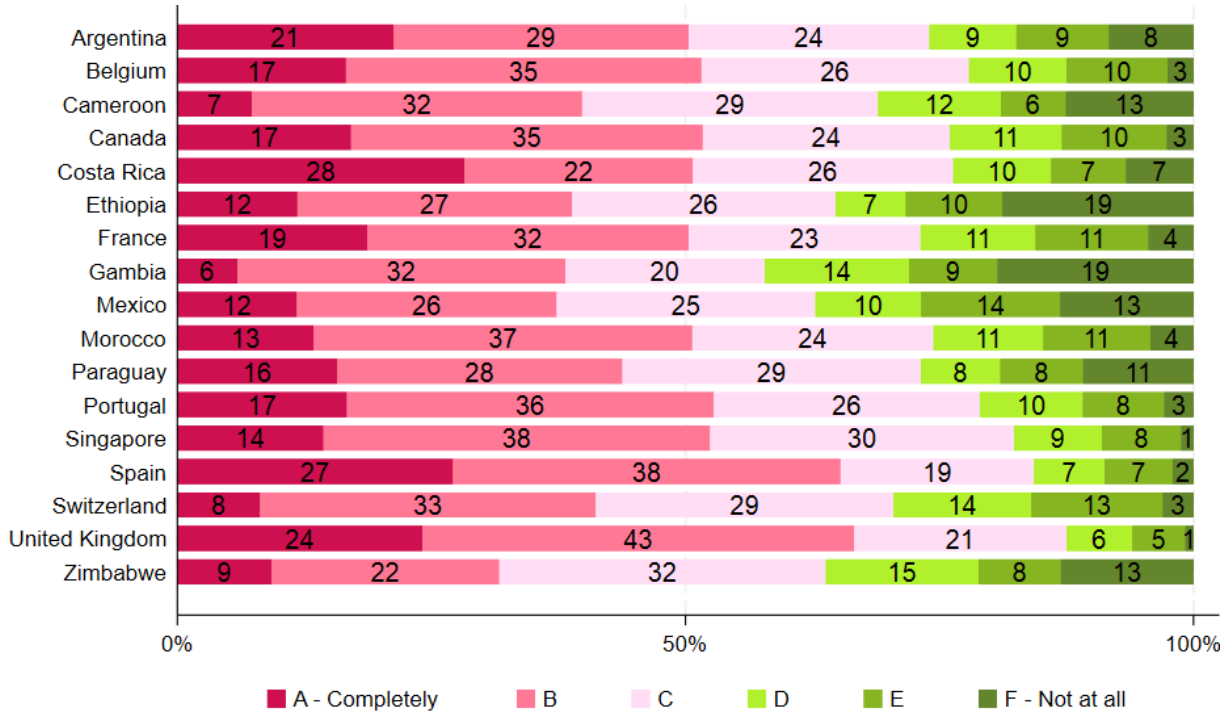
IV.1 Psychological well-being at work

Last week, to what extent did you feel…?

Happy at work



Stressed at work

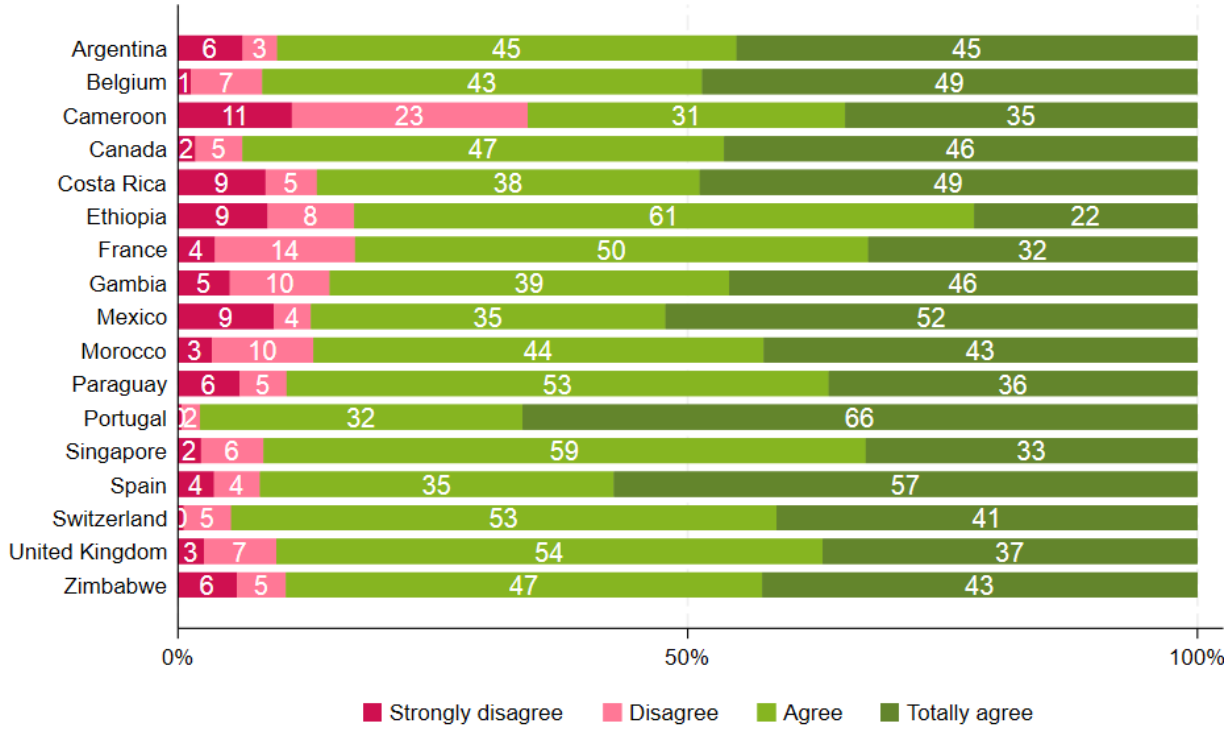


Source: I-BEST 2026, EI/FESP. Field: education personnel

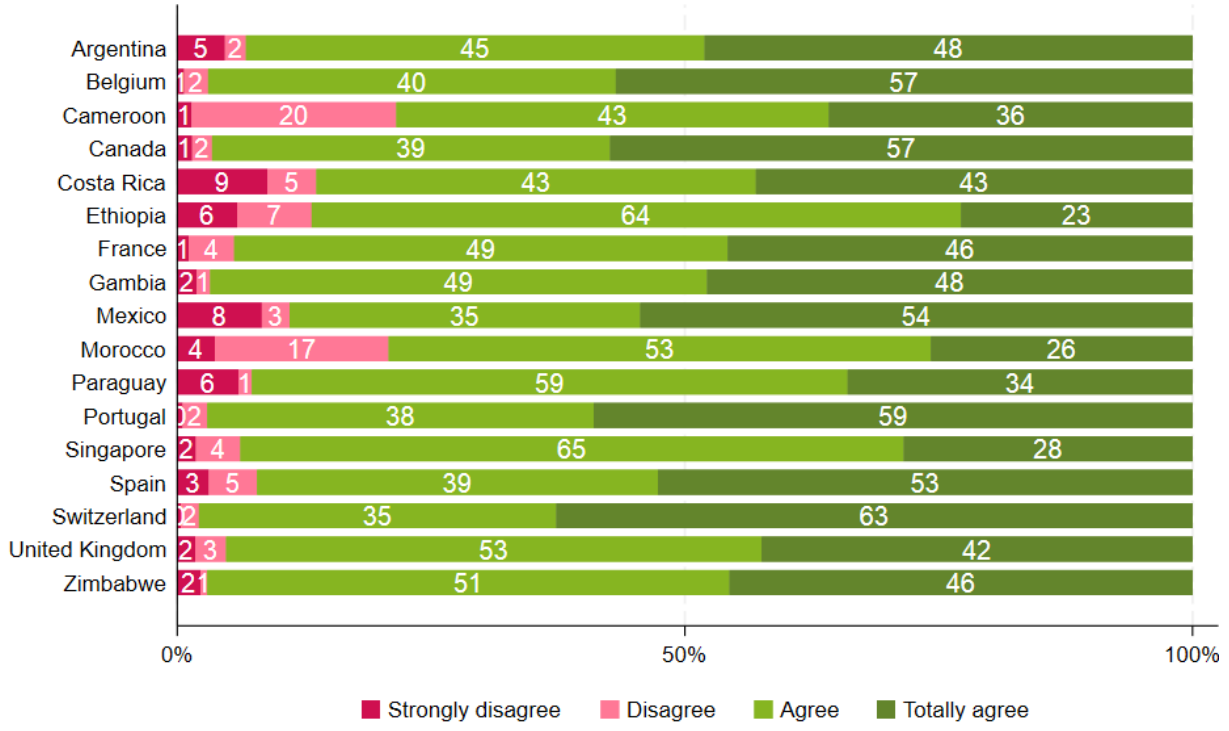
IV.2 Positive aspects of work

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

My work has an influence on future generations

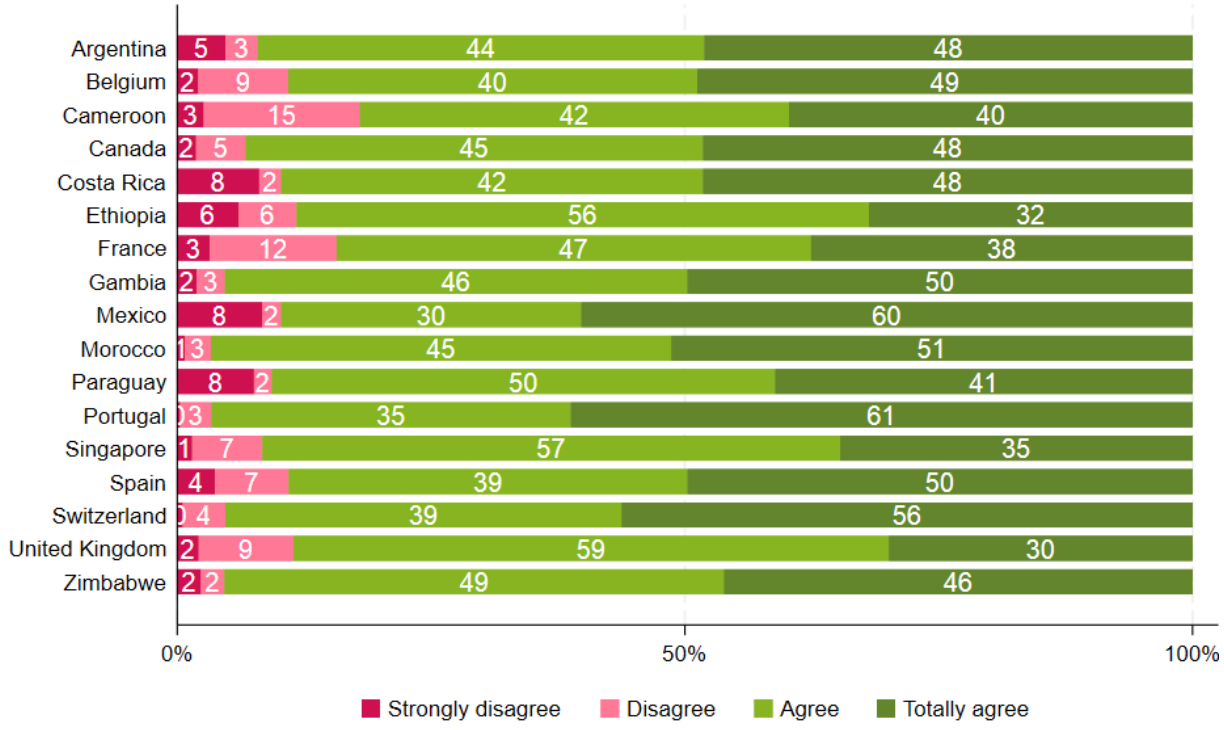


I like working with children/adolescents

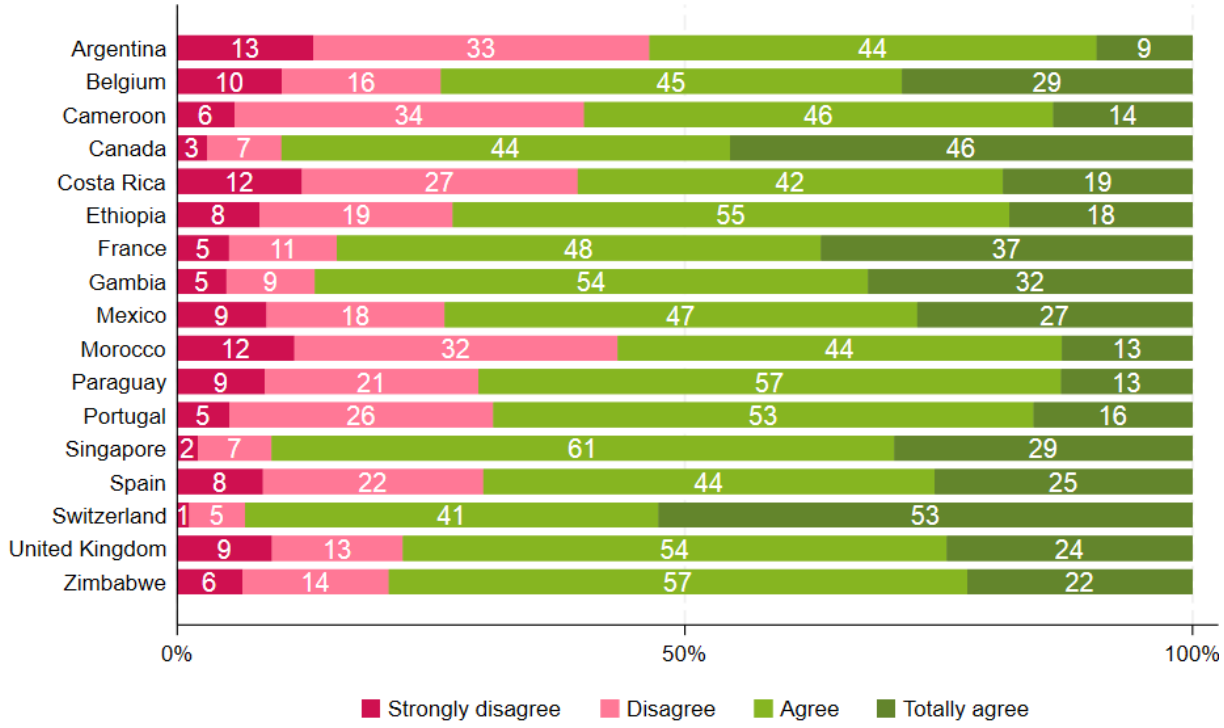


Source: I-BEST 2026, EI/FESP. Field: education personnel

My work is purposeful and meaningful

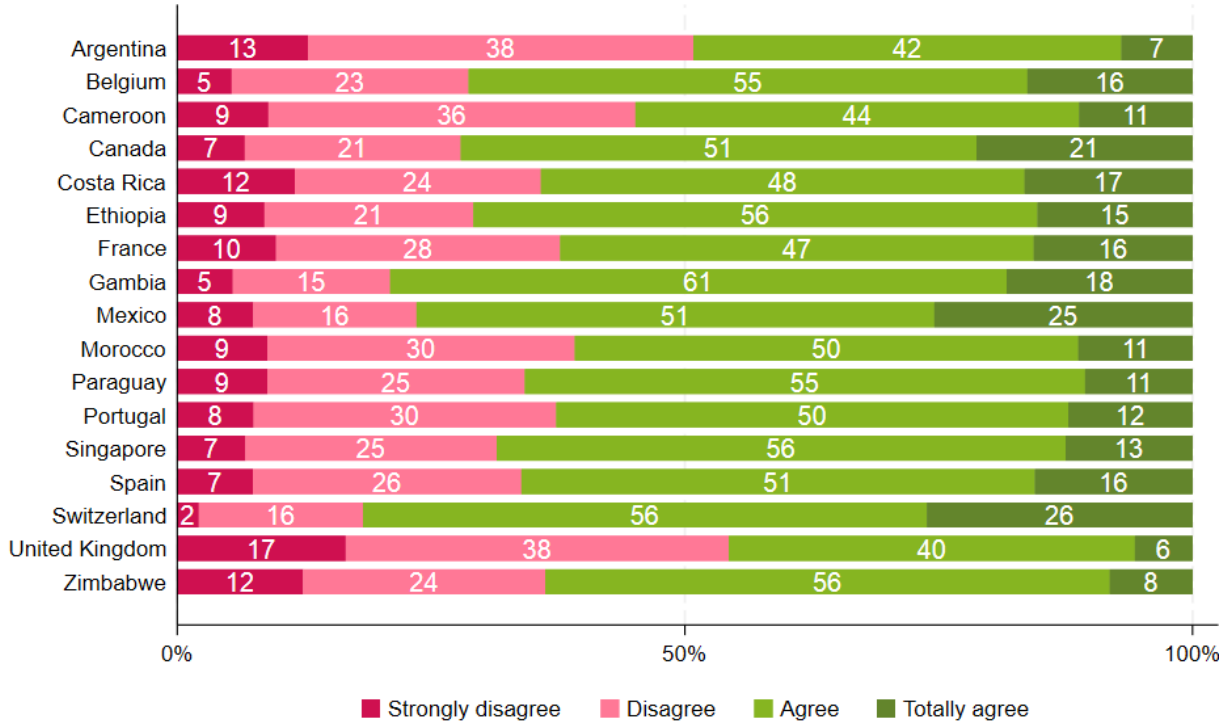


My work provides a good security of employment



Source: I-BEST 2026, EI/FESP. Field: education personnel

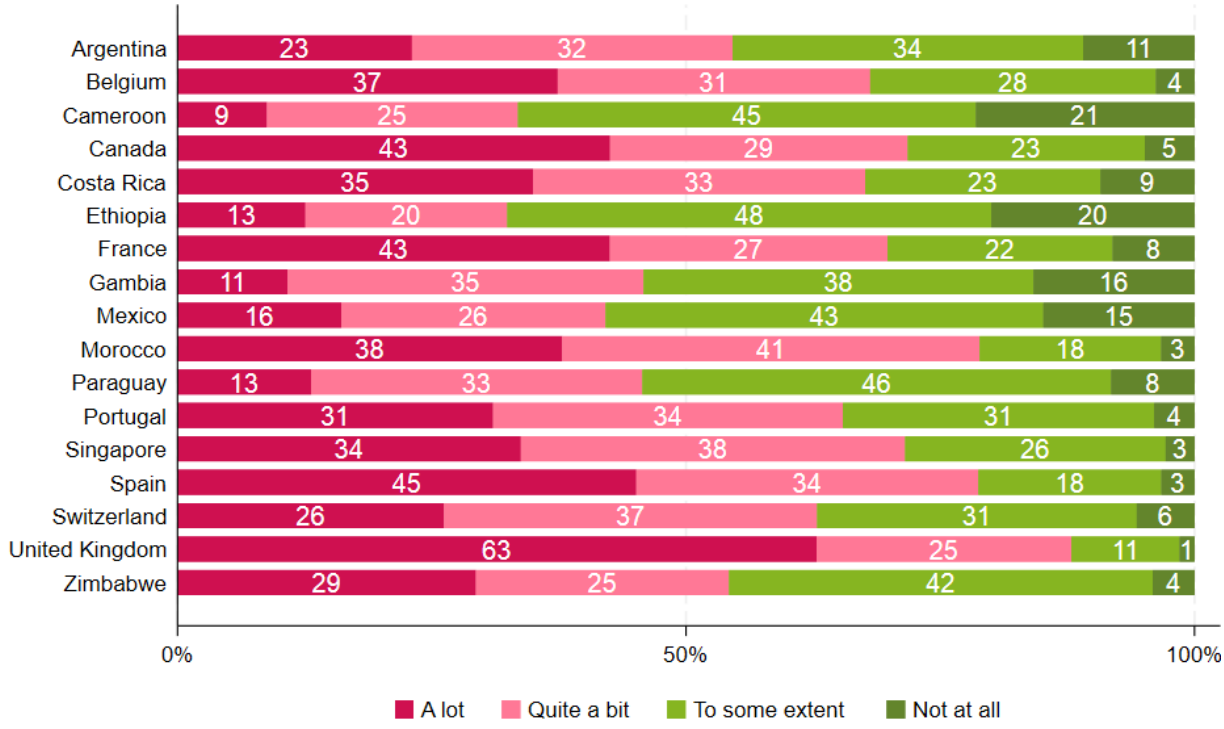
My work allows me to meet my family commitments



IV.3 Sources of difficulties at work

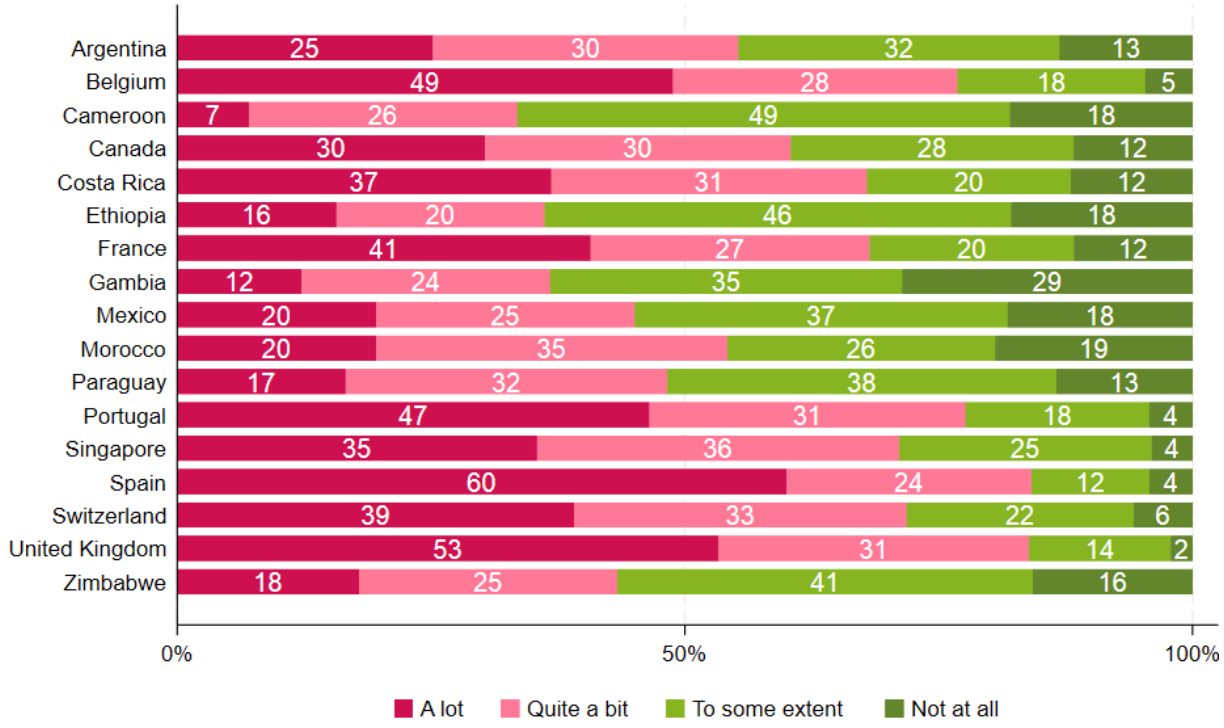
To what extent are the following aspects a source of stress in your work?

The workload

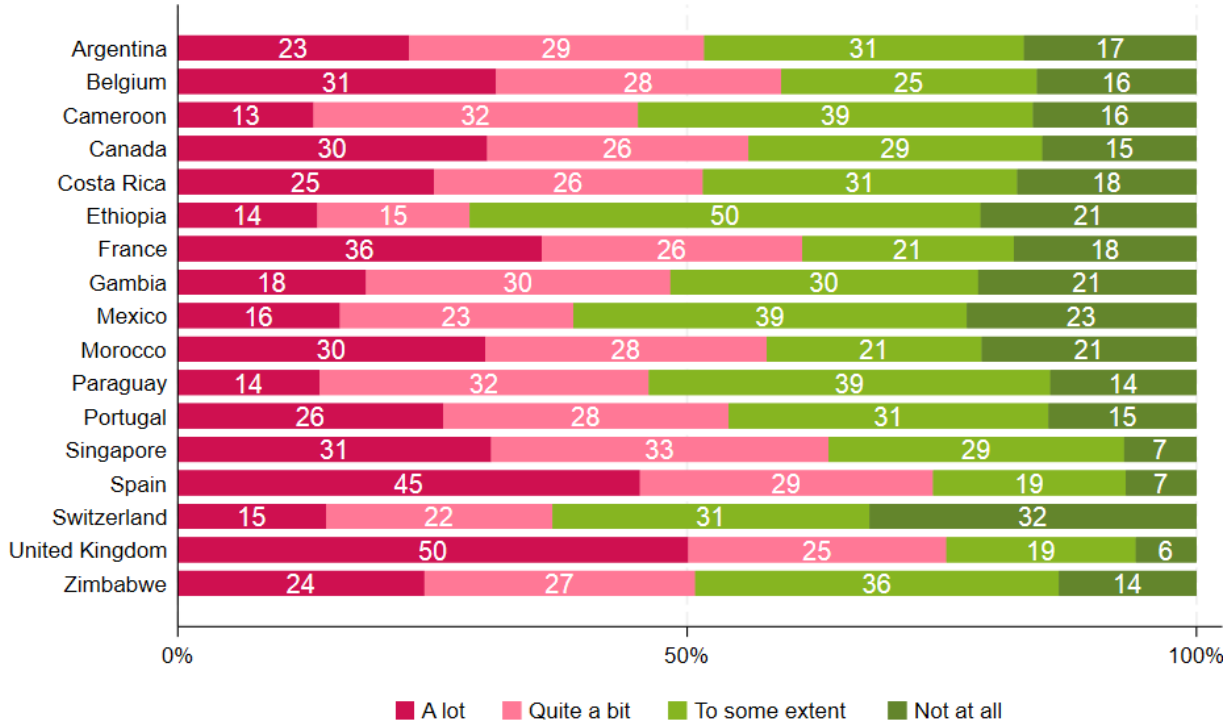


Source: I-BEST 2026, EI/FESP. Field: education personnel

Carrying out administrative tasks

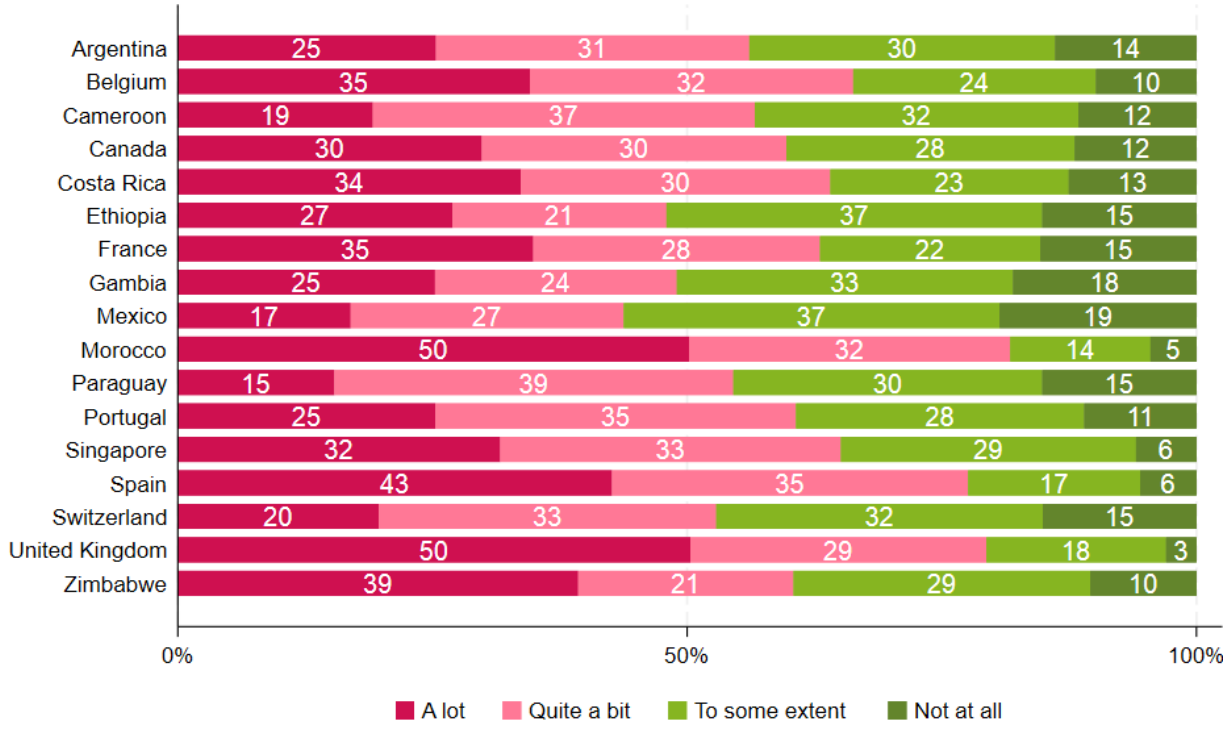


Having additional tasks due to lack of staff

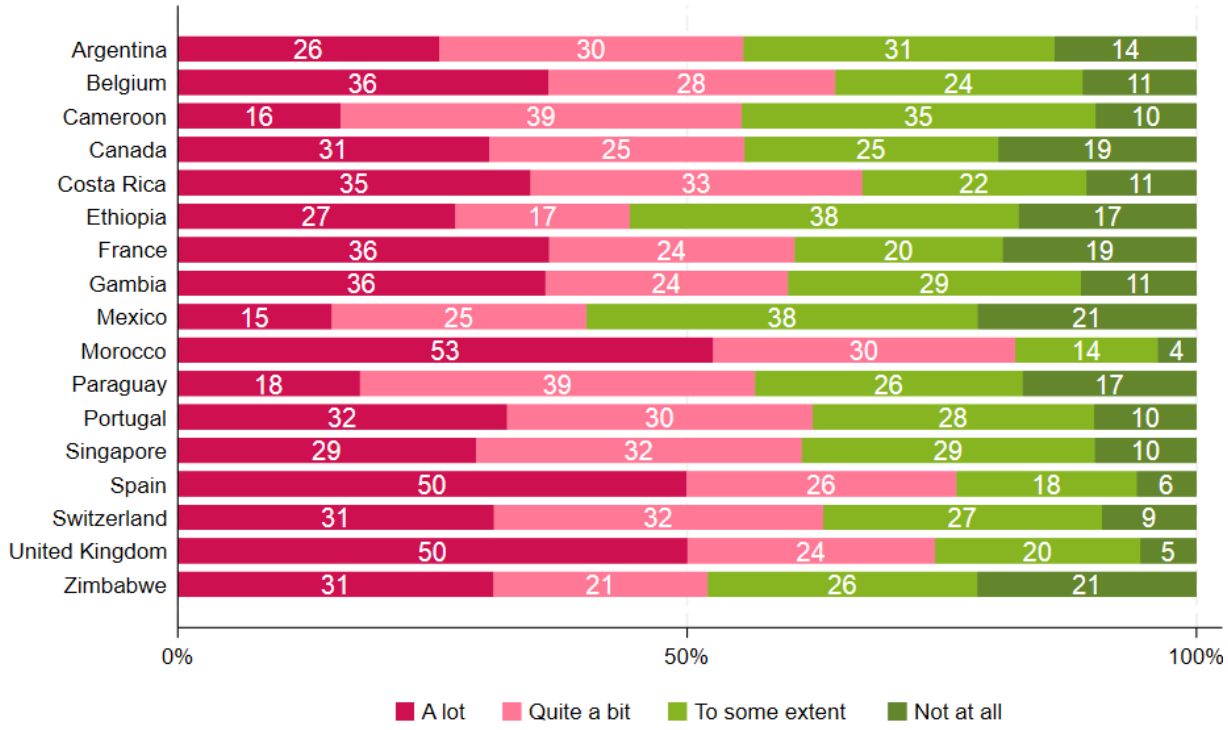


Source: I-BEST 2026, EI/FESP. Field: education personnel

Being held accountable for students' achievement and/or well-being

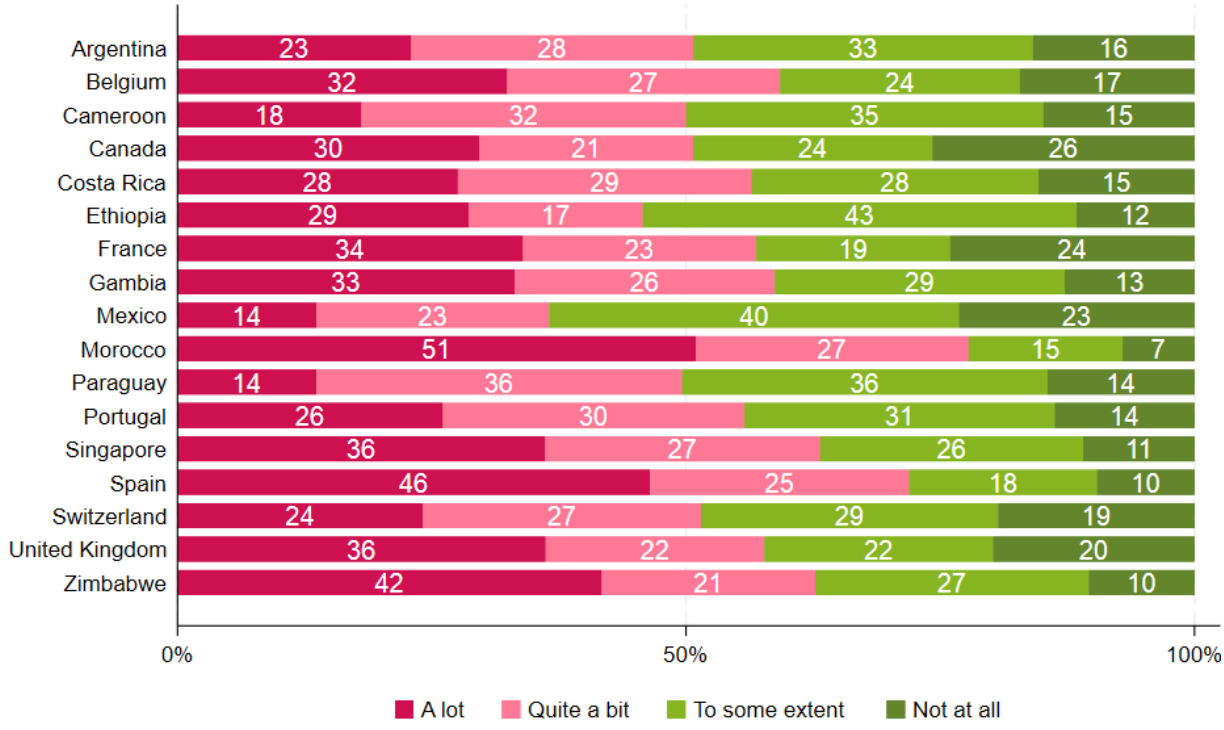


Maintaining classroom discipline

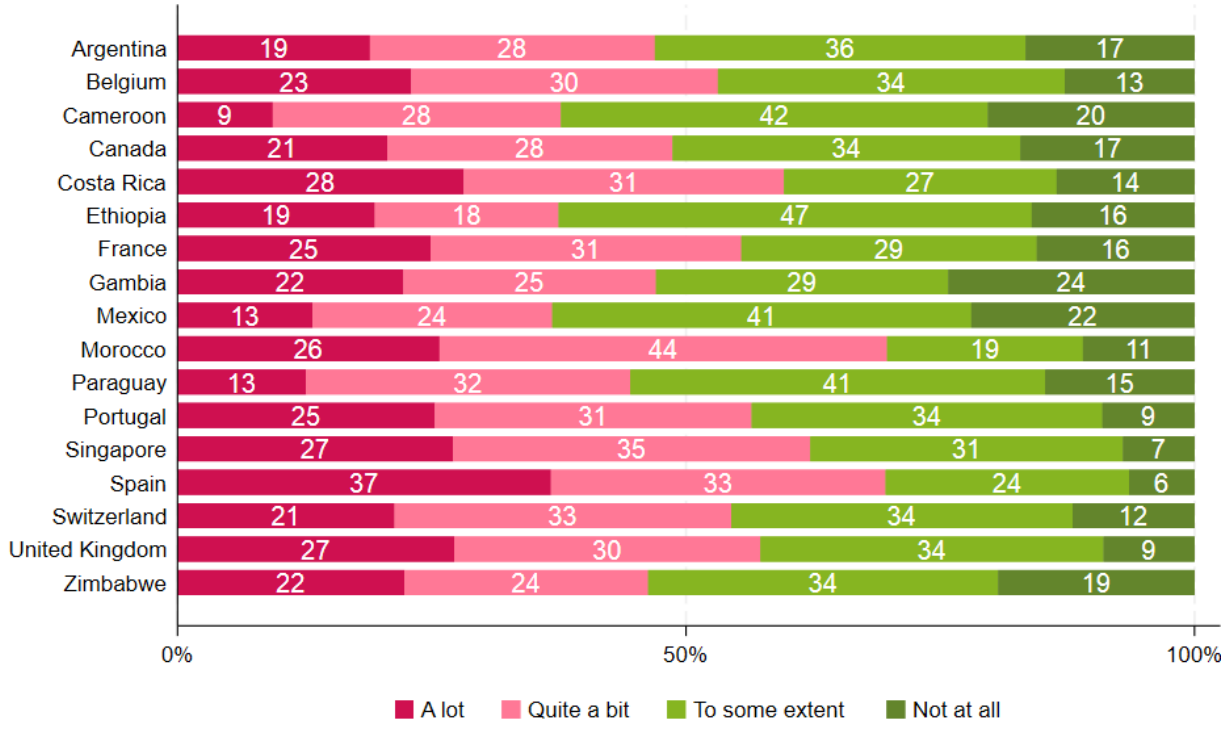


Source: I-BEST 2026, EI/FESP. Field: education personnel

Managing large class sizes

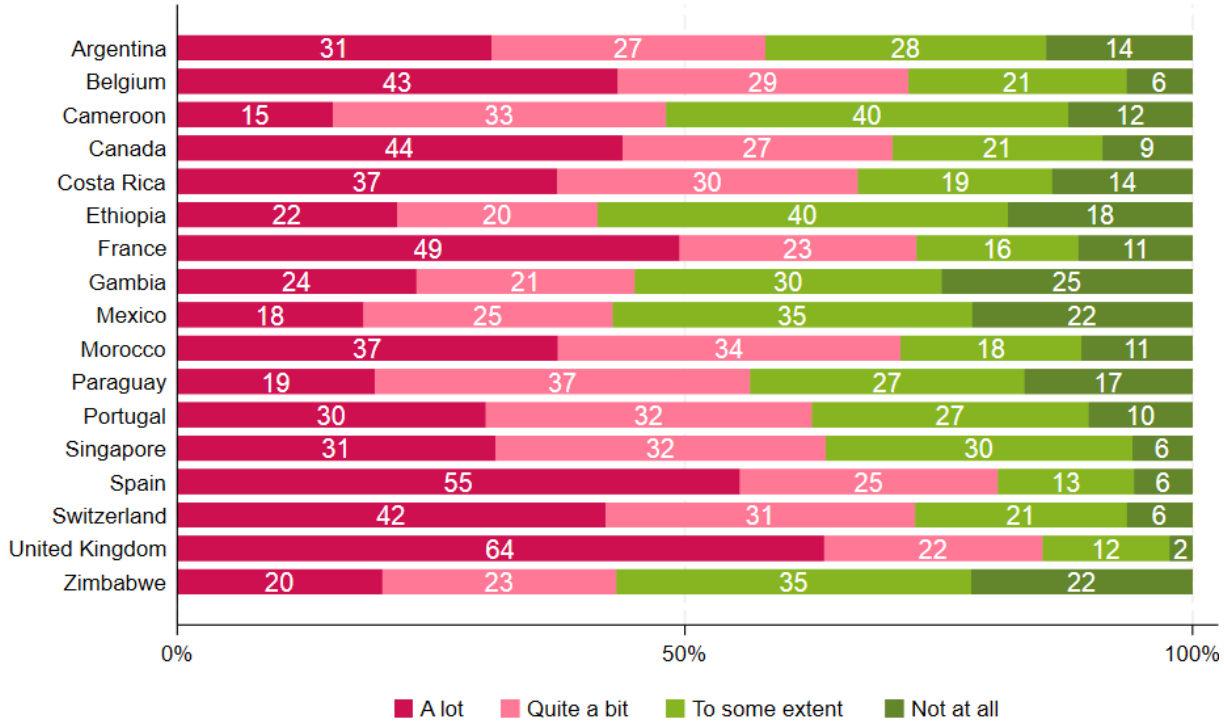


Addressing parents or legal guardians' concerns

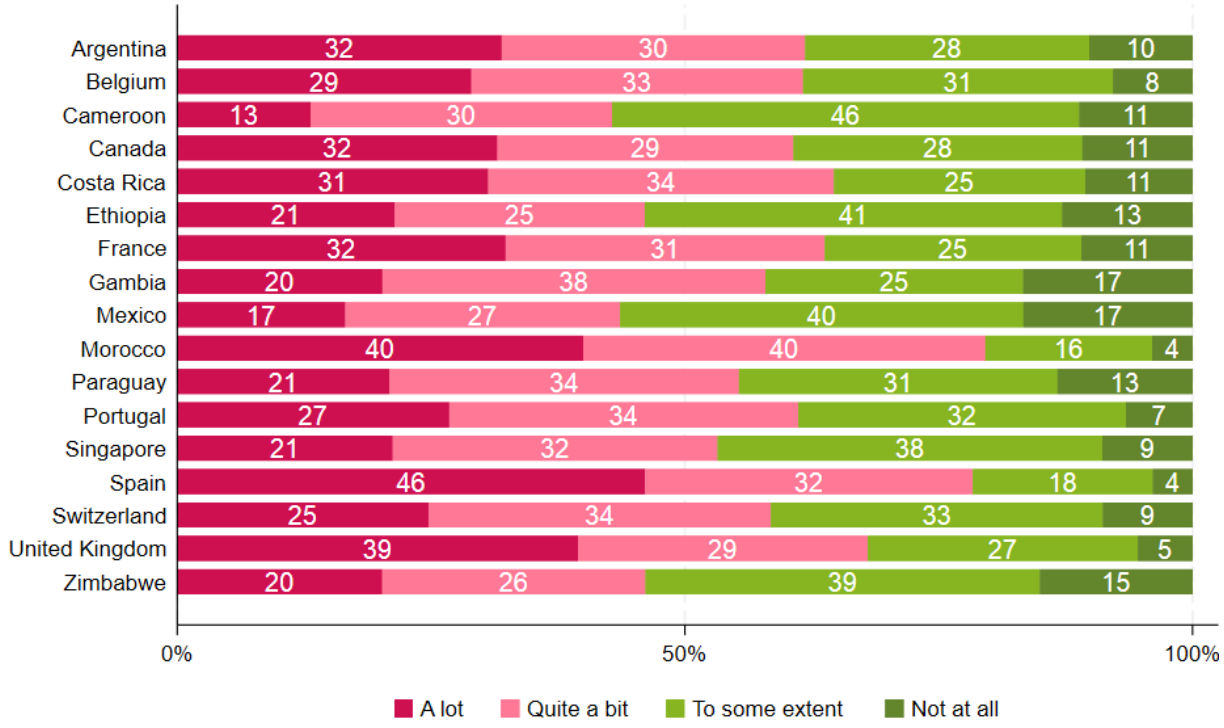


Source: I-BEST 2026, EI/FESP. Field: education personnel

Accommodating students with special educational needs

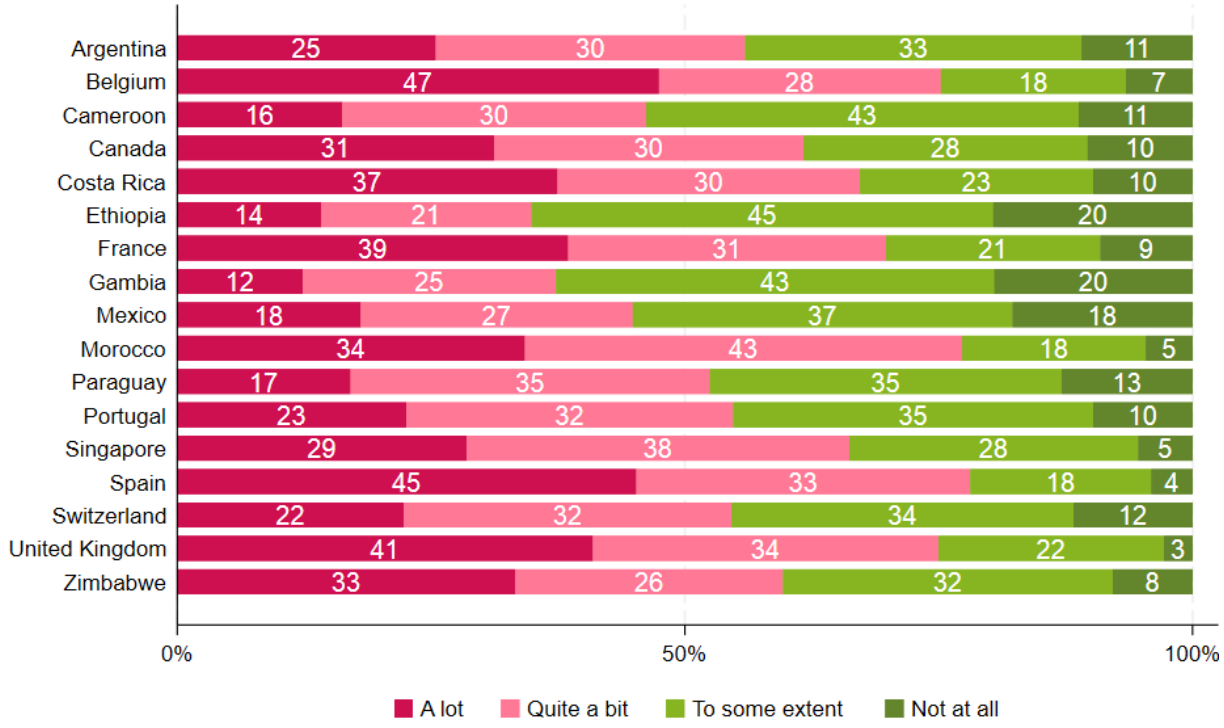


Dealing with difficult situations experienced by students



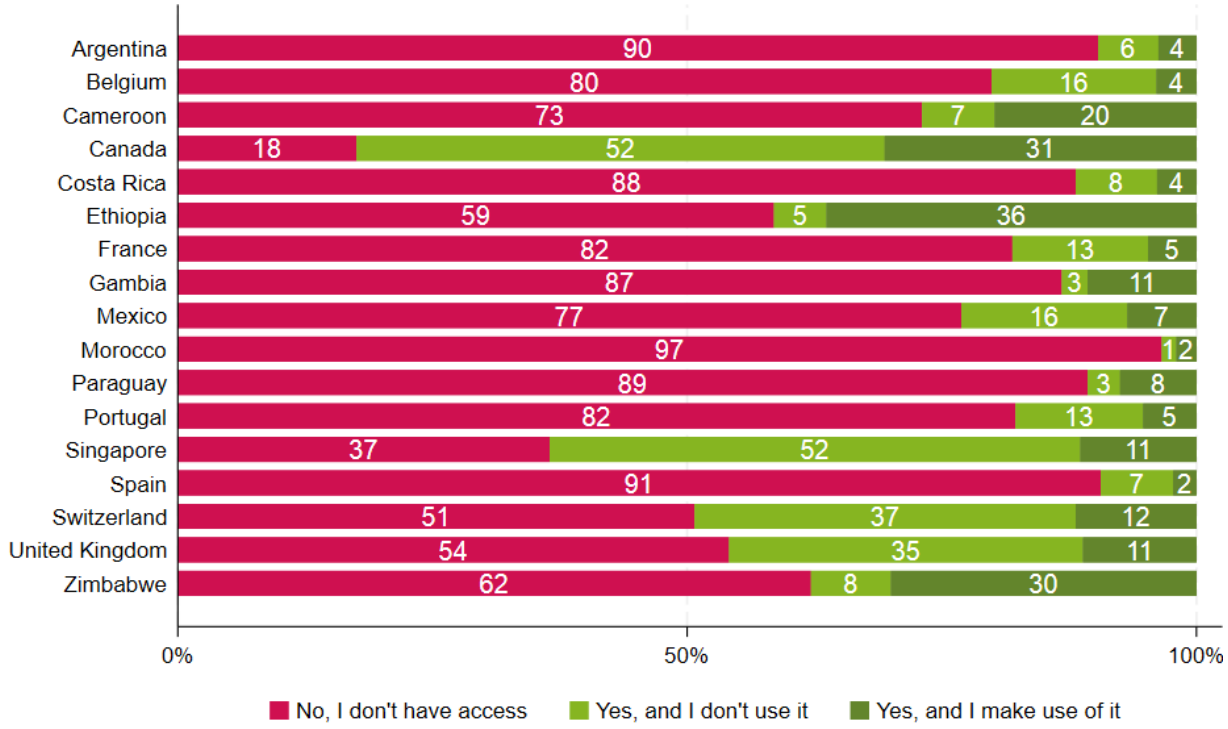
Source: I-BEST 2026, EI/FESP. Field: education personnel

Keeping up with changing requirements at work



IV.4 Resources / psychological support at work

Do you have access to psychological support resources through your work?

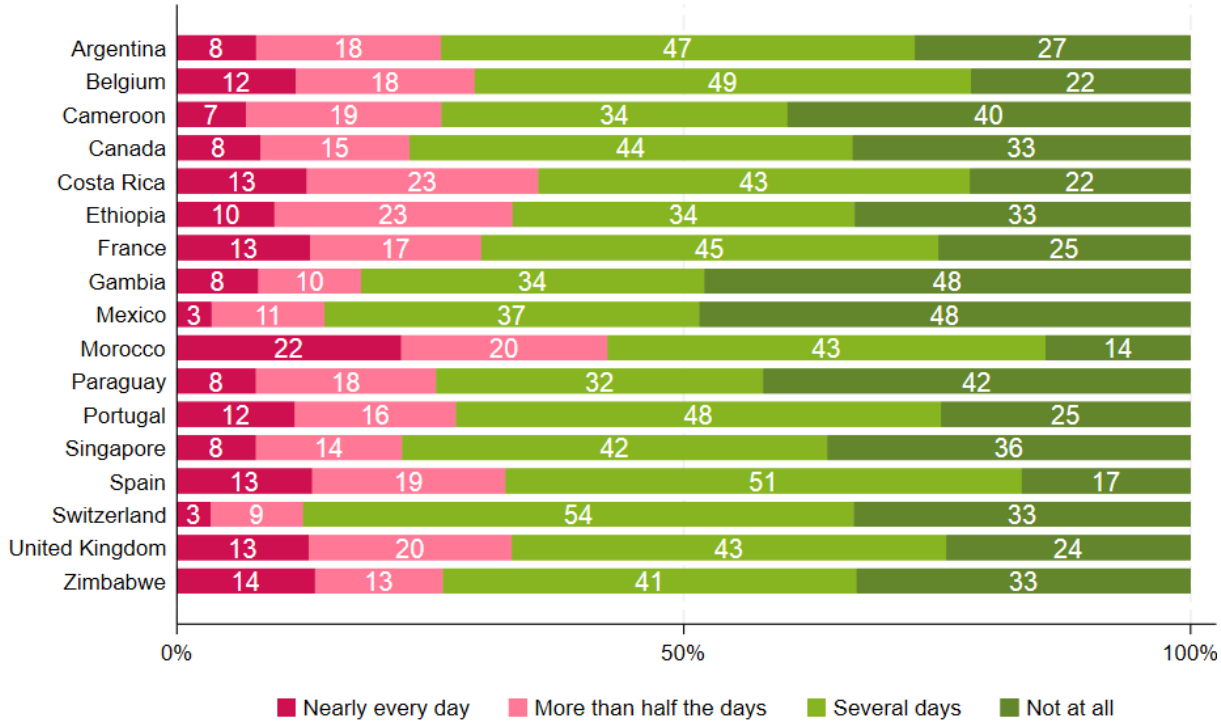


Source: I-BEST 2026, EI/FESP. Field: education personnel

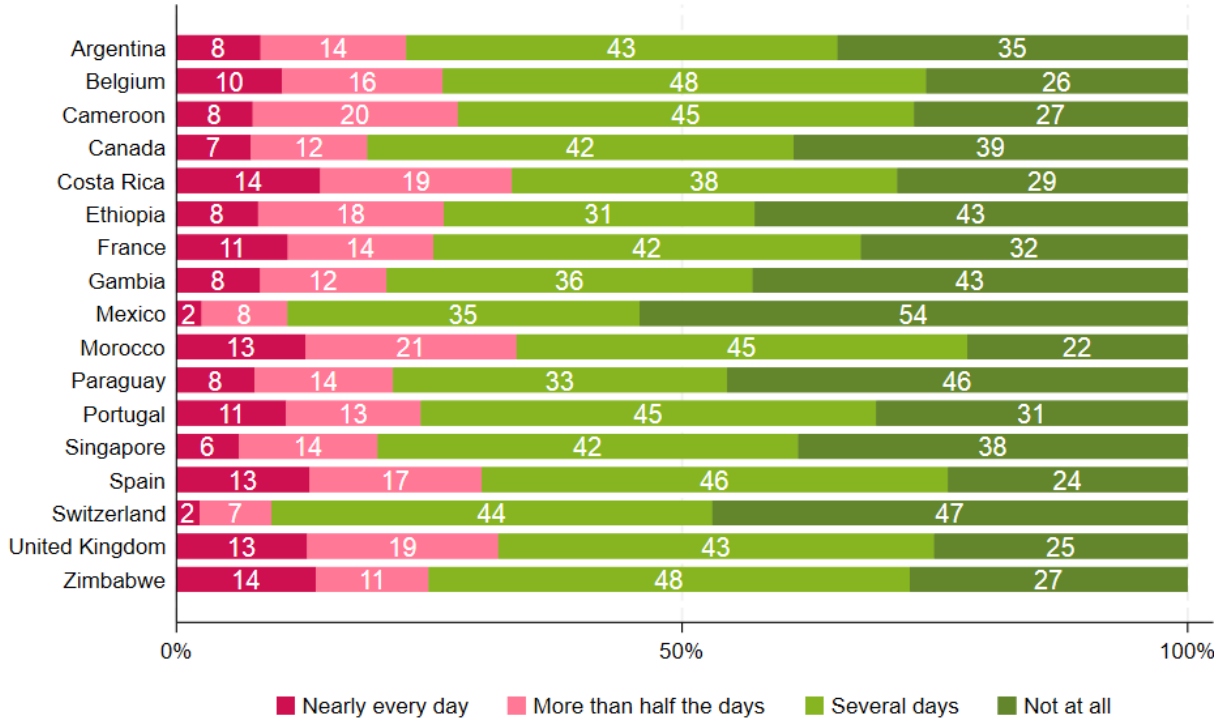
IV.5 Depressive symptoms

Over the last 2 weeks, how often have you been bothered by any of the following problems?

Little interest or pleasure in doing things

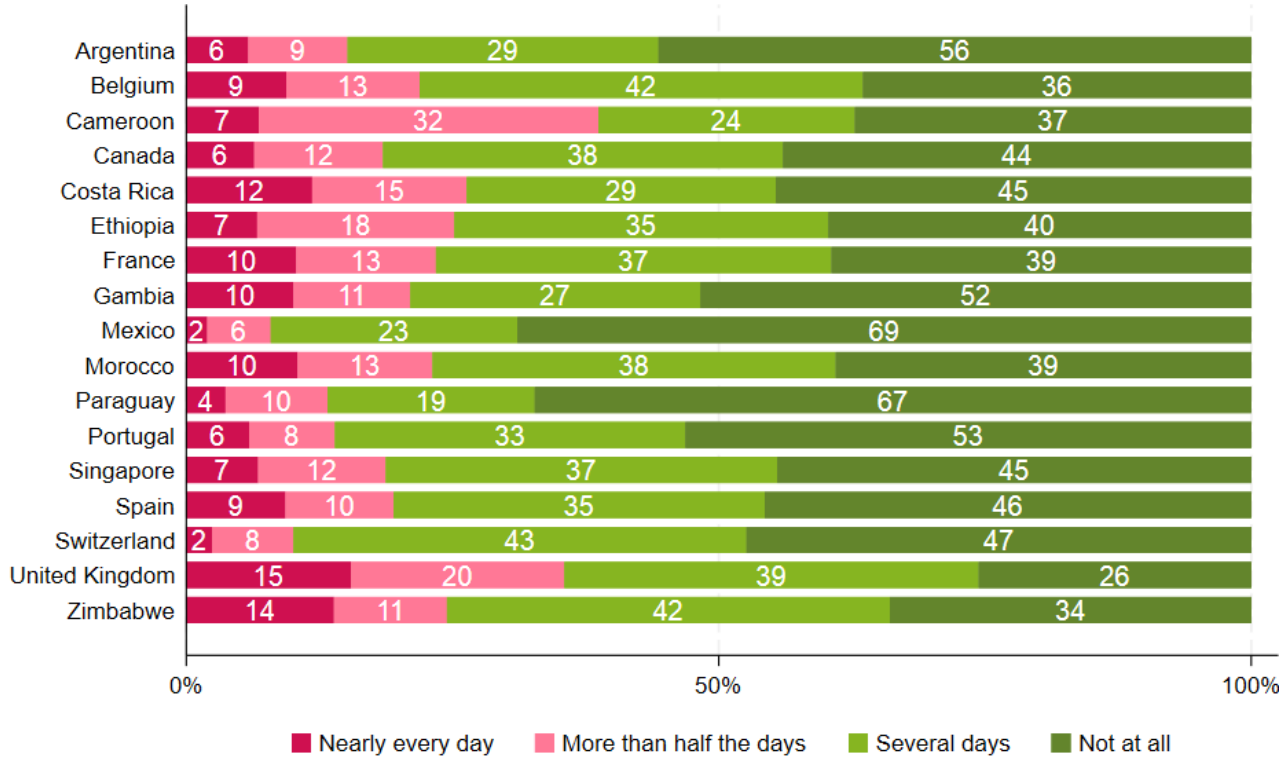


Feeling down, depressed, or hopeless



Source: I-BEST 2026, EI/FESP. Field: education personnel

Having a poor opinion of yourself



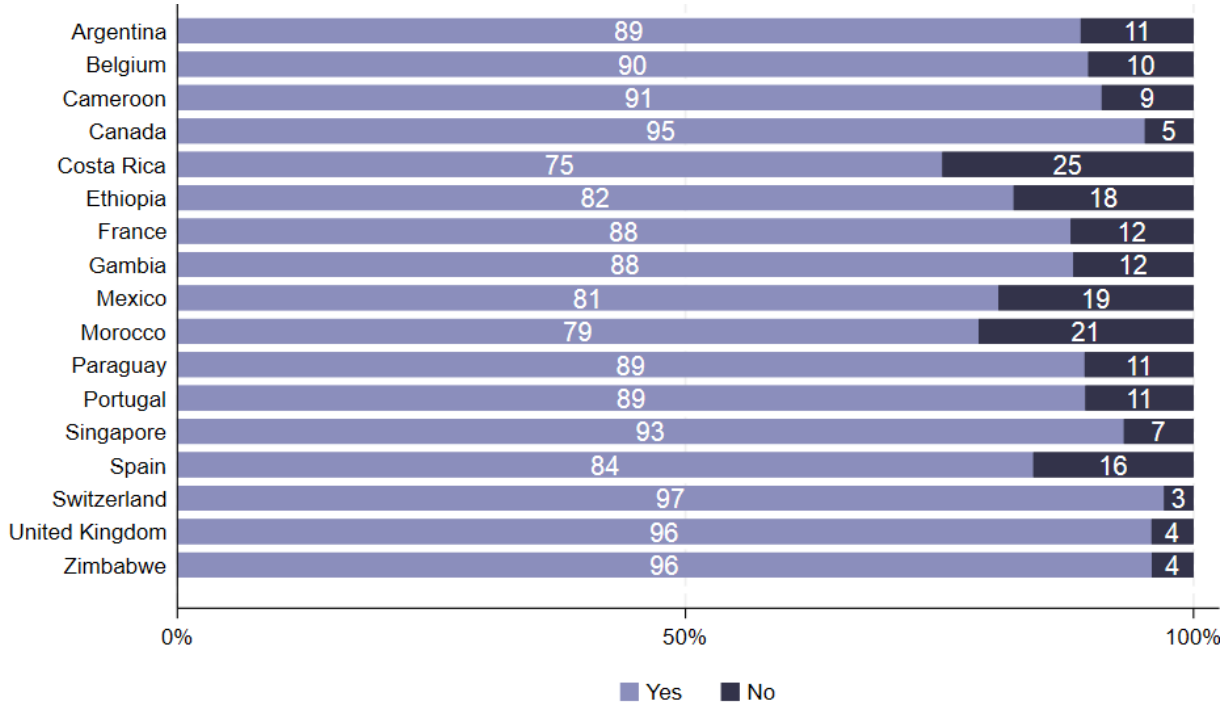
Source: I-BEST 2026, EI/FESP. Field: education personnel

V. Needs identified by education staff

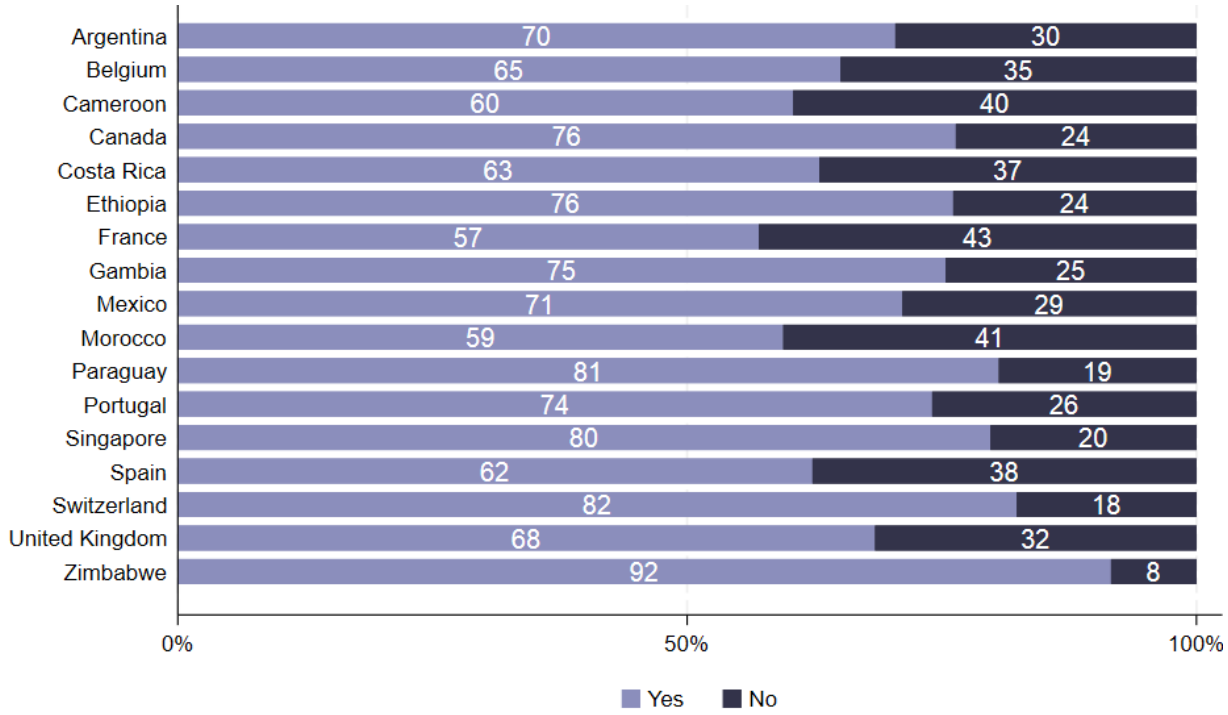
V.1 Interpersonal support

If needed, in your educational institution, do you get support from the following people?

Colleagues

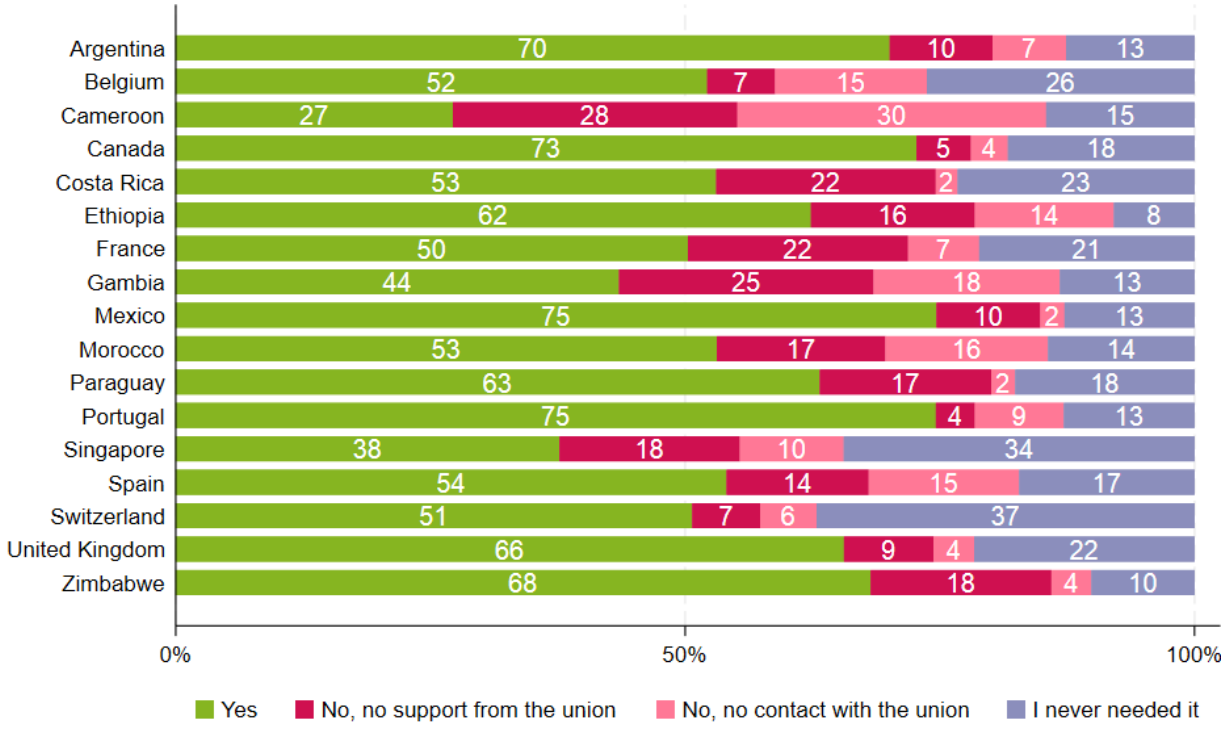


Supervisors



Source: I-BEST 2026, EI/FESP. Field: education personnel

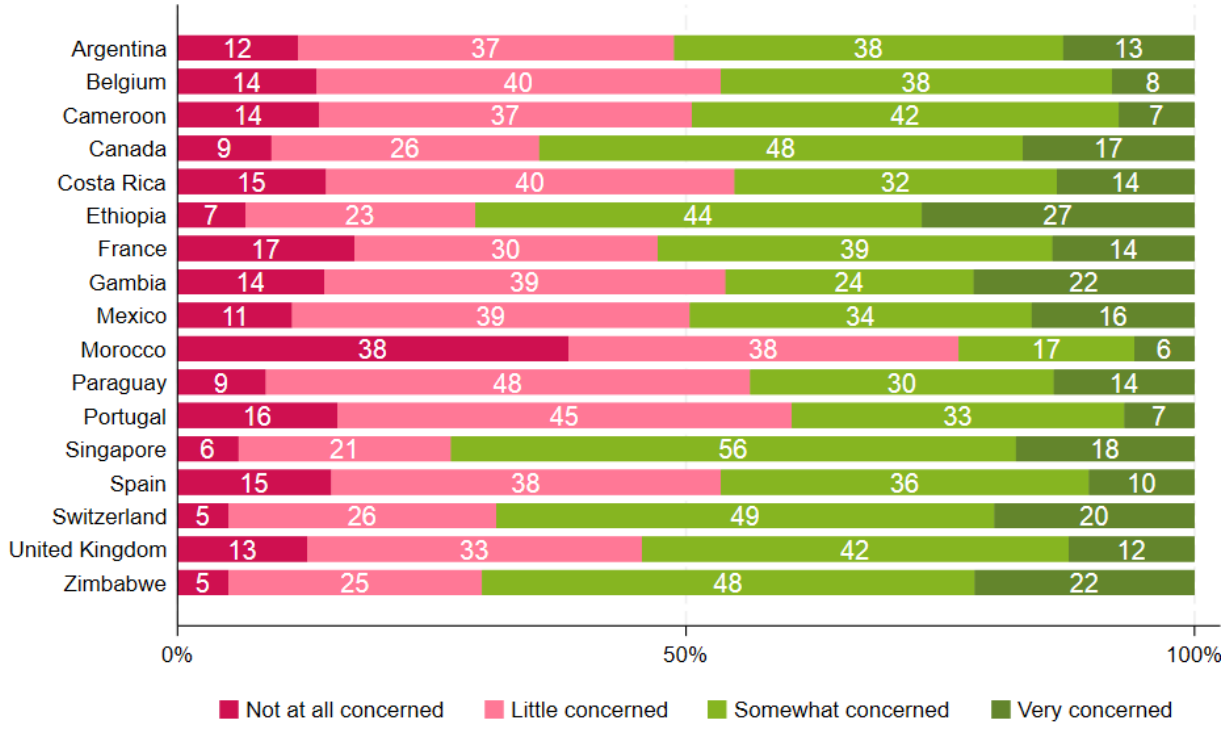
Associations or unions



V.2 Occupational health support

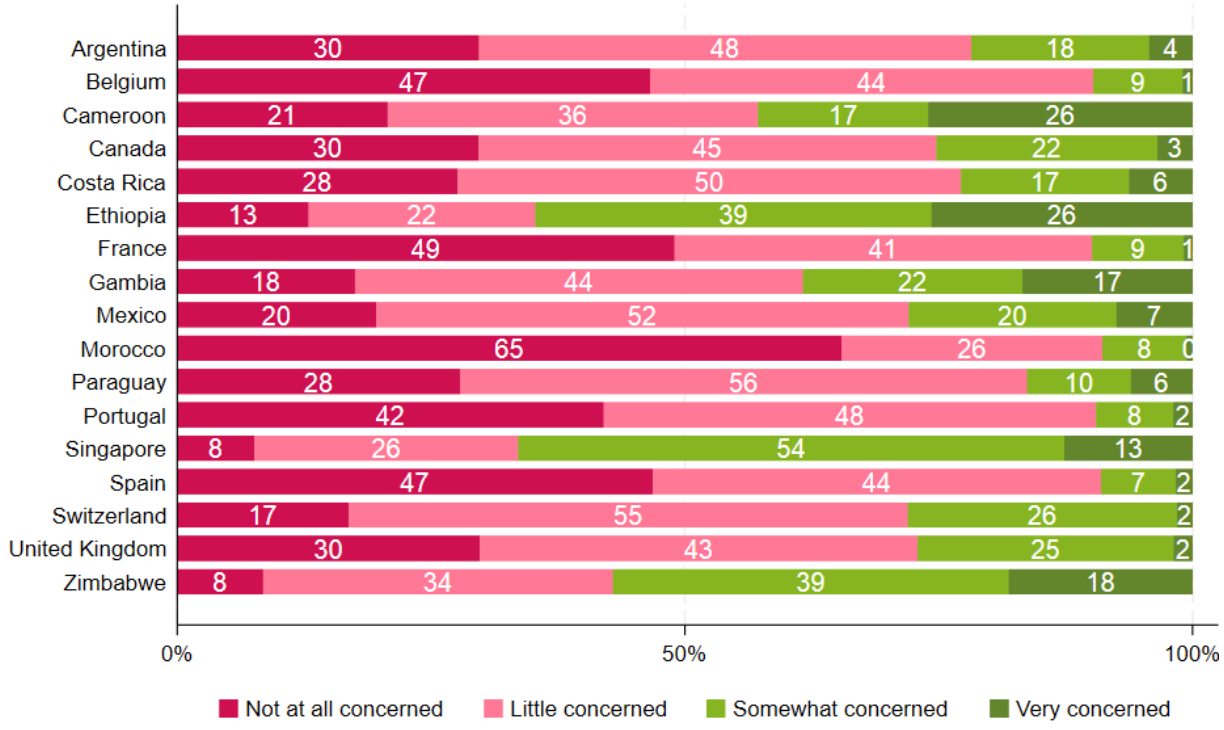
To what extent are these actors concerned about the health and well-being of staff?

The educational authority

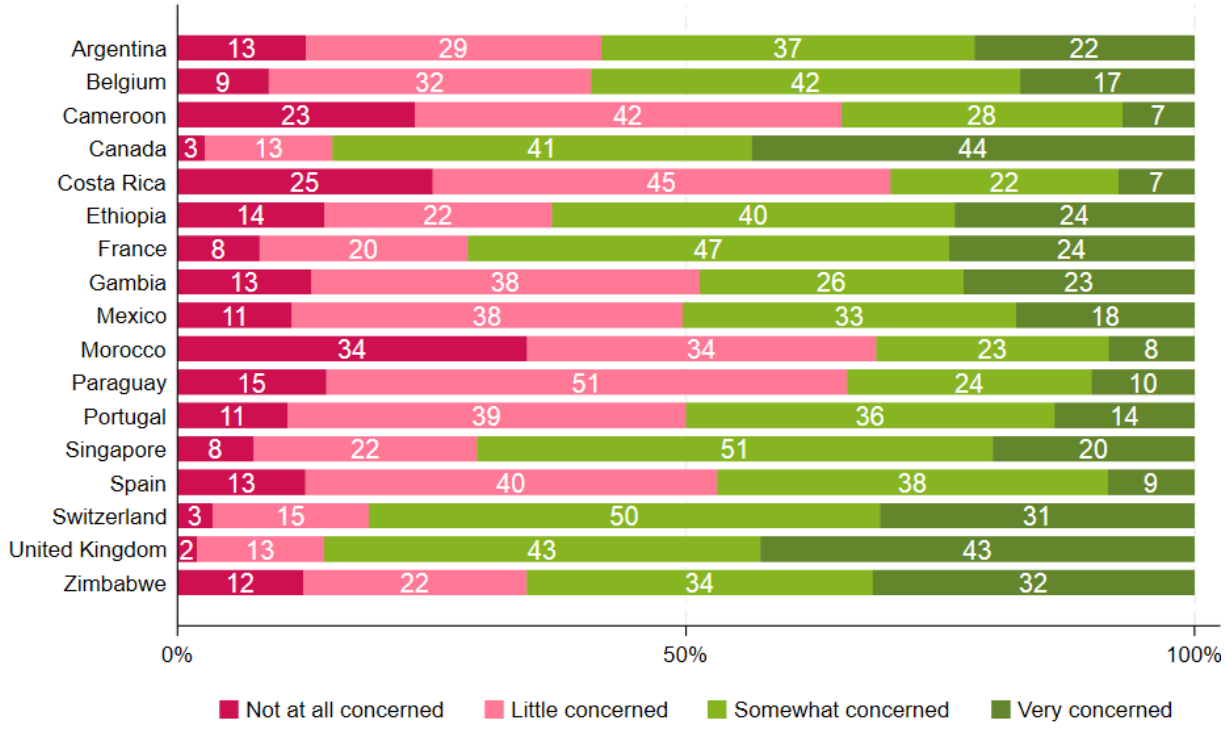


Source: I-BEST 2026, EI/FESP. Field: education personnel

The educational institution's management

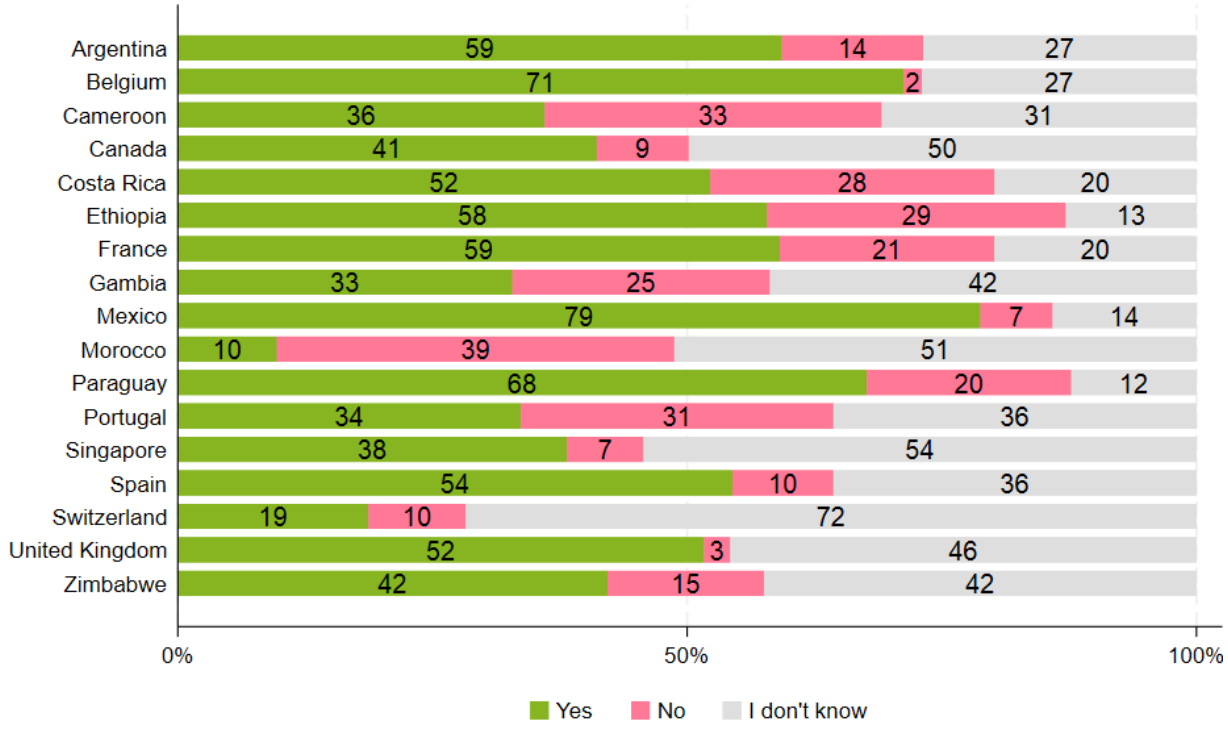


The unions

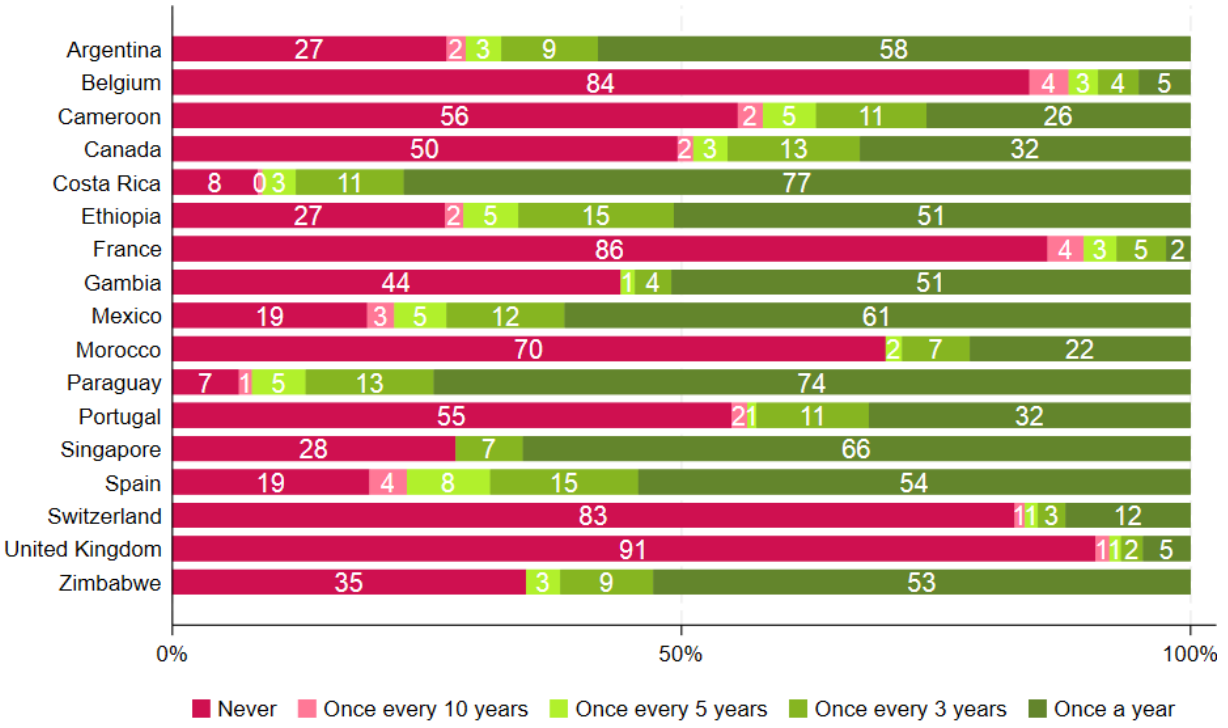


Source: I-BEST 2026, EI/FESP. Field: education personnel

Is there a (public) occupational health service in your country?



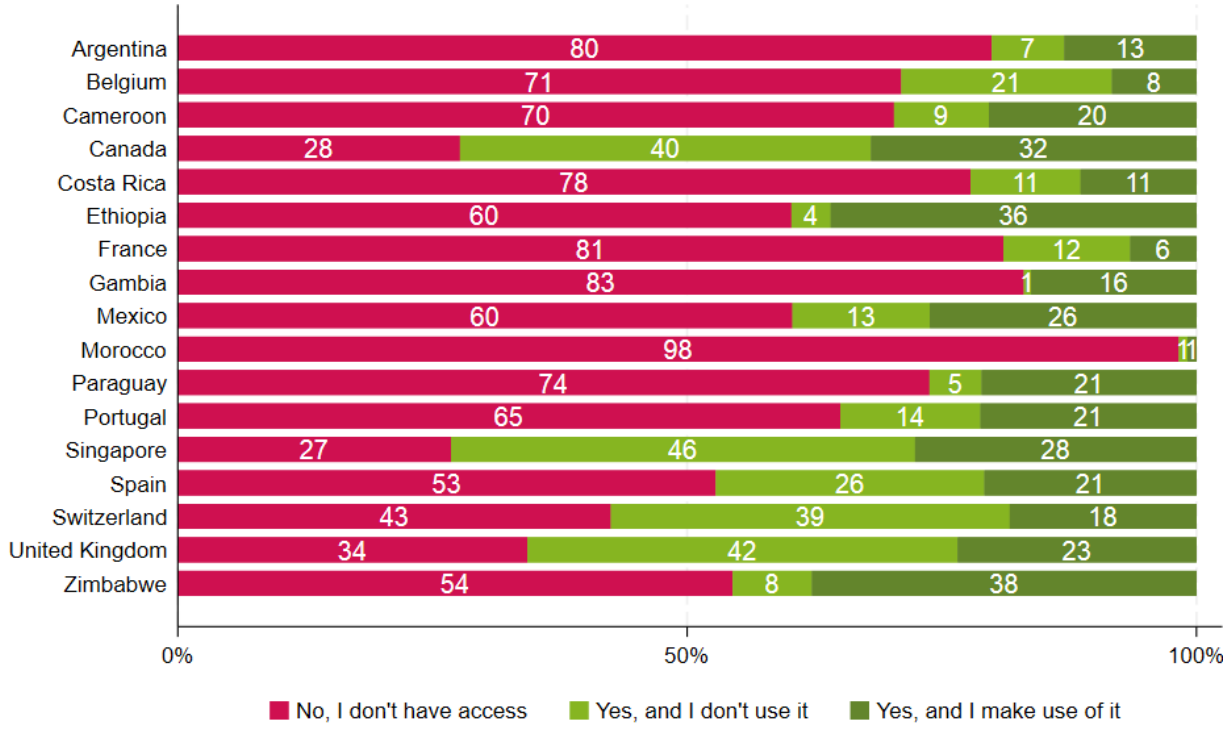
If so, how often do you have an appointment?



**Percentages calculated among the sample of respondents who answered yes to the previous question.*

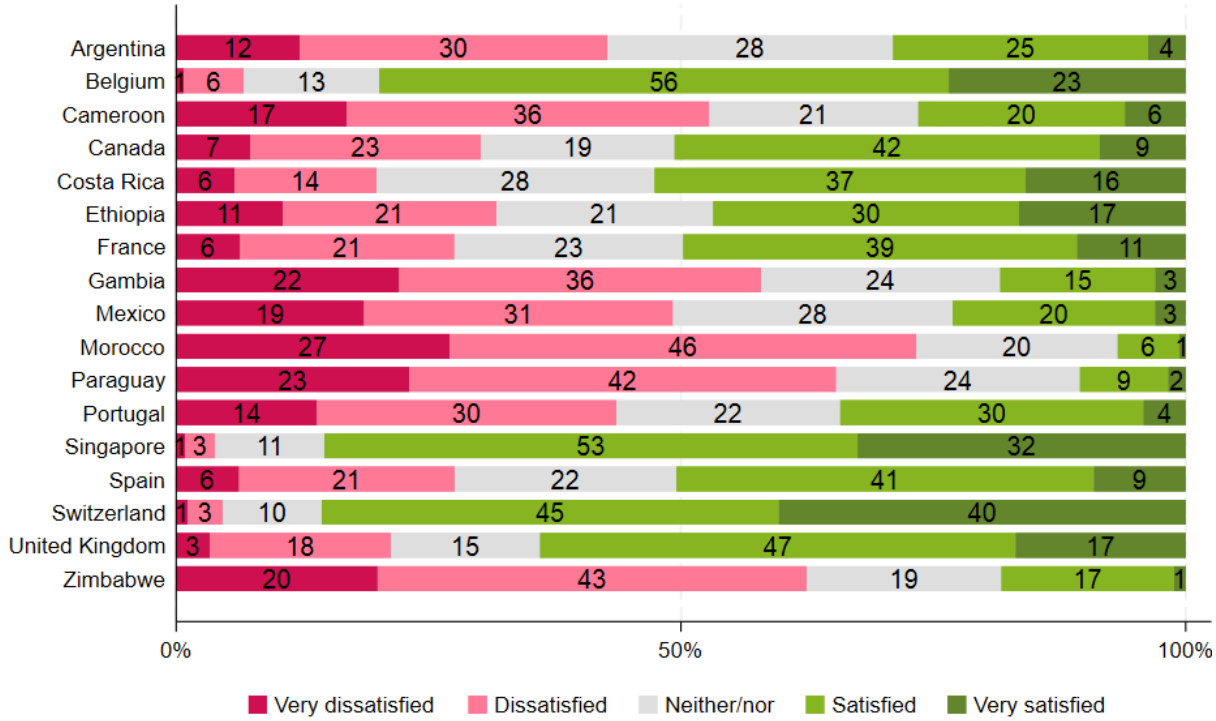
Source: I-BEST 2026, EI/FESP. Field: education personnel

Do you have access to training and/or prevention resources on health/well-being?



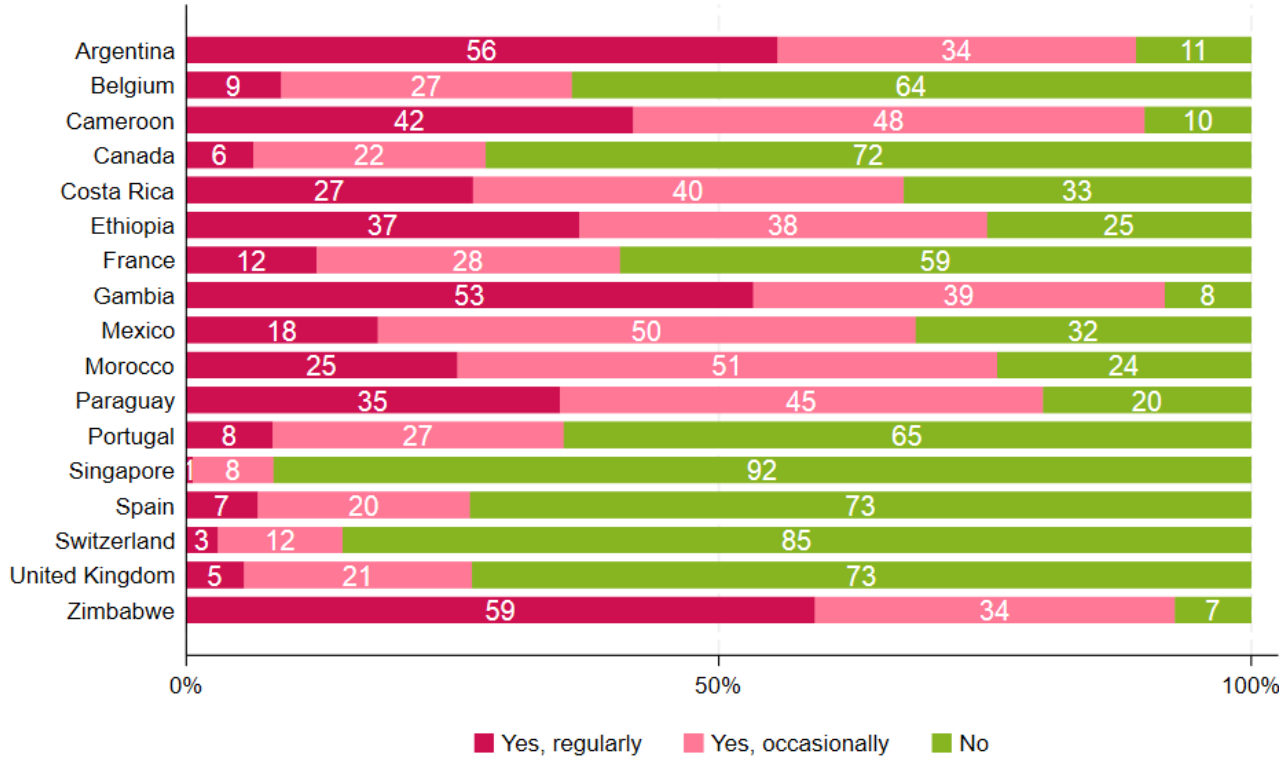
V.3 Financial difficulties and access to care

Are you satisfied with your access to healthcare in your country?



Source: I-BEST 2026, EI/FESP. Field: education personnel

Financial difficulties in meeting basic needs (in the past year)



Source: I-BEST 2026, EI/FESP. Field: education personnel

VI. Trends over the years 2021-2023-2026: an overview for teachers

To understand recent trends in the health and well-being of teaching staff*, a dozen key-indicators were selected, and their trends were analysed in countries that participated in at least two out of the three I-BEST editions: 2021, 2023 and/or 2026. In the following graphs, positive indicators are shown in green (the higher, the better) and negative indicators in red (the higher, the worse).

*In 2021, only teaching staff were surveyed; in subsequent editions, the participation of other (non-teaching) education staff varied widely from country to country; to ensure that trends could be interpreted as correctly as possible, only the former were included in this specific analysis.

VI.1. Size of teacher samples by survey edition

	I-BEST survey edition		
	2021	2023	2026
Country			
Argentina		1782	2856
Belgium	1268	937	1973
Cameroon		421	388
Canada*	2349	2516	3499
France	3646	9595	3266
Gambia	222		263
Mexico*	215		9543
Morocco*	302	739	579
Spain		2723	1925
Switzerland		1597	2937
United Kingdom*		2524	5418

**Special caution is required when interpreting trends for these countries: the geographic coverage and/or the local partners who relayed the survey have changed significantly from one edition to the next.*

Source: I-BEST 2021/2023/2026, EI/FESP. Field: teachers

VI.2. Sample characteristics by survey edition

The figures from the national —independent— samples of the various survey editions have been standardised using the most recent target structure of the national teacher population (taking into account the cross-tabulation by gender, primary/secondary level, and age).
As illustrated in the following table, even after standardisation, the characteristics* of the respondent samples can vary considerably. Changes in health and well-being indicators should therefore be interpreted in light of the more or less pronounced structural variations among the different samples.

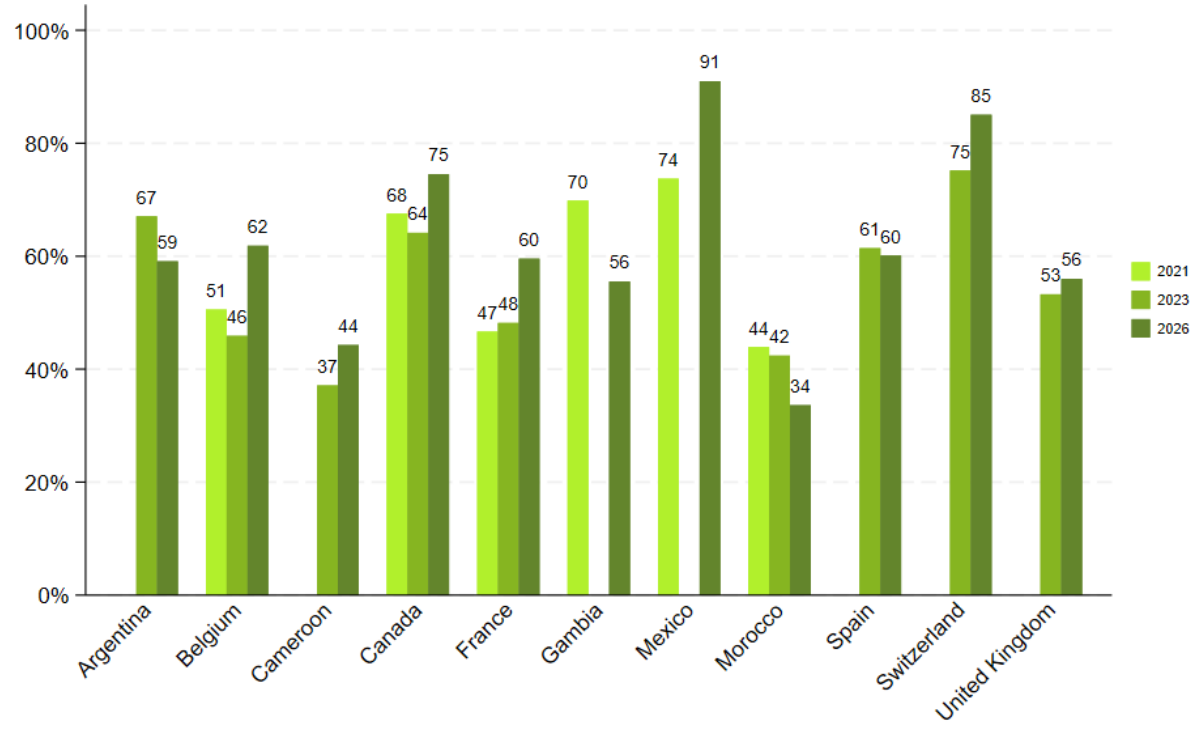
**except those taken into account in the standardisation process, which by design remain stable*

	Experience >30 y	Part-time	Union member	Public
Argentina				
2023	4%	35%	87%	97%
2026	7%	34%	86%	73%
Belgium				
2021	12%	12%	83%	98%
2023	11%	17%	79%	87%
2026	14%	26%	84%	78%
Cameroon				
2023	1%	15%	25%	63%
2026	0%	27%	27%	46%
Canada				
2021	9%	11%	97%	99%
2023	7%	10%	97%	95%
2026	6%	9%	98%	98%
France				
2021	14%	9%	43%	94%
2023	14%	10%	40%	98%
2026	15%	12%	52%	100%
Gambia				
2021	0%	5%	72%	92%
2026	0%	5%	79%	83%
Mexico				
2021	16%	34%	66%	70%
2026	11%	36%	96%	99%
Morocco				
2021	10%	0%	49%	98%
2023	13%	18%	57%	97%
2026	11%	36%	62%	99%
Spain				
2023	12%	7%	58%	92%
2026	7%	10%	66%	91%
Switzerland				
2023	13%	50%	56%	99%
2026	15%	59%	79%	98%
United Kingdom				
2023	5%	23%	99%	94%
2026	6%	23%	100%	98%

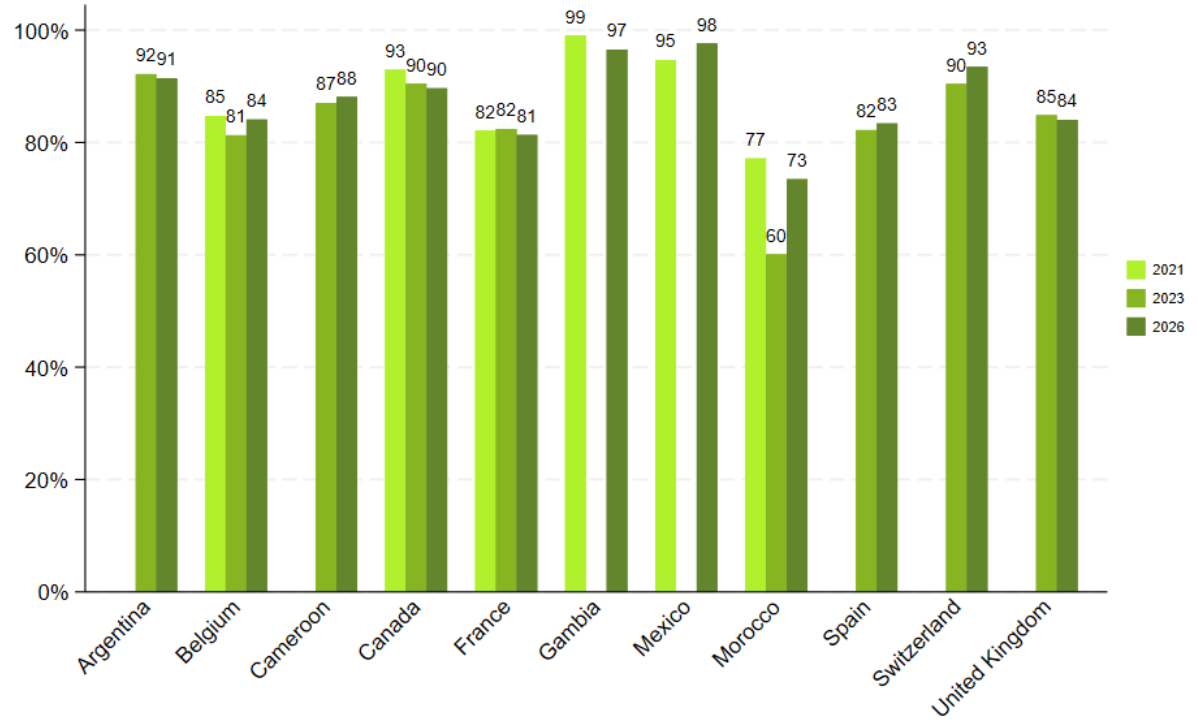
Source: I-BEST 2021/2023/2026, EI/FESP. Field: teachers

VI.3. Trends in key-indicators

Satisfaction with quality of life (levels 5-8 out of 8)

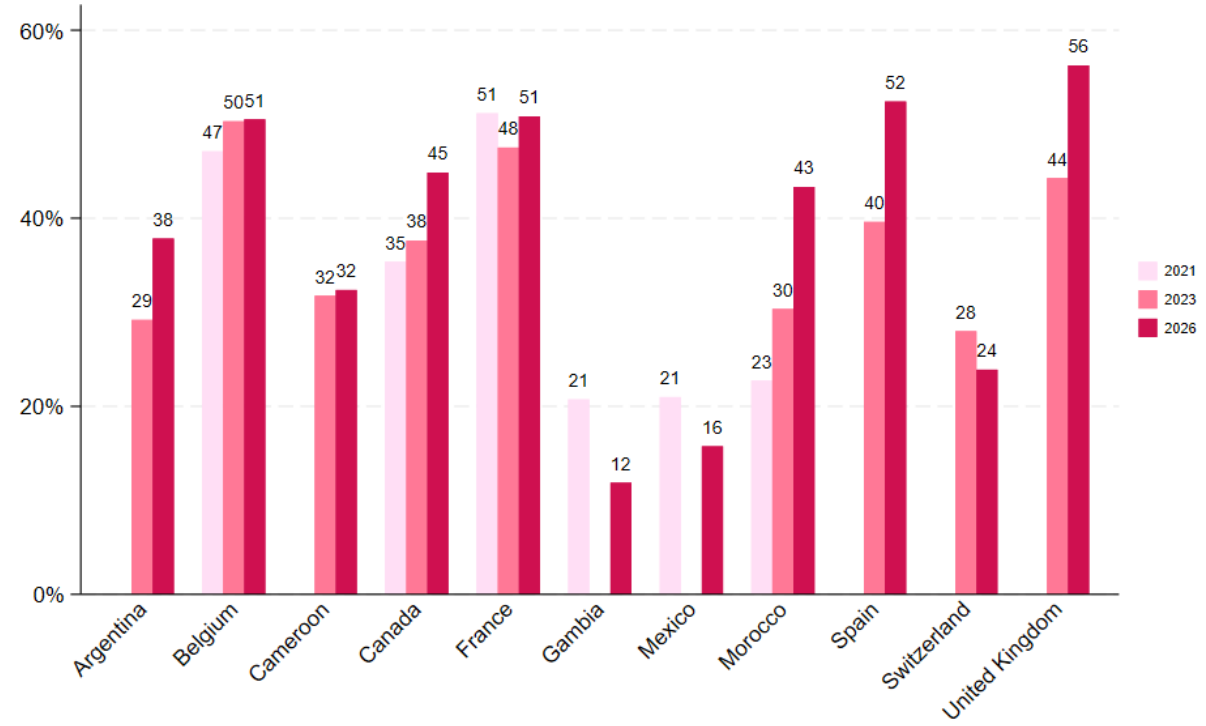


Satisfaction with general health (excellent <-> fairly good)

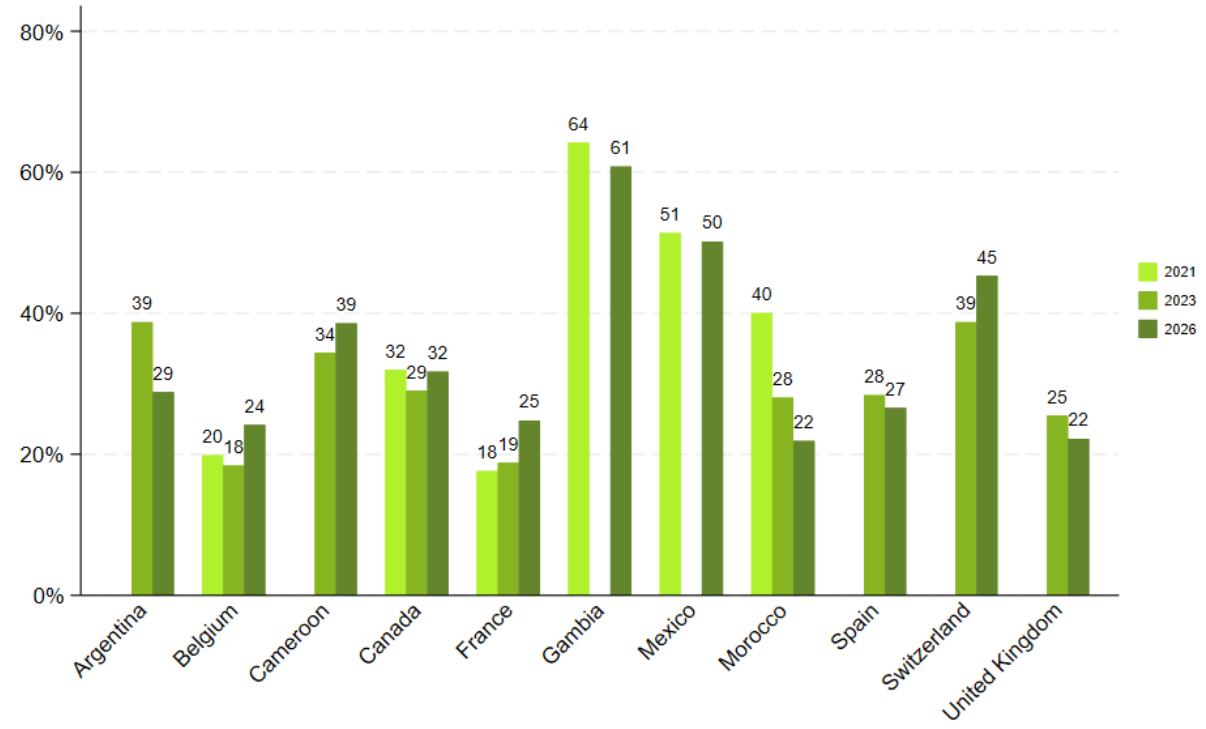


Source: I-BEST 2021/2023/2026, EI/FESP. Field: teachers

Depressive symptoms (negative feelings often/very often/always)

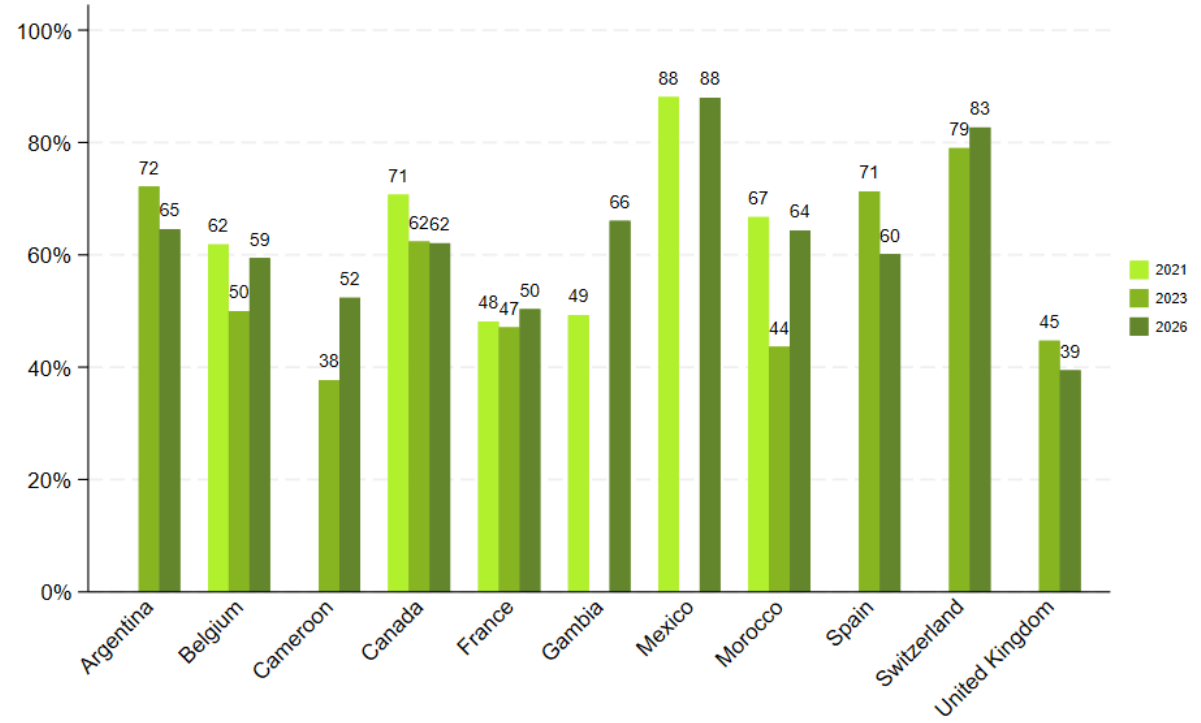


Sleep satisfaction (very satisfied/satisfied)

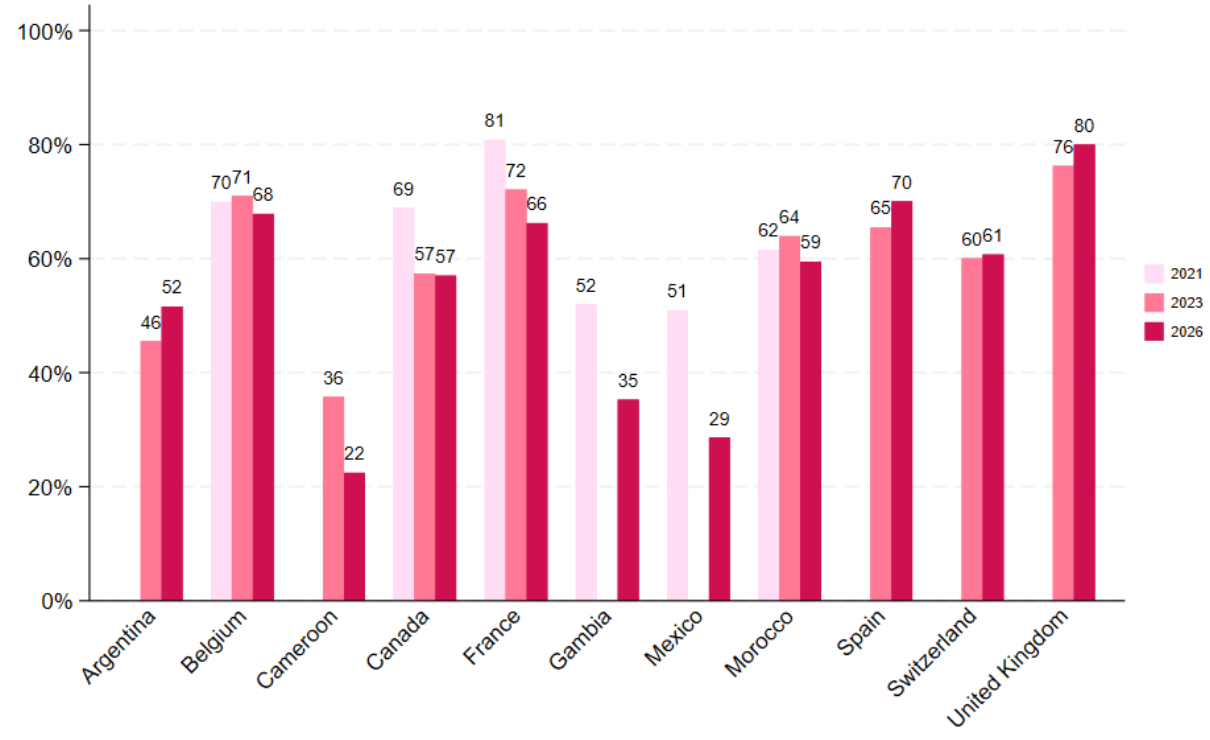


Source: I-BEST 2021/2023/2026, EI/FESP. Field: teachers

Job satisfaction (agree/strongly agree)

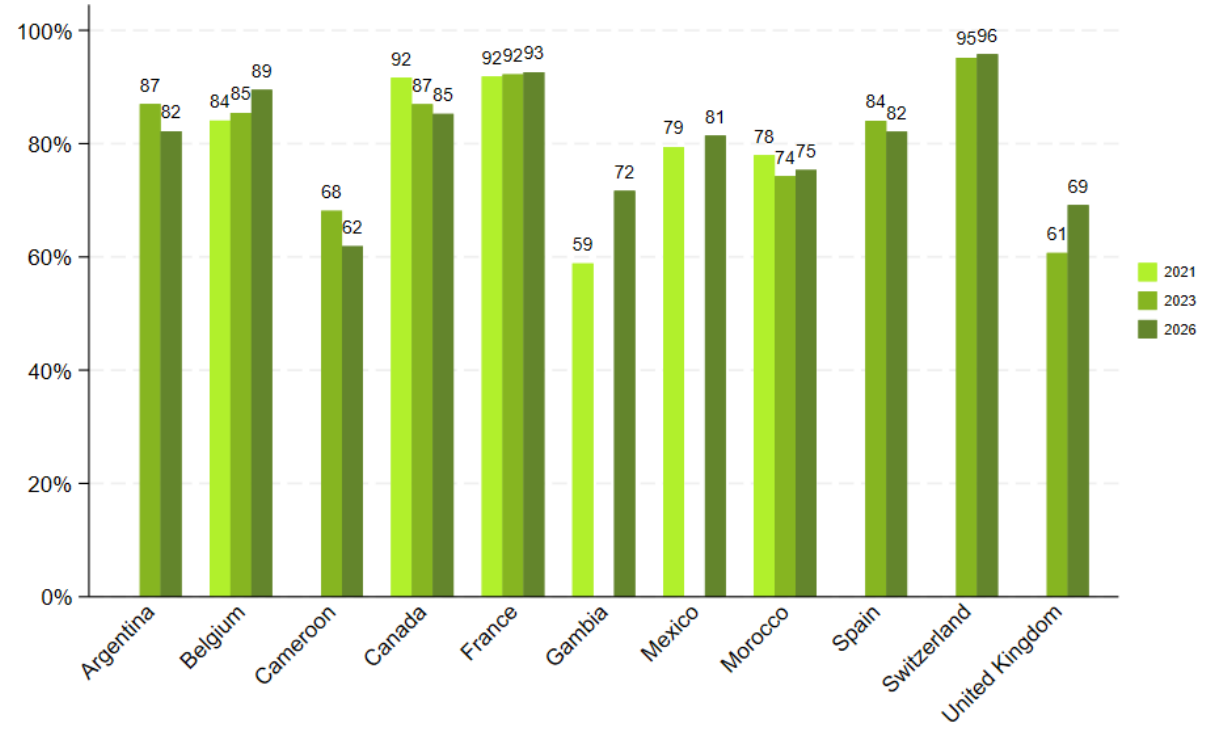


Stress at work (quite / very stressful)

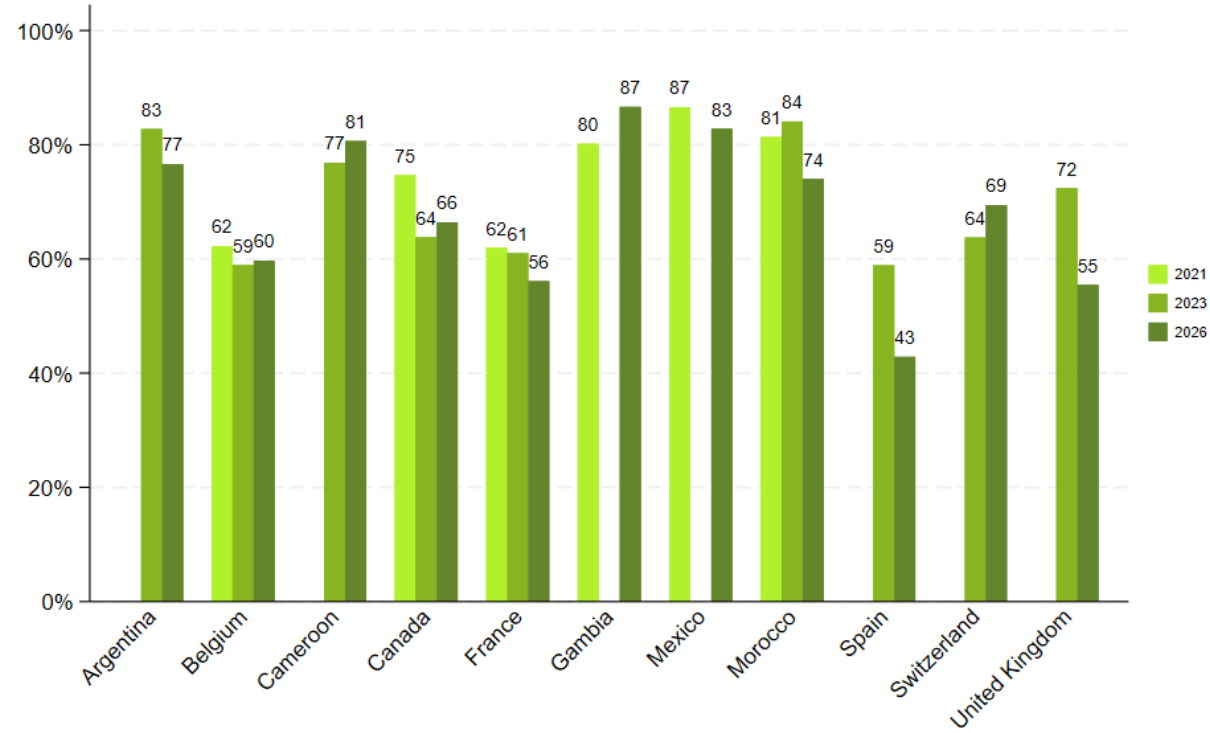


Source: I-BEST 2021/2023/2026, EI/FESP. Field: teachers

Autonomy at work (some/high level of autonomy)

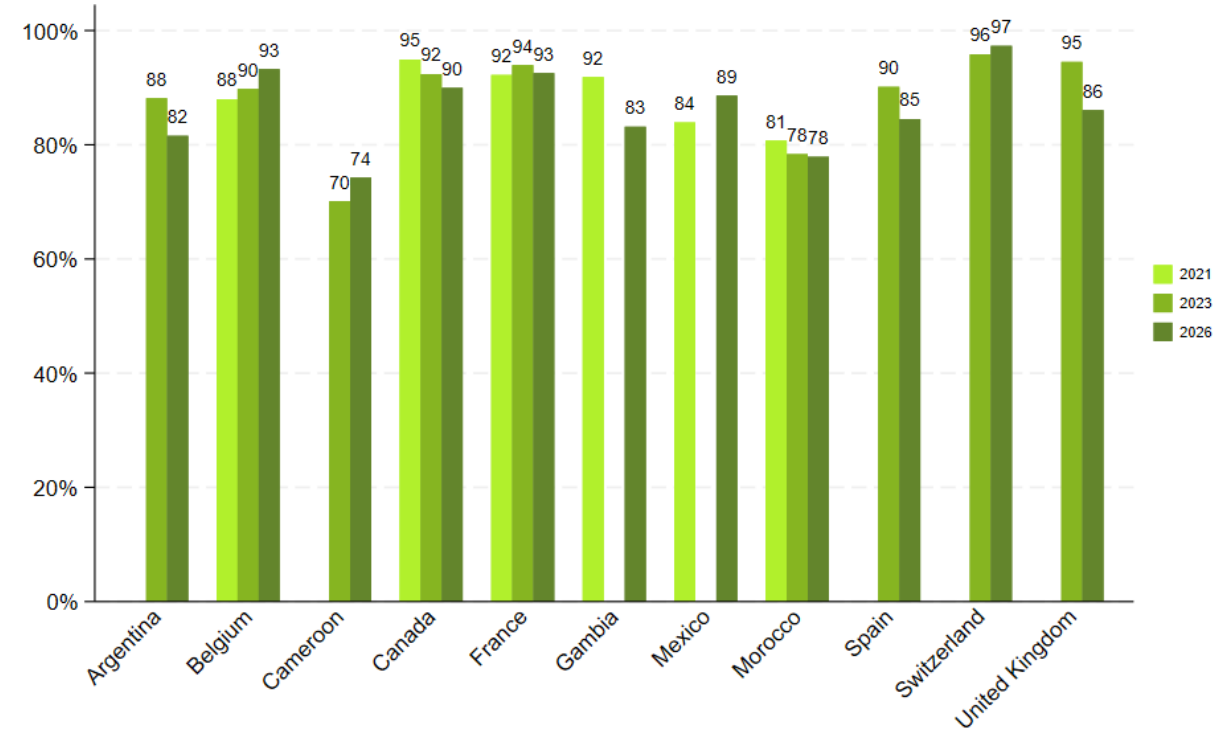


Student discipline (level 1-3 out of 6)

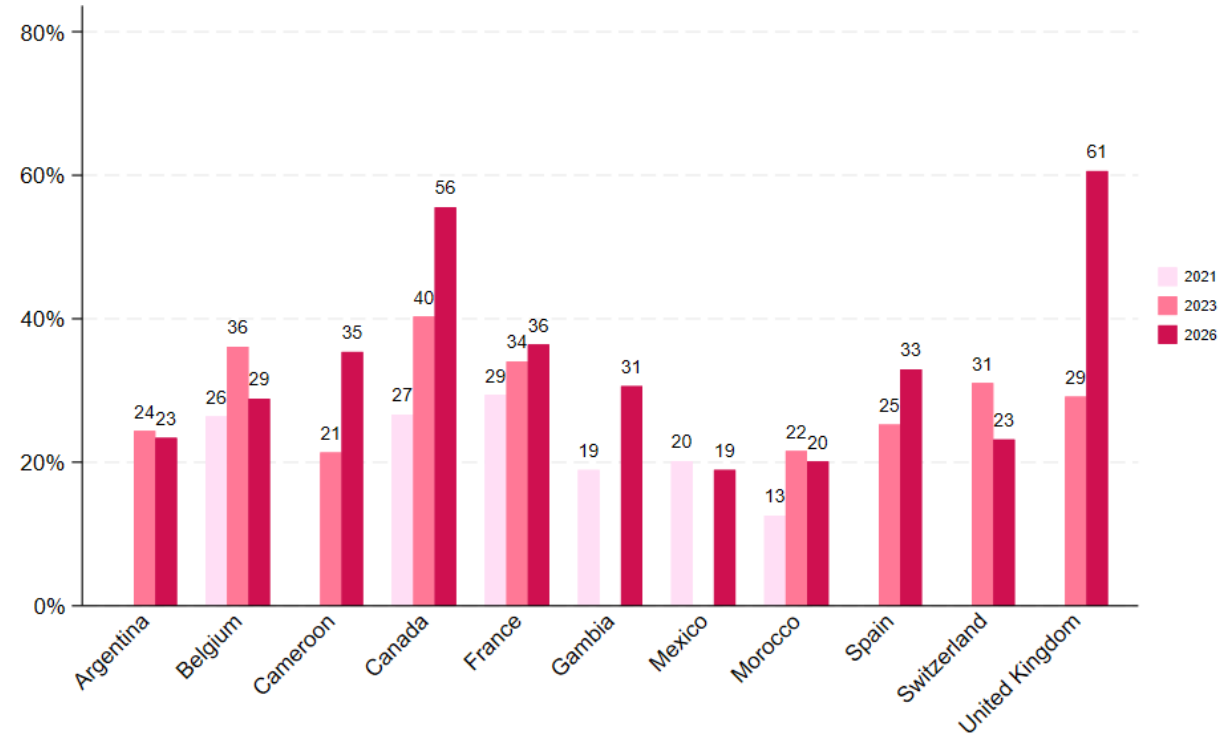


Source: I-BEST 2021/2023/2026, EI/FESP. Field: teachers

Safety at work (always/most of the time)

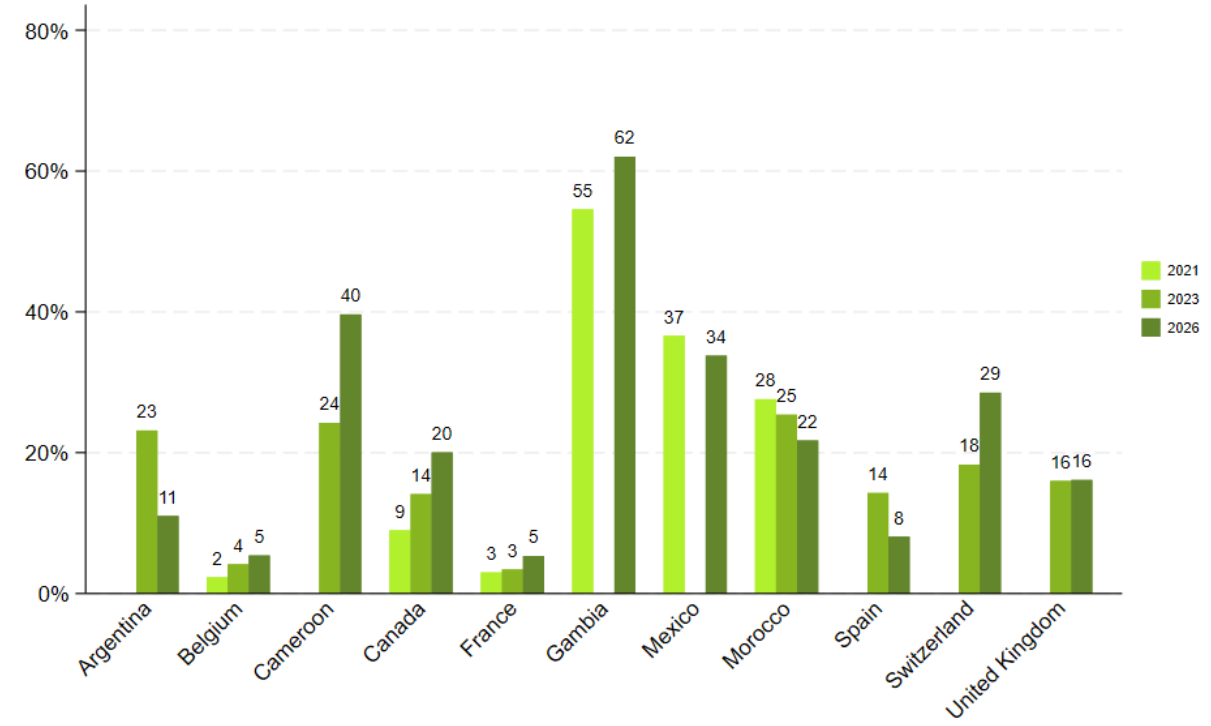


Victim of violence at work (in the last 12 months)

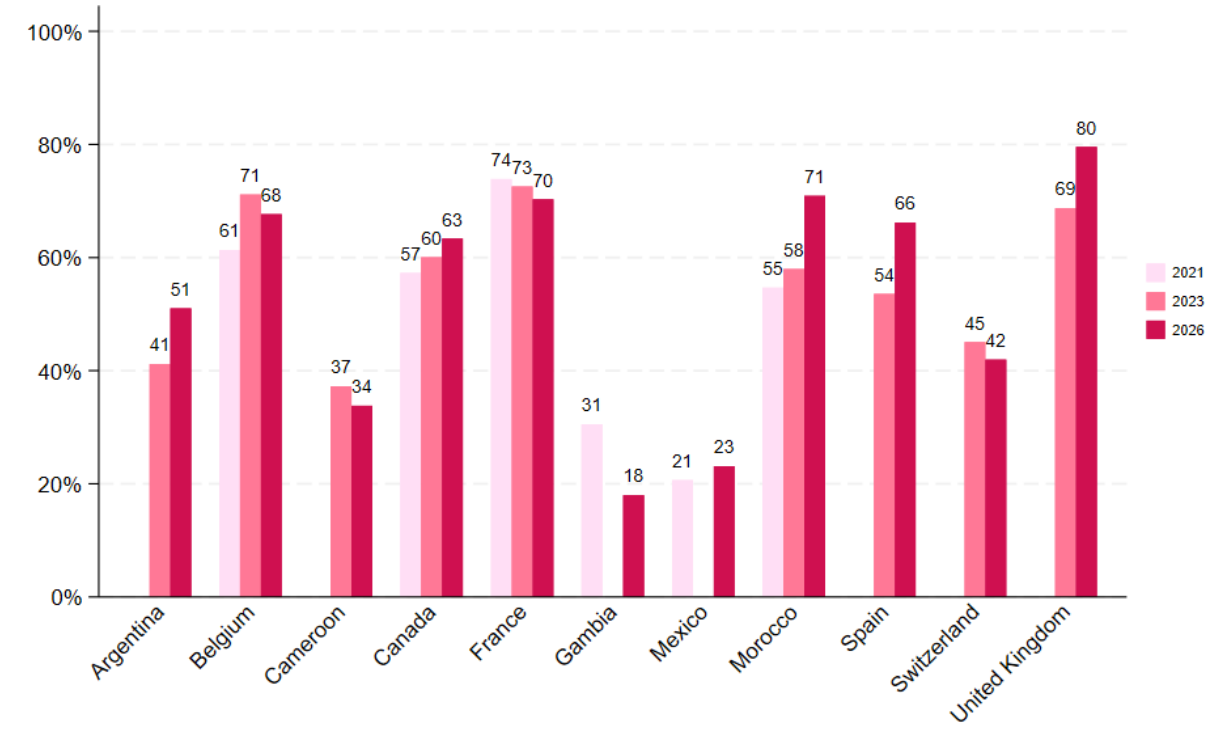


Source: I-BEST 2021/2023/2026, EI/FESP. Field: teachers

Recognition/valuation by society (agree/totally agree)

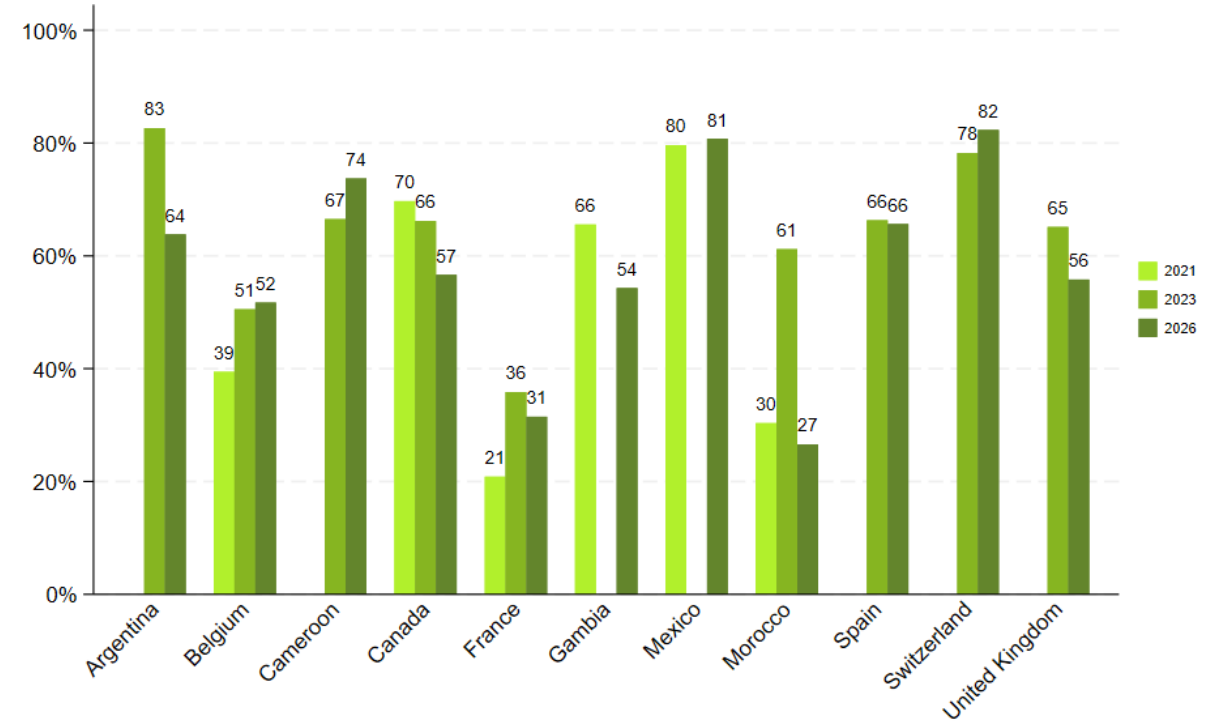


Negative impact of work on private life (often/very often/always)

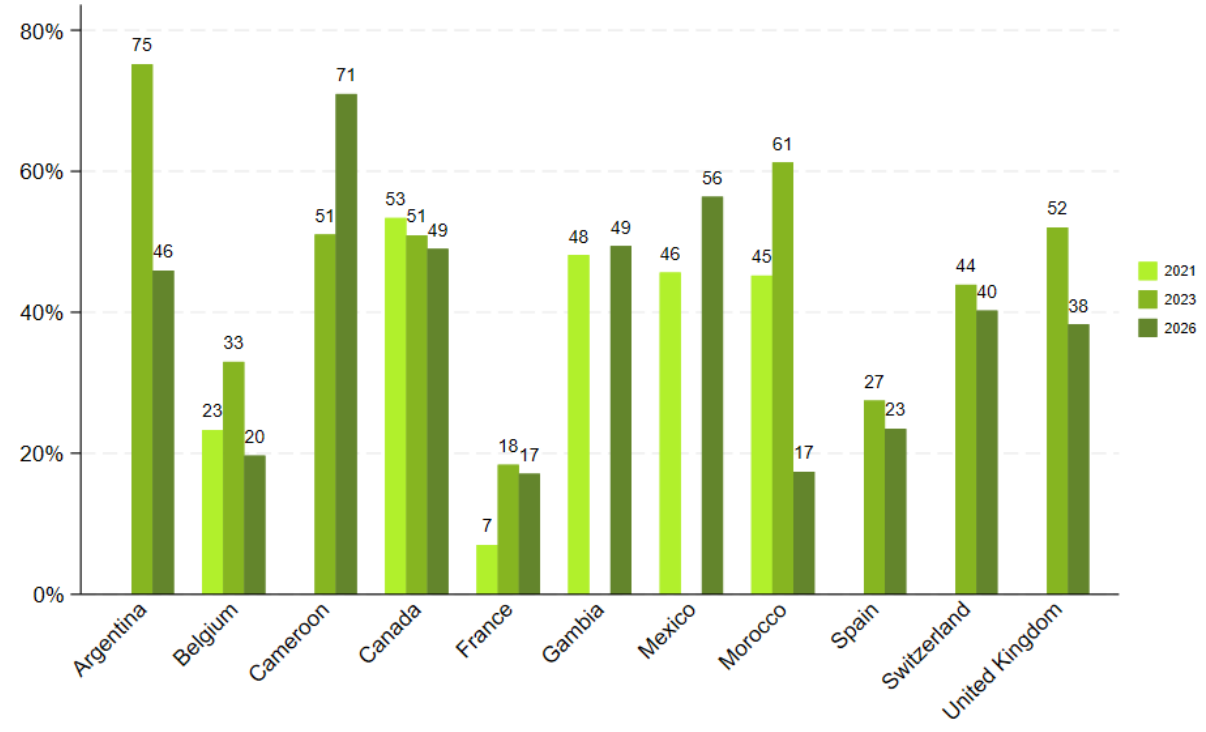


Source: I-BEST 2021/2023/2026, EI/FESP. Field: teachers

Satisfaction with training opportunities (level 1-3 out of 6)

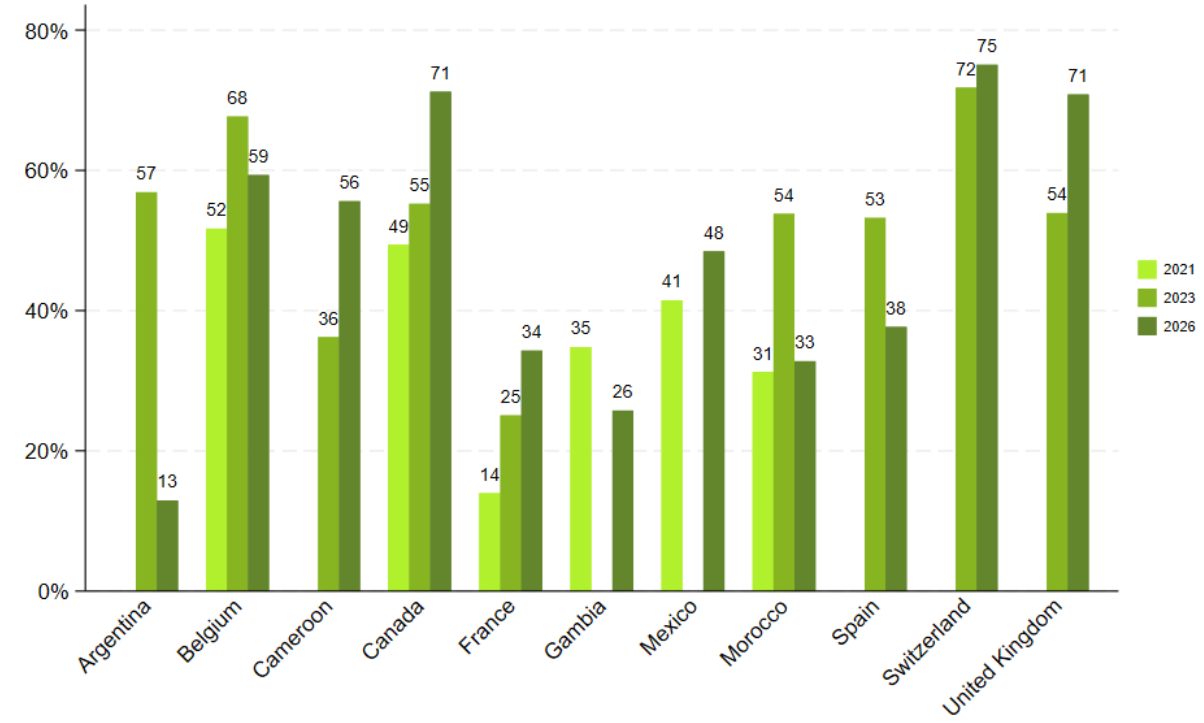


Satisfaction with opportunities for career advancement (level 1-3 out of 6)

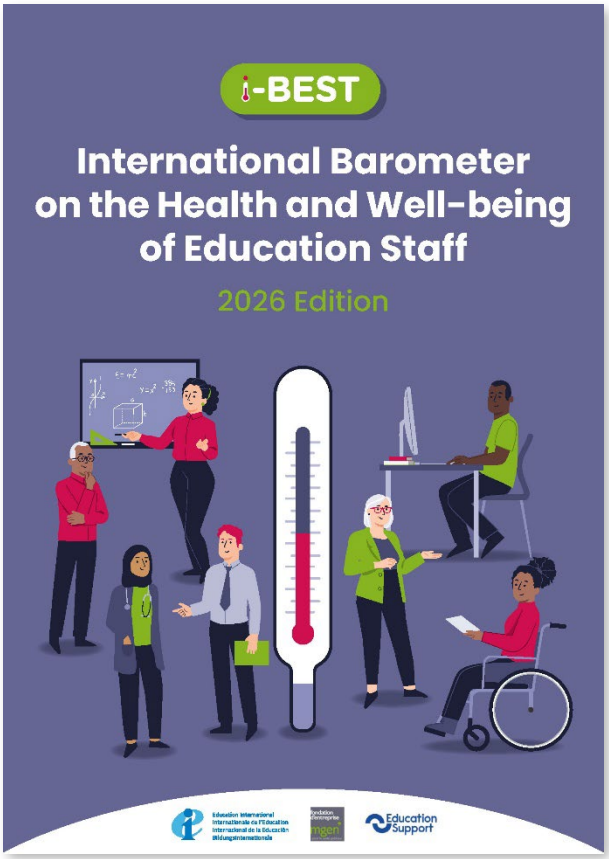


Source: I-BEST 2021/2023/2026, EI/FESP. Field: teachers

Satisfaction with salary (level 1-3 out of 6)



Source: I-BEST 2021/2023/2026, EI/FESP. Field: teachers



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