



**Wieteke Conen**

# The value of work in a changing labour market

An analysis of workers' surveys 1997-2015

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Contact: W.S.Conen@uva.nl

General contact: aias-hsi@uva.nl

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Wieteke Conen

AIAS-HSI, University of Amsterdam

Amsterdam Institute for Advanced labour Studies – Hugo Sinzheimer Institute (AIAS-HSI), University of Amsterdam.

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## Abstract

Over the past decades, major changes took place in advanced labour markets. This paper analyses recent trends in work values, employment commitment and job outcomes across time. Data was used from the 1997, 2005 and 2015 International Social Survey Programme module on Work Orientation for France, Germany, Great-Britain, the Netherlands, Norway, Sweden and the United States. The findings in general seem to indicate that in advanced economies, workers have developed a more non-financial and intrinsic orientation towards work across time and both extrinsic and intrinsic rewards largely seem to have improved, although these changes have been accompanied by an increased work strain and potentially more insecure nature of (enough) work. The findings provide no solid evidence that male and female workers have converged in terms of work values or job outcomes between 1997 and 2015.

**Key words:** Cross-national comparison, employment commitment, extrinsic and intrinsic rewards, job quality, work orientation, work values

# 1. Introduction

Over the past decades, major changes have taken place in the labour market in advanced economies. Not only the nature of work transformed as a result of – amongst others – technological developments and globalisation, but also the size and structure of the labour market changed markedly under the influence of for instance the sharp increase in women's labour force participation and demographic changes (such as population ageing and immigration). Workers and employers coped with profound changes in the organisation of work (including a trend towards more flexibility and out-sourcing) and there was a shift within families with respect to the balance between work and family lives. Media and experts strongly focus on how various macro-level developments affect the quantity of jobs. This research aims to examine whether individual's valuations of work have changed over time and whether the 'utility' they derive from their jobs – both in pecuniary and non-pecuniary terms – has altered.

Although scientists, employers and employees share the notion that how work is organised has radically changed, we have yet to arrive at a coherent picture of the implications of these developments (Kalleberg, 2011; Osterman, 2013). Some earlier studies have found – at odds with modernisation theory - an increasing appreciation of especially extrinsic values in advanced economies (for an overview, see Conen and De Beer, 2018). In explanatory terms, Kalleberg and Marsden (2013) indicated that in the US groups most vulnerable to insecurity were most apt to place high importance on income and security. Such findings, thus far predominantly found in liberal regime countries, may call for a rethinking of contemporary policy design in the area of income support and social security provisions, and whether and how developments – and perhaps with it the potential need for policy action – differs between advanced countries. This paper aims to contribute to this field by examining the variation regarding the value of work for various groups of workers within their national contexts.

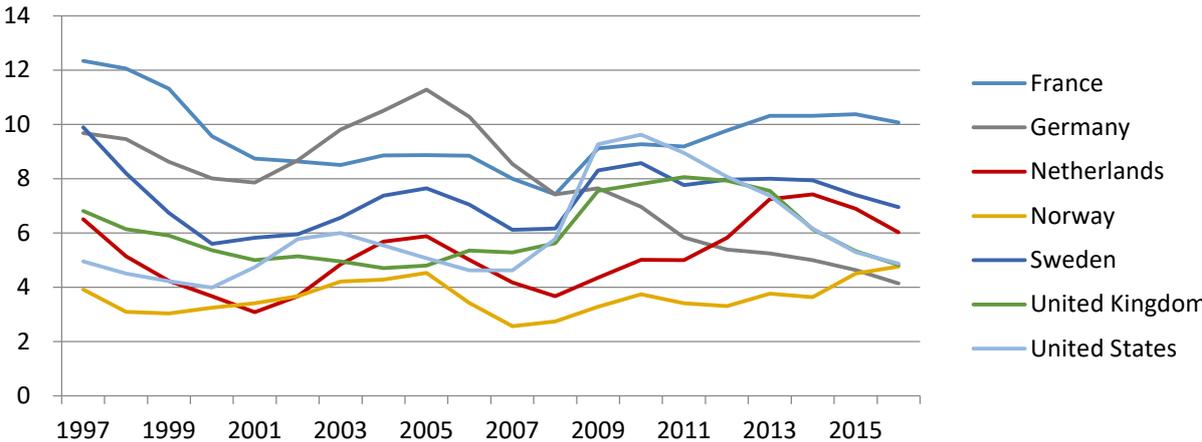
Various methods have been used to examine the nature and causes of changes in valuations of work. Many studies use longitudinal panel data from one country to address transitions in valuations of work across time and during the life course (e.g. Johnson, 2001; Jürgess, 2003; Highhouse et al., 2010). Other studies use repeated cross-sectional data to examine broad net trends in valuations of work in either one country (e.g. Harpaz & Fu, 2002; Handel, 2005; Rose, 2005; Gallie et al., 2012; Kalleberg & Marsden, 2013), or to examine various countries over a relatively short period of time (e.g. Clark, 2005; Rose, 2005; Hult & Stattin, 2009). In this paper, we analyse repeated cross-sectional data from the International Social Survey Programme (ISSP) for various advanced economies covering a relatively long and recent period of time (i.e. 1997 to 2015), building on and adding to earlier studies conducted in the pre-crisis period (e.g. Olsen et al., 2010; Hauff & Kirchner, 2015).

In this study, “value of work” in the first place refers to ‘general’ valuations of work, which is captured in a concept like ‘employment commitment’ (e.g. ‘I would enjoy having a paid job even if I did not need the money’) and attributes individuals consider of importance in work (‘work values’ or ‘work orientations’). General valuations of work are not necessarily dependent on employment status. Second, “value of work” may also refer to the value individuals derive from their own work, which is captured through extrinsic and intrinsic rewards from work (‘job outcomes’). These concepts are by their nature restrictedly applicable to those individuals currently employed. In other words: the general level refers to the embeddedness and the role work (or work values) play in people’s lives, whereas the individual level refers to utility derived directly from one’s own job.

In principle, the value of work can be both about the value to an *individual* and to *society*. The value of work at the level of the individual addresses the question to what extent and how work has pecuniary and non-pecuniary value to an individual. Societal value refers to the extent to which work adds to the functioning and prosperity of society. In this paper we focus on the value of work to an individual.

At the macro-level, economic forces create contexts within which people seek - and find - different things from work. When economic prospects are prosperous, people may express for instance greater non-financial employment commitment or hold different values and find different rewards from work than when economic times are tough. Kalleberg and Marsden (2013) find support for the ‘problematic rewards explanation’, asserting that workers tend to place greater importance on those work values that they find most difficult to realize. For example, income and job security are more likely to be valued when unemployment is high, since then jobs and income are more problematic.

Figure 1 Harmonised unemployment rate, 1997-2016



Source: OECD Labour Market Statistics, 2019

Over the period between 1997 and 2016, there have been both expansion and contraction in the different national labour market, as reflected for instance in fluctuations of the overall unemployment rate (see Figure 1). In several countries, both 1997 and 2005 (i.e. the first and second ISSP wave) were marked by a peak in unemployment, while 2015 (i.e. the third

ISSP wave) seems a period of more diminishing unemployment levels in several countries. However, the unemployment rate does not show a synchronic course for all countries, making it difficult to assess the impact of economic forces on aggregated outcomes.

In general, valuations of work are unlikely to be gender-neutral. Gender ideology and perceived consequences of women working (such as the belief that a pre-school child is likely to suffer if his or her mother works) will have a different impact on the value of work in the lives of men and women. Furthermore, socialization theory and social role theory predict that women will value other job facets than men. Earlier research has shown that the nature of gender-role attitudes varies substantially between nations (see for example Scott et al., 1996; Treas & Widmer, 2000; Crompton et al., 2005). Initially, there seemed to be a trend in most advanced economies towards consistently more egalitarian gender role attitudes, but research shows a flattening and even reversed trend in some countries in more recent times (Scott et al., 1996; Brewster & Padavic, 2000; Brooks & Bolzendahl, 2004; Van Egmond et al., 2010; Cotter et al., 2011), which has led to the belief that there may be arising a new cultural frame in advanced economies with respect to women's employment, blending aspects of feminism and traditional familism (Cotter et al., 2011).

## 2. Theoretical background

### 2.1 Meaningful work from a heterodox economics perspective

In standard neoclassical welfare economics meeting needs in the area of work is about meeting personal preferences. In modern happiness economics it is about making workers 'feeling happy'. However, as put forward in Spencer (2015), the notion of meaningful work from a heterodox economics perspective is rather premised on a deeper understanding of human needs and therewith about meeting fundamental human needs. He argues that meaningful work is an encompassing concept, including extrinsic and intrinsic aspects of work which are directly related to the characteristics of work. "It entails seeing work in terms of the needs of workers and asks us to consider whether work matches up to those needs. Meaningful work, in essence, means work that enables workers to realise their potential or, in the apt phrase of Nussbaum (1999, p. 235), 'to work as humans'" (Spencer, 2015, p. 685). 'Humanisation of work' also has a central role in the works of Jahoda (1982).

Extrinsic values and rewards from work (such as pay, the availability and generosity of work-related benefits, the hours of work and security of employment) can influence the extent to which workers can find meaning in work and there may be interdependencies between them. For instance, high-paid jobs may be less meaningful when they are endured by workers under conditions of job insecurity. Work is improbable to be meaningful if it thwarts the ability of workers to meet their material needs. "Being able to fulfil one's potential in capitalist society entails being able to earn enough to live. In this sense, pay and other

pecuniary aspects of work must be included in the conception of meaningful work” (Spencer, 2015, p. 684). In addition meaningful work encompasses an array of non-pecuniary aspects of work. Meaningful work can bring intrinsic benefits of solidarity, community, purpose and satisfaction, adding to the basic advantage of being able to meet material needs through work. Intrinsic factors may be interrelated with extrinsic factors. For instance, high-paid jobs may be less meaningful when performed under oppressive physical conditions. Meaningful work is thus a joint product of the extrinsic and intrinsic values and rewards as they exist; which factors matter most as well as its interdependencies are mostly an empirical exercise.

## 2.2 Theories on human needs

Theories on human needs provide a framework for studying general valuations of work from a socio-economic perspective. Theories on human needs tend to distinguish between two types of needs: on the one hand basic needs (i.e. physiological, safety and security needs) and on the other hand ‘higher’ needs (such as needs for love and belonging, esteem and self-actualization). The roots of these theories go back to Maslow’s (1954) need-gratification theory. Many researchers have amended this framework since, but the contours have largely remained the same (Van den Broeck et al., 2017). Applying Maslow’s hierarchy of needs to the work domain, basic needs are considered to be related to extrinsic valuations, whereas ‘higher’ needs correspond to social and intrinsic valuations (see Figure 2).

Inglehart (1977, 1997) postulates that in post-modern societies people have increasingly tended to take survival for granted and that such societies experience a value change from values related to economic achievement (extrinsic) to values related to enhancing self-expression (intrinsic). The “modernisation perspective” describes the process of an increase in more ‘modern’ values, which tend to be connected to ‘individualistic’ orientations such as self-determination and personal development.

Figure 2 Maslow’s hierarchy of needs in relation to the value of work



## 2.3 Rewards from work

In line with Bell's (1976) optimistic analysis of the post-industrial society, one school of thought (termed Post-Fordist theory or mutual gain literature) argues that new work systems have led to an improved quality of working life especially in terms of intrinsic rewards (such as job challenge and autonomy), working conditions (such as decreased physical workload) and in terms of material rewards (such as wages). In this view, changing product and labour markets, diffusion of information technology and participative management strategies – amongst others – lead to job enrichment and mutual improvements for both employers and employees (Handel, 2005; Greenan et al., 2013). In contrast, the critical view (also termed Neo-Fordist theory), breathes Braverman's (1974) more pessimistic analysis of the post-industrial society and claims that the limited gains that may have accrued to employees are outweighed by increased effort requirements and insecurity. They argue that recent changes in labour markets and work organizations have put individuals under greater pressure and that for many workers material conditions (such as pay and job security) have actually decreased and earnings inequality grew (Handel, 2005; Kalleberg, 2009; Greenan et al., 2013). Outsourcing, the hiring of temporary workers, pay-rolling and platforms have fragmented the workplace both for workers and employers and this new organisation of work leads to a more flexible, fragmented and insecure nature of contemporary labour. In this view, employers responded to the economic climate after the post-war growth period “by rolling back many of labor’s post-war gains and by institutionalizing a “lean and mean” philosophy of employment relations” (Handel, 2005, p.67).

## 2.4 Hypotheses

The preceding discussion suggests several hypotheses about changes in the value of work in recent times that frame our further analyses. We hypothesize that:

1. In advanced economies, workers have developed a more non-financial work motivation and intrinsic orientation towards work across time;
2. a. Under the Post-Fordist theory or mutual gain literature: in advanced economies, rewards from work have predominantly undergone positives changes over time;  
b. Under the Neo-Fordist theory: in advanced economies, rewards from work have predominantly undergone negative changes over time.

Adherence to the ‘needs principle’ may translate into different values of work for men and women. Vecerník (2006) for instance describes the situation that under the former communist regime in Czechoslovakia women’s earnings were conceived “as necessary but supplementary to family income ... their work was regarded as secondary by society and the related expectations from work were moderate and focused on social contacts” (p.1225-1226). This description relates to a hierarchy of needs in the sense that a women’s job in this context contains less elements of the ‘survival’ function than a men’s job. In terms of work outcomes, earlier studies found a positive job satisfaction and a negative work quality

differential of women as compared to men (Sousa-Poza & Sousa-Poza, 2000; Green et al., 2013). Following from these gendered differences, we expect the value of work to differ substantially within and between (groups of) men and women. With the increasing labour force participation of women and increase in single person households we hypothesize that:

3. In advanced economies, male and female workers have converged in terms of orientations towards work across time.
4. In advanced economies, male and female workers have converged in terms of work outcomes across time.

## 3. Method

### 3.1 Data and measures

Data was drawn from the 1997, 2005 and 2015 ISSP module on Work Orientation for France, Germany, Great-Britain, the Netherlands<sup>1</sup>, Norway, Sweden and the United States. The advanced countries included cover different types of Western regimes (e.g. United states and Great-Britain representing Esping-Andersen's (1990) liberal regime type, Germany and France the corporatist regime, Norway and Sweden the social-democratic regime and the Netherlands a 'hybrid' regime). Workers from different countries face different labour markets and institutional restrictions and policies set out by their governments, which may influence their orientations and valuations of work. Findings have been mostly based on studies in liberal regime countries; in this paper we also distinguish other types of welfare states - to check for differences in developments in orientations and valuations of work and developments therein. For further description of the data, see the GESIS Data Archive (<https://www.gesis.org/issp/modules/issp-modules-by-topic/work-orientations/>). Analyses were restricted to individuals aged 18-59 years working for pay.

Departing from the considerations as outlined in the theoretical section we constructed a framework for analysing the value of work as shown in Figure 3.

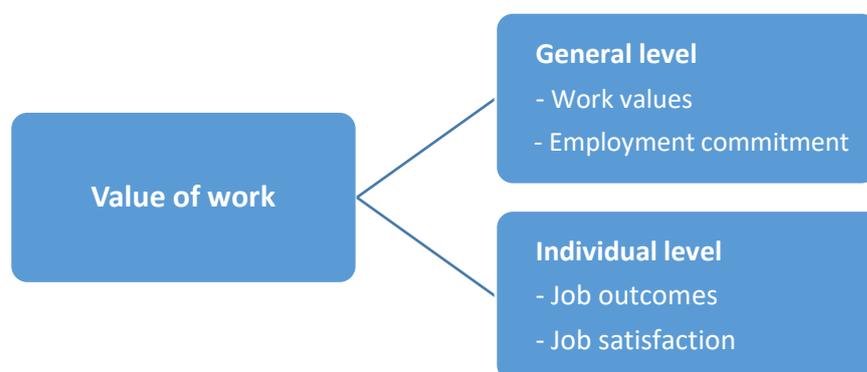


Figure 3 A framework for analysing the value of work

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<sup>1</sup> In the Netherlands the 2015 ISSP module on Work Orientation was collected in 2016

There is not one variable, nor a clear set of variables, that can undisputedly be thought of as summarising what constitutes “the value of work” to individuals. The main concepts analysed in this paper, capturing different dimensions of the value of work are:

### 3.1.1 General valuation of work: work values and employment commitment

‘Work values’ signify the importance individuals attribute to various job facets and shed light on the desirable states and goals that individuals seek through working (‘in general’, rather than from a particular job). Work values have also been termed job expectations, job preferences, job preference orientations, job values, judgements about work and (subjective) work goals. The most commonly applied classification divides individuals’ work values into an intrinsic and an extrinsic work orientation.

Extrinsic values (or security, material or instrumental values) refer to aspects such as job security or income. Intrinsic values (or self-actualization or cognitive work values) from work encompass multiple aspects. In this study, intrinsic values relate to aspects such as having an interesting job and work that is useful to society. Individuals and groups of individuals assign different significance to particular aspects of work, which may reflect variations in social norms and cultures as well as opportunities to realize pecuniary and non-pecuniary rewards from work. Earlier research shows two consistently dominant work values to be ‘interesting work’ and ‘good pay’ across countries, gender and age groups (e.g. Harpaz & Fu, 2002; Kallberg & Marsden, 2013) .

Eight values were continuously asked in all ISSP waves of data collection (i.e. ‘job security’, ‘high income’, ‘good advancement opportunities’, ‘interesting job’, ‘independently working’, ‘to help other people’, ‘useful to society’ and ‘decide times of work’). The measurement of extrinsic values is composed of the following two facets (answering categories: ‘1’ very important and ‘5’ not important at all):

1. How important is...—job security.
2. How important is...—high income.

The measurement of intrinsic values is composed of the following two facets, as they are considered to essentially relate most to a need for satisfaction, community, solidarity or purpose through work:

3. How important is...—an interesting job.
4. How important is...—a job that is useful to society.

Employment commitment refers to the desire to work for work’s sake and is designed to indicate the degree to which a person finds other values in working besides merely financial ones. “In this research tradition, which refers back to Warr (1982) and Jahoda (1982), modern employment is considered to be a potential source of higher social and psychological values” (Hult and Stattin, 2009, p. 109). Earlier research has shown that non-financial employment commitment (NFEC) is generally high in advanced economies (for an overview, see Conen & De Beer, 2018). Women generally display higher levels of NFEC than

do men in the working population and NFEC declines for both sexes as people approach retirement age (Hult & Stattin, 2009). In this study, the measure is composed of two items:

1. A job is just a way to earn money—no more.
2. I would enjoy having a paid job even if I did not need the money

Both items can vary between '1' strongly disagree and '5' strongly agree with the statement (item 1 in NFEC is reversed). Given the low reliability measures in various studies on non-financial employment commitment based on the 2-item scale (Cronbach's alpha tends to be below 0,5), we follow the alternative as put forward by Hult and Edlund (2008) and identify respondents with low and high employment commitment profiles. I.e. we categorised respondents with a high score on item 1 and a low score on item 2 as workers with low NFEC and respondents with a low score on item 1 and a high score on item 2 as workers with high NFEC.

### 3.1.2 Individual level: rewards from work

Job characteristics or job quality provide insight into dimensions of the value of work and partly follow similar distinctions as work values, such as job characteristics on the extrinsic versus intrinsic dimension, but also may include for instance working conditions, health and safety and training provisions. Warr's "vitamin model" (1987) states that some job characteristics linearly relate to 'good jobs', such as earnings or the valued social position (like vitamins C and E), while other only if present within bounds, such as worker's opportunities for skill use or variety (like vitamins A and D). Job quality as a whole is a complex concept to measure and there is not a single accepted definition in the literature.

Extrinsic rewards refer to aspects such as job security, income and hours worked. We analyse the question whether workers are able to realise their preferred number of working hours. The measurement of extrinsic rewards is – similarly as with work values - composed of the following two facets (answering categories: '1' strongly agree and '5' strongly disagree):

1. My job is secure
2. My income is high

Intrinsic rewards from work encompass multiple aspects. We analyse whether working conditions put at risk the health of workers (including both hard physical and stressful work). The measurement of intrinsic rewards is – similarly as with intrinsic work values – composed of the following two facets:

3. My job is interesting
4. My job is useful to society.

## 3.2 Weighting

In the analyses we weighted the data to ensure observations are representative for the population of workers in the different countries in terms of gender, age and educational attainment level. Weights were constructed according to the population of workers aged 18-59 years in the seven countries<sup>2</sup>. National-level statistics on gender and age groups were obtained from OECD labour force data and statistics on educational attainment (i.e. ‘years in school’) were obtained from the UNESCO Institute for Statistics, a source of internationally-comparable education data. To present results at the pooled level, we constructed an additional weighting factor taking into account the net sample sizes of the different countries in the various years; otherwise large sample countries would have a relatively high weight in the findings.

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<sup>2</sup> The upper limit of 59 years of age was adopted to avoid influence on results due to the variation in (early) exit cultures. From the 1990s onward, various governments have concentrated on reversing early exit cultures, but the public pension age has lingered around age 60 (for both sexes or women) in various countries, while raised relatively fast and being substantially higher in others.

## 4. Results

### 4.1 General valuations of work in historical-comparative perspective

General valuations of work refer to the *importance* of work and work facets and is captured in concepts such as attributes individuals consider of importance in work ('work values') and the degree to which a person finds other value in working besides merely financial ones ('employment commitment'). In this section, we analyse information on work values and employment commitment from 1997 to 2015 to assess changes in the importance workers in advanced economies attach to various work characteristics.

#### 4.1.1 Work values

Work values may be among the concepts suffering from the fact that individuals from different countries "scale" responses differently (Hofstede, 1985). Hauff and Kirchner (2015), studying work value patterns, find a relatively high share of what they term 'high demanders' among American respondents; individuals who value every work dimension to be 'very important' with a high probability. Although a high importance of both extrinsic and intrinsic work values may be the effect of a comparatively low socio-economic security system combined with high individualism (fostering the importance of values in both the area of income and security and independent work), it may also indicate Americans have different response patterns. Some authors have circumvented the problem of national differences in response patterns by focusing on trends rather than levels in the value of work (e.g. Corneo, 2012; Green & Tsitsianis, 2005; Lopes et al., 2014). We follow the same logic in the discussion of findings.

In this section, we distinguish between the extrinsic and intrinsic rewards from work as they exist in jobs. Table 1 shows the answers of workers to the question: "For each of the following, please tick one box to show how important you personally think it is in a job".

Table 1 Work values in historical-comparative perspective  
(in 1997, 2005 and 2015; percentages 'very important' or 'important')

Regime	Country	High income			Job security			Interesting job			Useful to society		
		1997	2005	2015	1997	2005	2015	1997	2005	2015	1997	2005	2015
Corporatist	France	77.10	84.13**	83.24**	92.32	92.63	93.48	97.95	97.85	98.45	63.88	66.92	67.09
	Germany	80.37	84.23*	76.28*	97.38	98.02	97.84	97.81	95.86*	97.20	58.52	71.79**	69.94**
Hybrid	Netherlands	60.65	63.37	57.39	88.91	89.22	88.71	95.28	90.74**	89.80**	67.18	62.74*	65.11
Liberal	Great Britain	76.74	75.43	67.21**	97.11	94.88	95.93	95.73	95.61	94.15	64.50	65.95	70.20*
	United States	81.22	78.54	82.42	95.20	93.62	98.14**	95.68	94.78	91.84**	78.11	90.44**	88.25**
Social-democratic	Norway	69.88	71.59	64.20**	94.19	93.12	94.49	97.15	97.90	97.21	62.49	59.07*	65.81*
	Sweden	74.27	77.64	71.48	91.83	92.15	92.10	96.48	96.45	96.08	61.20	54.62**	60.85
<b>Total</b>		<b>74.43</b>	<b>76.63**</b>	<b>71.78**</b>	<b>92.48</b>	<b>92.55</b>	<b>93.89*</b>	<b>96.59</b>	<b>95.60**</b>	<b>94.97**</b>	<b>65.00</b>	<b>67.61**</b>	<b>69.79**</b>

Note: \*\* (\*) = significant difference compared to 1997 at the 1% (5%) level

Source: ISSP 1997, 2005 and 2015, own calculations

Extrinsic values are measured by “high income” and “job security”. Intrinsic values are measured by “an interesting job” and “a job that is useful to society” - relating to a need for satisfaction, community, solidarity or purpose through work.

In 2015, more than 90 per cent of respondents in advanced economies mention having an interesting job and job security is ‘important’ or ‘very important’ to them. Around 70 per cent considers a high income or a job that is useful to society to be important. Between 1997 and 2015, the importance of having an interesting job has been declining, whereas doing a job that is useful to society and job security have increased in importance to workers. The importance of high income increases between 1997 and 2005 and decreases thereafter. This rather erratic course could perhaps be connected to the problematic rewards explanation, hypothesizing that income is valued higher during economic downturns.

Table 2 shows the results of a logistic regression analysis showing the impact of year, work characteristics, socio-demographic variables and country of workers on work values. The odds ratio represents the ratio of the probability that individuals find a work value ‘important’ or ‘very important’ to the probability they do not.

The table shows the same trends across time as outlined in table 1. In addition, the results show that self-employed are less likely than employees to find extrinsic values important – this corresponds to earlier findings in research that self-employed are often ‘not in it for the money’. Individuals who work more hours per week have a higher probability to place importance on high income and interesting work. Men have – as compared to women – a higher probability to find high income important and a lower probability to value job security, having an interesting job or doing useful work. Whereas the probability to find extrinsic values important decreases with educational attainment, the probability to find intrinsic values important increases.

Table 2 Explaining work values (logistic regression analysis)

	Extrinsic values				Intrinsic values			
	High income		Job security		Interesting job		Useful to society	
	OR	p-value	OR	p-value	OR	p-value	OR	p-value
<b>Year (1997 = reference category)</b>								
2005	1.23**	.00	0.99	.83	0.77*	.02	1.06	.12
2015	0.95	.29	1.42**	.00	0.62**	.00	1.16**	.00
<b>Work characteristics</b>								
Type of contract (0 = dependent employment; 1 = self-employed)	0.78**	.00	0.29**	.00	1.11	.49	0.90	.05
Hours worked/ week	1.01**	.00	1.00	.46	1.01**	.00	1.00	.79
<b>Socio-demographic variables</b>								
Gender (1 = male)	1.13**	.00	0.69**	.00	0.82*	.04	0.63**	.00
Age (years)	1.03*	.03	1.01	.82	1.00	.95	0.97*	.01
Age squared/100	0.95**	.00	0.99	.90	1.01	.88	1.03**	.00
Years of schooling								
(<10 years = reference category)								
10-12 years	0.93	.38	0.53**	.02	1.33*	.00	0.84**	.01
13-16 years	0.85*	.05	0.31**	.00	2.49**	.00	0.93	.24
17 years or more	0.79**	.00	0.23**	.00	4.24**	.00	1.26**	.00
other (e.g. currently in school)	1.09	.55	0.67**	.00	1.06	.85	1.02	.84
Level of urbanisation (1 = urban; 2 = suburban; 3=rural)	1.00	.91	1.19**	.00	0.95	.37	1.00	.86
Religious denomination (none = reference category)								
Catholic	1.14*	.03	1.31**	.00	0.86	.25	1.10*	.04
Protestant	0.89*	.02	1.35**	.00	1.11	.38	1.07	.10
Other	0.97	.73	1.66**	.00	0.80	.23	1.54**	.00
<b>Country (Netherlands = reference category)</b>								
France	2.73**	.00	1.26*	.05	3.46**	.00	0.98	.73
Germany	2.42**	.00	4.22**	.00	3.07**	.00	1.18*	.01
Great Britain	1.74**	.00	2.78**	.00	1.56**	.10	1.18*	.01
United States	2.55**	.00	2.21**	.00	1.12	.61	3.38**	.00
Norway	1.60**	.00	1.36**	.01	2.60	.00	0.84**	.00
Sweden	1.96**	.00	1.00	0.99	1.92**	.00	0.78**	.00
<b>Pseudo R<sup>2</sup></b>	0.03		0.08		0.06		0.04	
<b>N</b>	14,969		14,969		14,969		14,969	

Notes: \*Significant at p < .05; \*\* significant at p < .01

Source: ISSP 1997, 2005 and 2015, own calculations

#### 4.1.2 Employment commitment

The advanced economies included in this study can be mostly regarded as holding a value system that Weber called the protestant work ethic, characterised by hard work, self-denial and the avoidance of idleness. Later different types of work ethic have been proposed, but it seems safe to state that all these countries have traditionally been characterized as ‘industrious’. Although it is sometimes put forward that work ethic would be declining in advanced societies over time - due to for instance secularisation, modernisation and changing institutions (Inglehart, 1997; Lindbeck & Nyberg, 2006) - findings in this area seem hardly conclusive (Conen & De Beer, 2018).

Employment commitment refers to the desire to work for work’s sake and captures a non-financial and non-job specific value of work. Table 3 shows the shares of workers with low and high non-financial employment commitment (NFEC). The findings show that in 2015, six per cent of respondents in advanced economies have low NFEC and 48 per cent have a high NFEC. Although work ethic may differ from several decades ago – a hypotheses impossible to test with these data – the results show that between 1997 and 2015 the non-financial and non-job specific value of work has been increasing, as low NFEC has decreased and high NFEC increased across time.

*Table 3 Non-financial employment commitment [NFEC] in historical-comparative perspective (in 1997, 2005 and 2015; percentages)*

Regime	Country	Low NFEC			High NFEC		
		1997	2005	2015	1997	2005	2015
Corporatist	France	11.98	12.18	9.39	27.10	34.32**	36.41**
	Germany	9.92	8.95	8.64	46.64	42.94	45.00
Hybrid	Netherlands	8.33	8.14	5.99*	44.09	41.78	48.42*
Liberal	Great Britain	16.74	12.52*	4.94**	34.60	35.43	41.01**
	United States	7.53	7.67	5.40*	42.41	43.76	43.03
Social-democratic	Norway	3.68	4.94	1.86**	58.85	62.29*	64.89**
	Sweden	5.90	6.97	3.94	50.22	50.15	53.74
<b>Total</b>		<b>9.16</b>	<b>8.73</b>	<b>5.71**</b>	<b>43.68</b>	<b>44.48</b>	<b>47.61**</b>

Note: \*\* (\*) = significant difference compared to 1997 at the 1% (5%) level

Source: ISSP 1997, 2005 and 2015, own calculations

Table 4 shows the results of a logistic regression analysis showing the impact of year, work characteristics, socio-demographic variables and country on low non-financial employment commitment. The odds ratio represents the ratio of the probability that individuals have a low NFEC to the probability they do not.

The table shows the same trends across time as outlined in table 3. In addition, the results show that self-employed, individuals who work more hours per week and catholic and protestant workers are less likely than employees to have a low NFEC. Men have – as compared to women – a higher probability to have a low NFEC. The probability to have a low NFEC decreases with educational attainment. Earlier studies on NFEC included job

satisfaction as an explanatory variable; including this variable (model c) does not alter the results much, although the effect of self-employment is no longer significant.

*Table 4 Explaining low non-financial employment commitment (logistic regression analysis)*

	Model a		Model b		Model c	
	OR	p-value	OR	p-value	OR	p-value
<b>Year (1997 = reference category)</b>						
2005	1.09	.20	1.07	.37	1.06	.48
2015	0.70**	.00	0.72**	.00	0.74**	.00
<b>Work characteristics</b>						
Type of contract (0 = dependent employment; 1 = self-employed)			0.78*	.03	0.89	.33
Hours worked/ week			0.99**	.00	0.99*	.01
Job satisfaction					0.67**	.00
<b>Socio-demographic variables</b>						
Gender (1 = male)			2.00**	.00	1.98**	.00
Age (years)			1.09**	.00	1.10**	.00
Age squared/100			0.90**	.00	0.89**	.00
Years of schooling (<10 years = reference category)						
10-12 years			0.75*	.01	0.76*	.02
13-16 years			0.55**	.00	0.55**	.00
17 years or more			0.34**	.00	0.34**	.00
other (e.g. currently in school)			0.71	.17	0.68	.12
Level of urbanisation (1 = urban; 2 = suburban; 3=rural)			1.01	.90	1.02	.69
Religious denomination (none = reference category)						
Catholic			0.73**	.00	0.76**	.00
Protestant			0.83*	.04	0.89	.19
Other			1.03	.82	1.00	.98
<b>Country (Netherlands = reference category)</b>						
France			1.79**	.00	1.52**	.00
Germany			1.13	.36	1.11	.45
Great Britain			1.41**	.00	1.27	.06
United States			0.93	.59	0.87	.28
Norway			0.41**	.00	0.38**	.00
Sweden			0.61**	.00	0.54**	.00
<b>Pseudo R<sup>2</sup></b>		0.01		0.06		0.09
<b>N</b>		14,993		14,993		14,993

Notes: \*Significant at p < .05; \*\* significant at p < .01

Source: ISSP 1997, 2005 and 2015, own calculations

## 4.2 Rewards from work in historical-comparative perspective

### 4.2.1 Job outcomes

Job characteristics or job quality partly follow similar distinctions as work values, i.e. job outcomes on the extrinsic versus intrinsic dimension. Extrinsic rewards refer to aspects such as job security, income and the hours of work. Intrinsic rewards from work encompass multiple aspects. The most basic aspect would be the aspect of whether working conditions affect the health of workers (including both hard physical and stressful work). Intrinsic benefits are included in this study in the form of having an interesting job and work that is useful to society.

Table 5 shows the answers of workers to the question: “For each of these statements about your (main) job, please tick one box to show how much you agree or disagree that it applies to your job.” In 2015, 28 per cent of workers ‘strongly agrees’ or ‘agrees’ with the statement “my income is high”, and 72 per cent with the statement “my job is secure”. Between 1997 and 2015, extrinsic rewards seem to have been increasing in general, though the Netherlands and Norway show a deviating trend when it comes to job security: whereas in most countries job security has gradually increased over time, both countries show a decrease in job security between 1997 and 2005, which in the Netherlands hardly recovered afterwards.

*Table 5 Extrinsic rewards from work in historical-comparative perspective (in 1997, 2005 and 2015) - Percentages ‘strongly agree’ or ‘agree’*

Regime	Country	High income			Job security		
		1997	2005	2015	1997	2005	2015
Corporatist	France	13.75	15.18	19.87**	46.37	53.77**	59.48**
	Germany	20.79	20.99	32.64**	60.22	62.99	81.59**
Hybrid	Netherlands	23.35	24.20	27.83*	66.78	62.55*	63.11
Liberal	Great Britain	17.21	19.99	25.20**	51.58	68.93**	67.80**
	United States	24.43	26.71	26.58	69.31	71.00	75.48**
Social-democratic	Norway	16.57	18.35	28.89**	70.04	61.96**	75.34**
	Sweden	15.56	18.62	34.62**	55.21	63.87**	78.78**
<b>Total</b>		<b>18.81</b>	<b>20.69*</b>	<b>28.07**</b>	<b>59.89</b>	<b>63.87**</b>	<b>71.99**</b>

Note: \*\* (\*) = significant difference compared to 1997 at the 1% (5%) level

Source: ISSP 1997, 2005 and 2015, own calculations

The quantity of work or realisation of preferred hours of work is another aspect of the extrinsic dimension. Table 6 shows the answers of workers to the question: “Think of the number of hours you work, and the money you earn in your main job, including any regular overtime”. In 2015, 65 per cent of workers would prefer to ‘work the *same* number of hours and earn the *same money*’, while 28 per cent would prefer to ‘work *longer* hours and earn *more money*’. The remaining shares of workers either would prefer to work less hours or

cannot choose. Between 1997 and 2015, the share of workers who meet their preferred hours of work seems to have been decreasing or stable in general, except in Sweden where workers increasingly met their preferred hours of work. On the other hand, an increasing share of workers indicates to prefer working more hours over time.

*Table 6 Realisation of preferred hours of work (in 1997, 2005 and 2015; percentages)*

Regime	Country	Same number of hours			Longer and more money		
		1997	2005	2015	1997	2005	2015
Corporatist	France	65.84	59.62*	51.07**	19.70	33.33**	45.26**
	Germany	68.87	61.63**	67.42	22.32	31.84**	23.30
Hybrid	Netherlands	69.20	71.34	69.09	19.30	19.69	21.84
Liberal	Great Britain	70.27	70.51	62.92**	23.81	21.40	29.68*
	United States	55.83	60.89*	54.33	34.46	34.16	41.35**
Social-democratic	Norway	73.44	74.99	75.42	12.05	15.11	18.05**
	Sweden	66.39	67.53	71.62*	17.99	18.65	13.96*
<b>Total</b>		<b>67.27</b>	<b>66.55</b>	<b>64.70**</b>	<b>21.27</b>	<b>25.03**</b>	<b>27.48**</b>

Notes: \*\* (\*) = significant difference compared to 1997 at the 1% (5%) level

Source: ISSP 1997, 2005 and 2015, own calculations

Table 7 shows the results of a logistic regression analysis showing the impact of year, work characteristics, socio-demographic variables and country on the preference for working more hours and earning more money over time. The odds ratio represents the ratio of the probability that individuals prefer to work more hours - and earn more money - to the probability they do not.

The table shows the same trends across time as outlined in table 6. In addition, the results show that self-employed are more likely than employees to prefer to work more hours. Men have – as compared to women – a higher probability to prefer working more hours. The probability to prefer working more hours decreases with educational attainment and is higher among workers in more urban areas. Including job characteristics in the analyses (model c) does not alter the results much, but do show that it is especially among workers with relatively low incomes and insecure jobs who prefer to work more hours.

Table 8 shows working conditions in the area of workers' health in terms of both hard physical and stressful work and shows the answers to the question: "Please tick one box for each item below to show how often it applies to your work...". In 2015, 29 per cent of workers indicate that they 'always' or 'often' have to do hard physical work and 41 per cent find their work stressful. Between 1997 and 2015, both aspects seem to have been deteriorating or been stable in general, indicating that an increasing share of workers find their work tedious or stressful.

Table 7 Who are the workers preferring more hours of work?  
(logistic regression analysis)

	Model a		Model b		Model c	
	OR	p-value	OR	p-value	OR	p-value
<b>Year (1997 = reference category)</b>						
2005	1.38**	.00	1.37**	.00	1.40**	.00
2015	1.52**	.00	1.71**	.00	1.86**	.00
<b>Work characteristics</b>						
Type of contract (0 = dependent employment; 1 = self-employed)			1.22**	.00	1.19*	.01
Hours worked/ week			0.99**	.00	0.99**	.00
<b>Characteristics</b>						
High income					0.62**	.00
Secure					0.67**	.00
Interesting					0.96	.39
Useful to society					1.10	.06
<b>Socio-demographic variables</b>						
Gender (1 = male)			1.45**	.00	1.49**	.00
Age (years)			0.91**	.00	0.91**	.00
Age squared/100			1.08**	.00	1.08**	.00
<b>Years of schooling</b>						
(<10 years = reference category)						
10-12 years			0.79**	.00	0.82*	.02
13-16 years			0.59**	.00	0.64**	.00
17 years or more			0.49**	.00	0.56**	.00
other (e.g. currently in school)			0.96	.76	1.08	.64
Level of urbanisation (1 = urban; 2 = suburban; 3=rural)			0.90**	.00	0.88**	.00
<b>Religious denomination (none = reference category)</b>						
Catholic			1.04	.53	1.05	.39
Protestant			0.90	.07	0.93	.23
Other			1.32**	.00	1.26*	.01
<b>Country (Netherlands = reference category)</b>						
France			2.12**	.00	1.89**	.00
Germany			1.34**	.00	1.34**	.00
Great Britain			1.34**	.00	1.27*	.01
United States			2.52**	.00	2.49**	.00
Norway			0.78**	.00	0.74**	.00
Sweden			0.96	.64	0.91	.32
<b>Pseudo R<sup>2</sup></b>		0.01		0.06		0.08
<b>N</b>		15,123		15,123		15,123

Note: \*Significant at p < .05; \*\* significant at p < .01

Source: ISSP 1997, 2005 and 2015, own calculations

*Table 8 Working conditions in historical-comparative perspective (in 1997, 2005 and 2015)  
Percentages 'always' or 'often'*

Regime	Country	Hard physical work			Stressful work		
		1997	2005	2015	1997	2005	2015
Corporatist	France	20.46	22.68	31.36**	46.28	46.50	45.77
	Germany	22.14	25.99*	26.90**	39.03	33.63*	39.00
Hybrid	Netherlands	16.40	17.97	17.15	27.28	27.06	29.67
Liberal	Great Britain	22.81	21.96	28.50**	34.45	35.40	38.32
	United States	23.71	26.56	49.95**	NA	NA	NA
Social-democratic	Norway	24.50	21.22	24.02	36.82	36.63	44.03**
	Sweden	29.47	28.32	29.73	45.04	42.12	51.66*
<b>Total</b>		<b>22.39</b>	<b>23.44</b>	<b>28.70**</b>	<b>38.16</b>	<b>36.74</b>	<b>41.36**</b>

Note: \*\* (\*) = significant difference compared to 1997 at the 1% (5%) level

Source: ISSP 1997, 2005 and 2015, own calculations

Intrinsic benefits are included in this study in the form of having an interesting job and work that is useful to society. Table 9 shows the findings on intrinsic rewards from work in the form of having an interesting job and work that is useful to society. In 2015, 79 per cent of workers 'strongly agrees' or 'agrees' with the statement "my job is interesting", and 72 per cent with the statement "my job is useful to society". Between 1997 and 2015, intrinsic rewards from work also seem to have been increasing in general, although the Netherlands on both dimensions show stability rather than an increase.

*Table 9 Intrinsic rewards from work in historical-comparative perspective (in 1997, 2005 and 2015) - Percentages 'strongly agree' or 'agree'*

Regime	Country	Interesting job			Useful to society		
		1997	2005	2015	1997	2005	2015
Corporatist	France	73.53	75.92	77.67*	66.82	66.89	70.50
	Germany	81.66	82.27	85.46*	63.70	69.03*	70.93**
Hybrid	Netherlands	75.79	74.06	72.23	61.71	57.93	64.16
Liberal	Great Britain	69.03	71.73	76.95**	55.61	63.89**	68.98**
	United States	72.30	84.02**	77.35*	71.01	80.64**	79.31**
Social-democratic	Norway	73.71	76.49	82.32**	70.58	68.74	76.47**
	Sweden	73.61	72.47	78.78*	65.19	65.28	71.35*
<b>Total</b>		<b>74.31</b>	<b>76.88**</b>	<b>78.83**</b>	<b>64.85</b>	<b>67.68**</b>	<b>71.79**</b>

Note: \*\* (\*) = significant difference compared to 1997 at the 1% (5%) level

Source: ISSP 1997, 2005 and 2015, own calculations

#### 4.2.2 Job satisfaction

Job satisfaction is a summary measures containing information about how workers feel about and evaluate their jobs. As such, this construct has a cognitive dimension and holds an evaluative judgement about one or several aspects of a job. The multidimensionality of the constructs makes it difficult to interpret and over time many questions have emerged on what this summary measure is capturing. However, since we do not consider job satisfaction in isolation we believe it still provides a valuable, additional insight into historical-comparative evolutions in the value of work (Green & Tsitsianis, 2005; Brown et al, 2008; Lopes et al., 2014).

As with work values, job satisfaction is known to be among the concepts that individuals from different countries “scale” differently. Blanchflower & Freeman state (1997): “Americans may be relatively optimistic, with an “everything will work out” mentality that leads them to respond more positively than a comparable British group to the question “Are you satisfied with your job” even though their true satisfaction, on some objective scale, is the same as that of the (possibly more reserved) British” (p.449). Kristensen & Johansson (2008), using anchoring vignettes, indeed find cross-national differences in the way individuals perceive subjective questions about job satisfaction and Frege & Godard (2014) find that “German workers are, in an objective sense, better-off [in terms of job quality than U.S. workers], but this tends to be masked by their more critical evaluative standards” (p.960).

Table 10 shows the answers of workers to the question: “How satisfied are you in your (main) job?”. In 2015, 45 per cent of workers indicated to be ‘completely satisfied’ or ‘very satisfied’ with their jobs. Between 1997 and 2015, job satisfaction seems to have been increasing or stable in general, though in the Netherlands job satisfaction has declined.

*Table 10 Job satisfaction in historical-comparative perspective (in 1997, 2005 and 2015) Percentages ‘completely satisfied’ or ‘very satisfied’*

Regime	Country	Job satisfaction		
		1997	2005	2015
Corporatist	France	33.18	28.96*	35.78
	Germany	35.18	47.64**	46.97**
Hybrid	Netherlands	47.90	44.51	41.18**
Liberal	Great Britain	34.17	41.57**	43.58**
	United States	46.72	54.35**	52.74**
Social-democratic	Norway	35.87	39.49*	46.33**
	Sweden	39.10	37.02	45.24*
<b>Total</b>		<b>38.77</b>	<b>42.33**</b>	<b>44.77**</b>

Note: \*Significant at  $p < .05$ ; \*\* significant at  $p < .01$

Source: ISSP 1997, 2005 and 2015, own calculations

Table 11 shows the results of a logistic regression analysis showing the impact of year, work characteristics, socio-demographic variables and country on job satisfaction. The odds ratio represents the ratio of the probability that individuals are 'completely satisfied' or 'very satisfied' to the probability they are not.

The table shows the same trends across time as outlined before. In addition, the results show that self-employed and individuals who work more hours per week are more likely to have a high level of job satisfaction. Including job characteristics in the analyses (model c) shows that especially having an interesting job positively affects job satisfaction, followed by extrinsic factors. Being active in stressful work but also doing hard physical work decreases the probability to have a high level of job satisfaction.

Table 11 Explaining job satisfaction (logistic regression analysis)

	Model a		Model b		Model c	
	OR	p-value	OR	p-value	OR	p-value
<b>Year (1997 = reference category)</b>						
2005	1.11**	.00	1.07	.12	1.09*	.05
2015	1.28**	.00	1.22**	.00	1.18**	.00
<b>Work characteristics</b>						
Type of contract (0 = dependent employment; 1 = self-employed)			1.66**	.00	1.67**	.00
Hours worked/ week			1.01**	.00	1.00	.12
Characteristics						
High income					2.04**	.00
Secure					1.83**	.00
Interesting					6.74**	.00
Useful to society					1.29**	.00
Hard physical work					0.90*	.02
Stressful work					0.50**	.00
<b>Socio-demographic variables</b>						
Gender (1 = male)			0.92*	.02	0.94	.11
Age (years)			0.98	.05	0.96**	.00
Age squared/ 100			1.03	.05	1.05**	.00
Years of schooling (<10 years = reference category)						
10-12 years			1.04	.60	1.01	.93
13-16 years			1.09	.21	0.86*	.05
17 years or more			1.15	.06	0.73**	.00
other (e.g. currently in school)			0.97	.81	1.02	.89
Level of urbanisation (1 = urban; 2 = suburban; 3=rural)						
Religious denomination (none = reference category)						
Catholic			1.11*	.04	1.09	.14
Protestant			1.26**	.00	1.22*	.00
Other			1.07	.43	1.19	.05
<b>Country (Netherlands = reference category)</b>						
France			0.51**	.00	0.64*	.00
Germany			0.86*	.04	0.72**	.00
Great Britain			0.69**	.00	0.77**	.00
United States			1.03	.71	0.99	.86
Norway			0.63**	.00	0.65**	.00
Sweden			0.67**	.00	0.77**	.00
<b>Pseudo R<sup>2</sup></b>	0.01		0.02		0.15	
<b>N</b>	14,993		14,993		14,993	

Note: \*Significant at p < .05; \*\* significant at p < .01

Source: ISSP 1997, 2005 and 2015, own calculations

### 4.3 Different developments among male and female workers?

Various theoretical perspectives predict that women value other job facets than men. The upper panel of Table 12 shows that women more often mention being useful to society and job security to be 'important' or 'very important' to them than men, whereas men attach greater value to high income. The findings furthermore show that non-financial employment commitment (NFEC) is higher among women than among men, i.e. low NFEC is significantly lower and high NFEC significantly higher among women.

In terms of changes over time, the indexed findings in Table 13 (columns 1 and 2) indicate similar developments between sexes in orientations towards work between 1997 and 2015: for both men and women there is a tendency to attach greater value to be useful to society and job security and an increase in NFEC, while there is a tendency to attach less value to high income and having an interesting job. Table 13 furthermore indicates whether outcomes have diverged (positive values) or converged (negative values) between male and female workers for respectively the period between 1997 and 2005 (column 3), between 2005 and 2015 (column 4) and over the period as a whole (column 5). The findings show that male and female workers do not seem to have significantly converged or diverged in terms of work values over the period as a whole, although the employment commitment gap between men and women does seem to narrow (i.e. low NFEC decreased and high NFEC increased faster among men than among women).

Men and women also differ in terms of job characteristics. The lower panel of table 12 shows that as compared to women, men more often 'strongly agree' or 'agree' with the statement that their income is high and less often with the statement that their job is useful to society. Moreover, men more often indicate they would prefer to work more hours and they more often have to do hard physical work. In line with earlier research, we find a positive job satisfaction differential of women as compared to men in 1997, but by 2015 the picture seems completely reversed, with more men than women indicating to be 'completely satisfied' or 'very satisfied' with their jobs.

In terms of changes over time (Table 13) the findings on job outcomes indicate similar developments between men and women: for both men and women all indicators on job outcomes and job satisfaction increased between 1997 and 2015. However, the pace and starting point of these developments differ between sexes. One observation that in this respect can be made is that whereas in 1997 men less often agreed with the statement that their job is secure, this effect has disappeared in 2015 (job security increased faster among men than among women). Another finding – as outlined before – is that the positive job satisfaction differential of women as compared to men in 1997 has reversed by 2015 (as job satisfaction increased faster among men than among women). In general, the findings provide no evidence that male and female workers have clearly converged in terms of job outcomes between 1997 and 2015.

Table 12 Overview of extrinsic and intrinsic needs and rewards across time, by gender

Measure	Item	1997			2005			2015		
		M	F	Δ M-F	M	F	Δ M-F	M	F	Δ M-F
<b>Work values</b>	High income	75.96	72.87**	3.09**	78.15	75.17**	2.98**	74.56	69.33**	5.23**
	Job security	93.04	94.89**	-1.85**	92.30	94.75**	-2.45**	93.35	95.52**	-2.17**
	Interesting job	96.43	96.76	-0.33	95.32	95.87	-0.55	94.68	95.22	-0.54
	Useful to society	59.25	70.79**	-11.54**	62.68	72.33**	-9.65**	64.19	74.71**	-10.52**
<b>Employment commitment</b>	Low NFEC	11.59	6.71**	4.88**	10.97	6.60**	4.37**	7.19	4.42**	2.77**
	High NFEC	38.72	48.71**	-9.99**	39.88	48.87**	-8.99**	42.92	51.73**	-8.81**
<b>Job outcomes</b>	High income	23.17	14.37**	8.80**	25.69	15.87**	9.82**	34.63	22.27**	12.36**
	Job security	58.28	61.57**	-3.29**	61.34	66.31**	-4.97**	72.05	71.93	0.12
	Prefer more hours	21.57	17.47**	4.10**	26.30	20.93**	5.37**	28.95	23.47**	5.48**
	Hard physical work	24.91	19.99**	4.92**	26.85	20.14**	6.71**	32.46	27.06**	5.40**
	Stressful work	32.40	32.35	0.05	37.92	35.35*	2.57*	39.25	40.38	-1.13
	Interesting job	74.42	74.19	0.23	76.28	77.44	-1.16	78.68	78.95	-0.27
	Useful to society	62.18	67.52**	-5.34**	63.79	71.40**	-7.61**	68.83	74.39**	-5.56**
<b>Job satisfaction</b>	High job satisfaction	36.89	40.68**	-3.79**	42.63	42.06	0.57	46.50	43.24**	3.26**

Note: \*Significant at  $p < .05$ ; \*\* significant at  $p < .01$

Source: ISSP 1997, 2005 and 2015, own calculations

Table 13 *Developments in extrinsic and intrinsic needs and rewards across time, by gender*

Measure	Item	Indexed ΔM (1997=100)	Indexed ΔF (1997=100)	1997-2005 div-conv	2005-2015 div-conv	1997-2015 div-conv
<b>Work values</b>	High income	98.16	95.14	-0.11	2.25	2.14
	Job security	100.33	100.66	0.60	-0.28	0.32
	Interesting job	98.19	98.41	0.22	-0.01	0.21
	Useful to society	108.34	105.54	-1.89	0.87	-1.02
<b>Employment commitment</b>	Low NFEC	62.04	65.87	-0.51	-1.60	-2.11
	High NFEC	110.85	106.20	-1.00	-0.18	-1.18
<b>Job outcomes</b>	High income	149.46	154.98	1.02	2.54	3.56
	Job security	123.63	116.83	1.68	-5.09	-3.41
	Prefer more hours	134.21	134.34	1.27	0.11	1.38
	Hard physical work	130.31	135.37	1.79	-1.31	0.48
	Stressful work	121.14	124.82	2.52	-3.70	1.18
	Interesting job	105.72	106.42	1.39	-0.89	-0.50
	Useful to society	110.69	110.17	2.27	-2.05	0.22
<b>Job satisfaction</b>	High job satisfaction	126.05	106.29	-4.36	2.69	7.05

Note: \*Significant at  $p < .05$ ; \*\* significant at  $p < .01$

Source: ISSP 1997, 2005 and 2015, own calculations

## 4.4 Robustness check

Since we estimated the effects of variables based on 7 countries, it is possible that results are driven by one, very influential, country. We therefore also performed a robustness check by deleting every country once from the various analyses (jack knife procedure). The results described above appear quite stable. The time effects remain largely significant and changes in the sizes of the effects are – in general – minor. One exception concerns the development of low non-financial employment commitment, in the analyses of table 4 the effect of 2015 becomes insignificant when Great Britain is excluded. Moreover, taking France out of the analyses in table 2 turns the effect of 2015 on the importance of high income into significance ( $p < .05$ ). The results which change due to the jack knife procedure may be interpreted with care.

## 5. Conclusion and discussion

*“Just because we live in a period in which economic thought and economic necessities dominate public policy it is important to insist that other dimensions be considered too; all the more so because economic thought rests inevitably on some tacit assumptions about what people want, need and value” (Jahoda, 1982, p.3).*

Although written several decades ago, various observations from Jahoda’s introduction chapter (1982) are still – or perhaps again – largely relevant today. She describes a reality in which ‘work’ is transcribed into ‘paid employment’ and a concept of meaningful work becomes similar to economic value. But what do people actually want, need and value in their work? Has this changed over time? And have developments been in line with these needs? This paper analysed recent trends in work values, employment commitment and job outcomes across time. Data was used from the 1997, 2005 and 2015 International Social Survey Programme module on Work Orientation for France, Germany, Great-Britain, the Netherlands, Norway, Sweden and the United States. The aim of this study was to examine whether individual’s valuations of work as well as the ‘utility’ they derive from their jobs – both in pecuniary and non-pecuniary terms – has changed across time. The findings are summarized in Table 14.

Findings on general valuations of work predominantly support the hypothesis that in advanced post-modern societies workers experience a value change from values related to economic achievement (extrinsic factors) towards intrinsically oriented values towards work (hypothesis 1). Firstly, the findings show that non-financial employment commitment among workers has increased over time, indicating an increasing (intrinsic) desire to work besides merely financial values. Moreover, although the importance of high income increased between 1997 and 2005, it sharply decreased thereafter, resulting in a significant decline in the importance of high income between 1997 and 2015. In addition, the importance of having a job that is useful to society has increased across time. Finally, although the

importance of having an interesting job has declined between 1997 and 2015, this aspect is still considered to be important by a large majority of workers (95 per cent).

*Table 14 Overview of extrinsic and intrinsic needs and rewards across time*

Measure	Item	1997-2015
<b>Work values</b>	High income	--
	Job security	+
	Interesting job	--
	Useful to society	++
<b>Employment commitment</b>	Low NFEC	--
	High NFEC	++
<b>Job outcomes</b>	High income	++
	Job security	++
	Prefer more hours	++
	Hard physical work	++
	Stressful work	++
	Interesting job	++
	Useful to society	++
	<b>Job satisfaction</b>	High job satisfaction

Note: \*Significant at  $p < .05$ ; \*\* significant at  $p < .01$   
 Source: ISSP 1997, 2005 and 2015, own calculations

A more puzzling finding in this line of reasoning is that the importance of job security has also increased over time. If we assume that the realisation of extrinsic needs forms the basis of being provided the opportunity to develop intrinsically oriented values towards work, a decrease in the importance of job security would seem a more plausible finding. Moreover, the findings on extrinsic rewards show that the self-assessed quality of the own job has actually improved in terms of job security between 1997 and 2015. One possible explanation could be that developments towards a more flexible labour market (such as outsourcing, the hiring of temporary workers, pay-rolling and platforms) have fragmented the workplace and led to a more flexible and insecure nature of contemporary labour, which is perceived as such by workers, even though their own jobs are not directly assessed as being insecure. Unfortunately, the data does not allow us to distinguish between values and rewards of various types of flexible workers or to take organisational context or perceived labour market insecurity into account.

In terms of changes over time, for both men and women the findings show an increase in non-financial employment commitment and a tendency to attach greater value to be useful to society as well as job security, while there is a tendency to attach less value to high income and having an interesting job. The findings predominantly do not seem to support

hypothesis 3, i.e. male and female workers do not seem to have converged in terms of work values between 1997 and 2015 in general, although the positive employment commitment differential of women as compared to men seems to have narrowed. Women consistently value being useful to society and job security higher than men, whereas men attach greater value to high income.

The findings on extrinsic rewards show that the self-assessed quality of one's own job has improved in terms of both income and job security between 1997 and 2015. The findings on intrinsic rewards show that the self-assessed quality of the own job has also improved across time in terms of having an interesting job and having a job that is useful to society. These findings largely seem to be in line with Post-Fordist theory or mutual gain literature (hypothesis 2a), arguing that new work systems have led to an improved quality of working life especially in terms of intrinsic rewards (such as job challenge) but also in terms of material rewards. However, whereas the theory also predicts improvement in terms of working conditions such as a decreased workload, the findings on the contrary point towards an increasing share of workers indicating they have to do hard physical work or find their work stressful. In addition, an increasing share of workers would prefer to work more hours and earn more money. Especially self-employed, men, workers with relatively low educational attainment and workers in more urban areas prefer to work more. These latter findings rather relate to the more critical Neo-Fordist view (hypothesis 2b), claiming that the limited gains that have accrued to employees are outweighed by increased effort requirements and a more insecure nature of (enough) work.

At an overall level, we find an increase in job satisfaction between 1997 and 2015. The results show that self-employed and individuals who work more hours per week are more likely to have a high level of job satisfaction and in terms of job characteristics especially having an interesting job positively affects job satisfaction, followed by extrinsic factors.

In terms of job outcomes, the findings show that men more often than women indicate their income is high and less often find their job useful to society. Moreover, men more often indicate they would prefer to work more hours and they more often have to do hard physical work. In terms of changes over time the findings on job outcomes indicate similar developments between the sexes: for both men and women all indicators on job outcomes and job satisfaction increased between 1997 and 2015. However, the pace and starting point of these developments differ between sexes. One observation that can be made is that whereas in 1997 men less often agreed with the statement that their job is secure, this effect has disappeared in 2015 (job security increased faster among men than among women). Another finding is that the positive job satisfaction differential of women as compared to men in 1997 has reversed by 2015 (as job satisfaction increased faster among men than among women). In general, the findings provide no evidence that male and female workers have clearly converged in terms of job outcomes between 1997 and 2015 (rejection of hypothesis 4).

This study has a number of strengths as well as limitations. To start with a strength: the study covers a relatively long and recent period of time for various advanced economies - a perspective that to our knowledge has not been examined in the literature to date. An important limitation is its reliance on self-reported behaviour as well as the survey character which potentially gives rise to biased results; future studies may combine self-reported job outcomes with direct measures. Another limitation is that the data did not allow us to test the effect of more earners in the household and/ or a higher household income for these countries across time.

One observation that may be relevant for future research on orientations and valuations of work concerns the long and strong tradition of using welfare state types as the main unit of examination in scientific cross-national research. Beforehand, it seemed plausible that developments across time are more similar between countries belonging to the same type of welfare state, but the findings do not seem to show a clear (discriminant) pattern along the lines of welfare state type.

Taking all together, the findings seem to indicate that in advanced economies, workers have developed a more non-financial and intrinsic orientation towards work across time and both extrinsic and intrinsic rewards largely seem to have improved over time, although these changes have been accompanied by an increased work strain and potentially more insecure nature of (enough) work. The findings of this study clearly breathe the notion that meaningful work is more than merely an economic necessity in advanced economies. However, there are a number of issues that have received no or only limited attention in this study, but deserve to be considered in future research. First, this study examined whether values and rewards have been changing over time in general, but analyses would benefit from the possibility to include more workers characteristics to gain more knowledge on how evenly this increased freedom and quality in the work domain is distributed among workers. Second, this study examined the value and rewards from work restricted to 'work from paid employment'. However, the value and rewards from unpaid work (including voluntary work, care and domestic work) are lacking, future studies may want to consider involving more work domains.

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PO Box 15966  
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The Netherlands

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Nieuwe Achtergracht 166  
1018 WV Amsterdam  
The Netherlands

