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# The transformation of work?

*WP 15 – A quantitative evaluation of changes in work in the New Member States*

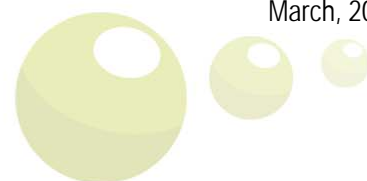
Csaba Makó  
Miklós Illéssy  
Péter Csizmadia  
ISB, New Member States

**works**  
CHANGES IN WORK

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# 1 Different Cycles of the Transformation Process in the New Member States

Comparing the impacts of the Global Value Chains restructuring in the New Member States (NMS), we have to be aware, that these post-socialist economies are representing different level of social-economic performance or success according to the various cycle of the transformation process. In the recent literature on the transformation economies, the authors make distinction between the so-called ‘first-generation’ *versus* ‘second generation’ reform or various ‘cycles’ of the transformation process (O’Dwyer-Kovalcik 2007, Makó-Illéssy 2007, Fink 2006, Frye 2002, O’Donnel 1999.)

The so-called ‘first-generation’ transformation reform refers to the shift from the state-socialist political-economic regime into the market-capitalist one. This period covers the 1990’s when Hungary together with the Czech Republic were among the winners. For example the FDI-based Hungarian economic development strategy of the early 1990’s resulted in a fast ‘destruction’ of the institutional-organisational structures of the former state socialist economy and in a fast creation of the market economy institutions. These changes are resulted – among others – in the high productivity growth of the manufacturing sector, relatively low level of unemployment rate, high share of export, *etc.* International organisations (like OECD, IMF, World Bank) considered Hungarian economy as a kind of ‘best practice’ of the CEE region and was often compared to Ireland within the EU (See Table 1.1).

**Table 1.1** Comparison of the most important economic indicators of the CEE countries

Countries	GDP growth (2001) (1990=100)	GDP/capita (2001) (PPS)	Productivity growth (1989-2001)	Productivity growth in manufac- turing sector (1989-2001)	Unemploy- ment rate (2002) ( <i>per cent</i> )	Share of export (2002) ( <i>per cent</i> )
Czech Republic	102	60	2.15	3.09	7.3	65
Poland	145	41	3.09	6.65	19.9	30
Slovakia	108	49	2.39	2.05	18.7	73
Slovenia	124	74	3.07	3.17	6.0	58
Hungary	113	54	4.05	7.68	5.9	64
Bulgaria						
EU-15	125	100	1.54	-	7.6	34

Source: Fink, 2006: 8

The so-called ‘first generation reforms’ can be illustrated by the case of Hungary. The primary drivers of the economic modernisation in Hungary are the multinational companies (MNCs) compared to which the Hungarian-owned firms performs relatively poor: at the end of the 1990’s 90 *per cent* of the Hungarian export and 80 *per cent* of the Hungarian import were performed by foreign-owned firms.

Recent trends in FDI inflows indicate that the share of Hungary in FDI targeting the Central and Eastern European (CEE) region is decreasing from the year 2000. More important, the structure of FDI is also changing: labour-intensive production activities are replaced by capital-intensive ones, the share of services and R and D activities are also growing at the expenses of the manufacturing.

The mainstream view among the Hungarian economists is the following: ‘The reserves of once successful attractive factors were exhausted. Investors interest turned to other investment targets. Under the conditions that pertained, the capital absorption capacity of the country may also have become saturated. The decline on both the demand and supply sides is interpreted here as an end of a period of capital attraction. To revive the capital inflows will require the establishment and strengthening of new attraction features.’ (Szanyi, 2003: 10).

Unfortunately, the Hungarian economic modernisation strategy failed to integrate the Hungarian SME sector into the activities of MNCs. This failure produced further inequalities in the performance of the Hungarian economy. For example, firms with mixed ownership and firms owned by foreigners are significantly more active both in product and process innovations in comparison to the Hungarian-owned companies. In order to diminish this asymmetric character of the Hungarian modernisation process based on FDI, the so-called first cycle of the transformation process should pave the road to the new or creative path of the development.<sup>1</sup> The success of this new cycle of economic development depends largely on the more active participation of the SMEs in the GVC.

Contrary to the first-generation transformation reform, the second generation reform characterises a policy package having the following key components (O’Dwyer-Kovalcik, 2007: 8):

1. steep tax cuts for business, simplification of the tax code, and a preference for flat-tax systems;
2. generous incentives to foreign investors, including long tax holidays and land grants;
3. loosening labour regulations with little consultation from organised labour;
4. funding tax cuts and incentives through a reduction in the state’s commitment to the social welfare system.

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<sup>1</sup> The word ‘creative’ refer here to the emergence of a new or learning economy and to the importance of eliminating the asymmetric economic structure sketched above.

**Table 1.2** Comparison of Second-Generation Reforms in Selected Post-Socialist Countries

Country	Tax cut	Flat Tax	Investment incentives	Reduction in State's Welfare Commitments	Reduction in Power of Organised Labour	Overall Character of 2G Reforms
Estonia	Radical	Yes	Extensive	Yes	Yes	Radical
Slovakia	Radical	Yes	Extensive	Yes	Extensive	Radical
Hungary	Moderate	No	Neutral	No	Not much	Weak
Czech Republic	Moderate	No	Neutral	No	Not much	Weak
Romania	Radical	Yes	Yes*	Yes*	Yes*	Yes*
Bulgaria						

Source: O'Dwyer-Kovalcik, 2007: 11

The Table 1.2 summarises the main indicators of the second-generation reforms in some selected post-socialist countries. In the view of O'Dwyer-Kovalcik (2007), it is too early to assess the performance of the Romanian government, its statements and early steps signal a commitment to economic policies consistent with the direction of Estonia and Slovakia.

In the followings we intend to focus on three major issues investigating the New Members States: 1) changes in work organisation, 2) working time patterns and 3) work intensity.



## 2 Changes in work organisation

According to Greenan *et al.*, (2007) the national distribution of indicators that characterises the work organisations (*e.g.* work complexity, independence in time allocation, work intensity and working conditions) are rather inconsistent at the European level. Their results show that in two Scandinavian countries (Denmark and Sweden) and in the Netherlands work tasks are complex, provide a good environment for learning and the quality of working conditions are high compared to the European average. In the Mediterranean area (Greece, Portugal and Spain), however, the working conditions are rather poor and the job complexity is weak.

If we try to capture the basic characteristics and distributions of the different work organisation models involving more variables, the picture becomes somewhat more complex. In analysing the changes in work organisation in the New Member States we used the data from the European Working Conditions Survey (EWCS) that provides a unique source of information for characterising work organisation in Europe (Valeyre *et al.*, 2007).

In the secondary analysis of the data two statistical methods were combined. Multiple correspondence analysis was applied in order to identify the structural relations between the categorical variables involved into the analysis, and it was followed by hierarchical cluster analysis to identify natural groups (clusters) of observations according to the identified criteria. The EWCS focuses on the non- agricultural market sector establishments of the EU-27 employing ten or more persons. The total sample studied consists of 9,240 salaried employees

### 2.1 Variables measuring work organisation

In order to characterise the main forms of work organisation the following 15 variables were used in the multiple correspondence and cluster analyses:

- a 3-level variable measuring the use of teamwork, distinguishing autonomous teamwork (with decisions on division on tasks by team members), non-autonomous teamwork (without decision on division on tasks by team members), and no teamwork;
- a binary variable measuring task rotation;
- two binary variables measuring autonomy in work: autonomy in the methods used and autonomy in the pace or rate at which work is carried out;
- four binary variables measuring the factors or constraints which determine the pace or rate of work: 'automatic' constraints linked to the rate as which equipment is operated or a product is displaced in the production flow; norm-based constraints linked to numerical production targets or performance targets; 'hierarchical' constraints linked to the direct control which is exercised by ones immediate superiors; and 'horizontal' con-

straints linked to way one person's work rate is dependent on the work of his or her colleagues;

- a binary variable measuring repetitiveness of tasks (less than a minute);
- a binary variable measuring the perceived task monotony;
- two binary variables measuring the way quality is controlled, which correspond to the use of precise quality standards and to self assessment of quality of work;
- a binary variable measuring the complexity of tasks;
- and two binary variables measuring learning dynamics in work, which correspond to whether the individual learns new things in his or her work and to whether the work requires problem-solving activity.

Four of these variables measure the use of the core work practices identified in the lean production model and in high performance work systems: teamwork, job rotation, employee responsibility for quality control and precise quality norms. Besides, the use of autonomous teamwork defined by the 3-level variable of teamwork is characteristic of the Scandinavian 'socio-technical systems' and of the 'learning organisation' model. Two of these variables capture whether employees engage in learning and problem-solving which are mainly characteristics of learning organisations and operating adhocracy and, to a lesser extent, characteristics of high performance work systems. One variable captures whether work tasks are complex or not and is relevant to both adhocracies and learning organisations. The forms of discretion in work that are characteristic of learning organisations, socio-technical systems, adhocracies and, to a certain extent, high performance work systems, are measured by two active variables that capture whether employees are able to choose or change their work methods and their pace of work. Four variables measuring different constraints on employee discretion in setting their pace of work, the 'automatic', 'norm-based', 'hierarchical', and 'horizontal' constraints, are interesting because they provide indicators of differences in how work is coordinated inside the companies across different forms or systems of work organisation. Automatic constraints are classic characteristics of Taylorist or mechanistic bureaucratic work settings, norm-based constraints characterise both the Taylorist (or mechanistic bureaucratic) and the lean production forms of work organisation, and hierarchical constraints characterise both Taylorist (or mechanistic bureaucratic) and simple structure forms. The horizontal constraints variable which provides a measure of whether work is carried out collectively rather than individually, distinguishes adhocracies and the lean production model. Finally, the two variables measuring task repetitiveness and task monotony capture typical features of Taylorist or mechanistic bureaucratic work settings.

In addition we used 4 supplementary variables that serve to characterise the generated factors and clusters while not contributing to their construction:

- a binary variable measuring the autonomy in the order of tasks;
- two binary variables measuring assistance in work from colleagues or from a superior or boss if asked for it;
- and a binary variable measuring indirectly the extend of just-in-time practices on the basis of demand-driven work rate constraints for employees who are never or almost never dealing directly with customers.

## 2.2 Work organisation typology

Using Ward's method of hierarchical cluster analysis on the basis of the factor scores resulting from the multiple correspondence analysis the following types of work organisations were identified.

### 2.2.1 Discretionary learning forms

The first class (38 *per cent* of the employees) is characterised by the overrepresentation of the variables measuring autonomy in work, learning and problem-solving, task complexity, and self assessment of quality of work and, to a lesser extent, autonomous teamwork. The variables reflecting monotony, repetitiveness and work pace constraints are underrepresented. This class, which we refer as the discretionary learning form of work organisation, would appear to correspond to the 'learning organisation' or the 'operating adhococracy' models and has many of the features of the 'Scandinavian socio-technical' model, notably a relative emphasis on autonomous team organisation for those employees involved in teamwork.

### 2.2.2 Lean production forms

The second class (26 *per cent* of the employees) is mainly defined by an overrepresentation of teamwork (autonomous or not) and job rotation (particularly multi-skilling), the quality management variables (self assessment of quality of work and quality norms), the indirect variable of just-in-time (measured by demand-driven constraints on work pace without or almost without direct customer dealings) and the various factors constraining work pace. This class, like the first, displays strong learning dynamics and relies on employees' contribution to problem-solving. One easily recognises here the classic attributes of the 'lean production' model. However, autonomy in work is only a little higher than in average and bracketed by the importance of work pace constraints linked to the collective nature of the work and to the requirement of respecting strict quantitative production norms. Thus, this class has much in common with what is described as a 'controlled autonomy' in work, reflecting employers' concern to balance the needs of exercising control over employees and encouraging their creativity (Coutrot, 1998; Edwards, Geary & Sisson, 2002).

### 2.2.3 Taylorist forms

The third class (20 *per cent* of the employees) corresponds in most respects to a classic characterisation of Taylorist or of 'mechanistic bureaucratic' forms of work organisation. The work situation is for the most part the opposite of that found in the discretionary learning class, with very low autonomy in work, particularly in the methods of work, low learning dynamics, low complexity and low assistance from colleagues or hierarchy, and an overrepresentation of the variables measuring constraints on the pace of work, repetitiveness and monotony of tasks, and quality norms. Interestingly, teamwork and job rotation are nearly at an average level in this class, confirming the importance of what some authors refer to as 'flexible Taylorism' (Boyer & Durand, 1993). However, team working is developed with a low level of self-organisation (on the division of tasks and the choice of

the team leader) and, in the same way, workers rotating tasks do not choose often on the division of tasks and practice more multi-tasking and less multi-skilling than in the discretionary learning and the lean production forms.

#### **2.2.4 Traditional and simple structure forms**

The fourth class (16 *per cent* of the employees) is poorly described by the variables of work organisation which are all underrepresented. This class presumably groups traditional forms of work organisation where methods are for the most part informal and non-codified. This class would also appear to correspond to a certain extent to Mintzberg's (1979) notion of 'simple organisational structure'.

There are wide differences in the importance of the four forms of work organisation across European countries, as shown in Table 1.1. which gives the percentage of employees in each country grouped in each of the four classes of work organisation forms.

The discretionary learning forms of work organisation are most developed in the Scandinavian countries (Sweden and Denmark) and the Netherlands, and to a lesser extent in the continental European countries (France, Austria, Germany, Belgium and Luxembourg), Finland and Malta, while they are little diffused in southern European countries (Spain, Portugal, Greece, Cyprus) and some eastern European countries (Bulgaria, Lithuania, Romania, Slovakia and Czech Republic).

### **2.3 The distribution of various of work organisation forms in the New Member States**

In the following session we focus on the geographical distribution of the different work organisation types in the New Members States investigation the national differences. Table 2.1 provides an overview about the incidence of the work organisation forms in the NMS.

**Table 2.1** Distribution of work organisation classes in the NMS (*per cent*)

	Work organisation classes				Total
	Discretionary Learning	Lean Production	Taylorist	Traditional or simple	
Czech Republic	28.0	26.7	22.5	22.9	100.0
Estonia	40.7	33.4	11.2	14.7	100.0
Cyprus	26.4	27.0	21.2	25.4	100.0
Latvia	33.4	34.5	17.1	15.0	100.0
Lithuania	23.5	31.1	22.0	23.4	100.0
Hungary	38.3	18.2	23.4	20.1	100.0
Malta	45.6	34.2	12.1	8.2	100.0
Poland	33.3	32.6	18.9	15.2	100.0
Slovenia	34.9	32.1	16.7	16.3	100.0
Slovakia	27.2	21.0	33.8	18.1	100.0
Bulgaria	20.6	27.2	32.7	19.5	100.0
Romania	24.	33.4	27.6	14.9	100.0
EU-27	38.	25.7	19.5	16.4	100.0

Source: EWCS, 2006

**Table 2.2** Distribution of work organisation classes in the OMS (*per cent*)

	Work organisation classes				Total
	Discretionary learning	Lean Production	Taylorist	Traditional or simple	
Belgium	43.3	24.6	16.3	15.8	100.0
Denmark	55.2	27.1	8.5	9.2	100.0
Germany	44.3	19.9	18.4	17.4	100.0
Greece	24.0	29.1	22.6	24.3	100.0
Spain	20.6	24.6	27.5	27.3	100.0
France	47.7	23.8	17.5	11.0	100.0
Ireland	39.0	29.2	11.3	20.5	100.0
Italy	36.8	24.1	24.6	14.6	100.0
Luxembourg	42.7	29.6	13.9	13.8	100.0
Netherlands	51.6	24.3	11.4	12.7	100.0
Austria	47.3	22.4	18.3	12.0	100.0
Portugal	24.9	30.3	32.5	12.3	100.0
Finland	44.9	29.9	12.6	12.7	100.0
Sweden	67.5	16.0	6.9	9.6	100.0
UK	31.7	32.4	17.7	18.2	100.0
EU-27	38.4	25.7	19.5	16.4	100.0

Source: EWCS, 2006

The discretionary learning forms of work organisation are most developed in Estonia, Hungary, Malta and Slovenia.

The lean production forms of work organisation are most in evidence in the Czech Republic, Estonia, Cyprus, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, Bulgaria and Romania while they are little spread in Hungary and Slovakia.

The Taylorist forms of work organisation are most diffused many eastern European countries, mainly Czech Republic, Cyprus, Lithuania, Hungary, Slovakia, Bulgaria and Romania, but they are solely present in Estonia and Malta.

Finally, the traditional or simple structure forms of work organisation are most in evidence in the Czech Republic, Cyprus, Lithuania, Hungary, Slovakia and Bulgaria.

Comparing the New Members States clear country clusters can be identified:

- Malta and Estonia with the overrepresentation of learning and lean organisations;
- Czech Republic, Lithuania and Romania dominated by the lean and Taylorist work organisational forms;
- Bulgaria, Cyprus and Slovakia, where the Taylorist and traditional work organisations are overrepresented.

There are, however differences between the Old and New Members States in the distribution of the different work organisation types, as well. The next table shows these differences.

**Table 2.3** Distribution of the work organisation types above the EU-27 average

Work organisation form	New Members States	Old Members States
Discretionary learning form	Estonia, Hungary, Malta, Slovenia	Belgium, Denmark, Germany, France, Ireland, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Austria, Finland, Sweden
Lean production	Czech Republic, Estonia, Cyprus, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, Bulgaria, Romania	Denmark, Greece, Luxembourg, Ireland, Portugal, Finland, UK
Taylorist form	Czech Republic, Cyprus, Lithuania, Hungary, Slovakia, Bulgaria, Romania	Spain, Italy, Portugal
Traditional or simple structure	Czech Republic, Cyprus, Lithuania, Hungary, Slovakia, Bulgaria	Germany, Greece, Spain, Ireland, UK

Source: EWCS, 2006

Comparing the differences in each form of work organisation across European countries, important national specializations can be identified. Five contrasting groups of countries can be distinguished according to their main forms of work organisation:

- the Scandinavian countries (Sweden and Denmark) and the Netherlands where the discretionary learning forms of work organisation predominate;
- the UK, Ireland, some eastern European countries (Poland, Latvia, Estonia and Slovenia) and Finland, Luxembourg and Malta, which are characterised by a relatively high development of the lean production forms of work organisation;
- Portugal and Romania with an overrepresentation of the lean production and Taylorist work organisation forms;
- Bulgaria and Slovakia where the Taylorist forms of work organisation are quite widely diffused;

- and some southern European countries (Greece, Cyprus, Spain) and eastern European countries (Lithuania and Czech Republic) with an overrepresentation of the Taylorist and traditional or simple structure forms of work organisation.



### 3 Working time flexibility

Working time flexibility covers various aspects of working time issues: working time arrangements, unusual working hours, overtime and part-time work among others. According to the data of the European Survey on Working Times (ESWT) there are significant differences among the European countries in the overall incidence of various working time arrangements (Ramioul & Huys, 2007). Even the New Member States follow different patterns. Latvia is close to the Northern countries (Sweden, Finland), where about two thirds of firms can be described as flexible, while the Czech Republic and Poland is closer to the Continental countries (France, Austria, Germany and the Netherlands. Hungary and Cyprus show the characteristics of the Mediterranean group of countries (Spain, Greece, Portugal) with less than half of the enterprises offering flexible working time arrangements.

As for the compensation of overtime work the New Member countries can be characterised by the dominance of the financial forms of the compensation, which is also true for the UK and the Mediterranean countries, in the Northern part of Europe the compensation by time off has become more prevalent.

The share of unusual working hours among the employees also shows a heterogeneous picture. The prevalence of employees working unusual working hours is extremely high in the UK and above the average in the Czech Republic, Cyprus and Latvia. At the other end of the scale are the Mediterranean countries to be found (Portugal, Spain and Greece). Hungary is closer to this pattern.

Other aspect of the flexibility is part time work. The share of part time workers is relatively high in Poland, while Latvia, the Czech Republic, Hungary and Cyprus represent the average (Ramioul & Huys, 2007).

In order to gain more detailed picture on this rather complex issue, further analysis was applied. In doing so, two sources were combined. The first one is based on the secondary analysis of the European Survey on Working Times (ESWT) that has been carried out by the Chung *et al.*, (2007). In their analysis the researchers investigated the frequency of such working time flexibility indicators, like part time workers, irregular hours, flexible working time, overtime, childcare leave, long-term leave availability, early retirement options, facilities for work-life balance and flexible work contracts. Based on these variables latent cluster analysis was applied and three main country clusters were identified: 1) countries representing high flexibility 2) countries representing intermediate flexibility and 3) countries with low flexibility. Table 3.1 shows the three flexibility country clusters.

**Table 3.1** Country clusters by working time flexibility (EU-21; ESWT: 2004-2005)

Flexibility cluster	Countries
High flexibility	Belgium, Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland, France, Sweden, UK
Intermediate flexibility	Austria, Cyprus, Germany, Ireland, Latvia, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Poland, Slovenia
Low flexibility	Greece, Hungary, Italy, Portugal, Spain

Source: Chung, Kerkhofs & Ester, 2007

The table illustrates well that the European companies deal with working time arrangement in a rather different way. Within the NMS the companies operating in the Czech Republic belong to the high flexibility cluster providing flexible working time arrangements accompanied by long term leave and early retirement possibilities. The Latvia, Polish and Slovenian companies however can be characterised as 'intermediate' from the viewpoint of flexibility. The firms in Latvia and Poland support long term leave, early retirement and measures to facilitate work-life balance, while their Slovenian counterparts are operating with unusual working hours and overtime. Hungary, like the most of the 'Mediterranean' countries, belongs to the group of low flexibility representing very modest working time arrangements.

### 3.1 Working hours and part-time work

The second source of the analysis of the working time flexibility was the European Working Conditions Survey. In this section we intend to review the diffusion of the working hours and part time work in the NMS. According to the data gained from the various waves of the EWCS, there has been a drop in white-collar male part-time, and rise in female blue-collar part time. Thus, during this transition period the NMSs have moved towards the marked gender difference in part-time work found in all EU-15 countries (Burchell *et al.*, 2007).

There has also been an increase in the percentage of male employees (or, more specifically, white-collar men) working more than 48 hours per week, but not for women; the increase in long weekly hours for blue-collar female employees is offset by a drop in for white-collar workers. This is a very different pattern to the EU-15 countries, where there has been a drop in long-hours work over the period 1995-2005.

In both cases we see evidence of these countries becoming more similar to EU-15 countries in their gender gap in working time. The exact mechanism for this change is not clear, but this might be a function of a dismantling of the welfare and childcare regimes that had facilitated women's employment under state socialism. Without this support, families may have regressed to a more traditional domestic division of labour causing a polarisation in the working hours of women and men.

### 3.2 Work-Life balance

In order to gain more detailed picture, the results of the 'Household, Work and Flexibility' (HWF) research project were also examined here. The HWF project was carried out between 2000 and 2003 in the Netherland, UK, Sweden, Slovenia, Czech Republic and Hungary in order to ensure comparative analysis on how changing forms of flexibility affect work and family life. According to the survey results within the investigated time period people in the Czech Republic, Hungary and Slovenia worked the longest hours. In all countries men worked on average longer hours than women did. In all countries women worked less overtime compared to men, and in Slovenia and Hungary they had less unusual working hours than the men. In terms of the control over their working time, women reported less control in all investigated countries than men did. In all countries women performed the domestic work. The largest differences between men and women were found in Hungary and the Czech Republic, while the lowest in the Netherlands and Sweden (Jager *et al.*, 2003). Table 3.2 provides an overview about the satisfaction with working hours by country and gender.

**Table 3.2** Satisfaction with working hours by country and gender (*per cent*)

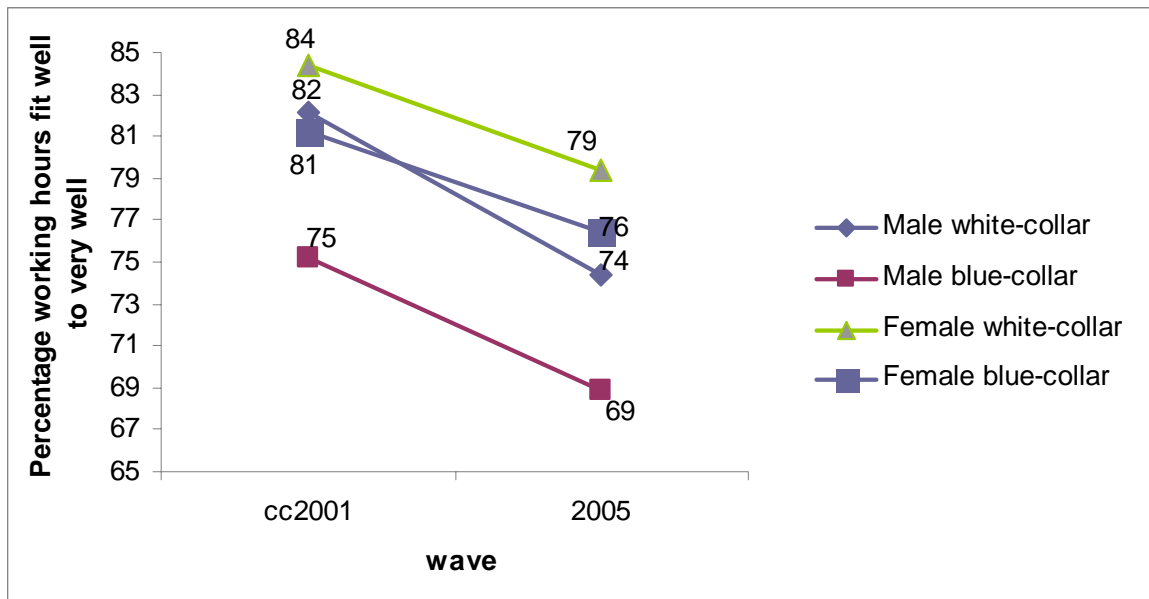
	Netherlands		UK		Sweden		Slovenia		Czech republic		Hungary	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	female
Very dissatisfied	1.7	0.4	7.0	4.4	0.9	1.8	2.1	1.8	4.9	5.5	3.9	3.2
Dissatisfied	5.7	2.2	10.5	7.5	10.0	9.3	17.1	8.9	15.4	19.3	12.1	11.5
Neither - nor	7.7	5.1	11.7	3.1	19.1	18.2	16.6	17.8	14.3	16.9	21.1	19.3
Satisfied	27.8	20.6	40.4	33.2	38.4	34.1	60.6	59.2	50.5	39.3	47.8	48.6
Very satisfied	57.2	71.7	30.4	51.8	31.7	36.6	3.6	12.4	14.9	19.0	15.1	17.4

Source: Jager *et al.*; 263

Women in Slovenia were more satisfied with their working hours than men; in Hungary the proportion of satisfied women and men was more or less equal, while in the Czech Republic women were less satisfied than men. On the other hand the ratio of very dissatisfied women and men was relatively high in the Czech Republic.

If we compare the EWCS data with the results summarised very briefly above, the followings can be seen. There has been a clear reduction in the perceived fit between work and non-work in all the sex/collar categories of employees in these NMSs. The percentage in the lowest satisfaction category has remained low and little changed, but there has been a marked drop in the percentage describing the fit as good or very good for both males and females, and for both white-collar and blue-collar workers (Figure 3.1). This is somewhat puzzling, given that some of these groups had experienced a reduction in long-hours work that we know to have a negative effect on work-life balance, and others had experienced an increase in part-time work that is associated with increased satisfaction with work-life balance. This might support the suggestion that, where we have observed reductions in working time in the eight 2004 NMSs, these have been forced by domestic circumstances (such as a reduction in state-funded childcare) rather than being chosen to increase the quality of non-work life.

**Figure 3.1** Employees whose working hours fit in well to very well with family or social commitments outside work, NMS



Source: EWCS, 2005



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