

# **Social Precarity and Social Integration**

Report for the European Commission  
Based on  
Eurobarometer 56.1

October 2002

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For the European Commission  
Directorate-General Employment  
Eurobarometer 56.1

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## SOCIAL PRECARITY AND SOCIAL INTEGRATION

### SUMMARY

The report is concerned with charting trends in social precarity, that is the factors that are associated with higher risks of social exclusion. It draws upon a survey specially commissioned by DG Employment and conducted with the framework of the Eurobarometer studies (Eurobarometer, 56.1), which allows for comparison with a range of earlier studies.

The first two chapters focus particularly on issues relating to precarity in terms of living conditions, while the third and fourth are concerned with sources of precarity in people's work lives. The fifth and sixth chapters examine the implications of social precarity in both of these spheres for people's personal integration and their attitudes to society.

#### *Chapter 2. The Evolution and Interpretation of Poverty*

A measure of subjective poverty (based on whether people's total net income is lower than the amount they judge absolutely necessary) showed that the proportion of individuals in poor households was greatest in Southern Europe (especially Portugal, Greece and Italy), and in Ireland. The inter-country differences are more marked than those that emerge from objective poverty indicators. For instance, 66% of individuals in Portugal were poor on the subjective measure compared with only 9% in Denmark – the country with the lowest level of subjective poverty.

The visibility of poverty in the local neighbourhood has varied markedly with the economic cycle. It rose sharply in all countries other than Italy between 1989 and 1993 and then declined in all countries other than the Netherlands between 1993 and 2001.

There were major country variations in the visibility of local poverty. It was most visible in Portugal and Greece, where approximately 50% of the population reported its presence in their local neighbourhood; it was least visible in Denmark where it was reported by less than 10%.

There were also strong inter-country variations in attributions of the causes of poverty. The proportions that viewed poverty as the results of the characteristics of individuals were highest in Portugal (48%), Denmark (47%), the United Kingdom (43%) and Ireland (41%). In contrast, social explanations of poverty were predominant in Sweden and East Germany (69%), Finland (66%), France and West Germany (59%).

Poverty attributions were strongly affected by the economic cycle. In the majority of the Northern and Central countries of the EU (and in Spain), there was a marked decline of explanations in terms of individual laziness between 1989 and 1993 as economic conditions deteriorated, followed by an increase between 1993 and 2001 when economic conditions improved. Conversely, in most countries (9 out of 11) explanations in terms of social injustice were most frequent in 1993, and had declined by 2001. The analyses showed that unemployment levels were a strong predictor of people's interpretations of the causes of poverty.

Those in the Southern countries of the EU were notably more likely to view poverty as an inherited condition: 53% of people in Greece and Portugal and 46% in Italy and Spain believed that the poor had always been in the same situation. In contrast, with the exception of Ireland and Great Britain, the most common view in the Northern and Central countries of the EU was that people fell into poverty after some unfavourable life event.

Views about the inherited or conjunctural nature of poverty were also affected by the economic cycle. The period between 1989 and 1993 saw a rise in all countries of explanations of shorter-term adverse circumstances, reflecting the sharp rise in unemployment. But such explanations had declined by 2001 in all countries (except East Germany and Italy) with the improvement in economic conditions. The level of unemployment was a particularly important factor accounting for the extent to which unemployment was viewed as inherited or conjunctural.

### *Chapter 3. The Experience of Poverty*

There has been a general reduction since 1993 in the proportion of people directly experiencing financial difficulty. The only exceptions are Portugal and the Netherlands. Moreover, the level of experienced financial difficulty remains very high in Greece and Portugal where it affects more than 50% of the population.

As with the population as a whole, financial difficulty has, in most countries, been reduced among those in the poorest income quartile. The exceptions are the Netherlands, Greece, Portugal and Italy.

There are very considerable country variations in the experience of financial difficulty among those with low incomes, ranging from approximately a quarter of those in those in lowest income quartile in Denmark to around 80% of those in the lowest income quartile in Greece and Portugal.

While there had been a reduction or stabilisation since 1993 in difficulties in meeting housing expenses for the overall population of most countries, it was notable that there had been an increase in most countries in the difficulties encountered by those in the lowest income quartile.

The unemployed experienced significantly greater difficulties in covering both food and housing expenses.

There are marked differences in the duration of poverty experiences between the Northern and Southern countries. In the former the majority of those affected by poverty report a duration of two or three years, whereas in the latter the most common experience is about fourteen or fifteen years. This points to the conjunctural nature of poverty in the northern countries, compared with its structural character in the Southern countries.

The probability of adults experiencing financial difficulties is considerably greater among those who spent their childhood in an economically disadvantaged milieu. This inheritance effect is particularly strong in the southern countries.

Social support in the sense of the availability of people that can be relied upon in situations of personal difficulty increased for the bulk of the population in most European countries between 1996 and 2001. However, in all countries other than Italy, it decreased over the same period for the poorest income quartile.

In the Southern countries, with the exception of Portugal, sociability tends to be higher for those with low incomes, while the inverse is the case in the northern countries. There is then no systematic relationship between poverty and the frequency of social contacts.

However, subjective social isolation is greater for the poor in all countries, indicating that frequency measures of social isolation fail to capture important qualitative differences in the character of networks. Those in the lowest quartile income group are also more likely to feel that others do not value them.

The unemployed do not have lower levels of sociability than those in work, but they feel significantly more isolated. This is the case even when income has been controlled. Social isolation is also greater in cities and large towns.

The view that the poor have qualitatively different networks is reinforced by the fact that a much higher proportion of friends are unemployed (and are therefore poorly placed to offer significant support). The polarisation of networks between those in lowest income quartile and others is particularly marked in Belgium, West Germany, Great Britain, Ireland, Finland and Austria.

Satisfaction with family life is significantly higher among the general population than among those in the lowest income quartile. It increased overall between 1996 and 2001, but it decreased for those in the lowest income quartile. The same pattern is evident for satisfaction with social life.

The unemployed are significantly more dissatisfied with both their family and social lives than those in other employment statuses.

Those in the lowest income quartile tend to live in neighbourhoods with more disadvantaged local environments on a range of different dimensions.

#### *Chapter 4. Work Precarity: Task Quality and Work Pressure*

Poor task quality can be seen as an important long-term risk factor for social exclusion in that it is likely to reduce commitment to employment, undermine the maintenance of learning skills and increase people's vulnerability to ill health from work pressure. Work pressure has been consistently identified as an important source of psychological ill health. The results indicate that there was no improvement in task quality over the period (rather it deteriorated). However, there was also no evidence of an intensification of work pressures.

Less than a third of employees in the European Union were in jobs where tasks were of high quality on measures of variety, opportunities for self-development and task control.

There was an overall decline in the quality of work tasks for employees between 1996 and 2001.

Women were in jobs of poorer task quality than men in both 1996 and 2001. Moreover the decline in quality scores between the years was more marked for women than for men (although the difference was only at a marginal level of statistical significance).

There were very wide class differences in job quality. However, there was no change in the relative position of the least skilled workers over the period.

Denmark, Finland and Sweden consistently showed distinctively high levels of task quality in both 1996 and 2001.

In contrast to the trends reported in the first half of the 1990s, there was an overall decline in the proportion of employees experiencing a high level of work pressure between 1996 and 2001. However, taking account of compositional effects, the decline in work pressure was only statistically significant in two countries: France and Germany.

Employees in Great Britain and Sweden experienced distinctively high levels of work pressure in both years, the Netherlands and Luxembourg distinctively low levels.

Work pressure was highly correlated with skill level. Those in more skilled occupations reported higher levels of pressure. However, there was no change between the years in the relative work pressure experienced by employees in different occupational classes.

## *Chapter 5. Career Development and Job Security*

Opportunities for career development help to reduce the risks of social exclusion by updating people with skills and increasing their labour market power in periods of economic restructuring. Apart from its immediate implications for risks of unemployment, job insecurity has been shown to be strongly related to the risks of psychological ill health. The findings show no improvement over the period with respect to career development. Perceived job insecurity has also not improved, although there has been a reduction in unemployment experiences among those in work.

While the proportions of employees in more highly skilled occupations continued to increase slightly from the mid-1990s, the pace of upskilling appears to have slowed down. In both 1996 and 2001, employees were more likely to have been upskilled than deskilled, but the proportion of employees who had experienced an upgrading of either the skill or the responsibility of their jobs in the previous five years was lower than in 2001.

Those in elementary occupations were particularly unlikely to have experienced an increase in the skill and responsibility requirements of their jobs. Less than a quarter had seen any upgrading of their job requirements in the five years prior to 2001. Both the absolute and the relative position of those in elementary occupations deteriorated significantly between the two years.

In both 1996 and 2001, over half of all employees had not received any training from an employer in the preceding five years. But there was a small (but statistically significant) improvement between the years in the amount of employer training given, with the proportion without training falling from 59% in 1996 to 55% in 2001.

Only a small proportion of employees had received training lasting more than a month (12% in 1996 and 13% in 2001).

Training was largely given to those who already had higher skills. In 2001, 68% of managers and 66% of professionals had received some training in the previous five years, but only 18% of those in elementary occupations.

Between 1996 and 2001, there was little change in absolute terms and a deterioration in relative terms in the training received by those in elementary occupations.

In both years Denmark, Finland and Sweden had significantly higher levels of training than other countries, although in Finland this reflected structural variables (in particular, the extensive use of advanced technologies).

Only Denmark, Germany and Italy showed an increase in employer training between the years once structural variables were held constant.

In contrast to the results of studies for earlier periods, there was no consistent evidence that job insecurity grew worse between 1996 and 2001.

Overall, employees' perceptions of the security of their current jobs were not statistically different in 2001 than in 1996.

There were important variations however between those in different occupational classes – managers, plant and machine operatives and employees in elementary occupations reported greater insecurity in 2001 than in 1996, whereas professionals, technicians and service and sales employees felt more secure. The position of professionals and those in intermediate occupational classes improved between the years relative to that of managers, but there was no change in the relative position of either machine operatives or those in elementary occupations.

There was no significant change between the years in perceived vulnerability to dismissal for lateness or inadequate work performance.

There were wide class differentials in vulnerability to dismissal. In 2001 only 15% of professionals and 29% of managers thought they could be dismissed within a month for regular lack of work effort, compared with 39% of employees in elementary occupations.

The relative security from dismissal of professionals and those in the intermediate classes improved compared to managers between 1996 and 2001, partly as a result of the deterioration in the security of managers. But there was no improvement in the relative position of machine operatives or those in elementary occupations.

Finland, Sweden and to a lesser extent Denmark stood out as having relatively high levels of protection from rapid dismissal, whereas employees in Spain had a particularly high level of vulnerability.

Between 1996 and 2001, there was a slight (but statistically significant) decline in the proportion of employees that had been unemployed in the previous five years (from 19% in 1996 to 16% in 2001).

There were very large class differences in the risks of having had an experience of unemployment. Whereas 10% of managers and professionals had had an experience of unemployment prior to 2001, this was the case for 24% of employees in elementary occupations. However, in part because of the rise in unemployment experiences among managers, the relative position of those in elementary occupations improved over the years.

Belgium, Finland, France, the Netherlands and Sweden witnessed a significant decline over the period in the proportion of employees who had had an experience of unemployment in the previous five years.

## *Chapter 6. Social Precarity and Personal Integration*

The implications of social precarity were examined for five measures of personal integration: employment commitment, job satisfaction, work-related stress, life satisfaction and psychological distress. The first three measures were concerned with personal integration in the world of work, while the third and fourth provided broader measures of personal integration for the wider population. While there was an overall improvement on most of our measures of personal integration between 1996 and 2001, there was still a very strong association in 2001 between all of the precarity factors and poorer personal integration.

Employment commitment was at a relatively modest level in both 1996 and 2001, with only about half the workforce wishing to continue working if there were no financial necessity. However, the period saw a small but statistically significant rise in people's commitment. This was true for both men and women.

The non-skilled had considerably lower levels of employment commitment than other occupational classes, with only 41% willing to continue work if there were no financial necessity in 2001. However, this was mainly accountable for by differences in the quality of jobs, in particular the poorer quality of job tasks.

Overall, there was no increase in job satisfaction between 1996 and 2001. However, satisfaction did rise among female employees.

Non-skilled workers had much lower levels of job satisfaction than employees in all other classes. Again this could be almost entirely accounted for by the poorer quality of the jobs of the non-skilled.

In 2001 nearly a third (31%) of employees reported that they regularly found their work stressful, a quarter that they came home from work exhausted and around 20% that their work was detrimental to their family and home lives. Work stress then was a problem that affected a substantial sector of the workforce. But there was no evidence that it had increased since 1996. Rather all the measures of work stress indicated some decline over the period. The pattern was the same for men and women and for employees in all-occupational classes.

Job quality factors were strong predictors of work stress. Lower task quality, greater work pressure and greater job insecurity all increased the level of work stress experienced by employees. The evidence was consistent with the view that jobs that offer greater opportunities for learning and control on the job mediate the impact of work pressure on stress.

Taking the population as a whole, there was a small but significant decline between 1996 and 2001 in both dissatisfaction with life and psychological distress. However, there was no evidence of a decline in psychological distress for women.

There were substantial differences in both satisfactions with life and psychological distress depending upon people's employment status. In particular, the unemployed had markedly lower levels of personal integration in both respects.

The self-employed showed a contradictory pattern: they had relatively high levels of life satisfaction, but also higher levels of psychological distress, possibly reflecting the anxieties associated with assuring the financial viability of their businesses.

There was no evidence that employment per se improved personal integration. However, those in better quality jobs were more satisfied with their lives and showed lower levels of psychological distress. Low quality jobs were associated with lower personal integration on both measures.

Income precarity, in particular the degree of financial difficulty experienced, was the strongest predictor of both life satisfaction and psychological well being. Level of income also had an effect, even controlling for the experience of financial difficulty.

Social isolation had a strongly negative association with both life satisfaction and psychological well being.

Overall, the evidence is consistent with the view that both precarity in terms of living conditions and precarity in terms of work conditions have strongly negative effects for personal integration.

### *Chapter 7. Social Precarity and Attitudes to Society and the Welfare State*

The final chapter considers the implications of precarity for wider attitudes to society, to democracy and to welfare state provision. The results show that precarity in both living and work conditions is strongly associated with more negative attitudes to society and to greater dissatisfaction with democracy. It has more mixed implications for attitudes to welfare.

Dissatisfaction varies very substantially between the EU countries. It is relatively weak in Denmark, but high in the eastern part of Germany, France, Italy and Greece.

Those in more precarious life situations were significantly more dissatisfied with society. These effects were evident for unemployment, low income, social isolation, poor quality local neighbourhood environments, high levels of work pressure, job insecurity and poor quality work tasks.

A virtually identical pattern was found for dissatisfaction with democracy, both with respect to inter-country variation and to the significant effects of precarity in heightening dissatisfaction.

Attitudes to the welfare state were studied taking account of three indicators: favourability to the government's social policy, the strength of solidaristic values and the severity of attitudes to the unemployed.

Critical attitudes to the government's social policy are most frequent in countries where state welfare policies are relatively underdeveloped (especially the countries of Southern Europe). Support for government social policy is also particularly strong among the unemployed and the poor. Those who have poor quality work tasks and are in less secure jobs are less favourable to government social policy, while those who have experienced job upgrading are more favourable.

Solidaristic attitudes are indicated by the willingness to pay higher taxes if it were certain that they would be used to improve the situation of the poor. Solidarism is highest in Denmark, Great Britain, Sweden, Luxembourg, Italy and Spain.

Those with low incomes do not show higher solidarism on this measure (presumably because they would find it difficult to meet any higher tax payments). Job insecurity reduces solidarism, but those with higher quality work tasks are more solidaristic.

A high proportion of people in all countries were in agreement with the view that the unemployed should be required to accept a job quickly even if it is less good than their previous job. But the unemployed, the poor and those who are in insecure jobs are significantly less likely to endorse this view.

## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

#### *Objectives of the Report*

The objective of this report is to chart trends in social precarity in the member states of the European Union. In the past, research on social exclusion has focused primarily on describing the conditions of groups that have already become separated from the mainstream of society. Increasingly, however, it has been recognised that an effective strategy for combating social exclusion needs to focus on the factors that put people at risk of entering a process of marginalisation that may lead to social exclusion. Thus a concern with social exclusion leads to the need for a wider analysis of social precarity. The report focuses on two major dimensions of social precarity – precarity of living conditions and precarity of work conditions. In both cases, it adopts a broad rather a restricted concept of precarity: it is concerned not just with factors that constitute a threat of social exclusion in the short-term but with factors that are likely to erode people's resources and capacities in a way that raises their risks of marginalisation in the longer-term.

With respect to living conditions, a crucial factor that heightens precarity is clearly inadequacy of financial resources. This involves not only the current level of income but also the duration of time over which people have experienced financial deprivation. The lack of social connections is also likely to constitute a long-term source of risk, since people will have fewer material and affective sources of support to draw upon in times of need (Paugam, 1991; Gallie and Paugam, 2000). The extent to which poverty is associated with social isolation in turn is likely to be affected by the broader understanding in society of the causes of social disadvantage, since whether poverty is seen as a result of the failure of the individual or the failure of society will have implications for the degree of stigmatisation of the poor and hence for the barriers to social interaction.

The second major dimension of precarity examined is that of work precarity – since the nature of people's jobs has been shown consistently to be a central factor affecting their long-term risks of unemployment, poverty and ill-health. The necessity for "poverty" studies to extend their analyses to the arena of work was clearly enunciated by Townsend in his classic study of poverty in the United Kingdom (Townsend, 1979), while the rise of unemployment in the 1980s led to a growing concern about the sources of precarity in work (Gallie et al. 1998; Paugam, 2000; Burchell et al. 2002). As underlined by a recent Employment in Europe report: "Those employed in jobs of poor quality are also at much higher risk of becoming unemployed or of dropping out of the labour force. Concerns about job quality are therefore strongly related to concerns about labour market segmentation and social exclusion" (European Commission, 2001:66). It is clear that many of the problems of those who arrive at the margins of society derive from difficulties they encountered earlier in their lives in maintaining stable employment.

While this may partly have resulted from individual characteristics, the risk of employment instability is heavily structured in a way that points to the importance of the way in which work is organised. Hence in assessing trends in the precarity of work conditions, it is important to take account not only of people's short-term situation with respect to job security, but also of the longer-term sources of employment instability – in particular whether jobs maintain people's motivation, sustain their learning skills and provide them with the opportunities for upgrading their work skills and competence in the way needed to safeguard their futures.

The report addresses three issues. First has precarity of living and work conditions been increasing or not in the countries of the European Union, and if, so which dimensions of precarity have changed most? Second, has the process been relatively consistent across countries or have there been marked variations in trends reflecting different institutional systems? Finally, what are the implications of precarity for social integration, both in terms of people's personal sense of integration in their society and in terms of their attitudes to the institutional framework of their society?

The answers to such questions require evidence across time. There has been no single survey in the past that provides relevant indicators across these different domains. But there have been a number of surveys covering the European Union countries that provide evidence relating to particular parts of the picture. The study, then, has built upon these earlier studies to make a series of comparisons that necessarily vary in terms of the time frame involved.

### *The Context of Earlier Research*

With respect to precarity of living conditions it has been possible to build upon a sequence of three earlier surveys. Helene Riffault, of the French Institute of Public Opinion (L'IFOP) and Jean-Rene Rabier of the European Commission carried out the first of these in 1976. Entitled in French *La perception de la misère en Europe*, (in English, *The Perception of Poverty in Europe*), this was in many ways a landmark study exploring the subjective perception of poverty, the extent of deprivation in terms of living conditions and public understandings of the causes of poverty (Riffault and Rabier, 1977). It flowed from a tradition of work that had been centrally concerned with changes in social values. There was then a considerable gap before the second survey – *The Perception of Poverty in Europe 1989* – was carried out as part of the Poverty 3 Programme, focusing primarily on people's experiences of their living conditions. Finally, in 1993, a third survey was carried out, in the context of a growing interest in the problematic of social exclusion. The title of the report, '*La perception de la pauvreté et de l'exclusion sociale*' (Riffault, 1994) captured its transitional position between two rather different conceptual currents. The concern in the present study with social precarity necessarily required comparison over time with a wider range of indicators than any of these surveys could provide, particularly in relation to the field of work experience. To achieve this, the study has built upon an earlier survey carried out in 1996 by DG Employment, which focused primarily on precarious work conditions and unemployment (Gallie, 1997).

The existence of these earlier surveys has clearly been crucial in opening up the opportunities for comparison across time. At the same time the shifts in focus and method they involved impose inherent constraints on what can be achieved in terms of charting trends. The length of time over which comparisons can be made varies substantially depending on the particular issue of concern. With respect to living conditions, it has been possible in certain instances to provide analyses of trends as far back as 1976, in others only from 1989. With respect to work precarity, we are necessarily confined to the shorter period of the second half of the 1990s. It must also be borne in mind that earlier surveys were still in the early days of systematic overtime comparative analysis. The importance of consistency in wording and question format was not always fully taken into account, with apparently random changes in phrasing or response sets often undermining the opportunity for rigorous comparison across the full set of years. Our position has been to confine ourselves to indicators where we have the exact equivalents between years, rather than try to modify non-consistent variables in the hope that they can be made to provide truly comparable information.

### *The Economic Context*

The evolution of the broad economic context at the time of the different surveys is important to bear in mind. The very earliest survey that we use – 1976 – dates from the period prior to the major deterioration in West European labour markets that occurred from the late 1970s, after the second oil price shock of 1979. The more recent surveys were carried out in a period of much greater labour market volatility. The 1989 survey was at a time when labour markets had substantially recovered from the turmoil of the early 1980s; the 1993 survey was carried out in a period of renewed crisis which extended for many countries into the mid years of the decade. Finally, the current 2001 survey took place after a substantial period of economic recovery.

This broad pattern can be seen clearly in the unemployment rates in the different periods (Table 1.1). Unemployment rose in all countries between the beginning of the decade to 1993, with particularly sharp rises in Finland (from 3.2% to 16.4%) and Sweden (1.7% to 9.1%). Unemployment rates then remained at a very high level in most countries through to 1996, with a marked decline occurring only in Denmark and Ireland. Finally, unemployment fell between 1996 and 2001 in all countries, with the possible exception of Greece. There were particularly marked declines in Finland, Ireland, Spain and Sweden.

**Table 1.1 Standardised Unemployment Rates**

|                | 1990 | 1993 | 1996 | 2001   |
|----------------|------|------|------|--------|
| Austria        |      | 4.0  | 4.4  | 3.6    |
| Belgium        | 6.7  | 8.8  | 9.7  | 6.6    |
| Denmark        | 7.7  | 10.1 | 6.8  | 4.3    |
| Finland        | 3.2  | 16.4 | 14.6 | 9.1    |
| France         | 9.0  | 11.7 | 12.4 | 8.6    |
| Germany        | 4.8  | 7.9  | 8.9  | 7.9    |
| Greece         | 6.4  | 8.6  | 9.6  | (11.1) |
| Ireland        | 13.4 | 15.6 | 10.1 | 3.8    |
| Italy          | 9.0  | 10.2 | 11.7 | 9.4    |
| Luxembourg     | 1.7  | 2.6  | 3.0  | 2.0    |
| Netherlands    | 6.2  | 6.6  | 6.3  | 2.4    |
| Portugal       | 4.6  | 5.7  | 7.3  | 4.1    |
| Spain          | 16.3 | 22.7 | 22.2 | 10.7   |
| Sweden         | 1.7  | 9.1  | 9.6  | 5.1    |
| United Kingdom | 7.1  | 10.5 | 8.2  | 5.0    |

Source: OECD Standardised Unemployment Rates, with the exception of Greece 2001 where Eurostat LFS (2001 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter) figures have been used in the absence of standardised figures.

### *The 2001 Survey*

The 2001 study was commissioned by DG Press and Communication on behalf of the Unit E2 Social Protection and Inclusion Policies of DG Employment. The authors of the report were responsible for drawing up the interview schedule in consultation with DG Employment. The administration of the survey and the organisation of the fieldwork were carried by the European Opinion Research Group, a consortium of Market and Public Opinion Research Agencies, made out of INRA (Europe) and GfK Worldwide. As with the earlier surveys, it was a specially commissioned survey carried out within the framework of the Eurobarometer studies. It adopted then the standard fieldwork practices used by these studies. The sample covered the population of the respective nationalities of the European Union member states. In each country a random multistage probability sample was drawn, with an initial stratified sample of administrative regional units followed by a random route selection of addresses within sampling points. The respondent was then drawn at random within households. Interviews were carried out in the respondent's home. The target sample size is approximately 1,000 people in each country, although much smaller samples are drawn in Northern Ireland (304) and Luxembourg (600). We have excluded Northern Ireland from the analyses, on the grounds that estimates were likely to be very unstable given any significant desegregation of the overall sample. The interviews were carried out between September 17<sup>th</sup> and October 26<sup>th</sup> 2001. This was a not uneventful period in world history, but it is unclear in what particular respects this may have influenced the findings given the specific domains of investigation of the survey.

Any survey has to make important choices about what to include or exclude, given the tight constraints on interview time. This is particularly the case with a survey such as this that covers a number of dimensions of people's lives. Our final selection depended on theoretical interest, potential for comparability and additionally to existing data sources. The survey focuses primarily on subjective rather than objective indicators, which have been much better served by other data sources. We have for instance relatively little information on detailed sources of income or on pay, aspects of people's lives that can be much better studied through surveys such as the European Community Household Panel which devotes a considerable part of the interview schedule to these topics. Similarly, with respect to health and work, we have focused on psychological health, where the data are much sparser, rather than on the traditional area of physical health where there is already a very considerable existing investment in data collection and analysis. Clearly the results of these studies need eventually to be taken in the context of these other research programmes.

There are two particularly important limitations to the study. The first (as with previous surveys) is the small size of the country samples. This makes it difficult to carry out detailed within country analyses in terms of the different implications for men and women of occupational class without rapidly encountering constraints of cell size. The second is the variable nature of the response rates. It is well known that there are marked differences in typical response rates between countries, with for instance particularly low response rates in the Netherlands. In certain cases however the response rates achieved in this survey seem deviant even by conventional standards. In particular the spectacularly low response rates in Great Britain (21%) and Ireland (37%) indicate that considerable caution needs to be exercised in the interpretation of the results for these countries. The data have been weighted to provide a representative picture of the population for each country. But it cannot be sure that such weighting eliminates all of the potential sources of bias that could accompany low response rates. Recent analyses of response rate patterns have been relatively optimistic about the robustness of results across differential response rates within a particular country and, as will be seen in the text of the report, there is certainly a plausible consistency of country patterns across different time periods. However, we believe that results are best regarded as tentative pending the creation of data sets of the requisite size and quality.

**Table 1.2 Unweighted Sample Sizes 2001 Survey**

|               | <b>Overall</b> | <b>In work</b> |
|---------------|----------------|----------------|
| Austria       | 1000           | 477            |
| Belgium       | 1032           | 500            |
| Denmark       | 1001           | 544            |
| Finland       | 997            | 481            |
| France        | 1002           | 501            |
| Germany W     | 1009           | 471            |
| Germany E     | 1000           | 552            |
| Great Britain | 999            | 459            |
| Greece        | 1004           | 393            |
| Ireland       | 996            | 472            |
| Ireland N     | 304            | 136            |
| Italy         | 992            | 453            |
| Luxembourg    | 600            | 313            |
| Netherlands   | 1006           | 473            |
| Portugal      | 1001           | 507            |
| Spain         | 1000           | 430            |
| Sweden        | 1000           | 553            |
|               | 15943          | 7715           |

There is a final general point of caution about the interpretation of the comparative results in this study that must be borne in mind. The concern is with trends, but the comparative reference points are sparse. Strong judgements about trends require regularly collected data over extended time periods. If there are two data points (by way of illustration, 1996 and 2001) conclusions about trends are necessarily very tentative. Strictly speaking we can only talk about whether there has been a change from one year to the other. To find that there was no difference between the results for these two years does not preclude a substantial longer-term difference, for instance between the early 1990s and 2001. Indeed, although it is unknowable, it might be the case that the comparator year was altogether exceptional and masks an otherwise strong and relatively consistent direction of change. The same problems of interpretation obviously would occur if for some reason 2001 were a highly exceptional year. This type of issue is inherent in the current limitations of data availability and clearly calls for the construction of more sustained data series in the future.

### *Structure of the Report*

The report divides into three broad parts. The first charts trends in the precarity of living conditions; the second focuses on trends in the precarity of work conditions and the third examines the implications of the different spheres of precarity for personal well-being and for attitudes to society.

Chapter 2 and 3 are concerned with precarity in living conditions. Chapter 2 begins by charting the evolution of poverty within the general populations of the different member states, with a particular focus on subjective poverty. It then considers the changing visibility of poverty at local neighbourhood level and the way this is affected by variations in the economic cycle and the level of unemployment in particular periods and countries. Finally it turns to examine the way that the general population interprets the mechanisms underlying poverty. In particular it addresses the extent to which it is viewed as a result of individual characteristics rather than broader social factors and as an inherited condition rather than one deriving from shorter-term adverse events.

Chapter 3 turns to a closer investigation of the experiences of those who are in the lowest income quartile. It considers the extent to which they experience financial difficulty and how this has changed over the last decade. It then looks at the typical duration of time that people have experienced poverty and the extent to which adult poverty is associated with being brought up as a child in an economically disadvantaged milieu. Finally, it looks at the implications of low income for the nature and experience of social networks: the availability of social support in times of difficulty, the frequency of social contacts, the experience of social isolation, the extent of segregation of friendship networks with respect to employment status and the degree of satisfaction with family and social life.

Chapter 4 and 5 are concerned with the assessment of changes in precarity at work. We follow the dimensions that have emerged in earlier research literature as of central importance for people's well being and commitment to work. Chapter 4 considers first whether the quality of work tasks, with its implications for people's learning and decision-making skills, has been changing since the mid-1990s. A substantial literature has pointed to this as a crucial factor affecting general personal development and the risk of both psychological and physical illness as a result of work (Kohn and Schooler, 1983; Karasek and Theorell, 1990; Johnson and Johansson, 1991). The chapter then addresses the issue of whether or not there has been a marked intensification of work pressures in employment, whether as a result of technological change or increased competitive pressure, which could be potentially detrimental to employee health. A central concern is whether the employment conditions of the non-skilled (who have a particularly high risk of losing employment) have improved over time in way that would lessen their long-term vulnerability to social exclusion.

Chapter 5 extends the discussion of work precarity by examining the opportunities for the development of new work skills and for career advancement. The regular updating of work skills is an essential factor in maintaining people's value on the labour market, protecting them from risks of redundancy and improving their chances of re-employment if they do become unemployed. The chapter examines both the extent to which people have experienced increases in the skill requirements of their work and whether they have received training from their employers. Finally, it turns to the issue of job security, assessing whether labour market trends have tended to undermine the stability of jobs. It considers both employees' perceptions of their current job security and their recent experiences of unemployment. Again, the analysis focuses particularly on changes over time in the position of the non-skilled given their higher risks of unemployment.

Chapters 6 and 7 are concerned with the implications of precarity for social integration. Chapter 6 explores the impact of precarity on people's sense of personal well being. It begins by looking at whether, for those in work, there have been changes over time in employment commitment, job satisfaction and the prevalence of work-related stress. It explores the impact of the various measures of work precarity for people's well being at work. It then examines for the broader population the impact of precarity both in living conditions and in work conditions on life satisfaction and psychological distress.

Chapter 7 examines whether precarity in living and work conditions affects people's evaluation of the wider society in which they live. It first considers people's general levels of satisfaction with society and with its democratic institutions. It then focuses more specifically on people's attitudes to the welfare state: their favourability to current government welfare policies, the importance they attach to solidaristic welfare values and finally their attitude to policies towards the unemployed.

Finally Chapter 8 draws some of the major conclusions of the findings and points to some of their implications for the future development of welfare policies.

## CHAPTER 2

### THE EVOLUTION AND SOCIAL REPRESENTATION OF POVERTY<sup>1</sup>

The purpose of this chapter is to study the evolution of poverty in Europe both on the basis of conventional statistical indicators and in terms of the way this phenomenon is viewed by the respondents in each country. The analysis of poverty on the basis of money indicators has already been the subject of a number of works, especially since the availability of figures from the European Community Household Panel<sup>2</sup>, which nowadays provides the most reliable statistical basis in Europe for these purposes. On the other hand, this panel tells us nothing about how people see poverty; this can be studied by using the Eurobarometer, where trends may be followed from 1976, the date of the first such survey to tackle perceptions of poverty in Europe. We have evidence from this date onwards for two useful indicators: one lets us examine the perceived causes of poverty, while the other shows us how the people interviewed perceived the principal characteristics of poverty.

When we set about comparing the first, 1976 survey with later ones (those of 1989, 1993 and 2001) we naturally find that this is only feasible for those countries which belonged to the European Union in 1976 and where, accordingly, the survey was conducted in that year: Belgium, Denmark, Germany, France, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom. If we want to make comparisons with the countries of southern Europe, apart from Italy, we shall only be able to do this from the 1989 survey onwards, since Greece became an EU member only in 1979 and Spain and Portugal only in 1986. In these cases, then, we have only three different years to compare. For this first chapter, we have decided to present the results of both sets of countries, so as to give the longest possible historical view, followed by the widest possible international comparison.

This chapter has three sections: the first compares poverty as measured in money terms with other indicators of poverty, the second analyses the perceived causes of poverty, and the third studies the characteristics of two contrasting forms: inherited poverty (structural poverty) and "new" poverty which follows a collapse in a person's circumstances.

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<sup>1</sup> Serge Paugam wrote this chapter; the calculations and graphs were made with the assistance of Marion Selz.

<sup>2</sup> See, e.g. Duncan Gallie and Serge Paugam (eds.), *Welfare Regimes and the Experience of Unemployment*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2000.

### *Measuring poverty*

There is more than one way of measuring poverty, and we make no claim here to have tried them all. The 2001 survey does not afford us any very precise statistical measurement, since the samples are not large, and our knowledge about incomes is still too superficial. On the other hand, it does enable us to get a fairly reliable estimate of a number of other aspects of poverty, and in particular "subjective poverty", or the difficulties experienced in coping with certain expenditures. It is possible also to investigate the visibility of poverty at local level.

### *Objective and subjective poverty*

While there is a great range of different indicators and methods for measuring poverty, statisticians generally adopt a strictly financial approach, setting an income threshold below which households or individuals are considered poor. The threshold varies: for many years, the most usual one was 50% of national average (mean) income. Since 2001, the European Union has used a reference threshold of 60% of the national median, described as an indicator of the "risk of poverty" that we will be looking at later. To take account of economies of scale applying to households depending on their composition, it is usual to give a value of 1 to the first adult in the household, 0.5 to all others aged 14 and over, and 0.3 to children under 14: we shall adopt this convention also.

Contrasting with this type of measurement, there are the approaches based on subjective poverty. Here again there is a customary definition: poor individuals are those whose total net income is less than they consider absolutely necessary for a proper standard of living.

Table 2.1 compares the "risk of poverty" indicator based on the European Union's objective money definition with that for subjective poverty as we have just defined it.

From the figures of the first European Community Household Panel surveys, we find that the proportion of individuals at risk of poverty is distinctly greatest in Portugal, Greece and the United Kingdom (most often above 20%). It is also high in Italy, Spain and Ireland (around 20%). At the other end of the scale, the Scandinavian countries (Denmark, Sweden and Finland) appear least affected by the risk of poverty, for here the proportion of individuals living in poor households is most often less than 10%. The Netherlands and Luxembourg also show a fairly low risk of poverty (between 11% and 12%). France, Germany and Belgium are in the middle (between 15% and 20%).

When we measure subjective poverty we get noticeably different results. With the exception of Denmark and Germany, the proportion of people who regard themselves as poor is distinctly greater than that of people facing an objectively measured risk of poverty. In certain countries the difference is as much as threefold; in Portugal, for instance, where we find 20% of individuals below the poverty line, while the proportion of individuals who consider themselves poor is 66%. In Greece there are 22% according to the first indicator and 54% according to the second. This difference is mainly connected with the fact that these two indicators are not measuring the same thing. The first is relative, in the sense that it is calculated with reference to the national median income: it depends on the income distribution within in the country in question, and can therefore be regarded as an indicator of national inequalities. The second measures individuals' degree of dissatisfaction with their standard of living; it depends on a personal perception of what is necessary for a decent life and of the possible gap between this subjective minimum and their declared net income. Clearly, in countries where there are still some very poor regions, those who live in them may feel frustrated when they compare themselves with those in other, better-off regions of their country, or even elsewhere in Europe, whose living standards they know more about, partly because travel is more frequent and partly through the media. We therefore need to see this as indicating the difficulty that individuals have in coping with the ordinary expenditures they judge necessary and, at the same time, their aspirations to an improved standard of living. In this sense we might say that the very high proportion of people regarding themselves as "poor" in Portugal and Greece reflects the desire expressed by most of those populations for economic and social progress that would bring them access to better conditions of life. This process is not new: we know, for instance, that countries such as France whose agriculture and industry developed very rapidly during the "three-decade boom" also had, during this period, a large proportion of the rural population very strongly dissatisfied with their lot and keen on a rapid transformation. This frustration can indeed be regarded as one of the preconditions for development.

It is striking that, while there are considerable differences between the results for the objective and subjective measures of poverty, the ranking is nevertheless quite largely the same. Portugal and Greece are still the two countries where the proportion of poor people is highest. Italy also has a large proportion of the subjectively poor (41%), while Denmark and Luxembourg, on the contrary, are again among the least affected countries (between 8% and 9%) followed by Germany (14%) and the Netherlands (18%). We may note, though, that the proportion of poor people according to the subjective indicator of poverty is high in Sweden (20%) and in Finland (30%), contrasting with the small proportion of "poor" people in these countries according to the objective "risk of poverty" indicator.

**Table 2.1 Comparison of objective and subjective poverty**

|                | <b>"Risk of poverty" indicator</b>                   |             |             |             | <b>Subjective poverty indicator</b>       |
|----------------|------------------------------------------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------------------------------------|
|                | <b>% living in households at risk of poverty (1)</b> |             |             |             | <b>% who consider themselves poor (2)</b> |
|                | <b>1995</b>                                          | <b>1996</b> | <b>1997</b> | <b>1998</b> | <b>2001</b>                               |
| Belgium        | 17                                                   | 16          | 15          | 16          | 32                                        |
| Denmark        | 12                                                   | 10          | 8           | 9           | 9                                         |
| Germany        | 17                                                   | 15          | 15          | 16          | 14 <sup>(3)</sup>                         |
| Greece         | 22                                                   | 21          | 23          | 22          | 54                                        |
| Spain          | 20                                                   | 19          | 20          | 19          | 34                                        |
| France         | 16                                                   | 17          | 16          | 18          | 30                                        |
| Ireland        | 19                                                   | 20          | 20          | 17          | 24                                        |
| Italy          | 20                                                   | 19          | 19          | 20          | 41                                        |
| Luxembourg     | 12                                                   | 12          | -           | -           | 8                                         |
| Netherlands    | 11                                                   | 12          | 11          | 12          | 18                                        |
| Austria        | 13                                                   | 14          | 13          | 13          | 16                                        |
| Portugal       | 23                                                   | 22          | 24          | 20          | 66                                        |
| Finland        | -                                                    | 8           | 8           | -           | 30                                        |
| Sweden         | -                                                    | -           | 9           | 10          | 20                                        |
| United Kingdom | 21                                                   | 17          | 22          | 21          | 27                                        |

(1) European Community Household Panel, threshold of poverty risk: 60% of the national median income, "modified" OECD scale, in which the first adult of the household counts 1, other aged 14 years or more count 0.5, and children under 14 count 0.3.

(2) Eurobarometer 56.1, Poverty and social devaluation, 2001. These are the percentages of individuals whose total net income is below what they consider absolutely necessary for a proper standard of living.

(3) Western Länder of Germany: 11%, eastern Länder: 24%.

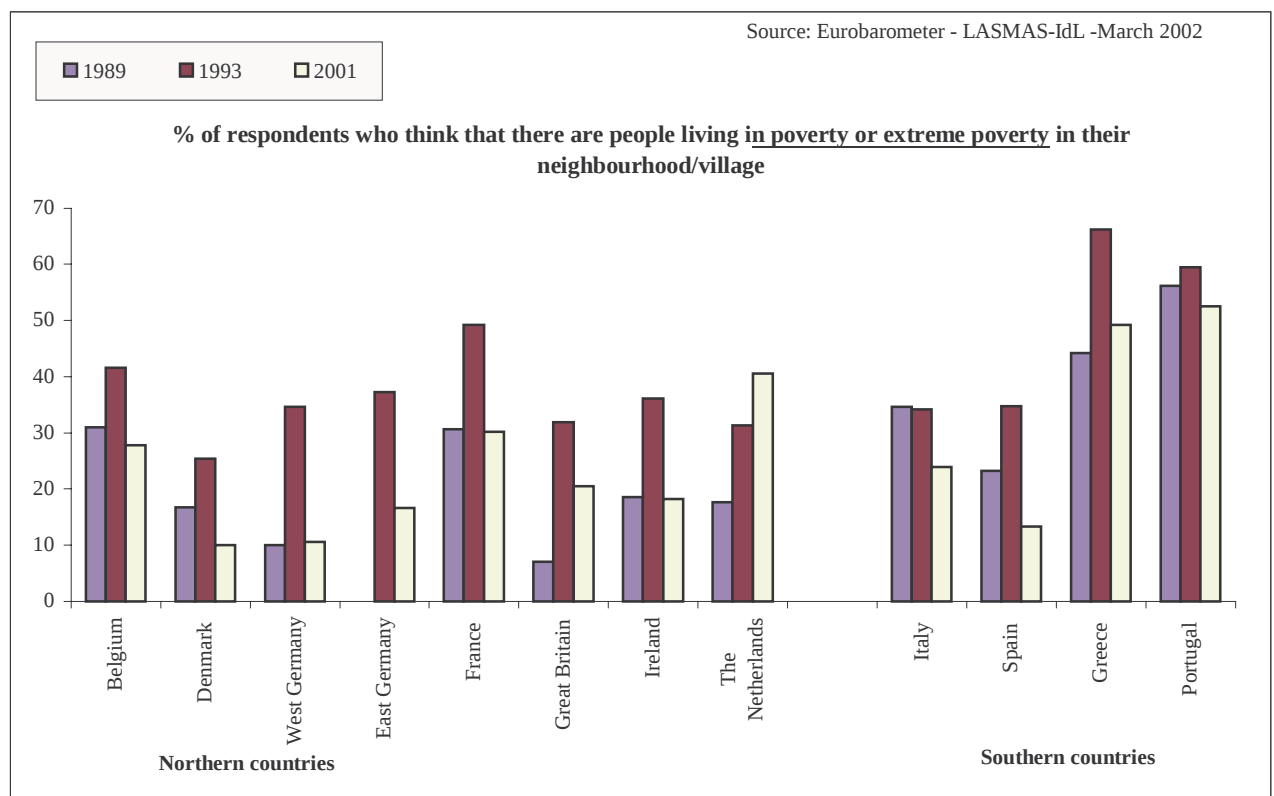


### *Visibility of poverty at local level*

If subjective poverty seems have diminished in recent years, we may wonder whether it is as visible as it used to be. We have the means of comparing over time (back as far as 1989) the proportion of respondents who think there are poor people, or extremely poor people, in their neighbourhood or village (cf. figure below). In 1989, unemployment was lower, in these countries as a whole, than in 1993, while economic growth was higher.

The changes since that date are most significant. We have a very distinct finding that the visibility of poverty or extreme poverty greatly increased from 1989 to 1993 in all countries except Italy, while from 1993 to 2001, on the contrary, it greatly diminished except in the Netherlands. Once more, Portugal and Greece are at one end of the scale and Denmark is at the other: the visibility of poverty or extreme poverty is very high in the former pair (some 50% of the population think there is poverty nearby) and very low in the latter (fewer than 10%).

**Figure 2.2**



The contrasts among these three years are even more striking if we compare the proportion of respondents who think that there are people nearby living in extreme poverty. In all the countries, without exception, we find a very sharp increase in the years to 1993, and a sharp fall between then and 2001. These results for the visibility of poverty agree with the objective and subjective measures of the phenomenon, for the ranking of the various countries is here again remarkably unchanged.

We may therefore hypothesise that, while the differences among European countries remain whatever the stage of the economic cycle, the status and subjective experience of the poor also vary greatly from one country to another: living in poverty in a country where the poor constitute a large and visible segment of the population is not the same as living in poverty where the poor are few and comparatively out of sight. In the first case, we might almost say poverty is part of the social system, and the poor are not seriously marginalized; in the second, being poor can be more of an anomaly or a survival from the past, and the poor may feel rejected or at least relegated to a position remote, on the whole, from the ordinary population. We shall be able to set about testing this hypothesis in the next chapter.

### *The causes of poverty*

The question on perceived causes of poverty was formulated as follows: "Why, in your opinion, are there people who live in want?" and the answers offered for the respondents to choose from were:

1. Because they have been unlucky;
2. Because of laziness and lack of willpower;
3. Because there is much injustice in our society;
4. It's an inevitable part of modern progress;
5. None of these.

This question has been asked since 1976, and we therefore have figures from four surveys, giving us a particularly good basis for studying, over time, both national differences and differences among survey periods. To start with, we shall distinguish between personal causes and social causes; we shall then go on to look more closely at the factors cited to explain poverty in terms of laziness, and those which point to injustice as an explanation.

### *Personal causes and social causes*

The first two replies offered refer to personal causes ("because they've been unlucky", "because of laziness or lack of willpower") while the next two refer to social causes ("because there's a great deal of injustice in our society" and "it's inevitable in the modern world") (cf. table 2.2).

Of the two personal causes, the first, unlike the second, is based on a factual observation only, passing no judgement on the poor people involved. Among the social causes, the explanation in terms of the inevitability of poverty also amounts to a factual observation about society, and does not imply a criticism of it, unlike the "injustice" explanation, which does. We may therefore say that the "laziness" and "injustice" explanations are more ideological ones than the others.

However that may be, the attribution of poverty to an individual cause or a social one is in itself a significant indication of the way individuals and societies relate to poverty. There are, moreover, considerable variations here from country to country.

**Table 2.2 Perceived causes of poverty in 2001**

|                | Bad luck | Laziness | Total,<br>personal<br>causes | Injustice | Inevita-<br>bility | Total<br>social<br>causes | None of<br>these<br>replies | Don't<br>know |
|----------------|----------|----------|------------------------------|-----------|--------------------|---------------------------|-----------------------------|---------------|
| Belgium        | 17.9     | 17.9     | 35.8                         | 31.2      | 23.6               | 54.8                      | 4.4                         | 4.9           |
| Denmark        | 27.5     | 19.3     | 46.8                         | 12.8      | 30.6               | 43.4                      | 6.0                         | 3.8           |
| Germany (W)    | 11.6     | 17.1     | 28.7                         | 33.2      | 25.4               | 58.6                      | 3.8                         | 8.8           |
| Germany (E)    | 9.8      | 14.4     | 24.2                         | 50.1      | 18.9               | 69.0                      | 3.6                         | 3.1           |
| Greece         | 13.7     | 19.9     | 33.6                         | 32.9      | 24.8               | 57.7                      | 3.7                         | 4.9           |
| Italy          | 19.4     | 15.4     | 34.8                         | 36.1      | 15.8               | 51.9                      | 6.2                         | 7.2           |
| Spain          | 24.0     | 12.4     | 36.4                         | 35.3      | 19.4               | 54.7                      | 3.6                         | 5.4           |
| France         | 16.4     | 15.6     | 32.0                         | 39.9      | 19.1               | 59.0                      | 5.1                         | 3.9           |
| Ireland        | 22.8     | 17.9     | 40.7                         | 22.9      | 19.7               | 42.6                      | 7.0                         | 9.8           |
| Netherlands    | 23.2     | 11.9     | 35.1                         | 19.3      | 22.5               | 41.8                      | 14.2                        | 8.8           |
| Austria        | 12.6     | 22.3     | 34.9                         | 29.6      | 24.2               | 53.8                      | 6.6                         | 4.7           |
| Portugal       | 18.3     | 29.4     | 47.7                         | 33.6      | 10.2               | 43.8                      | 3.2                         | 5.4           |
| Finland        | 13.4     | 14.7     | 28.1                         | 42.5      | 23.4               | 65.9                      | 2.4                         | 3.6           |
| Sweden         | 13.1     | 8.5      | 21.6                         | 42.0      | 27.1               | 69.1                      | 5.2                         | 4.1           |
| United Kingdom | 20.9     | 22.5     | 43.4                         | 19.5      | 22.3               | 41.8                      | 5.2                         | 9.7           |
| All countries  | 17.5     | 17.6     | 35.1                         | 31.4      | 21.9               | 53.3                      | 5.7                         | 5.9           |

Source: Eurobarometer 56.1, *Poverty and social devaluation in Europe* (2001)

The countries where poverty is most often explained in terms of personal causes are, in descending order: Portugal (48%), Denmark (47%), the United Kingdom (43%) and Ireland (41%). The countries where the social causes predominate as explanations of poverty are: Sweden and eastern Germany (69%), then Finland (66%), followed by France and western Germany (59%), Belgium and Spain (55%) and Italy (52%). These differences cannot be explained by any single factor: we could suggest that the countries with strong social-democrat traditions (Sweden, Finland) or socialist ones (eastern Germany) lean more towards the explanation in terms of social causes: there is some backing for this, yet Denmark is an exception. To observe that the Latin countries have a culture of challenging the social system, which translates into a stronger tendency to explain poverty in terms of social causes, is doubtless true; but in this case we have to point to Portugal as an exception.

On the other hand, it appears that the United Kingdom and Ireland tend more to explain poverty in terms of personal causes. In general, therefore, we may say that there is no single factor to explain these differences. All we can do is observe that, by and large, the development of an advanced social security system is often correlated with a frequent explanation of poverty in terms of social causes while, conversely, a social security system like the British, which has been considerably pruned over recent years particularly so far as unemployment compensation is concerned, is associated with a greater tendency to see poverty as the result of personal causes. We may cast more light on this by examining the explanatory factors of laziness and injustice.

### *Laziness and injustice*

As we have seen, the explanations of poverty in terms of laziness and of injustice are opposed. The former refers to a moral concept based on the sense of duty and the work ethic. In this view, the poor are as it were accused of not doing more for themselves, and the government authorities have therefore no duty to do more for them. According to this approach, each individual person is responsible for him- or herself, and the avoidance of poverty is a personal task. The explanation of poverty in terms of injustice, on the other hand, refers to a more global view of society: the poor are primarily the victims of a system that has condemned them. To this way of thinking, government authorities do have a duty: to help the poor, as a matter of greater social justice. The "laziness" and the "injustice" explanations correspond to contrasting opinions whose ideological and political orientation are obvious to all; and these two explanations themselves have a history which goes back to the Middle Ages: societies have opted, in their treatment of poverty, for "pity, or the gallows", to borrow the title of a book by the historian Geremek<sup>4</sup>; that is, the temptation to eliminate the poor on the grounds that they are lazy, irresponsible and therefore undesirable, has vied with the temptation to feel compassion for the world of all those who have never had a chance, and who have always lived in want.

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<sup>4</sup> Cf. B. Geremek, (1<sup>st</sup> edition in Polish, 1978). English translation entitled "Poverty: a History", Blackwell Publishers; ISBN: 0631205292; Reprint edition March 1997.

Looking at these two explanations of poverty, we may want to know on the one hand whether there are considerable differences among European countries and, on the other, whether there have been changes over time. We might suspect that a country will be less likely to develop ambitious social policies if many of its citizens regard poverty as a problem of individual responsibility and, conversely, that a country will more readily devote resources to the fight against poverty if its inhabitants regard this problem as the effect of systematic injustice which condemns its most deprived victims to one uniform destiny. We must see national differences on this point as both the effect of a value system inherited from history and the result of the interventionist tradition of the Welfare State.

We may also hypothesise that these two explanations of poverty become more or less prevalent according to the economic and social climate, and especially the rates of unemployment and growth. In 1976, the year of the first survey, the rate of unemployment was under 5% in most of the European countries, while in 1993, when the third survey was conducted, it was twice that level in many countries. If we look, likewise, at the rate of growth of GNP, this was above 5% – remarkable though it may seem today – in Belgium, Denmark, Germany, Greece, Italy and Portugal. In 1993, growth was near zero in most of the countries, or even negative. These changes seldom left the populations of any country unaffected; they have at least a partial effect on household consumption. It is therefore probable that they also influence the way people think about poverty.

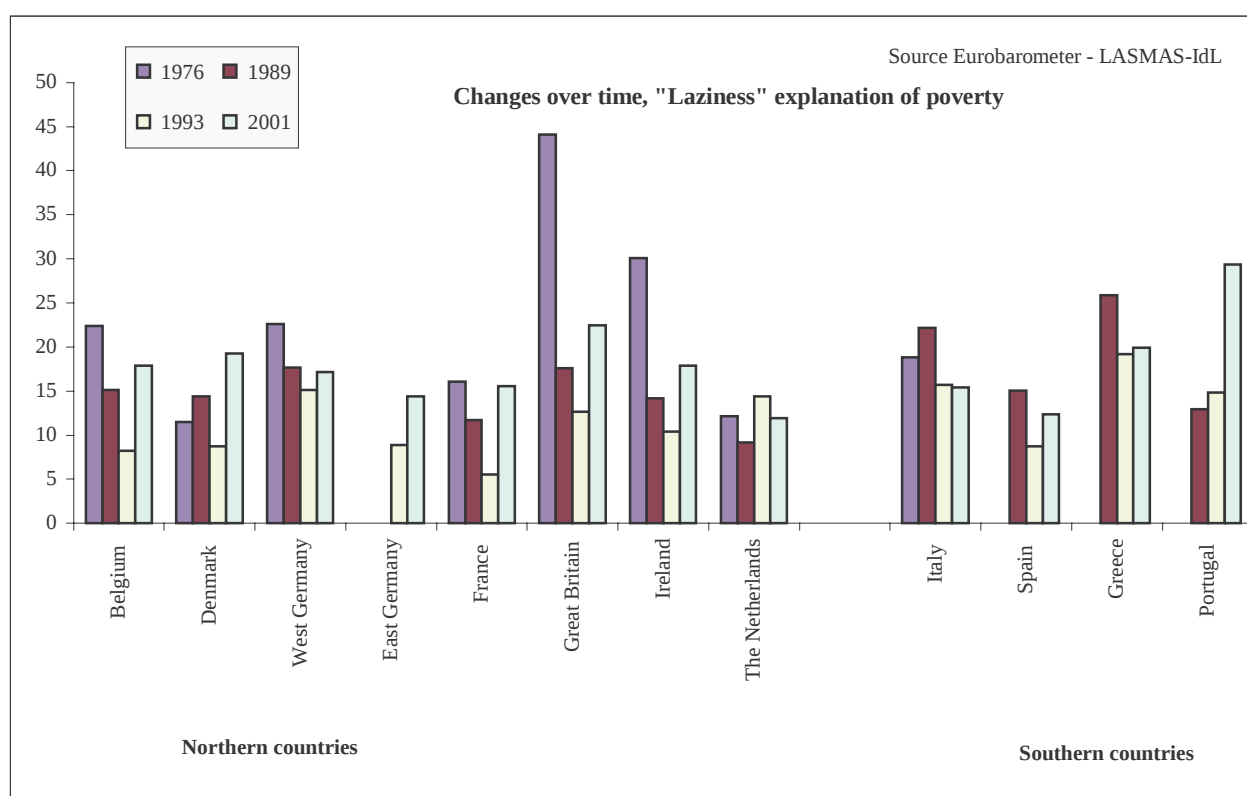
The figures (2.3. and 2.4.) below trace the evolution since 1976 of the "laziness" and "injustice" explanations of poverty in each country, allowing us to test these hypotheses; the two explanations do in fact vary over time, from country to country and from period to period. If we compare France and Great Britain, for instance, it appears that the "laziness" explanation is always voiced more often in Great Britain than in France, whichever period we look at. The difference was, moreover, particularly high in 1976, when more than 44% of British respondents chose this explanation compared with some 17% of French ones. We have to infer that there are different conceptions of poverty in these two countries, and this has been shown in other works as well<sup>5</sup>.

We also need to stress that despite the differences of actual level among countries, trends have been similar since 1976 in many of them. In Belgium, Germany, France, Great Britain and Ireland, the "laziness" explanation of poverty scored high in the first survey, noticeably lower in the second, and still lower in the third, moving back up strongly in the last. The changes are considerable: in France, for instance, the proportion of people explaining poverty as due to laziness was 16.1% in 1976, 11.7% in 1989, 5.6% in 1993, and 15.6% in 2001. In Belgium, the trends were the same: 22.4% in 1976, 15.13% in 1989, 8.2% in 1993 and 17.9% in 2001.

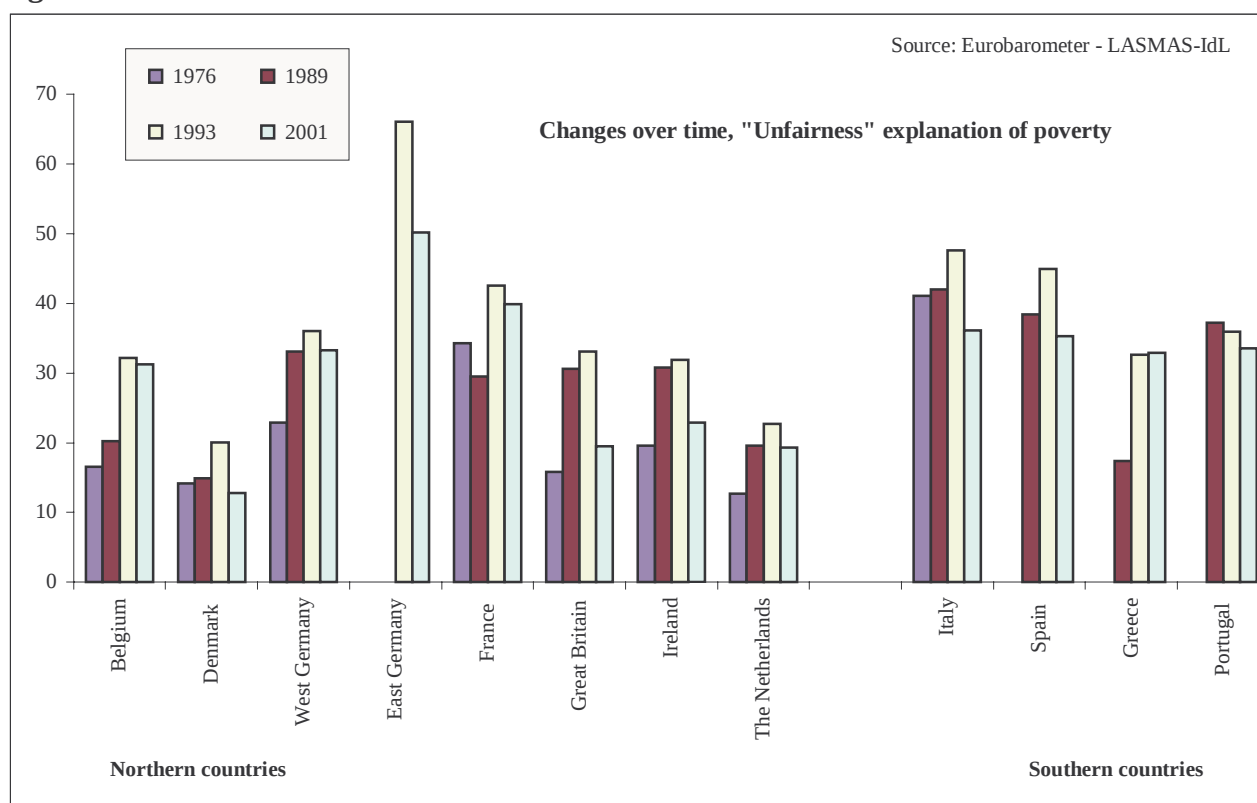
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<sup>5</sup> Cf. M. Evans, S. Paugam, J. Prélis, *Chunnel Vision: Poverty, Social devaluation' and the Debate on Social Welfare in France and Britain*, London School of Economics, STICERD, Discussion paper, Welfare state programme/115, 1995.

**Figure 2.3**



**Figure 2.4**



If we look only at the last three surveys, we find an appreciable waning of the "laziness" explanation of poverty in 1993 by comparison with 1989, and an increase in 2001 (again by comparison with 1989) in eight countries out of the eleven shown in the graph.

We find almost exactly the reverse for the "injustice" explanation of poverty. This explanation is chosen most often in eastern Germany (50%), Finland and Sweden (42%) and France (40%). The United Kingdom and Netherlands respondents chose this explanation a great deal less frequently (19%) and Denmark still less (13%). In southern countries, particularly Italy, Spain and Portugal, the proportion of the population choosing this explanation is fairly high overall (between 33% and 36%).

To interpret these differences, we should take into account not only the type of Welfare State, but also the way inequality is discussed in each of these countries, which depends on their experiments and experiences in the field of combating poverty, the people and organisations involved in this area, and the usual modes of social intervention more generally.

It is also remarkably clear that the "injustice" explanation of poverty varies greatly over time. In nine countries of the eleven, it reached a peak in 1993 (a time when the economic climate was most unfavourable, with a very high unemployment rate in most countries and very weak or even negative growth).

The "injustice" explanation of poverty dropped sharply in 2001 in all countries except Greece, where it has become somewhat stabilised at a high level.

We may immediately infer, therefore, that explanations offered for poverty vary greatly depending on place and time; and that these two variables seem, on the face of it, equally robust. We do need, however, to test this in a more systematic way, and to that end have run a number of logistic regression models for the "laziness" (table 2.3) and "injustice" (table 2.4) explanations of poverty, using the country data available, firstly from 1976 and secondly from 1989 onwards. All the models are standardised for the basic social and demographic variables of sex, age and income, and give detailed results by year and country. To test the effect of the economic climate, in addition to the survey period we have added (in model 2) an indicator of unemployment for the year of each survey and (in model 3) an additional growth indicator, also for the year of each survey.

Clearly, these indicators are still very crude and cannot on their own describe the overall economic climate. Moreover, a difference of one percentage point in an unemployment rate is not very significant from a statistical point of view, though it can be more so in social life since it features prominently in the news. As a consequence, if we can see even a very slight change in the results after adding in these indicators, we may be able to conclude that they do have an effect on the way people see the causes of poverty.

**Table 2.3 Explanation of poverty in terms of laziness**  
(Logistic regression, standardised for sex, age and income)

|                         | From 1976        |                  |                  | From 1989        |                  |                  |
|-------------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|
|                         | Model 1          | Model 2          | Model 3          | Model 1          | Model 2          | Model 3          |
| <b>Year</b>             |                  |                  |                  |                  |                  |                  |
| 1976                    | <i>Reference</i> | <i>Reference</i> | <i>Reference</i> | -                | -                | -                |
| 1989                    | -0.45***         | -0.35***         | -0.32***         | <i>Reference</i> | <i>Reference</i> | <i>Reference</i> |
| 1993                    | -0.81***         | -0.66***         | -0.76***         | -0.32***         | -0.24***         | -0.37***         |
| 2001                    | -0.32***         | -0.28***         | -0.25***         | 0.14***          | 0.08*            | 0.08*            |
| <b>Country</b>          |                  |                  |                  |                  |                  |                  |
| United Kingdom          | <i>Reference</i> | <i>Reference</i> | <i>Reference</i> | <i>Reference</i> | <i>Reference</i> | <i>Reference</i> |
| Belgium                 | -0.55***         | -0.53***         | -0.46***         | -0.32***         | -0.29***         | -0.29***         |
| Denmark                 | -0.78***         | -0.77***         | -0.75***         | -0.33***         | -0.33***         | -0.38***         |
| Germany                 | -0.32***         | -0.34***         | -0.31***         | -0.03 (ns)       | -0.02 (ns)       | -0.04 (ns)       |
| France                  | -0.82***         | -0.77***         | -0.69***         | -0.53***         | -0.38***         | -0.35***         |
| Ireland                 | -0.34***         | -0.21**          | 0.02 (ns)        | -0.24***         | -0.05 (ns)       | 0.16 (ns)        |
| Luxembourg              | 0.05 (ns)        | -0.09 (ns)       | 0.06 (ns)        | 0.33***          | 0.09 (ns)        | 0.27*            |
| Netherlands             | -0.89***         | -0.94***         | -0.92***         | -0.51***         | -0.61***         | -0.60***         |
| Italy                   | -0.32***         | -0.23***         | -0.13*           | 0.03 (ns)        | 0.19**           | 0.20**           |
| Spain                   | -                | -                | -                | -0.46***         | 0.03 (ns)        | 0.14 (ns)        |
| Greece                  | -                | -                | -                | 0.22***          | 0.34***          | 0.36***          |
| Portugal                | -                | -                | -                | 0.08 (ns)        | -0.02 (ns)       | -0.03 (ns)       |
| <b>Unemployment (1)</b> | -                | -0.03***         | -0.05***         | -                | -0.05***         | -0.05***         |
| <b>Growth (2)</b>       | -                | -                | -0.05***         | -                | -                | -0.03**          |

\*: P < 0.05, \*\*: P < 0.01, \*\*\*: P < 0.001, ns: not significant

(1) National unemployment rate for the year of each survey (Source OECD)

(2) National growth rate for the year of each survey (Source OECD)

Table 2.3 confirms, in the first place, that the year-of-survey effect and the country effect are still significant, both from 1976 onwards and from 1989 onwards. In model 1 (from 1976), the "laziness" explanation of poverty decreases in 1989 (coefficient -0.45 by comparison with the base year (1976), falls further in 1993 (-0.81) and then rises again in 2001 (-0.32). If we take the United Kingdom as country of reference (where the "laziness" explanation of poverty was the most widespread in 1976), all the other countries differ, but the Netherlands, France and Denmark differ most of all (coefficients of -0.89, -0.82 and -0.78, respectively).

When, in model 2, we add the unemployment indicator for the year of each survey, all the coefficients for the three years (1989, 1993 and 2001) decrease substantially, proving that there is indeed a specific unemployment effect, quite independent of the survey year. With higher unemployment there is a slightly lower probability that respondents will chose the "laziness" explanation of poverty. In every country, people tend more to reflect, during a period of recession when jobs are scarce, that it may not be the fault of the unemployed themselves if they do not find work.

When (model 3), we also add the growth indicator for each survey year, we can see the coefficients change once more, either upward or downward by comparison with model 2, but without reversing the general tendency. The specific effect of higher growth is, however, harder to interpret than that of higher unemployment: the figures show that when growth rises, also, the probability that respondents will give the "laziness" explanation of poverty falls slightly. We must undoubtedly relate this result to another observation from the same surveys: that awareness of inequalities became stronger over the period 1993 – 2001, even though the economic climate actually improved over that period. It has to be recognised also that as the economy recovers, unemployment may go down but inequalities simultaneously increase, along with general awareness of them. However that may be, these models confirm a very strong effect for the survey period, which we may attribute at least partly to the economic and social climate, since the introduction of the relevant specific indicators changes the coefficients noticeably, without reversing the overall tendency.

The factors contributing to the "injustice" explanation of poverty can be analysed according to the same models (cf. table 2.4). We find that the survey period is again highly significant. By comparison with 1976, the probability that this explanation will be given is greater in 1989 and greater still in 1993; moreover we find a net fall for this coefficient in 2001 compared with 1993 in all the models, and this warrants the inference that improvements in the economic climate reduce the collective readiness to refer to injustice as an explanation of poverty.

The models also confirm that the "injustice" explanation of poverty varies significantly from country to country. Once we have stripped out the effects of age, sex and income, and also that of the survey period, we still find that the two countries where this explanation is least popular are Denmark and the Netherlands, which seems logical as these are the countries where social security is most advanced.

If we add in unemployment (model 2), we find the coefficients fall significantly, proving that this indicator has a specific effect on the "injustice" explanation of poverty. Thus we find that an increase in unemployment raises the popularity of this explanation, whatever the country. When we also add growth (model 3), the coefficients again change, but less markedly. Once more, an increase in growth raises *ceteris paribus* the probability of this type of explanation. We may note however that the growth indicator is, under model 3, less significant in the model starting in 1989 than in that starting in 1976.

**Table 2.4 Explanation of poverty in terms of injustice**  
(Logistic regression standardised for sex, age and income)

|                         | From 1976        |                  |                  | From 1989        |                  |                  |
|-------------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|
|                         | Model 1          | Model 2          | Model 3          | Model 1          | Model 2          | Model 3          |
| <b>Year</b>             |                  |                  |                  |                  |                  |                  |
| 1976                    | <i>Reference</i> | <i>Reference</i> | <i>Reference</i> | -                | -                | -                |
| 1989                    | 0.28***          | 0.22***          | 0.22***          | <i>Reference</i> | <i>Reference</i> | <i>Reference</i> |
| 1993                    | 0.64***          | 0.52***          | 0.63***          | 0.35***          | 0.29***          | 0.37***          |
| 2001                    | 0.30***          | 0.31***          | 0.32***          | 0.05*            | 0.10***          | 0.10***          |
| <b>Country</b>          |                  |                  |                  |                  |                  |                  |
| United Kingdom          | <i>Reference</i> | <i>Reference</i> | <i>Reference</i> | <i>Reference</i> | <i>Reference</i> | <i>Reference</i> |
| Belgium                 | 0.03 (ns)        | -0.16***         | -0.16***         | 0.03 (ns)        | 0.02 (ns)        | 0.03 (ns)        |
| Denmark                 | -0.62***         | -0.81***         | -0.80***         | -0.73***         | -0.73***         | -0.70***         |
| Germany                 | 0.31***          | 0.13***          | 0.14***          | 0.28***          | 0.29***          | 0.31***          |
| France                  | 0.55***          | 0.31***          | 0.31***          | 0.41***          | 0.32***          | 0.31***          |
| Ireland                 | 0.06 (ns)        | -0.24***         | -0.32***         | 0.03 (ns)        | -0.12*           | -0.22*           |
| Luxembourg              | 0.01 (ns)        | -0.02 (ns)       | -0.15*           | 0.01 (ns)        | 0.19*            | 0.09 (ns)        |
| Netherlands             | -0.40***         | -0.53***         | -0.54***         | -0.41***         | -0.34***         | -0.33***         |
| Italy                   | 0.76***          | 0.50***          | 0.50***          | 0.64***          | 0.54***          | 0.55***          |
| Spain                   | -                | -                | -                | 0.54***          | 0.17*            | 0.12 (ns)        |
| Greece                  | -                | -                | -                | 0.01 (ns)        | -0.06 (ns)       | -0.05 (ns)       |
| Portugal                | -                | -                | -                | 0.34***          | 0.43***          | 0.45***          |
| <b>Unemployment (1)</b> | -                | 0.02***          | 0.03***          | -                | 0.03***          | 0.04***          |
| <b>Growth (2)</b>       | -                | -                | 0.02***          | -                | -                | 0.02*            |

\*: P < 0.05, \*\*: P < 0.01, \*\*\*: P < 0.001, ns: not significant

(1) National unemployment rate for each survey year (Source OECD)

(2) National growth rate for each survey year (Source OECD)

We may conclude from this section that the ways people see the causes of poverty are not immutable; like all perceptions, they can change. We have verified, in particular, that they vary both from country to country (that is, according to patterns of political and cultural perception) and according to the economic and social climate.

We shall have occasion in the next chapter to analyse the consequences of these images and perceptions on the subjective experiences of poverty. As "the poor" are not defined or perceived (as a group) in quite the same way throughout Europe, it stands to reason that their experience and behaviour will not be uniform from one country to another. Quite apart from differences in standard of living, the fact of receiving assistance while of an age to work has quite a different meaning for the individual and will produce quite different attitudes, depending on whether that individual lives in a country where unemployment is low and community pressure on deviant behaviour strong, or in a society where there is structural unemployment and the parallel economy is highly developed. In the former case, the individual is a member of a minority, and liable to be seriously stigmatised while feeling inadequate in the face of collective expectations; in the latter, such individuals are less marginalized and have more chance of managing to counteract the lowering of their social status, by still having access to both material and symbolic resources via the underground economy.

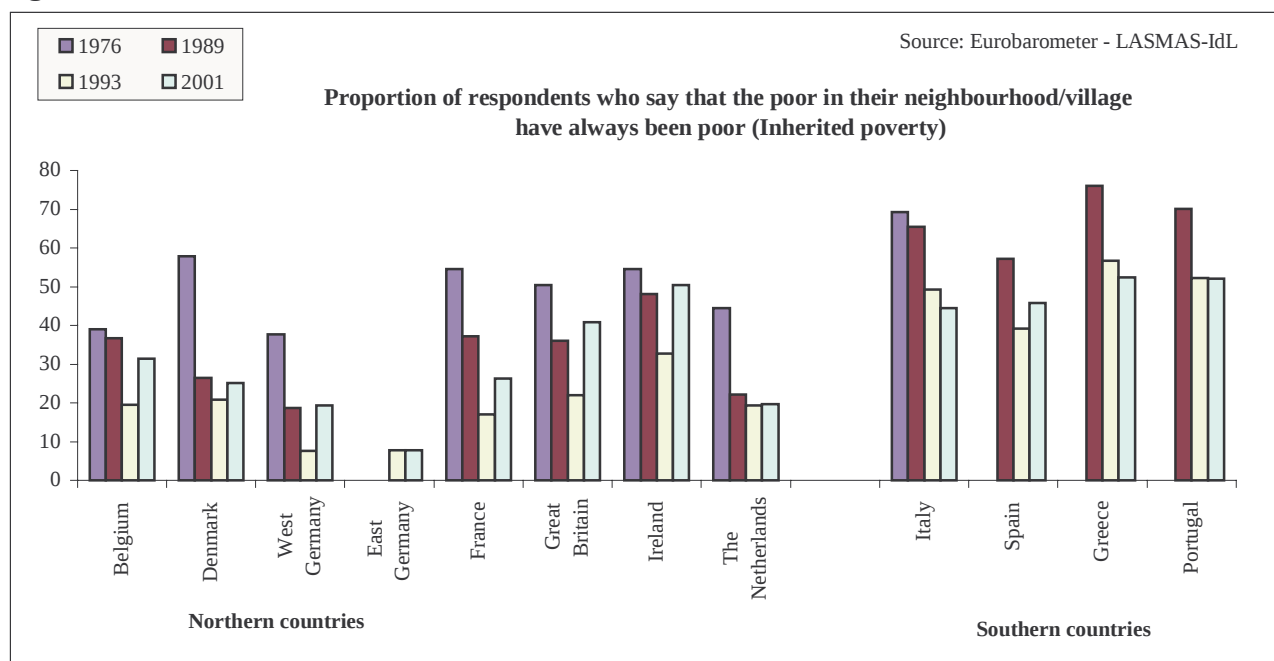
### *Inherited poverty and the newly poor*

In research on poverty, one question remains virtually unanswered in spite of being often studied: that of the relationship between two characteristic forms of poverty: that which reproduces itself from generation to generation like a destiny, and that which afflicts people who had formerly seemed free of the problem. Which of these two really matches the situation most often? Some consider that poverty is most outrageous when it concentrates on families who remain poor whatever the age or economic climate in which they live. In their view, the only possible explanation for this phenomenon is injustice. For others, poverty is worst when, like a whirlpool, it sucks down successive bands of the population or, in other words, when it spreads beyond the traditionally poor. Collective mobilisation is generally stronger in the second case. Our hypothesis here is that neither version of "poverty" is the "right" one in any absolute sense. They are both relative, and vary greatly not just from country to country, but also according to the economic climate.

It is possible to test this hypothesis by referring to a question, which has been included in the Eurobarometer surveys since 1976. The question is put to those who say they have seen, in their neighbourhood or village, people who are living in extreme poverty, in poverty, or at risk of falling into poverty. These respondents are asked whether these people have always been in their present situation ("inherited" poverty) or, on the contrary, have fallen into poverty following a particular unfavourable life event, having previously known something else ("the newly poor").

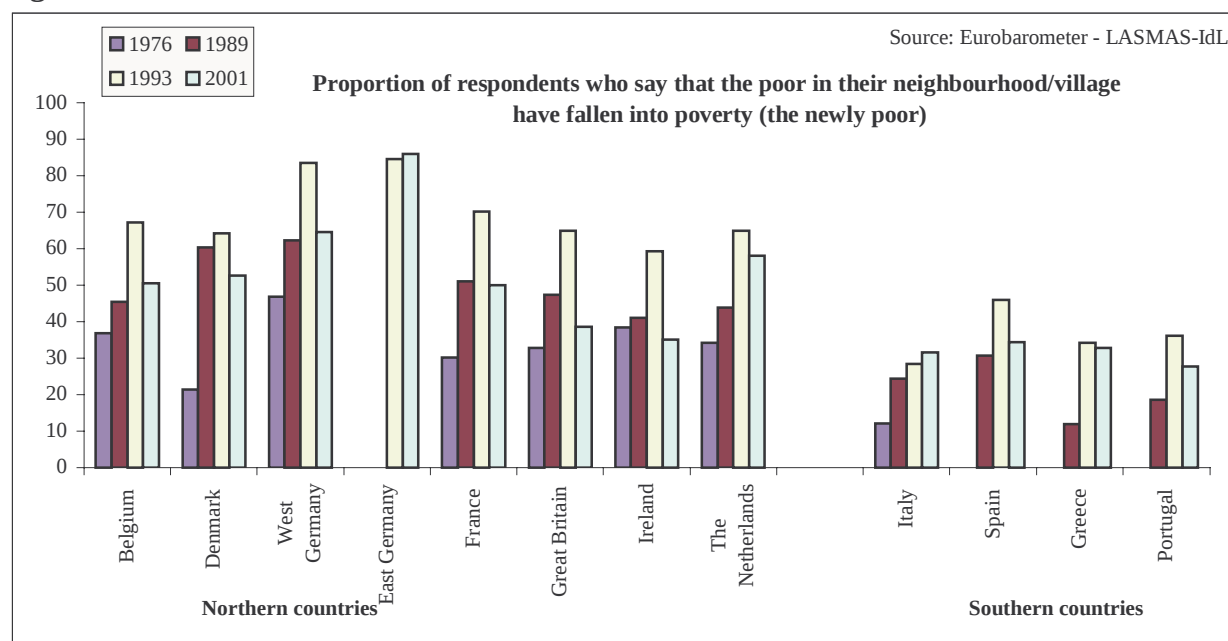
The figure 2.5 below shows that a very high proportion of respondents in southern countries regard poverty as a permanent, heritable condition (in 2001, the proportion was 53% in Greece and Portugal, and 46% in Italy and Spain).

**Figure 2.5**



It is striking how the perception of poverty as an inherited condition also varies from period to period of the survey. In all the countries, this perception waned between 1976 and 1993, probably due to the deteriorating jobs situation; then the trend reversed, and it rose noticeably from 1993 to 2001. We may note that while the differences among countries are less marked in 2001, the perception of poverty as an inheritance is still that of a small minority in Germany, Denmark and the Netherlands.

**Figure 2.6**



The perception of poverty as "new poverty", on the other hand, is less widespread in southern countries (28% in Portugal, and in the range 32% - 35% in Spain, Italy and Greece) while it is much more so in northern countries, particularly Germany (especially the eastern Länder, with 86%), the Netherlands (65%) and Denmark (53%). Clearly, poverty is perceived in different ways depending on the type of economic development and the level of social security provision. We may note also that collective perceptions at least partly match the observed national differences in statistical measurements of poverty itself.

As in the case of inherited poverty, the proportion of people who think that poverty is "new" also varies according to the period of the survey. We find that this view of poverty became much more widespread between 1976 and 1993, when it reached its peak in all countries apart from eastern Germany, and then fell sharply from 1993 to 2001. It seems therefore that under the effect of declining job opportunities the population of each country became more aware of the growing number of poor people, and more aware that many of these were "newly poor". As the economic climate improved, so this perception grew weaker.

To examine in greater depth the factors explaining these two views of poverty, we can use the same type of logistic regression model as in the previous section (cf. tables 2.5 and 2.6).

**Table 2.5 Poverty perceived as an inherited condition**  
(Logistic regression standardised for sex, age and income)

|                         | From 1976        |                  |                  | From 1989        |                  |                  |
|-------------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|
|                         | Model 1          | Model 2          | Model 3          | Model 1          | Model 2          | Model 3          |
| <b>Year</b>             |                  |                  |                  |                  |                  |                  |
| 1976                    | <i>Reference</i> | <i>Reference</i> | <i>Reference</i> | -                | -                | -                |
| 1989                    | -0.43***         | -0.22*           | -0.22*           | <i>Reference</i> | <i>Reference</i> | <i>Reference</i> |
| 1993                    | -1.17***         | -0.88***         | -0.80***         | -0.73***         | -0.62***         | -0.65***         |
| 2001                    | -0.67***         | -0.59***         | -0.59***         | -0.49***         | -0.54***         | -0.54***         |
| <b>Country</b>          |                  |                  |                  |                  |                  |                  |
| UK                      | <i>Reference</i> | <i>Reference</i> | <i>Reference</i> | <i>Reference</i> | <i>Reference</i> | <i>Reference</i> |
| Belgium                 | -0.35**          | -0.32**          | -0.35**          | -0.23 (ns)       | -0.22 (ns)       | -0.23 (ns)       |
| Denmark                 | -0.33**          | -0.33**          | -0.33**          | -0.54***         | -0.52**          | -0.54**          |
| Germany                 | -0.77***         | -0.82***         | -0.84***         | -1.17***         | -1.22***         | -1.23***         |
| France                  | -0.17 (ns)       | -0.10 (ns)       | -0.12 (ns)       | -0.35**          | -0.19 (ns)       | -0.20 (ns)       |
| Ireland                 | 0.24*            | 0.50***          | 0.44**           | 0.35*            | 0.67***          | 0.70***          |
| Luxembourg              | -0.24 (ns)       | -0.52**          | -0.55**          | 0.13 (ns)        | -0.22 (ns)       | -0.18 (ns)       |
| Netherlands             | -0.59***         | -0.72***         | -0.73***         | -0.64***         | -0.81***         | -0.81***         |
| Italy                   | 0.62***          | 0.75***          | 0.71***          | 0.80***          | 0.96***          | 0.95***          |
| Spain                   | -                | -                | -                | 0.56***          | 1.26***          | 1.26***          |
| Greece                  | -                | -                | -                | 1.15***          | 1.26***          | 1.25***          |
| Portugal                | -                | -                | -                | 1.05***          | 0.87***          | 0.86***          |
| <b>Unemployment (1)</b> | -                | -0.05**          | -0.05**          | -                | -0.06***         | -0.06***         |
| <b>Growth (2)</b>       | -                | -                | 0.02*            | -                | -                | -0.01 (ns)       |

\*: P < 0.05, \*\*: P < 0.01, \*\*\*: P < 0.001, ns: not significant

(1) National unemployment rate for each survey year (Source OECD)

(2) National growth rate for each survey year (Source OECD)

Once we have taken account of the effects of sex, age and income, we still find that both the year of the survey and the country can to a very significant extent account for the perception of poverty as an inherited condition. Taking 1976 as the base, the coefficients obtained for 1989, 1993 and 2001 are all negative, meaning that the first survey year was the one where this perception was the strongest. It then declined until 1993, the period with the lowest coefficient (-1.17 in model 1), and rose again very sharply between 1993 and 2001.

If we add in unemployment (model 2), the coefficients for each year increase considerably, proving that this indicator has a specific effect (for instance the 1993 figure rises from -1.17 in model 1 to -0.88 in model 2). We may therefore conclude in a general way that increases in unemployment lessen the probability that people will see poverty as a problem reproduced from generation to generation. If we also add in the growth indicator (model 3), we see no great change in the coefficients, particularly not in those using figures from 1989 onwards, indicating that the unemployment effect is of greater explanatory power than growth, so far as this phenomenon is concerned.

We also find that, other things being equal, the countries of southern Europe all have highly positive and highly significant coefficients by comparison with the United Kingdom, and that Germany is the country where the coefficient is the lowest (-1.22 in model 2, 1989 onwards).

**Table 2.6 Poverty perceived as "new poverty"**  
(Logistic regression standardised for sex, age and income)

|                         | From 1976        |                  |                  | From 1989        |                  |                  |
|-------------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|
|                         | Model 1          | Model 2          | Model 3          | Model 1          | Model 2          | Model 3          |
| <b>Year</b>             |                  |                  |                  |                  |                  |                  |
| 1976                    | <i>Reference</i> | <i>Reference</i> | <i>Reference</i> | -                | -                | -                |
| 1989                    | 0.62***          | 0.50***          | 0.50***          | <i>Reference</i> | <i>Reference</i> | <i>Reference</i> |
| 1993                    | 1.35***          | 1.19***          | 1.05***          | 0.79***          | 0.69***          | 0.70***          |
| 2001                    | 0.64***          | 0.59***          | 0.60***          | 0.28***          | 0.34***          | 0.34***          |
| <b>Country</b>          |                  |                  |                  |                  |                  |                  |
| UK                      | <i>Reference</i> | <i>Reference</i> | <i>Reference</i> | <i>Reference</i> | <i>Reference</i> | <i>Reference</i> |
| Belgium                 | 0.19 (ns)        | 0.18 (ns)        | 0.20*            | 0.21 (ns)        | 0.20 (ns)        | 0.21 (ns)        |
| Denmark                 | 0.13 (ns)        | 0.13 (ns)        | 0.12 (ns)        | 0.34**           | 0.33*            | 0.33*            |
| Germany                 | 0.73***          | 0.76***          | 0.77***          | 0.96***          | 1.00***          | 1.01***          |
| France                  | 0.17 (ns)        | 0.13 (ns)        | 0.14 (ns)        | 0.31*            | 0.16 (ns)        | 0.17 (ns)        |
| Ireland                 | 0.05 (ns)        | -0.08 (ns)       | 0.01 (ns)        | -0.08 (ns)       | -0.37*           | -0.38*           |
| Luxembourg              | 0.13 (ns)        | 0.29 (ns)        | 0.36*            | 0.08 (ns)        | 0.42 (ns)        | 0.41 (ns)        |
| Netherlands             | 0.30**           | 0.37**           | 0.38**           | 0.32*            | 0.49***          | 0.49***          |
| Italy                   | -0.98***         | -1.05***         | -1.01***         | -0.95***         | -1.09***         | -1.08***         |
| Spain                   | -                | -                | -                | -0.51***         | -1.16***         | -1.16***         |
| Greece                  | -                | -                | -                | -1.03***         | -1.13***         | -1.13***         |
| Portugal                | -                | -                | -                | -0.99***         | -0.82***         | -0.81***         |
| <b>Unemployment (1)</b> | -                | 0.03 (ns)        | 0.02 (ns)        | -                | 0.05***          | 0.05***          |
| <b>Growth (2)</b>       | -                | -                | -0.04***         | -                | -                | 0.01 (ns)        |

\*: P < 0.05, \*\*: P < 0.01, \*\*\*: P < 0.001, ns: not significant

(1) National unemployment rate for each survey year (Source OECD)

(2) National growth rate for each survey year (Source OECD)

We find virtually the opposite tendency in those explanatory models based on 1976 or on 1989 for the perception of poverty as "new". By comparison with 1976, the coefficients obtained for 1989, 1993 and 2001 are all positive, meaning that the first survey year was the one where this perception was the least widespread (We should recall here that in 1976 unemployment was still minimal: the predominant views were still very much coloured by the thirty years of uninterrupted growth which European societies had experienced after the second world war.) This perception of poverty, as a whirlpool sucking down more and more people, grew until 1993, when the coefficient peaked (1.35 in model 1), and then fell sharply between 1993 and 2001. The introduction of the unemployment indicator (model 2) lowers the coefficients for the year 1993, tending to establish a specific unemployment effect (especially in the model starting in 1989).

The introduction of the growth indicator makes a significant difference in model 3 based on 1976. Higher growth lessens the probability that people will perceive poverty as "new". The introduction of this indicator makes an even more significant difference to the coefficient for the year 1993. We may therefore conclude that the economic climate has a real effect on the perception of poverty.

This effect of the economic climate does not eliminate the country effect, however. Just as with the perception of poverty as an inherited condition, this perception of poverty as the result of a fall is far less widespread in southern countries than in northern ones.

## Conclusion

In this chapter we have been able to verify that the ways people see poverty are not unvarying but, on the contrary, change considerably from one period to another in all European countries. Not only does the economic climate, and in particular a change in the unemployment rate, contribute to altering the level of poverty in each society, but the collective perception of this phenomenon is transformed as well. The characteristic forms and perceived causes of poverty change from one phase to another in the history of each society; but these evolutions over time do not radically affect national differences in perceptions of the phenomenon: each country faces both peculiar and common problems, which it tries to tackle with its own particular means.

We may therefore speak of a "processing" of poverty that varies with both economic circumstances and national characteristics. This processing contributes to the overall definition, in each country and period, of the social status of those regarded as poor, since the ways they are designated and the forms of social intervention applied to them are an expression of collective expectations concerning them. In the same way, these people's subjective experiences and ways of adapting to their social environment can affect the attitudes of the different societies in which they live, and in particular the institutions of social intervention concerned with them. In one particular country, therefore, it could be thought, on the basis of various types of evidence, that the poor are being made passive by the assistance they receive, and recommendations for a reduction in their allowances might result; while in another, it might be agreed that it was pointless helping them more, because kinship and other mechanisms of solidarity were still operating. In a more general way, the group of people recognised as poor in a given society will be more or less homogeneous, and more or less stigmatised, depending on the combination, in that country or region, of a number of variables (economic, political and social), and the particular historical period under consideration.

## CHAPTER 3

### THE SUBJECTIVE EXPERIENCE OF POVERTY <sup>6</sup>

When sociologists speak of "the subjective experience of poverty", they are referring to in-depth analysis of how the people living in poverty or designated as "poor" live their everyday lives and give meaning to their experience; in other words, this involves taking account of the tribulations that poverty, or what is regarded as poverty, consists of, in several life domains: budget management, family behaviour, working life, social and cultural practices, etc. The subjective experience of poverty has often been interpreted as a negative one, for many reasons: not only can this experience take the form of real deprivation and difficulties in coping with the requirements of daily living; it can also be accompanied by a weakening of social ties, a deterioration of social status, and feelings of humiliation or psychological distress.

We do not claim, in this chapter, to deal with all these points. This chapter has three sections, each corresponding to one aspect of the experience of poverty: the first looks at the pressure of difficulties in making ends meet, day by day; the second attempts to assess the risk of social isolation; and the third studies differences in terms of the quality of life. The aim of this chapter is to analyse the subjective experience of poverty with particular reference, as in the previous chapter, to differences between countries and changes over time. Our study cannot go so far back historically, though: the data necessary for this chapter's analyses are not available before the survey of 1993.

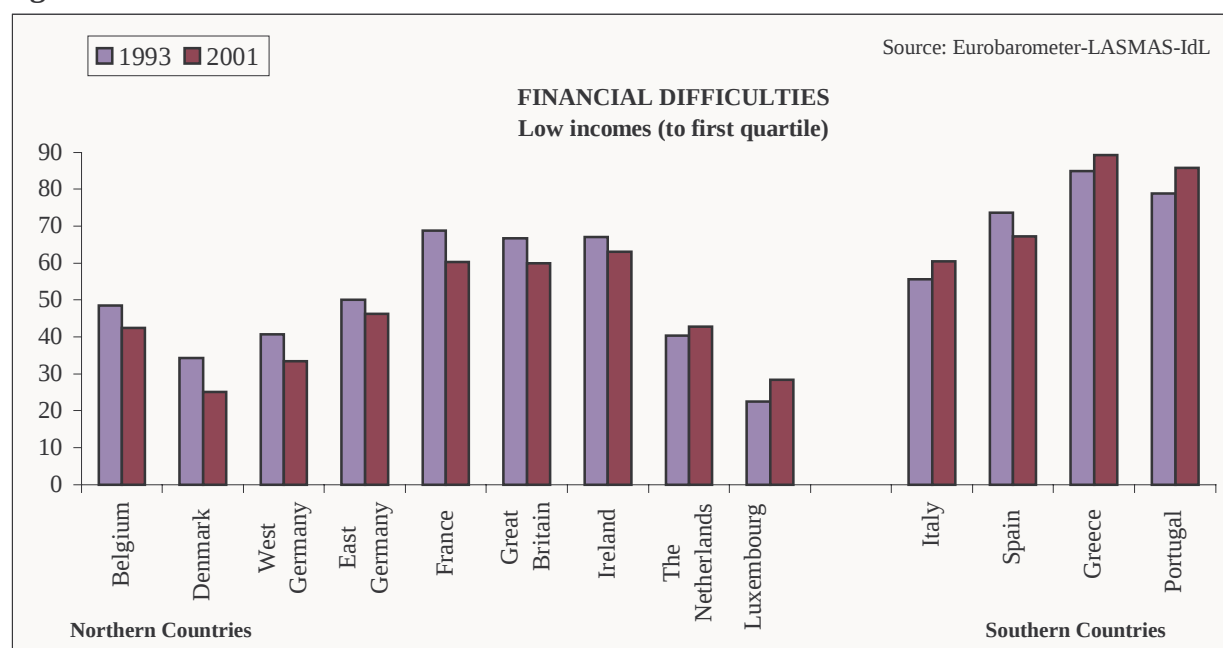
#### *The pressure of difficulties in making ends meet*

A number of indicators of subjective poverty were examined in the previous chapter, including one referred to as "financial difficulty". We found that financial difficulty affected a smaller proportion of people, overall, in 2001 than in 1993. If we consider the poorest group (below lower quartile) in each country, we still find the same, except in five countries: the Netherlands, Luxembourg, Italy, Greece and Portugal (cf. figure 3.1). We may note also, as might be expected, that financial difficulty affects a higher proportion of people in the southern countries, especially in Greece and Portugal, being distinctly less widespread in Denmark and Luxembourg. Around a quarter of the population up to the first quartile have financial difficulties in Denmark, against approximately 80% in Greece and in Portugal.

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<sup>6</sup> Serge Paugam wrote this chapter. The calculations and graphs were made with the assistance of Marion Selz.

**Figure 3.1**

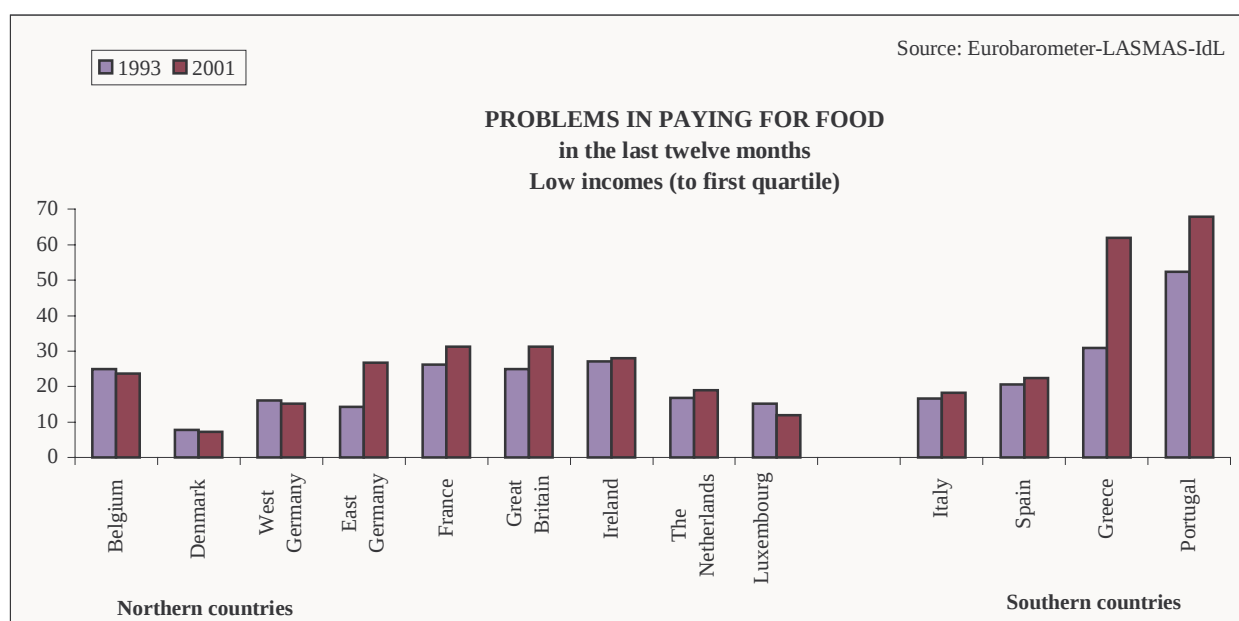
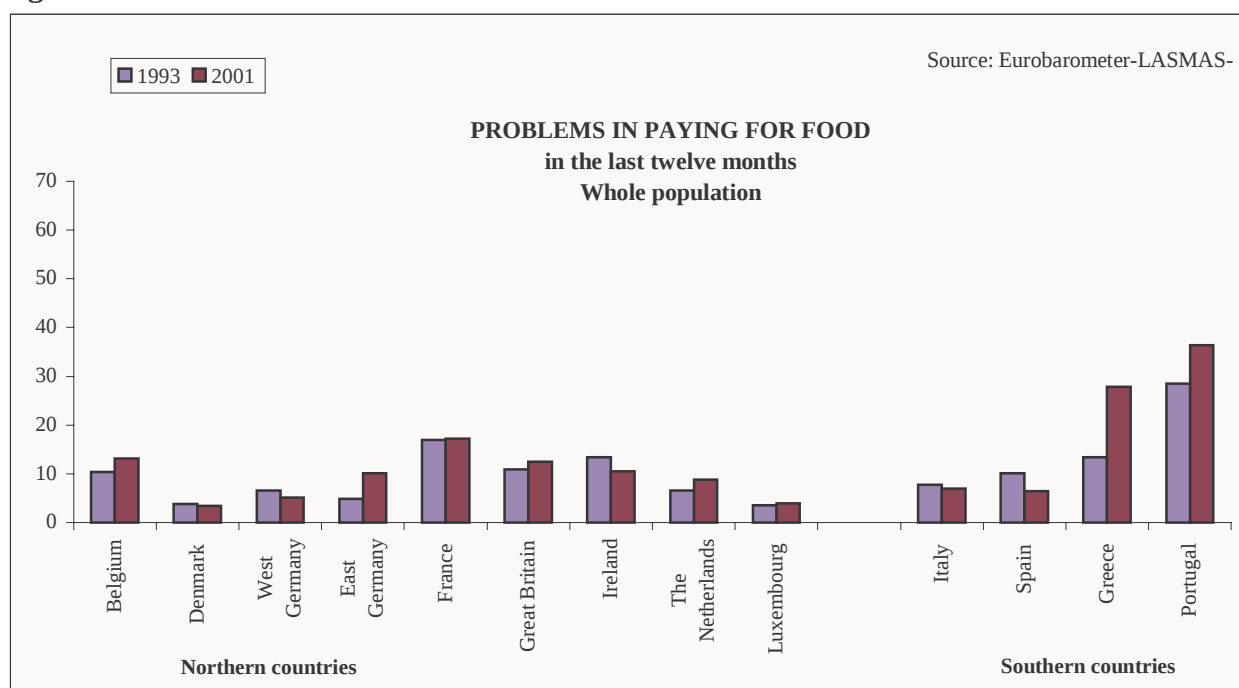


The questionnaire for the 1993 and 2001 surveys asked about many types of financial difficulty, including two relating to important budget items for households, food and rent. The question went: "In the last twelve months, have you, or any member of your household, had problems in..." and the alternatives offered in each case were: "no problem, some problems, a lot of problems, enormous problems" For the purpose of our analysis, we have grouped the last three together.

Figure 3.2 has two parts, the first for the whole population of each country, and the second for those whose income was equal to, or below, the first quartile. For whole populations, the change between 1993 and 2001 varies from country to country: between these two dates we find an increase in Portugal, Greece, the Netherlands, Great Britain, eastern Germany and Belgium, and no change or a fall in the other countries.

Naturally, we find that difficulties in paying for food are more frequent among people whose income is the lower quartile or below, and we also find that national variations persist here. People affected by this type of difficulty are proportionally more numerous in Greece and Portugal than in the other countries, especially Denmark, where the rate is still quite low.

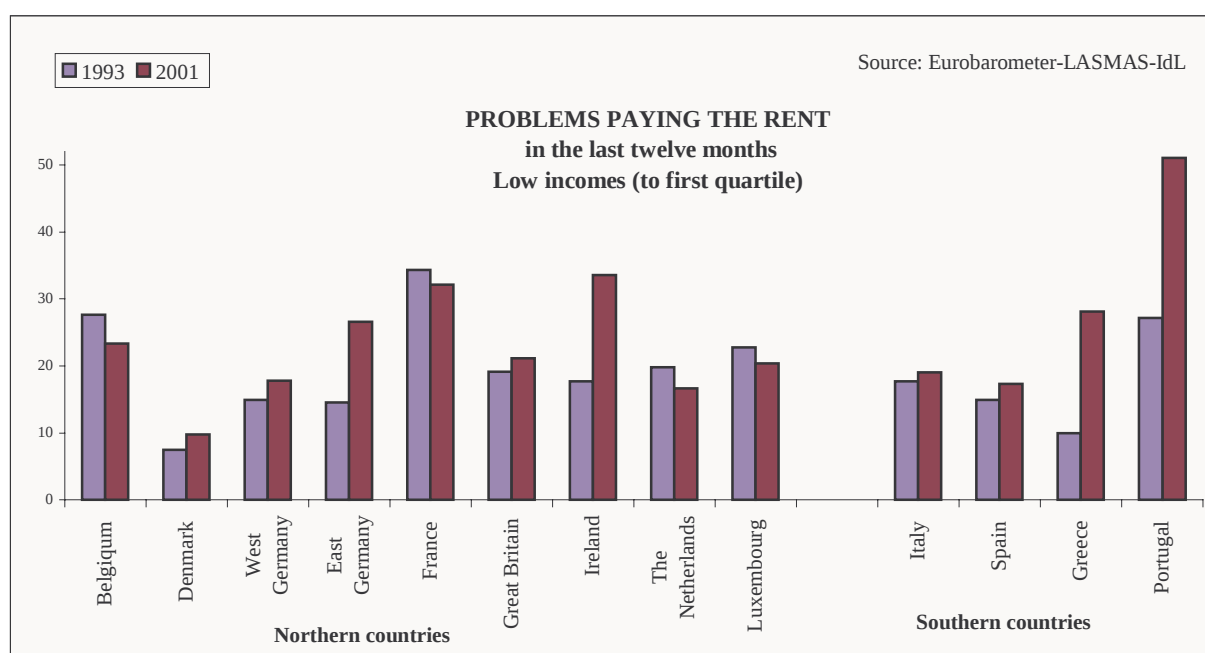
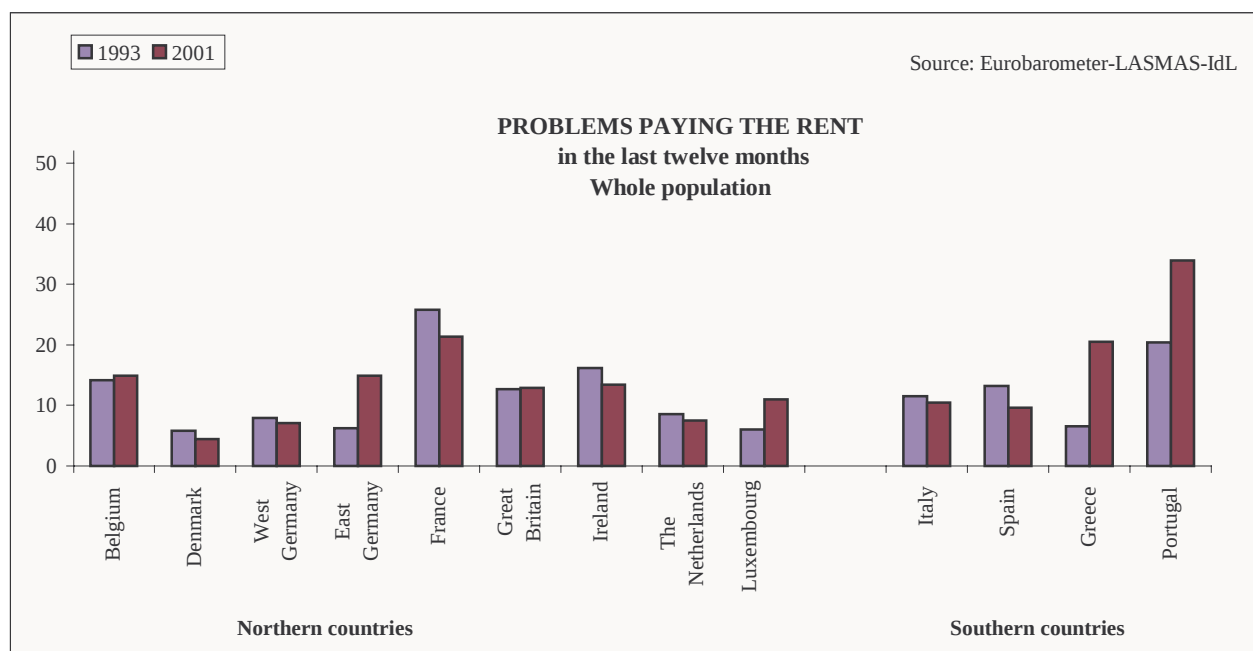
Figure 3.2



So far as difficulties in paying the rent are concerned (cf. figure 3.3), the changes between 1993 and 2001 also vary from one country to another, for the whole population: we find a clear increase in Portugal, Greece, eastern Germany and Luxembourg, and either no change or a fall in the other countries. On the other hand, an increase can be seen in more countries when we take those with incomes at or below the lower quartile: all southern countries, but also, among the others, Ireland, Great Britain, eastern and western Germany, and even Denmark.

Difficulties in paying the rent may in fact depend more on the state of the housing market than on income levels; in other words, with the same or even higher money incomes the poor can be faced with greater difficulties when rents go up and conditions of access to housing become more strictly selective. It is known that in many countries the economic climate can improve without any attendant relaxation of the tight conditions applying to those in rented accommodation.

**Figure 3.3**



The likelihood of being confronted with either of these two types of difficulty depends also on a number of variables which we have examined using a logistic regression model (cf. table 3.1). Other things, including the country, being held equal, women face difficulties paying for food more often than men do. Age also has a significant effect. By comparison with those aged 35 to 44 (the reference group for this model), young people under 25 and people over 45 (and especially those over 55) seem less affected by this type of difficulty. Young people under 25, of course, are not always independent and often still live with their parents, especially in southern countries: this might explain both their less frequent reports of difficulty and also, no doubt, their lesser sensitivity to this problem. The groups most affected of all are those of intermediate age, who are liable to have the heaviest family responsibilities.

We may note also, as might be expected, that the unemployed are much more often affected by these difficulties in paying for food than those in paid work, just as those whose income is at or below the lower quartile are more affected than others. Lastly, the year turns out to be statistically significant. Adjusting for other factors, the total population was more affected as a whole by this type of difficulty in 2001 than in 1993. While the lowest income groups are in general more affected than the other categories, they are not more so in 2001 than they were already in 1993, as we see from the interaction effect tested in the model (the coefficient here is almost zero, and not significant).

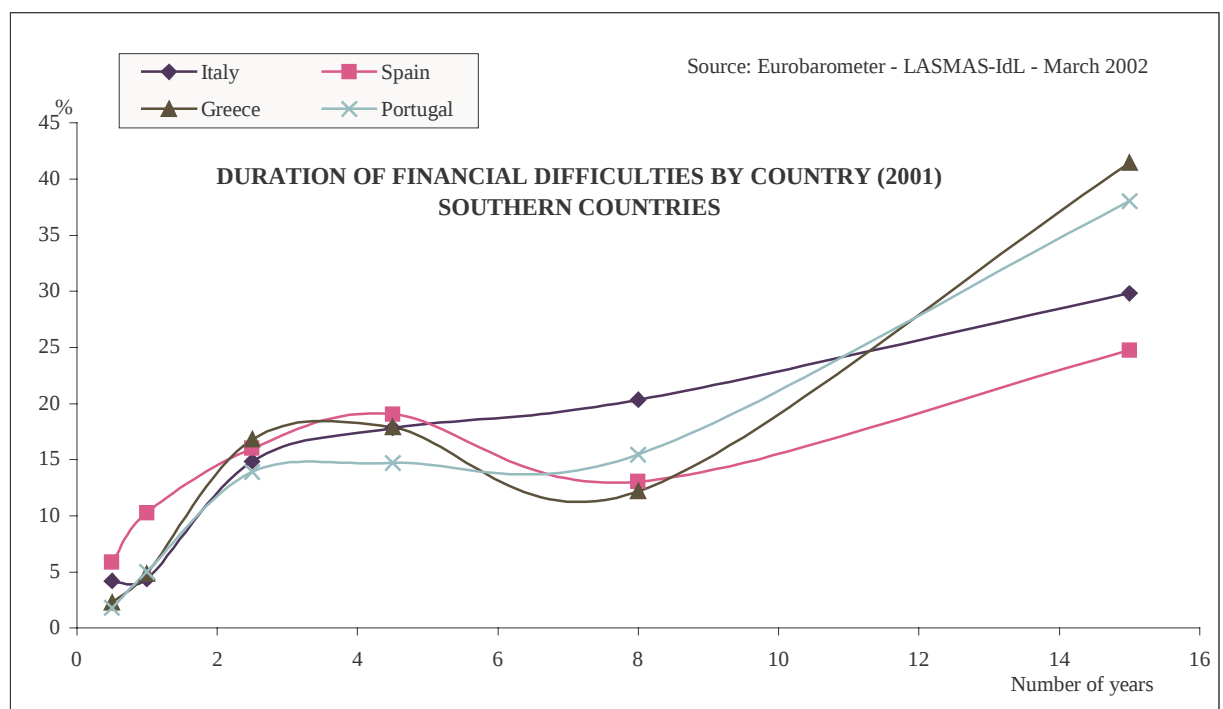
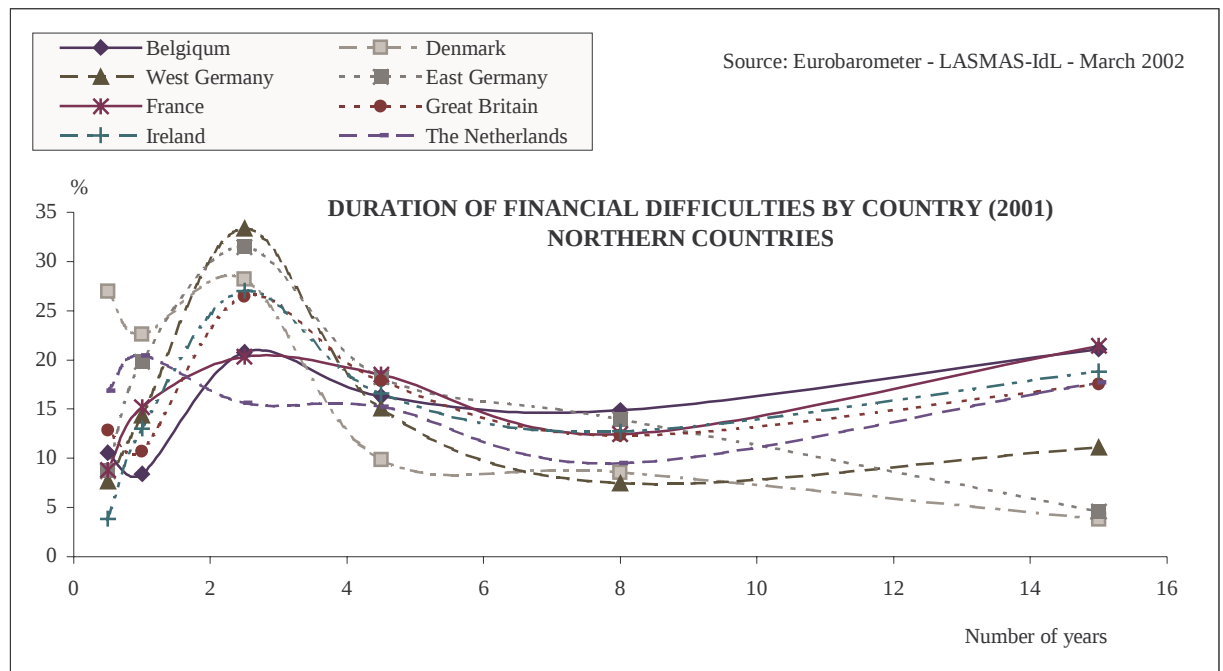
**Table 3.1 Logistic regression for the probability of having difficulty in paying for food and rent in the last twelve months (standardised for country)**

|                                       | <b>Difficulty<br/>in paying for food</b> | <b>Difficulty<br/>in paying the rent</b> |
|---------------------------------------|------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------|
| <b>Gender</b>                         |                                          |                                          |
| Men                                   | <i>Reference</i>                         | <i>Reference</i>                         |
| Women                                 | 0.13***                                  | 0.05 ns                                  |
| <b>Age</b>                            |                                          |                                          |
| 15 - 24                               | -0.35***                                 | -0.33***                                 |
| 25 - 34                               | -0.10 ns                                 | -0.01 ns                                 |
| 35 - 44                               | <i>Reference</i>                         | <i>Reference</i>                         |
| 45 - 54                               | -0.18**                                  | -0.21***                                 |
| 55 - 64                               | -0.40***                                 | -0.66***                                 |
| 65+                                   | -0.69***                                 | -1.20***                                 |
| <b>Employment status</b>              |                                          |                                          |
| In paid work                          | <i>Reference</i>                         | <i>Reference</i>                         |
| Unemployed                            | 1.02***                                  | 0.82***                                  |
| Inactive                              | 0.31***                                  | 0.09 ns                                  |
| <b>Income</b>                         |                                          |                                          |
| First quartile and below              | 1.50***                                  | 1.00***                                  |
| Above first quartile                  | <i>Reference</i>                         | <i>Reference</i>                         |
| <b>Year</b>                           |                                          |                                          |
| 1993                                  | <i>Reference</i>                         | <i>Reference</i>                         |
| 2001                                  | 0.29***                                  | 0.10 ns                                  |
| <b>Interaction</b>                    |                                          |                                          |
| below lower quartile <i>with</i> 2001 | -0.03 ns                                 | 0.11 ns                                  |

\*: P < 0.05, \*\*: P < 0.01, \*\*\*: P < 0,001, ns: not significant

We may observe fairly similar results for difficulties in paying the rent. Though women are not more affected than men are by this type of difficulty, the age effect is just the same as in the analysis for difficulties in paying for food. It is still those of intermediate age who are the most affected; likewise, the unemployed are distinctly more likely to have difficulties paying the rent than those in paid work. The poorest 25% are also more often affected than the other income categories. On the other hand, the year 2001 is not significantly different from 1993, nor is the interaction effect of low income and the year 2001: while the lowest income groups are more affected than the other income categories in both years, they are not more so in 2001 than in 1993 to any statistically significant extent.

Figure 3.4



In assessing the intensity of poverty, we have to take into account how long it lasts: people confronted with poverty may be experiencing it only during a short period in their lives, or over a long period<sup>7</sup>. In the first case, we may speak of "episodic poverty", arising as the result of some particular new difficulty; the second is referred to rather as "structural poverty", in the sense that it persists and corresponds to one or more permanent difficulties. In the 2001 survey, a question was asked about the duration of the financial difficulties, and in Figure 3.4 we may contrast the northern and southern countries. In the former, it is noticeable that the majority of those who have had financial difficulties have done so for some two or three years, while in the latter these difficulties have on the whole been going on a great deal longer: around fourteen or fifteen years in the case of the largest proportion of people, whatever the country. It is clear, therefore, that poverty is more of an episodic phenomenon in the northern countries, and more of a structural one in southern countries. This contrast should be related to our finding in the previous chapter, where we distinguished between the views of poverty as "new poverty" (widespread in the northern countries) and "inherited" (far more prevalent in southern countries).

This distinction between episodic and structural poverty, though it relates to the one between northern countries and southern ones, should not be taken to suggest that structural poverty only exist in the southern countries, or episodic poverty only in those of the North. We find in northern countries also a proportion of the population which remains poor from generation to generation and has persistent difficulty in surviving, whatever the economic and social climate. Surveys have revealed only that this proportion is distinctly smaller in the northern countries, and that episodic poverty is a more widespread phenomenon in the North than in the South.

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<sup>7</sup> For a number of years now, those who specialise in research into poverty have been assigning more importance to this question of its duration. Cf. Lutz Leisering and Stephan Leibfried, *Time and Poverty in Western Welfare States*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1999.

**Table 3.2 Effect of disadvantaged childhood background on the likelihood of financial difficulties in adulthood, by country**

| <b>Interactive effect:<br/>Country/Parents' financial<br/>difficulties (PFD)</b> | <b>Model 1<br/>(standardised for sex,<br/>age and country)</b> | <b>Model 2<br/>(standardised for sex, age,<br/>country and income)</b> |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Northern countries</b>                                                        |                                                                |                                                                        |
| Belgium-PFD                                                                      | 0.69***                                                        | 0.57*                                                                  |
| Denmark-PFD                                                                      | 0.38 ns                                                        | 0.46*                                                                  |
| Germany-West-PFD                                                                 | 0.90***                                                        | 0.79*                                                                  |
| Germany-East-PFD                                                                 | 0.31 ns                                                        | 0.38 ns                                                                |
| France-PFD                                                                       | 0.32 ns                                                        | 0.48*                                                                  |
| Great Britain-PFD                                                                | 0.28 ns                                                        | 0.21 ns                                                                |
| Ireland-PFD                                                                      | 0.85***                                                        | 0.88***                                                                |
| Luxembourg-PFD                                                                   | 0.76**                                                         | 0.73**                                                                 |
| Netherlands-PFD                                                                  | 0.34 ns                                                        | 0.27 ns                                                                |
| Finland-PFD                                                                      | 0.14 ns                                                        | 0.16 ns                                                                |
| Sweden-PFD                                                                       | 0.75***                                                        | -                                                                      |
| Austria-PFD                                                                      | 0.46*                                                          | 0.39 ns                                                                |
| <b>Southern countries</b>                                                        |                                                                |                                                                        |
| Italy-PFD                                                                        | 0.85***                                                        | 0.76***                                                                |
| Spain-PFD                                                                        | 1.00***                                                        | 0.95***                                                                |
| Greece-PFD                                                                       | 1.01***                                                        | 0.83***                                                                |
| Portugal-PFD                                                                     | 1.14***                                                        | 0.96***                                                                |
| <b>Income</b>                                                                    |                                                                |                                                                        |
| below lower quartile                                                             | -                                                              | 1.63***                                                                |
| lower quartile to median                                                         | -                                                              | 0.54***                                                                |
| median to upper quartile                                                         | -                                                              | -0.15**                                                                |
| above upper quartile                                                             | -                                                              | Reference                                                              |

\*: P < 0.05, \*\*: P < 0.01, \*\*\*: P < 0.001, ns: not significant

Lastly, when we look at the variables regarded as explaining poverty, we cannot disregard family background. In the 1960s the anthropologist Oscar Lewis explained, on the basis of his research on very poor families, that the "culture of poverty" has a tendency to perpetuate itself from generation to generation, through the effect it has on children. As he says, "by the time slum children are aged six or seven, they have usually absorbed the basic values and attitudes of their subculture and are not psychologically geared to take full advantage of the changing conditions or increased opportunities that may occur in their lifetime."<sup>8</sup> Now the materials we have from our 2001 survey are not, of course, as full as those Lewis gathered in the field; but we do have specific information about the respondents' childhood's, and in particular on any financial difficulties their parents had when they were responsible for their maintenance and upbringing.

<sup>8</sup> Cf. Oscar Lewis, *La Vida: A Puerto Rican Family in the Culture of Poverty--San Juan & New York, 1965 and 1966*, Random Ho., NY.

Table 3.2 shows the effect of these financially disadvantaged childhoods on the financial difficulties experienced in adulthood. As might be expected, there is a strong correlation between these two variables: the probability of financial difficulties in adulthood increases if the childhood background was economically disadvantaged<sup>9</sup>. However, the strength of this correlation varies from one country to another, even if we control not only for the effects of gender and age (model 1), but also for the effect of household income (model 2). In southern countries, the regression coefficients are always very high and statistically significant, indicating that reproduction of financial difficulties experienced in childhood is prevalent. In the northern countries, the coefficients are on the whole weaker and not always significant: in eastern Germany, Great Britain, the Netherlands and Finland the coefficient is not significant in any of the models. In other words, the tendency for childhood financial difficulties to be reproduced is less noticeable in the northern countries than in southern ones, doubtless because income disparities are on the whole smaller in the north. In the countries which enjoyed a period of rapid economic and social growth, as was the case during the "Three glorious decades", prospects for upward social mobility were also better than in the less developed countries of southern Europe, which were also countries of emigration. Poverty has tended and still tends to be a social destiny in economically poor countries or regions, where unemployment and underemployment are high and social security is less developed.

### *The risk of social isolation*

Another aspect of the experience of poverty is the risk of social isolation. A number of research projects have shown that the poor often live closed in on themselves, unable to enjoy social ties and relationships that could help with their difficulties. We can measure this risk of social isolation in various ways.

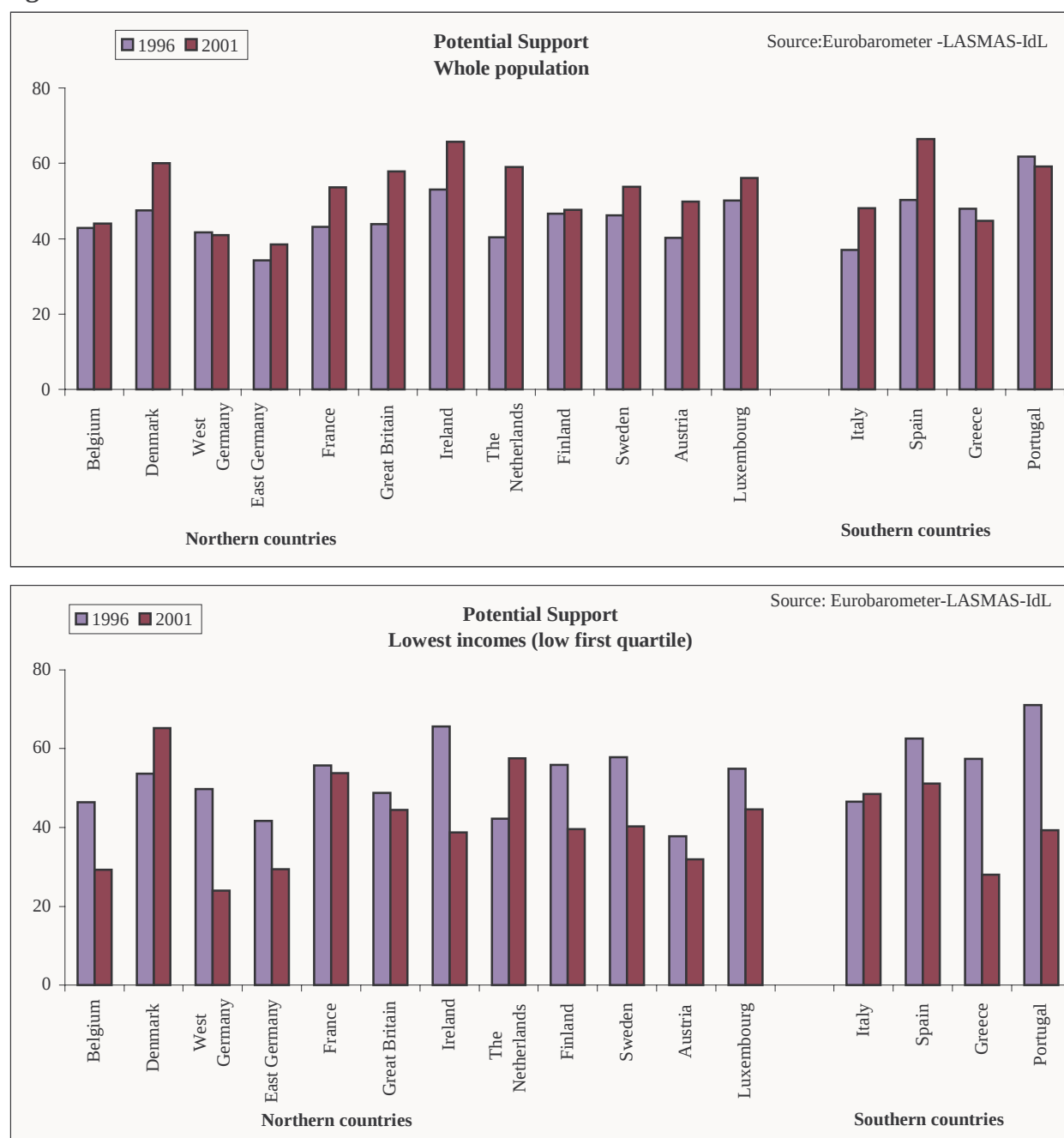
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<sup>9</sup> This issue has been analysed recently: Cf. Mary Corcoran, "Mobility, Persistence, and the Consequences of Poverty for Children: Child and Adult Outcomes", in Sheldon H. Danziger and Robert H. Haveman (eds.), *Understanding Poverty*, New York, Russell Sage Foundation/Harvard University Press, 2001.

### Potential support

First, it is possible to take account of individuals' ability to count on someone in situations of difficulty, something we may call "potential support". The survey distinguishes three situations: 1) "if you felt depressed"; 2) "if you needed help finding work for yourself or for a family member"; 3) "if you had to borrow money to help pay an urgent bill like the electricity or gas bill, or the rent or a mortgage payment". Figure 3.5 shows the proportion of people who said that they would have someone they could count on, for each of these three situations. The figure shows proportions, firstly, among the whole population in each country and secondly among just those with the lowest incomes (below lower quartile), for both 1996 and 2001.

**Figure 3.5**



Though there are variations from country to country, the most obvious fact is the difference between the first and second parts of this figure. While in the case of the whole population the proportion of people with someone to count on in these three situations increased markedly between 1996 and 2001 in most countries, we find the opposite for the 25% with the lowest incomes. "Potential support" has diminished for them, in all countries except Denmark, the Netherlands and Italy.

The likelihood of being able to count on someone in situations of difficulty depends on a number of variables, and in particular gender, age, employment status, the year of the survey, and income (cf. table 3.3). Once we have taken account of the differences between countries, it should be emphasised that women have a better chance than men of enjoying this type of support do. Young people also, *ceteris paribus*, are better supported than older ones. The availability of potential support in fact decreases steadily with age<sup>10</sup>.

This age effect results first of all from the progressive reduction as one age in the number of older family members. The weakening of potential support with age can also be explained by social customs of helping younger people to get a start in life: where a young person who has difficulties in getting established and setting up a home may be helped by his or her family, older individuals are more likely to be thought of as having failed to make the effort to provide for themselves; they will also be less comfortable asking the family for help, for accepting such help in maturity may be interpreted as the result of individual failure or inadequacy. This produces not only an objective dependence of young people on their family and entourage for support (of a material or moral kind or both), but also collective expectations and social standards concerning this type of assistance.

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<sup>10</sup> This observation has been verified e.g. by Serge Paugam and Jean-Paul Zoyem, "Le soutien financier de la famille: une forme essentielle de la solidarité", [Financial support from families: an essential form of solidarity] *Economie et Statistique*, n°308-309-310, 1997, 8/9/10, pp. 187-120

**Table 3.3 Logistic regression for the probability of being able to count on someone in the times of difficulty (standardised for country)**

|                           | Model 1          | Model 2          |
|---------------------------|------------------|------------------|
| <b>Gender</b>             |                  |                  |
| Men                       | <i>Reference</i> | <i>Reference</i> |
| Women                     | 0.11***          | 0.12***          |
| <b>Age</b>                |                  |                  |
| 15 - 24                   | 0.43***          | 0.45***          |
| 25 - 34                   | 0.31***          | 0.33***          |
| 35 - 44                   | <i>Reference</i> | <i>Reference</i> |
| 45 - 54                   | -0.18***         | -0.18***         |
| 55 - 64                   | -0.39***         | -0.37***         |
| 65+                       | -0.42***         | -0.35***         |
| <b>Employment status</b>  |                  |                  |
| In paid work              | <i>Reference</i> | <i>Reference</i> |
| Unemployed                | -0.62***         | -0.53***         |
| Inactive                  | -0.37***         | -0.32***         |
| <b>Year</b>               |                  |                  |
| 1996                      | <i>Reference</i> | <i>Reference</i> |
| 2001                      | 0.25***          | 0.40***          |
| <b>Income 1</b>           |                  |                  |
| below lower quartile      | -0.17***         | -                |
| lower quartile to median  | -0.15***         | -                |
| median to upper quartile  | -0.13***         | -                |
| above upper quartile      | <i>Reference</i> | -                |
| <b>Interactions</b>       |                  |                  |
| 1996-below lower quartile | -                | 0.27***          |
| 2001-below lower quartile | -                | -0.46***         |

\*: P < 0.05, \*\*: P < 0.01, \*\*\*: P < 0,001, ns: not significant

Employment status also has an effect. The probability of those who are unemployed or otherwise economically inactive being able to count on someone in the event of difficulty is less than for those in paid work. The negative coefficient is larger for the unemployed than for others outside the workforce, whichever model we choose. We may also note a significant income effect: the likelihood of being able to get such help increases with income. The poor and the unemployed are thus more socially vulnerable, *ceteris paribus*, than other categories. Though their material and psychological situation might well require more support from their entourage than is needed by other categories, they are unfortunately often deprived of such support, for lack of an easily mobilised network near at hand.

Lastly, the logistic regression confirms an increase in potential support between 1996 and 2001 for the whole population: the coefficient for 2001 is 0.25 (by comparison with reference year, 1996) in the first model and 0.40 in the second. On the other hand, the interactive effect of survey year and income below the lower quartile, in model 2, shows that the situation was worse in 2001 for those with the lowest incomes (a statistically significant coefficient of  $-0.46$ ). This gives some confirmation of the general tendency seen in figure 3.5.

### *Social contact and sense of social isolation*

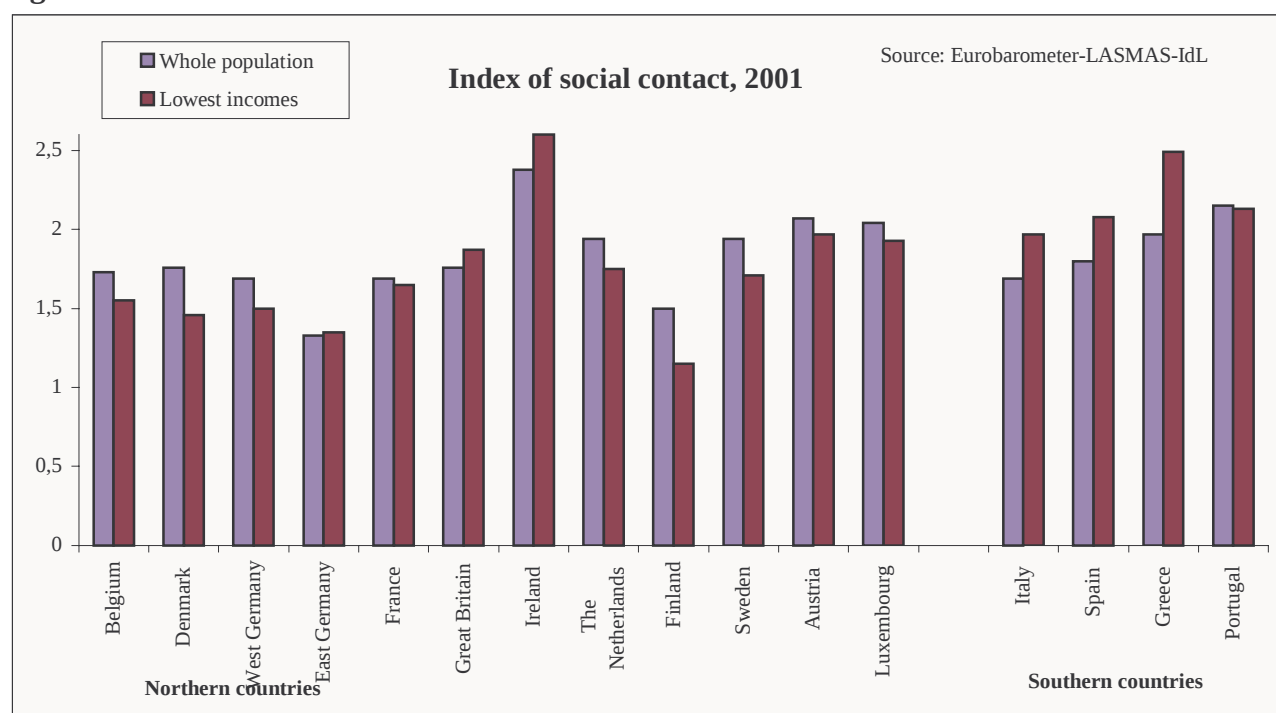
To measure the risk of social isolation, we can also work out a social contact ("sociability") index from the information available in the 2001 survey. Seven variables are used to represent social contact: they are expressed as follows:

- I speak to my neighbours almost every day
- I see my friends many times a week
- I meet family members not belonging to my household many times a week
- I belong to a sports or leisure club
- I belong to a voluntary or charity group
- I belong to a political party
- I go to church regularly (or another place of worship).

These variables admittedly stand for fairly different sorts of social contact; we may in particular distinguish between the informal social contact of social affinity networks (family, friends and neighbours) and the organised social contact of associations, clubs, parties and churches. The Cronbach test, though, which measures the degree of linkage among the various items in a composite index, gives a satisfactory result (0.63), warranting the use of our social contact index based on these seven variables.

Figure 3.6 presents this index both for the whole population and for the group with the lowest incomes (below lower quartile). Once more, there is a clearly visible difference between southern countries and northern ones. In the former, the social contact of the poorest people is greater than for the population as a whole, except in Portugal where the levels are roughly equal. In the northern countries, we find the opposite tendency, except in Ireland and Great Britain and, to a lesser extent, in eastern Germany. At all events, it cannot be concluded that in all countries the poor have a very low level of social contact compared with the rest of the population. The social isolation of the most deprived people is, as revealed by this indicator of social contact, by no means systematic.

**Figure 3.6**



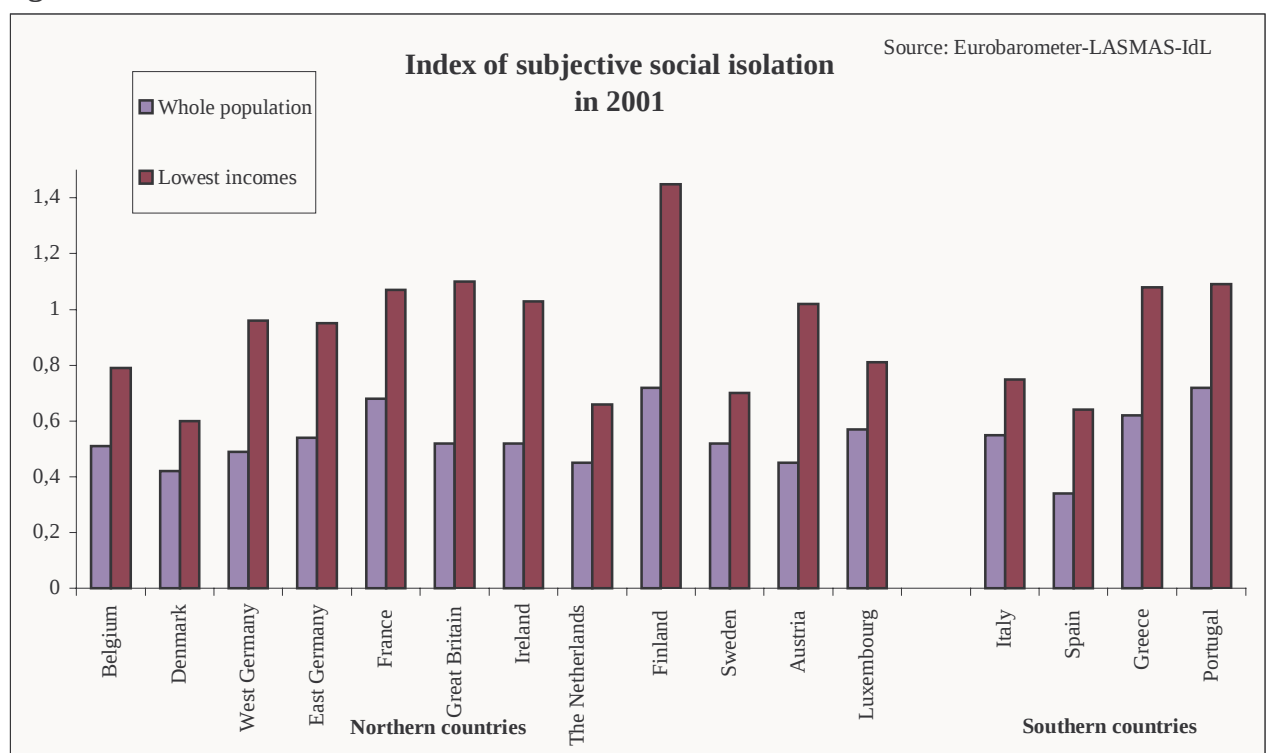
We may also, however, look a little more closely by using an index of subjective social isolation. This index may be calculated from four variables in the 2001 survey:

- I have felt lonely at certain moments in the two last weeks
- It's hard to have friends where I live
- I feel left out of society
- I feel isolated from my family

As in the case of the social contact index, these variables are not all of a kind, even though they all report a sense of isolation: the first is general in scope, while the others each mention one particular aspect of isolation, in relation to the friends, society and the family. We repeated the Cronbach test for this index, and again the result was satisfactory (0.73), so we are warranted in using it in our analyses.

Figure 3.7 shows that this index varies considerably from country to country. The index of subjective social isolation is relatively weak in Denmark, the Netherlands, Spain and Italy by comparison with other countries. On the other hand, in all the countries without exception, we find a distinctly higher value of this index for those with the lowest incomes by comparison with that for the whole population.

**Figure 3.7**



The tendencies observed on the basis of the objective social contact index, then, do not match those observed on the basis of the index of subjective social isolation. The difference between the northern countries and southern countries in the case of those with the lowest incomes is not found for both indices: while poor people in the southern countries have more social contact than the average for those countries<sup>11</sup>, they *feel* more isolated socially, as do poor people in the northern countries. This difference actually reveals a weakness in our measure of social contact: obtaining measures of the frequency of relationships is necessary, but still not sufficient for explaining their quality; an individual may be surrounded by kin and unable to appreciate this proximity much, at the same time as feeling the lack of relationships he or she finds subjectively important. It is thus quite possible to have a high level of [objective] social contact and still not be in touch with what the psychologists call "significant others". When social contact is of an informal kind, as it is more often in southern countries, it is probable that it is also often constrained, determined in a sense by the requirements of common life and the paucity of collective venues in the neighbourhoods or villages where a large part of the population lives in conditions of poverty.

What are the factors, which determine both social contact and the propensity to feel, isolated socially? *Ceteris paribus*, women have more social contact than men: the difference is slight, but statistically significant; on the other hand they also feel more isolated (cf. Table 3.4). Social contact, as we have measured it, also increases markedly with age, peaking among those aged 65 years and more (who have reached the age of retirement and therefore may have more time to devote to their family and friends and to club activity). There is on the other hand no statistically significant age effect on subjective social isolation.

As might be expected, those with the lowest incomes have the least social contact and also feel the most isolated socially. This observation is confirmed by the indicator of financial difficulty. The result can be explained, at least partly, by the cost of participating in social life, which is often considerable whether in the form of membership of sports clubs or cultural associations or of the cost of inviting friends or neighbours home, or going on group outings. Lastly, while the unemployed do not have significantly less social contact than those in paid work, they do however feel more isolated socially than the others.

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<sup>11</sup> This has been observed before. Cf. Serge Paugam and Helen Russell, "The Effects of Employment Precarity and Unemployment on Social Isolation", in Duncan Gallie and Serge Paugam (eds.), *Welfare Regimes and the Experience of Unemployment in Europe*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2000, pp. 243-264.

**Table 3.4 Ordered logistic regression for social contact and the probability of feeling socially isolated (Standardised for country)**

|                               | Social contact   | Subjective social isolation |
|-------------------------------|------------------|-----------------------------|
| <b>Gender</b>                 |                  |                             |
| Men                           | <i>Reference</i> | <i>Reference</i>            |
| Women                         | 0.05**           | 0.07***                     |
| <b>Age</b>                    |                  |                             |
| 15 - 24                       | -0.26***         | -0.04 ns                    |
| 25 - 34                       | -0.16***         | -0.01 ns                    |
| 35 - 44                       | <i>Reference</i> | <i>Reference</i>            |
| 45 - 54                       | 0.08**           | -0.01 ns                    |
| 55 - 64                       | 0.20***          | -0.01 ns                    |
| 65+                           | 0.28***          | -0.01 ns                    |
| <b>Income</b>                 |                  |                             |
| below lower quartile          | -0.19***         | 0.34***                     |
| lower quartile to median      | -0.09**          | 0.09***                     |
| median to upper quartile      | -0.06*           | 0.02 ns                     |
| above upper quartile          | <i>Reference</i> | <i>Reference</i>            |
| <b>Financial difficulties</b> |                  |                             |
| No                            | <i>Reference</i> | <i>Reference</i>            |
| Yes                           | -0.17***         | 0.35***                     |
| <b>Employment status</b>      |                  |                             |
| In paid work                  | <i>Reference</i> | <i>Reference</i>            |
| Unemployed                    | -0.04 ns         | 0.28***                     |
| Inactive                      | 0.18***          | 0.05***                     |

\*: P < 0.05, \*\*: P < 0.01, \*\*\*: P < 0.001, ns: not significant

Among the four variables taken into account in calculating the index of subjective social isolation, one explicitly refers to the place of residence: this deserves particular attention. This is the difficulty of having friends where one lives (cf. table 3.5). *Ceteris paribus*, and to a statistically significant extent, women reported difficulties of this type more often than men did. The under-25s, on the other hand, appear to be distinctly less affected than their elders are by this problem. Unemployed people more often feel that it is difficult to have friends where they live than do those in paid work.

**Table 3.5 Ordered logistic regression on the probability of feeling that it is difficult to have friends where one lives**

| Variables                                                              | B. Sig.          |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------|
| <b>Gender</b>                                                          |                  |
| Men                                                                    | <i>Reference</i> |
| Women                                                                  | 0.10***          |
| <b>Age</b>                                                             |                  |
| 15 - 24                                                                | -0.29***         |
| 25 - 34                                                                | -0.01 ns         |
| 35 - 44                                                                | <i>Reference</i> |
| 45 - 54                                                                | -0.02 ns         |
| 55 - 64                                                                | -0.04 ns         |
| 65+                                                                    | -0.08 ns         |
| <b>Employment status</b>                                               |                  |
| In paid work                                                           | <i>Reference</i> |
| Unemployed                                                             | 0.35***          |
| Inactive                                                               | -0.02 ns         |
| <b>Type of commune</b>                                                 |                  |
| Village or countryside                                                 | -0.17***         |
| Town                                                                   | <i>Reference</i> |
| City                                                                   | 0.13***          |
| <b>Interaction of variables:<br/>Country/below lower quartile (Q1)</b> |                  |
| <b>Northern countries</b>                                              |                  |
| Belgium-Q1                                                             | 0.20 ns          |
| Denmark-Q1                                                             | 0.02 ns          |
| Germany-West-Q1                                                        | 0.57***          |
| Germany-East-Q1                                                        | 0.45***          |
| France-Q1                                                              | 0.44***          |
| Great Britain-Q1                                                       | 0.50*            |
| Ireland-Q1                                                             | 0.16 ns          |
| Luxembourg-Q1                                                          | 0.22 ns          |
| Netherlands-Q1                                                         | -0.08 ns         |
| -Q1                                                                    | 1.02***          |
| Sweden-Q1                                                              | 0.50***          |
| Austria-Q1                                                             | 0.63***          |
| <b>Southern countries</b>                                              |                  |
| Italy-Q1                                                               | 0.16 ns          |
| Spain-Q1                                                               | 0.07 ns          |
| Greece-Q1                                                              | -0.01 ns         |
| Portugal-Q1                                                            | 0.31*            |

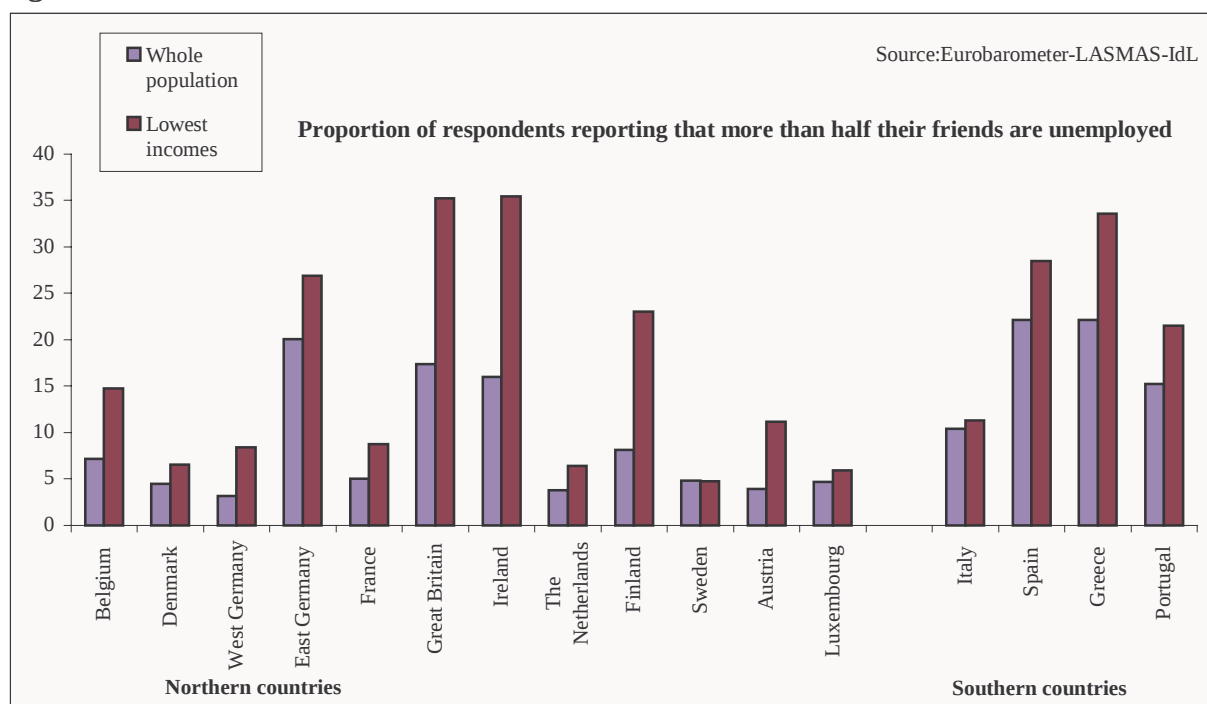
\*: P < 0.05, \*\*: P < 0.01, \*\*\*: P < 0,001, ns: not significant

We find also that the type of locality has a significant effect: major conurbation give rise to this difficulty more than villages or the countryside, despite expectations to the contrary (the frequently assumed "peace and solitude" of the countryside).

Lastly, using the interaction of variables "country\* income below lower quartile in the model proves that there is a statistically significant poverty effect in many northern countries, especially Germany (east and west), France, Great Britain, Finland, Sweden and Austria. Of the southern countries, the coefficients obtained are not significant in Italy, Spain or Greece, and only slightly so in Portugal. This difference between the northern and southern countries should be related to the results on social contact. We may suppose that when social contact is well developed, the probability of feeling that it is difficult to have friends where one lives will be lower, which does not mean, however, that one is totally immune to the possibility of social isolation, or that one will feel surrounded by friends.

When we study social networks, we have to be particularly attentive to their composition. Figure 3.8 gives the proportion of people who say that more than half of their friends are unemployed, both for the population as a whole and for those with the lowest incomes (below lower quartile). By comparison with the whole population, the poorest people are proportionally more likely, in all the countries except Sweden, to have at least 50% of their friends among the unemployed. This result is confirmation that the help the poorest can mobilise is less because of this particular composition of their network of friends.

**Figure 3.8**



We need, though, to look at the ratio of those with the lowest incomes to the whole population in terms of this indicator (cf. table 3.6). The higher this ratio, the more we may infer that the poor have a social network of friends of a polarised kind, quite different from those of the whole population. This ratio is over 2 in Belgium, western Germany, Great Britain, Ireland, Finland and Austria. In these countries, we may deduce that the poor have a distinctly more disadvantaged social network than will be found for the population as a whole. In southern countries, on the other hand, the ratio is nearer 1, especially in Italy, indicating that there is little difference in terms of the presence of unemployed friends in the composition of the social networks of the poorest and of the whole population.

**Table 3.6 Indicator of social polarisation based on the composition of networks of friends**

|                           | <b>More than half of friends<br/>unemployed Ratio: low-income<br/>group/whole pop.</b> |
|---------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Northern countries</b> |                                                                                        |
| Belgium                   | 2.06                                                                                   |
| Denmark                   | 1.46                                                                                   |
| Germany-West              | 2.67                                                                                   |
| Germany-East              | 1.34                                                                                   |
| France                    | 1.76                                                                                   |
| Great Britain             | 2.02                                                                                   |
| Ireland                   | 2.22                                                                                   |
| Netherlands               | 1.69                                                                                   |
| Luxembourg                | 1.27                                                                                   |
| Finland                   | 2.82                                                                                   |
| Sweden                    | 0.98                                                                                   |
| Austria                   | 2.84                                                                                   |
| <b>Southern countries</b> |                                                                                        |
| Italy                     | 1.09                                                                                   |
| Spain                     | 1.29                                                                                   |
| Greece                    | 1.52                                                                                   |
| Portugal                  | 1.41                                                                                   |

This result can largely be explained by reference to the composition of unemployment in southern countries. Unemployment affects mostly women and young people, especially in Italy, even though it is also more widespread there in the whole population. In other words, having a large proportion of unemployed friends in one's circle is to some extent a sign that this circle is made up of young people and women, which is of course to be expected, for the poor just as for others.

## *Differences in the quality of life*

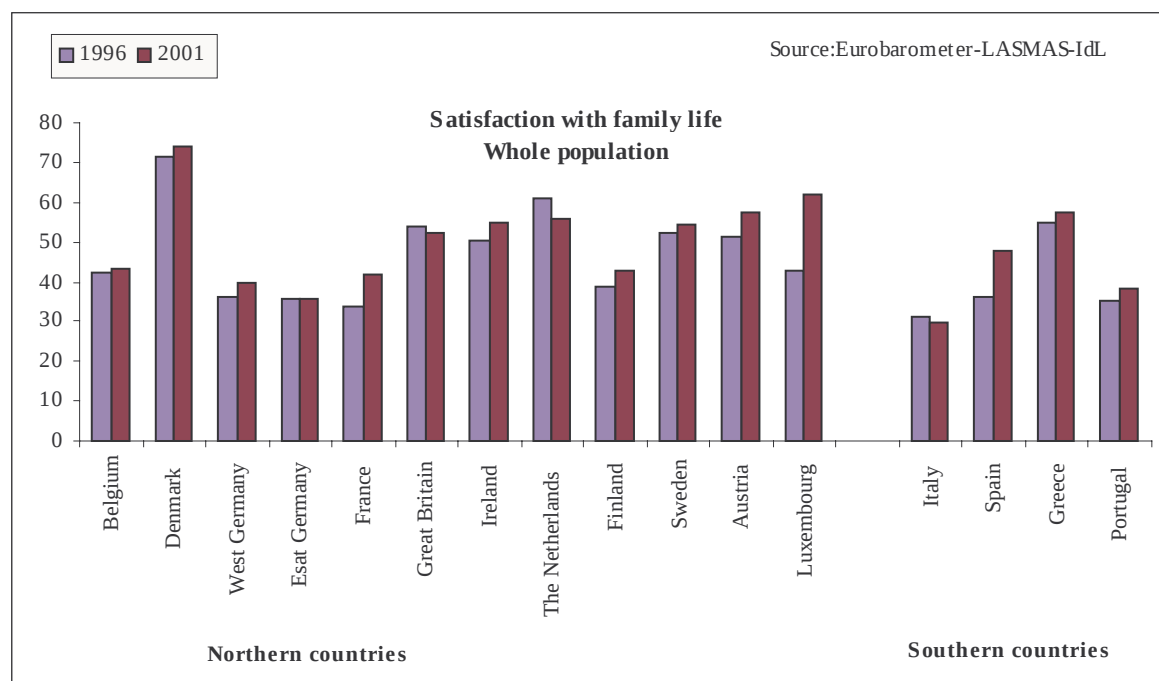
Lastly, the experience of poverty may be grasped on the basis of replies concerning the quality of life. We can distinguish many aspects of this: some relate to satisfaction with family life and social life and others to the dilapidation of local surroundings, and social devaluation.

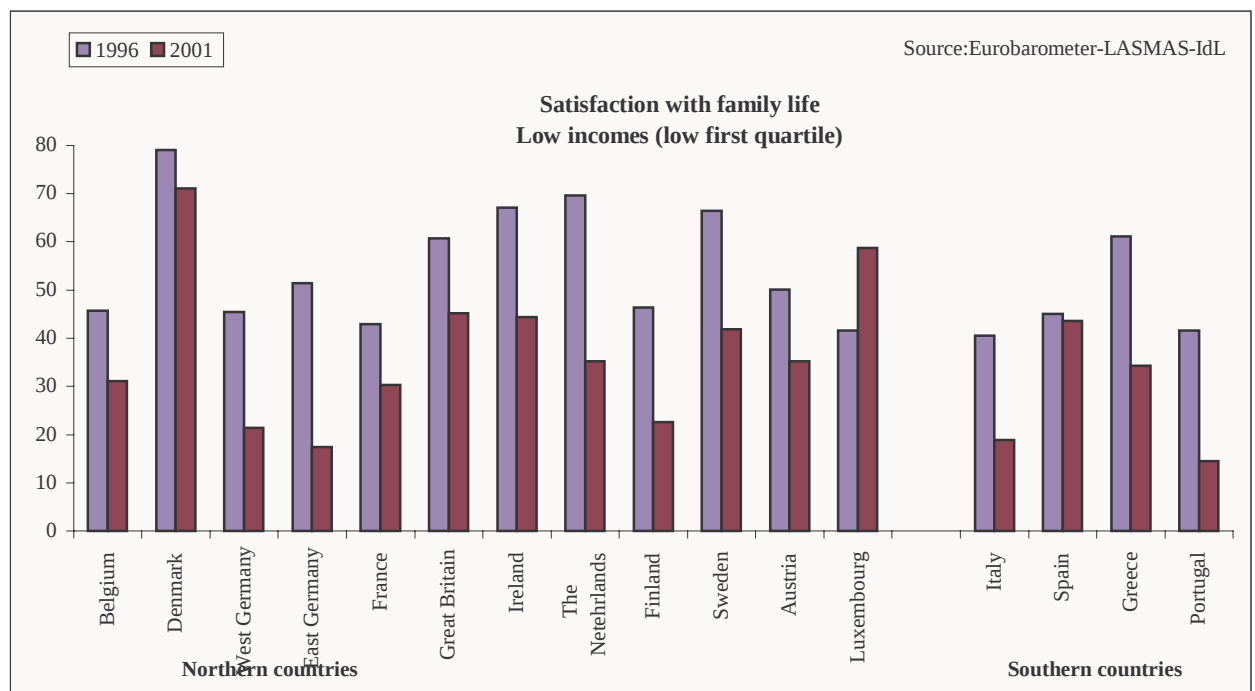
## *Satisfaction with family life*

The question concerning satisfaction with family life appears in the surveys for 1996 and 2001 and therefore enables us to make comparisons over time. The first part of figure 3.9 refers to the whole population for these two dates, while the second concerns only those with the lowest incomes. The first impression we have from this graph is indeed the contrast between the first and second parts: in both survey periods, satisfaction with family life is distinctly greater in the population as a whole than for those whose income is at or below the lower quartile. Low incomes not only hinder the achievement of family plans, but can also, of course, by causing financial difficulties, damage a family's balance and the psychological health of its members.

There is also a strikingly general tendency for satisfaction with family life to improve between 1996 and 2001 for the population as a whole, while the opposite general tendency is apparent for those with the lowest incomes, except in Luxembourg.

**Figure 3.9**





There are also large differences from country to country to be noted. For both years and both income levels, satisfaction with family life is highest in Denmark and lowest in Italy. Now Italy is often regarded as the country most essentially devoted to the family, and the way society is run there is often interpreted in terms of a "familistic" model. Though the results of our surveys may not necessarily be contradicting these conventional representations and analyses of the Italian family, it is necessary to stress that the current family model, especially its feature that grown offspring continue for a long while to live in the parents' household, can feel to individuals like a straitjacket.

Among the explanatory variables for satisfaction with family life, we should point to the following as significant, *ceteris paribus*: gender, employment status, the survey year, income, and the interaction of year\*income (cf. table 3.7).

**Table 3.7 Logistic regression for satisfaction with family life  
(Standardised for country)**

|                           | <b>Model 1</b>   | <b>Model 2</b>   |
|---------------------------|------------------|------------------|
| <b>Gender</b>             |                  |                  |
| Men                       | <i>Reference</i> | <i>Reference</i> |
| Women                     | 0.04*            | 0.05**           |
| <b>Age</b>                |                  |                  |
| 15 - 24                   | -0.01 ns         | 0.01 ns          |
| 25 - 34                   | 0.02 ns          | 0.04 ns          |
| 35 - 44                   | <i>Reference</i> | <i>Reference</i> |
| 45 - 54                   | -0.01 ns         | -0.01 ns         |
| 55 - 64                   | 0.10*            | 0.13*            |
| 65+                       | 0.08 ns          | 0.12*            |
| <b>Employment status</b>  |                  |                  |
| In paid work              | <i>Reference</i> | <i>Reference</i> |
| Unemployed                | -0.49***         | -0.38***         |
| Inactive                  | 0.02 ns          | 0.10***          |
| <b>Year</b>               |                  |                  |
| 1996                      | <i>Reference</i> | <i>Reference</i> |
| 2001                      | 0.16***          | 0.39***          |
| <b>Income</b>             |                  |                  |
| below lower quartile      | -0.05 ns         | -                |
| lower quartile to median  | 0.07 *           | -                |
| median to upper quartile  | 0.15***          | -                |
| above upper quartile      | <i>Reference</i> | -                |
| <b>Interactions</b>       |                  |                  |
| 1996-below lower quartile | -                | 0.46***          |
| 2001-below lower quartile | -                | -0.77***         |

\*: P < 0.05, \*\*: P < 0.01, \*\*\*: P < 0,001, ns: not significant

Women are slightly more satisfied with family life than men. There is no significant age effect to be seen. On the other hand, the unemployed are a great deal less satisfied with family life than those in paid work. We have known since the first major surveys of unemployment in the 1930s that it is often a source of tensions within the household, and can threaten its equilibrium<sup>12</sup>. This effect, then, is now confirmed once more, to a highly significant extent.

<sup>12</sup>Among the earliest systematic surveys of the experience of unemployment, we should mention: P. Lazarsfeld, M. Jahoda, H. Zeisel, *Marienthal: The Sociology of an Unemployed Community*, London, Tavistock, 1933 (translation in French: *Les chômeurs de Marienthal*, Paris, Editions de Minuit, 1981).et E.W.Bakke, *The Unemployed Worker: A Study of the Task of Making a Living without a Job*, New Haven, Yale University Press, 1940

The results of the logistic regression also confirm that satisfaction with family life is more prevalent in 2001 than in 1996 for the population as a whole. However, if we combine this with the "income below lower quartile" variable, the coefficient is 0.46 for 1996 and  $-0.77$  for 2001, meaning that satisfaction with family life grew worse in 2001 for those with the lowest incomes: the reverse of the trend observed for the whole population.

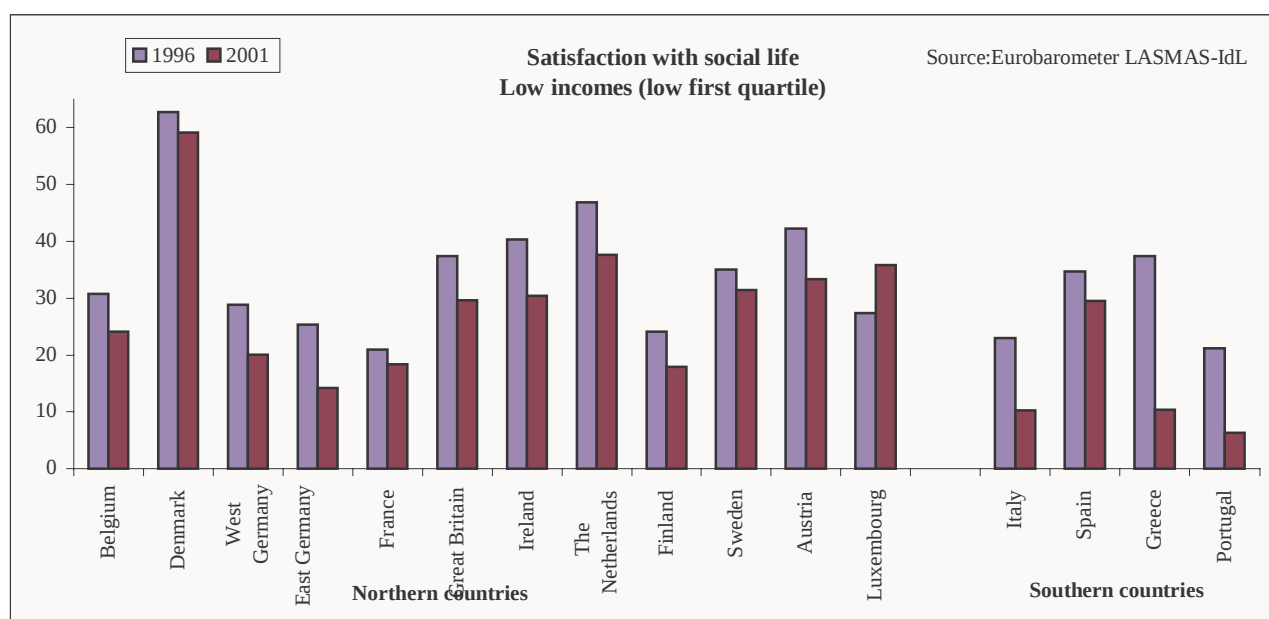
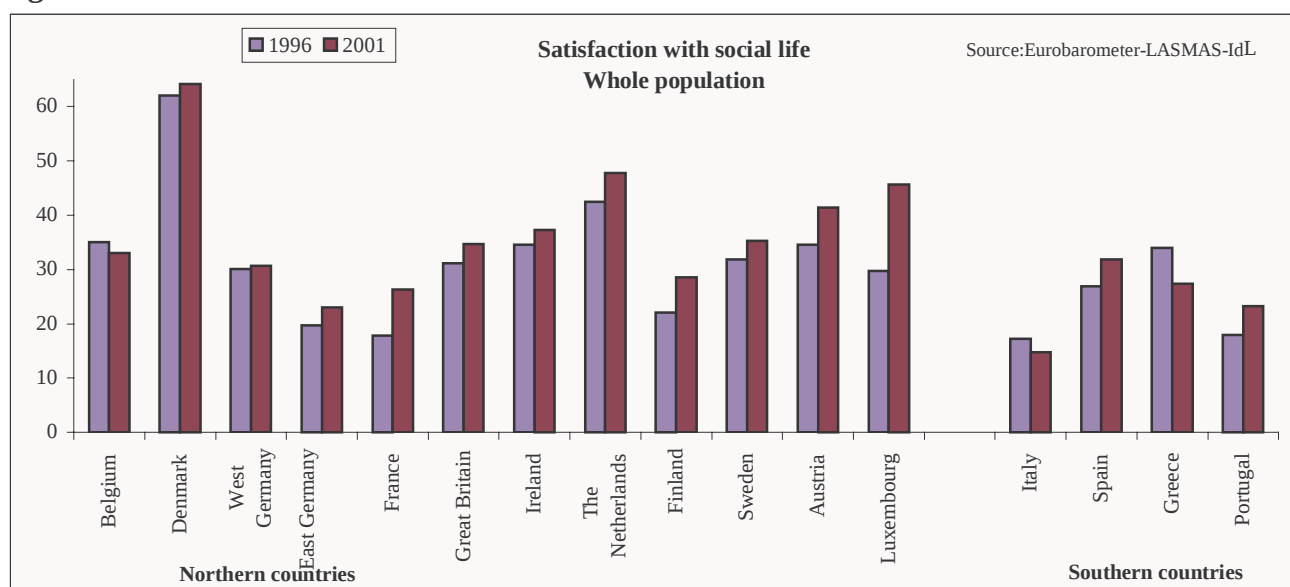
### *Satisfaction with social life*

The question on satisfaction also concerned social life. As in the case of satisfaction with family life, we find large differences from country to country. The proportion of people who are satisfied in this domain is once again highest in Denmark, followed by the Netherlands, being over 60% in the first case and just 50% in the second (cf. figure 3.10).

It is tempting to relate satisfaction with social life to the circumstances of social policy in each country. Denmark and the Netherlands are in fact two countries characterised by considerable intervention by the state and government authorities with respect to social security and access to social rights. This is an insufficient explanation, though; for the proportion of people satisfied with their social lives is relatively low in France and Germany, also countries where the intervention of the Welfare State is considerable. We therefore clearly need to attribute satisfaction with social life to a whole set of factors connected more generally with the quality of life, of which social policy is only one dimension.

The lower part of figure 3.10 once more concerns the lowest income group, while the upper part describes the population as a whole. What we find is a general tendency towards greater satisfaction with social life for the population as a whole between 1996 and 2001, while there is a clearly contrary trend between these two dates if we look at the poorest layer of the population: among those below the lower quartile income, the proportion of people satisfied with social life is lower in 2001 than in 1996, in all countries (Luxembourg once more excepted).

Figure 3.10



Satisfaction with social life may be analysed on the basis of the same explanatory variables as we used for satisfaction with family life (cf. table 3.8). The effects, however, are not exactly the same. Women were slightly more satisfied than men with their family life; but they are less satisfied than men with their social life. True, the coefficients are small, but they are significant. We may surely interpret these results in terms of a persistent contrast in the masculine and feminine models of self-affirmation, in spheres of integration which retain gender differences, at least in part.

In traditional societies, women always put more into the domestic sphere indoors, while men on the other hand set more store by the outside world, the one where they are out in public, under the scrutiny of others<sup>13</sup>. Even in today's European societies, women appear to find more satisfaction than men in family life and continue to play a bigger role there than men, who find more satisfaction outside this sphere.

**Table 3.8 Logistic regression for satisfaction with social life  
(Standardised for country)**

|                           | <b>Model 1</b>   | <b>Model 2</b>   |
|---------------------------|------------------|------------------|
| <b>Gender</b>             |                  |                  |
| Men                       | <i>Reference</i> | <i>Reference</i> |
| Women                     | -0.05*           | -0.04*           |
| <b>Age</b>                |                  |                  |
| 15 - 24                   | 0.62***          | 0.64***          |
| 25 - 34                   | 0.23***          | 0.25***          |
| 35 - 44                   | <i>Reference</i> | <i>Reference</i> |
| 45 - 54                   | 0.04 ns          | 0.04 ns          |
| 55 - 64                   | 0.18**           | 0.19**           |
| 65+                       | 0.24***          | 0.26***          |
| <b>Employment status</b>  |                  |                  |
| In paid work              | <i>Reference</i> | <i>Reference</i> |
| Unemployed                | -0.57***         | -0.45***         |
| Inactive                  | 0.12***          | 0.19***          |
| <b>Year</b>               |                  |                  |
| 1996                      | <i>Reference</i> | <i>Reference</i> |
| 2001                      | 0.39***          | 0.54***          |
| <b>Income</b>             |                  |                  |
| below lower quartile      | -0.07 ns         | -                |
| lower quartile to median  | 0.01 ns          | -                |
| median to upper quartile  | 0.01 ns          | -                |
| above upper quartile      | <i>Reference</i> | -                |
| <b>Interactions</b>       |                  |                  |
| 1996-below lower quartile | -                | 0.27***          |
| 2001-below lower quartile | -                | -0.55***         |

\*: P < 0.05, \*\*: P < 0.01, \*\*\*: P < 0.001, ns: not significant

<sup>13</sup> On this point, see the fine Kabylia studies made by Pierre Bourdieu in the 1960s. The author particularly notes this popular saying: "The man is the light of the outside, the woman the light within". Cf. P. Bourdieu, *Esquisse d'une théorie de la pratique*, Geneva, Librairie Droz, 1972, [Outline of a Theory of Practice, tr. R. Nice, CUP, 1977], especially chapter 2 "The home: the world turned inside-out", pp. 45-69.

We may also point to a positive age effect. Satisfaction with social life is in fact strongest at the two ends of the age scale, among the 15 - 24 year-olds and those 65 and over, and we see lower values in the middle of this scale, around 35 to 54 years of age.

As might be expected, the unemployed are distinctly less satisfied with their social life than those in paid work. We may also confirm that satisfaction with social life is higher in 2001 than in 1996 for the population as a whole. However when we introduce an interaction of the two variables "year" and "income below lower quartile", we find that satisfaction with social life had declined by 2001 for those with the lowest incomes (coefficient  $-0.55$ , statistically significant). There are thus a number of indicators all pointing to a tendency towards a polarisation: those with the lowest incomes on the one hand, and the rest on the other.

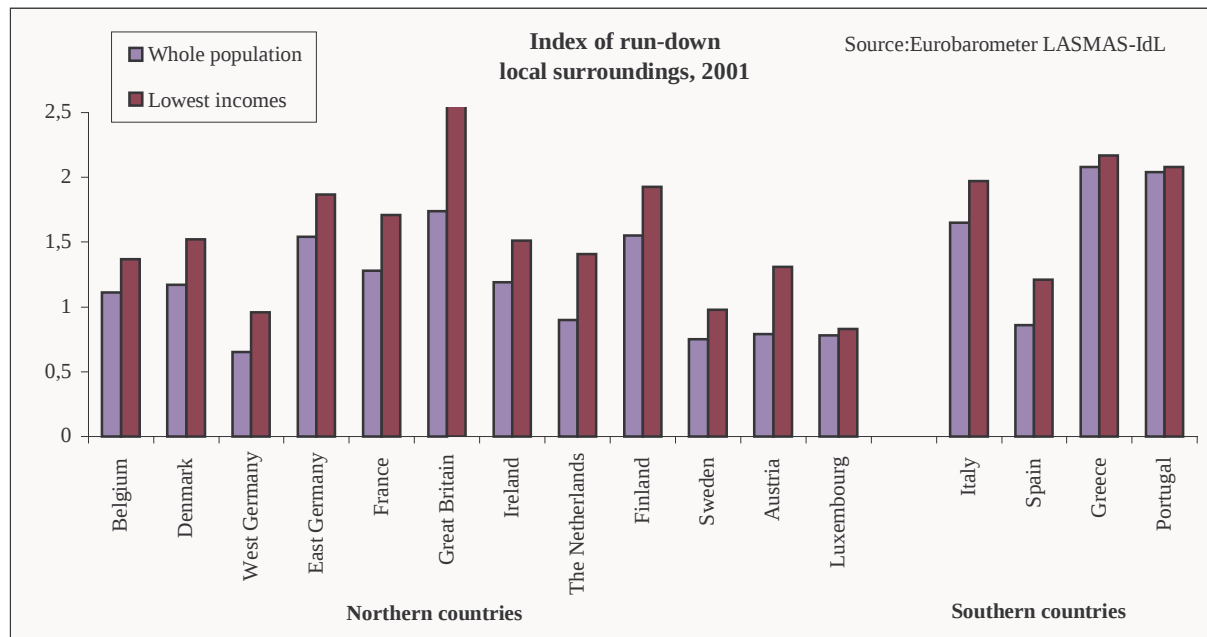
#### *Run-down local surroundings and social devaluation*

Lastly, for our assessment of quality of life, we have calculated two new indices, one concerning the surroundings of life and their deterioration, the other on the feeling of social devaluation. The index of deterioration of local surroundings has been calculated on the basis of the three following variables:

- there is run-down housing where I live;
- there is a great deal of unemployment where I live;
- there are drug addiction problems where I live.

While these three variables are formally personal assessments, they are not entirely subjective for all that, being based on close observation of the neighbourhood or village of residence. The Cronbach test gives a highly satisfactory result (0.84), proving the strength of the link among these three aspects of deterioration in local surroundings.

Figure 3.11



The Cronbach test for the index of social devaluation defined in this way gives a satisfactory result (0.73). What these five variables have in common is the expression of a negative individual point of view on the basis of the individual's own perception of others' judgement of him or her. Social devaluation results from the internalisation of a negative self-image connected with a lack of social recognition, not feeling trusted, feeling shut out, or having a bad reputation. Social devaluation corresponds, therefore, to an individual and collective experience of a process that leads to a lowered social status. It has been found that people on benefit have this experience when they turn to social services asking to be looked after because they are unable, temporarily or for the long term, to cope with their own needs.<sup>14</sup>

**Figure 3.12**

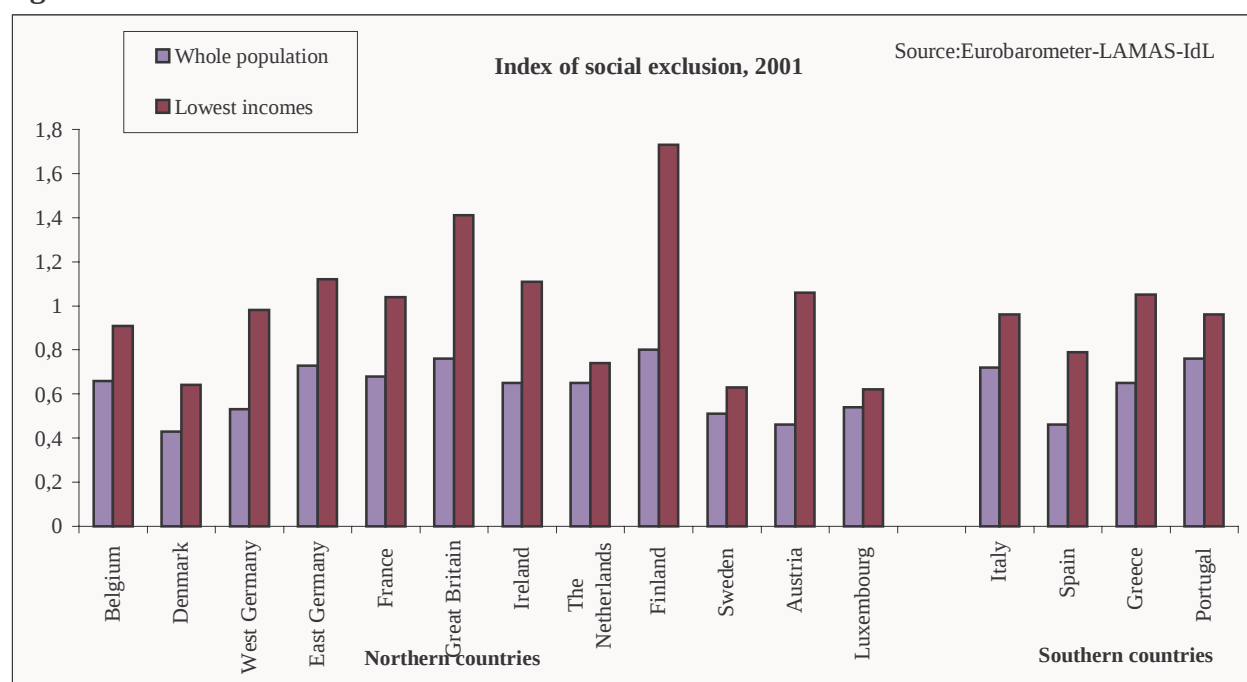


Figure 3.12 shows us that those with the lowest incomes are, in all countries, more excluded socially than the population as a whole. The index of social devaluation is highest in Finland and Great Britain.

<sup>14</sup> Cf. Serge Paugam, *La disqualification sociale*, [Social devaluation] Paris, PUF, 1991, new edition, the "Quadrige" series, 2002.

**Table 3.9 Logistic regression for run-down local surroundings and the feeling of exclusion (standardised for country)**

|                               | <b>Run-down local surroundings</b> | <b>Feeling of exclusion</b> |
|-------------------------------|------------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| <b>Gender</b>                 |                                    |                             |
| Men                           | <i>Reference</i>                   | <i>Reference</i>            |
| Women                         | -0.05 ns                           | -0.03**                     |
| <b>Age</b>                    |                                    |                             |
| 15 - 24                       | 0.14**                             | -0.05*                      |
| 25 - 34                       | 0.04 ns                            | -0.02 ns                    |
| 35 - 44                       | <i>Reference</i>                   | <i>Reference</i>            |
| 45 - 54                       | -0.05*                             | -0.01 ns                    |
| 55 - 64                       | -0.12**                            | -0.06*                      |
| 65+                           | -0.25***                           | -0.17***                    |
| <b>Income</b>                 |                                    |                             |
| below lower quartile          | 0.37***                            | 0.29***                     |
| lower quartile to median      | 0.22***                            | 0.12***                     |
| median to upper quartile      | 0.13**                             | 0.05*                       |
| above upper quartile          | <i>Reference</i>                   | <i>Reference</i>            |
| <b>Financial difficulties</b> |                                    |                             |
| No                            | <i>Reference</i>                   | <i>Reference</i>            |
| Yes                           | 0.54***                            | 0.48***                     |
| <b>Employment status</b>      |                                    |                             |
| In paid work                  | <i>Reference</i>                   | <i>Reference</i>            |
| Unemployed                    | 0.21***                            | 0.40***                     |
| Inactive                      | -0.01 ns                           | 0.09***                     |

P < 0.05, \*\*: P < 0.01, \*\*\*: P < 0.001, ns: not significant

Among the factors called on to explain these two indices, we may note that, to a slight but statistically significant extent, women less often feel excluded than men; in the case of run-down local surroundings the gender coefficient is not significant.

Younger people tend more to live in dilapidated surroundings than older ones, and the older they are, the less likely their local surroundings are to be in a poor state. The sense of being excluded is negatively correlated with age, in all comparisons with the reference group, that of people aged 35 to 44. We may therefore regard this group as the one most affected by social devaluation; and point out that this condition is harder to cope with when it comes around the mid-term of life, at an age when collective expectations of individuals are particularly high, both at work and in social and family life.

Living in run-down surroundings and the sense of being excluded socially are both [negatively] correlated with income. The coefficient is highest for the lowest income groups; and, logically enough, individuals who have financial difficulties, as well as the unemployed, are also more likely to be faced with a run-down environment and social devaluation.

## Conclusion

The experience of poverty was analysed in the first section of this chapter on the basis of financial difficulties, and specifically difficulties paying for food and rent in the course of the previous twelve months. The results confirm that the situation of all households taken together has improved since 1993; but if we study the changes for households whose income is at or below the lower quartile, it becomes obvious that the situation has got worse in many countries. Our regression analysis has enabled us to confirm this phenomenon for difficulties in paying the rent; and we have also been able to confirm that these difficulties are distinctly worse in the southern countries of Europe, especially Greece and Portugal. The duration of periods of financial difficulty is also markedly longer in southern countries, and their reappearance in adults after featuring in their childhood background is also more frequent there. We may therefore say that household poverty in money terms is more structural in the southern countries, confirming the results of the previous chapter on inherited poverty.

In the second section, we looked at a number of indicators for assessing the risk of social isolation. The proportion of people who consider they can count on someone in times of difficulty has risen in most of the countries between 1996 and 2001 so far as the population as a whole is concerned; but on the other hand it has fallen sharply among those whose income is at or below the lower quartile. We also found that the social contact index we calculated is higher in southern countries, particularly for the poorest people. If we turn to a more subjective index of social isolation, we find that the poorest 25% still have a greater sense of being isolated than the population as a whole. Lastly, we were able to verify that people in friendship networks where more than half are unemployed are more widely distributed throughout the population in southern countries, suggesting that there is less stigma and better social integration for the unemployed in these countries than in the northern ones.

In the third section, our analysis of satisfaction with family life and social life confirmed a trend towards a more marked polarisation between the poorest 25% and the rest of the population. While the results clearly show that satisfaction with family life, and with social life, has risen overall between 1996 and 2001, this is not true for that layer of the population whose incomes are at or below the lower quartile, for whom we observe a net decline in all countries. We also notice a wide gap between the poorest 25% and the population as a whole so far as the dilapidation of local surroundings and the sense of social devaluation are concerned.

## CHAPTER 4

### WORK PRECARIETY : TASK QUALITY AND WORK PRESSURE

#### *Introduction*

In recent years there has been a growing recognition that employment policy is integrally linked to the risks of social exclusion. This has been reflected in a stronger policy emphasis on boosting employment rates to provide an adequate quantity of jobs. More recently, attention also has been directed at the effects of the qualitative aspects of employment. Employment per se does not guarantee social integration; in the longer run, poor quality jobs are likely to make people highly vulnerable to job loss and to eventual labour market marginalisation. In particular, it has become evident that the quality of jobs is a vital factor affecting motivation, physical and psychological health, opportunities for the development and maintenance of skills, and the security needed to construct coherent work and non-work life plans. Monitoring the way in which patterns of work are evolving is then central for the construction of adequate policies against social exclusion.

The Social Exclusion Survey included a number of questions designed to provide comparison over time with a survey commissioned by DG Employment in 1996. These enable us to assess change in a range of work and employment conditions that have been shown to have important implications for work motivation, psychological well-being and opportunities self-development. This chapter will focus on the quality of the immediate job task and the intensity of work, while Chapter 5 will be concerned with the opportunities for long-term skill development and the level of job security.

Where jobs undermine work motivation and psychological health, people are more likely to quit their jobs, increasing their risk of unemployment, or to withdraw from the labour market altogether. Two factors have been shown to be particularly crucial in this respect: the quality of the work task and the level of pressure at work. A growing literature has pointed to the importance of task quality – in particular the degree of control people have over how they do their work - as a crucial factor affecting both work motivation and the risk of psychological and physical illness (Kohn and Schooler, 1983; Karasek and Theorell, 1990; Johnson and Johansson, 1991). There has also been very consistent evidence from prior research that work pressure is a source of more general psychological stress. A central issue, then, is whether jobs have been improving over time in terms of the quality of work tasks and the work pressure people experience.

### *The Quality of the Immediate Job Task*

Previous research has highlighted a number of key dimensions of the job task that can be important both for people's experience of work and their non-work lives. The first is the variety of the job – the extent to which it involves a diversity of sub-tasks or consists of highly repetitive actions. The second is people's capacity to continue to develop their knowledge through carrying out the work. The third, which has become increasingly central to discussions of well-being at work, is the extent to which the individual can take decisions about how the work is carried out.

The measures of intrinsic job quality were based on four question items. Respondents were given a list of statements and asked to report, using a four point scale, how true or untrue each was about their own particular job. The questions were designed to be applicable to the widest possible range of jobs and to direct attention to the factual nature of the jobs. Items were chosen to relate to the key conceptual dimensions of intrinsic job quality discussed above - the variety of the work, the opportunities for skill development and the scope for personal initiative. The wording of the items was

- "There is a lot of variety in my work"
- "My job requires that I keep learning new things"
- "I have a lot of say over what happens in my job"
- "My job allows me to take part in decisions that affect my work"

Table 4.1 presents the full distribution of answers for employees. A first point to note is that, in terms of these measures, only a minority of employees in 2001 were in jobs of high quality. Only 27% thought that it was very true that there was a lot of variety in their work and only 28% that they kept on learning new things on the job. Only 18% reported it was very true that they had a lot of say over what happened on the job and 21% that they had the ability to take part in decisions that affected their work. Second, if change over time is examined, on all four measures, task quality had grown poorer between 1996 and 2001. The proportion of those strongly agreeing there was a lot of variety had fallen by 6 percentage points, while there had been a decline of 3 points for the ability to keep on learning and take part in decisions, and of 5 points for the say people had over the job.

**Table 4.1 Job Task Characteristics Employees 1996-2001**

|                               | <b>Very true</b> | <b>Quite true</b> | <b>A little true</b> | <b>Not at all true</b> |
|-------------------------------|------------------|-------------------|----------------------|------------------------|
| <b>A lot of variety</b>       |                  |                   |                      |                        |
| 1996                          | 33.0             | 30.9              | 22.1                 | 13.9                   |
| 2001                          | 27.4             | 33.3              | 24.7                 | 14.6                   |
| <b>Ability to learn</b>       |                  |                   |                      |                        |
| 1996                          | 31.1             | 29.2              | 24.6                 | 15.1                   |
| 2001                          | 28.3             | 31.2              | 24.0                 | 16.5                   |
| <b>Say over what happens</b>  |                  |                   |                      |                        |
| 1996                          | 23.3             | 30.5              | 27.7                 | 18.5                   |
| 2001                          | 18.3             | 31.7              | 27.0                 | 23.0                   |
| <b>Take part in decisions</b> |                  |                   |                      |                        |
| 1996                          | 26.0             | 30.2              | 23.9                 | 20.0                   |
| 2001                          | 23.2             | 31.3              | 24.8                 | 20.7                   |

To simplify the analysis, and at the same time use the full range of responses, a scale of intrinsic job quality can be constructed from the four items<sup>15</sup>. Each item was scored from 3 for "very true" to 0 for "not at all true", and the scale score represents the average score across the four items. As can be seen in Table 4.2, the overall task quality score declined from 1.70 in 1996 to 1.62 in 2001, a change that was at a high level of statistical significance ( $p < .001$ ).

<sup>15</sup> The different job characteristics were clearly very closely related. A reliability analysis gave a satisfactory Cronbach alpha of .78. A principal components analysis confirmed that the items related to a single underlying dimension. The eigenvalue was 2.40 and the factor accounted for 60% of the variance.

**Table 4.2 Job Task Characteristics 1996-2001 by Employment Status and Sex**

| <i>% very true</i>   | <b>Variety</b> | <b>Learning</b> | <b>Say re Job</b> | <b>Take Part</b> | <b>Overall Task Quality Score</b> |
|----------------------|----------------|-----------------|-------------------|------------------|-----------------------------------|
| <b>Employed</b>      |                |                 |                   |                  |                                   |
| 1996                 | 33.0           | 31.1            | 23.3              | 26.0             | 1.70                              |
| 2001                 | 27.4           | 28.3            | 18.3              | 23.2             | 1.62                              |
| <b>Men</b>           |                |                 |                   |                  |                                   |
| 1996                 | 34.8           | 31.8            | 23.6              | 28.4             | 1.73                              |
| 2001                 | 28.8           | 30.2            | 20.1              | 26.6             | 1.67                              |
| <b>Women</b>         |                |                 |                   |                  |                                   |
| 1996                 | 30.8           | 30.2            | 22.9              | 22.9             | 1.66                              |
| 2001                 | 25.6           | 25.8            | 15.9              | 18.6             | 1.55                              |
| <b>Self-Employed</b> |                |                 |                   |                  |                                   |
| 1996                 | 49.0           | 47.1            | 66.7              | 79.1             | 2.33                              |
| 2001                 | 49.8           | 42.7            | 72.8              | 76.9             | 2.36                              |

It can also be seen in Table 4.2 that women were typically in jobs of poorer quality than men in both 1996 and 2001. For both years the difference between men and women in the overall task quality score was at a high level of statistical significance ( $p < 0.001$ ). The difference was particularly notable with respect to the ability to take part in decisions about the job. While overall task quality scores declined over the years for both sexes, the reduction was significantly greater for women ( $p = 0.04$ ).

The prevalence of poor job characteristics was notably more marked among employees than among the self-employed. In both years the self-employed were considerably more likely to report variety, learning opportunities and especially the ability to take decisions in their work. In 2001, 73% of the self-employed but only 18% of employees reported that they had a lot of say over what happened in their job, while the figures for taking part in decisions were 77% and 23% respectively. The self-employed also did not experience the overall decline in task quality between the years. Whereas for the self-employed the proportion strongly of the view that there was a lot of variety in their work remained very stable, among employees it fell by 5 percentage points. With respect to say over the job, a higher proportion of the self-employed felt a high level of job control in 2001 than in 1996, whereas the reverse was the case for the employed. The overall job task score rose slightly between the years for the self-employed, although the change was not statistically significant.

As can be seen from Table 4.3, there were marked differences in task quality by occupational class with the score of those in managerial and professional occupations approximately twice that of employees in elementary occupations. The decline in task quality also affected different occupational groups to a very different extent. There was no evidence of a change in the conditions of those in craft and related work, and the change was relatively small for professionals and technicians. The sharpest declines were among clerical employees, service and sales workers, and machine operatives.

**Table 4.3 Job Quality Scores by Occupational Group (Employees)**

|                          | <b>1996</b> | <b>2001</b> | <b>2001-1996</b> |
|--------------------------|-------------|-------------|------------------|
| Legislators/Managers     | 2.38        | 2.27        | -0.11            |
| Professionals & Managers | 2.12        | 2.08        | -0.04            |
| Technicians/ Assoc Profs | 1.90        | 1.84        | -0.06            |
| Clerical                 | 1.71        | 1.57        | -0.14            |
| Service & Sales          | 1.63        | 1.44        | -0.19            |
| Craft & Related          | 1.48        | 1.54        | 0.06             |
| Plant & Machine Ops      | 1.44        | 1.23        | -0.21            |
| Elementary Occupations   | 1.14        | 1.03        | -0.11            |

Was there a significant change over the years in the disadvantage experienced by non-skilled workers? This is examined in Table 4.4 through regression analyses that control for sex, age and country effects. The first two columns (Models 1 and 2) show the occupational class coefficients and their significance for each year taken separately. The relative quality of tasks of different classes is shown relative to the situation of those in managerial occupations. It reveals a very sharp and highly significant class gradient in both years, with those in elementary occupations having the strongest negative coefficients.

The third model is based on the pooled data for both years and shows the coefficients for the interaction terms between classes and year 2001. The direction of the coefficients (positive or negative) and the significance of these terms show how task quality changed relative to the situation of managers between the two years. It can be seen that only craft and related workers improved their position. The relative position of the most disadvantaged of all – those in elementary occupations – remained unchanged.

**Table 4.4 Task Quality Class Effects (Employees) 1996-2001**

|                          | <b>Model 1</b>                 | <b>Model 2</b>                 | <b>Model 3</b>                  |
|--------------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|---------------------------------|
|                          | <b>1996 Class Coefficients</b> | <b>2001 Class Coefficients</b> | <b>Class /Year Interactions</b> |
| Legislators/Managers     | ref.                           | ref                            | ref                             |
| Professionals & Managers | -0.21***                       | -0.15*                         | 0.05 n.s.                       |
| Technicians/ Assoc Profs | -0.43***                       | -0.38***                       | 0.05 n.s.                       |
| Clerical                 | -0.58***                       | -0.62***                       | -0.04 n.s.                      |
| Service & Sales          | -0.67***                       | -0.73***                       | -0.08 n.s.                      |
| Craft & Related          | -0.87***                       | -0.72***                       | 0.15 **                         |
| Plant & Machine Ops      | -0.96***                       | -1.04***                       | -0.09 n.s.                      |
| Elementary Occupations   | -1.16***                       | -1.16***                       | 0.00 n.s.                       |
| Adj R2 (full model)      | 0.20                           | 0.19                           | 0.21                            |
| N                        | 6581                           | 6724                           | 13306                           |

Note 3: \* = P < 0.05, \*\* = P < 0.01, \*\*\* = P < 0.001

**Table 4.5 Task Quality Scores by Country**

|               | <b>1996</b> | <b>2001</b> | <b>Change 2001-1996</b> |
|---------------|-------------|-------------|-------------------------|
| Austria       | 1.72        | 1.71        | -0.01                   |
| Belgium       | 1.66        | 1.47        | -0.19                   |
| Denmark       | 2.14        | 2.27        | 0.13                    |
| Finland       | 1.84        | 2.02        | 0.18                    |
| France        | 1.83        | 1.64        | -0.19                   |
| Germany       | 1.62        | 1.63        | 0.01                    |
| Great Britain | 1.76        | 1.64        | -0.12                   |
| Greece        | 1.79        | 1.52        | -0.27                   |
| Ireland       | 1.61        | 1.38        | -0.23                   |
| Ireland N     | 1.45        | 1.55        | 0.10                    |
| Italy         | 1.59        | 1.56        | -0.03                   |
| Luxembourg    | 1.57        | 1.82        | 0.25                    |
| Netherlands   | 1.74        | 1.69        | -0.05                   |
| Portugal      | 1.38        | 1.50        | 0.12                    |
| Spain         | 1.55        | 1.34        | -0.21                   |
| Sweden        | 2.15        | 1.84        | -0.31                   |

There were also marked differences in the experience of employees in different countries. Table 4.5 shows the average task quality score by country. In 1996, task quality was particularly high in Denmark, Sweden, Finland and France. In 2001 Denmark, Finland and Sweden still are among the countries with the highest task quality (now joined by Luxembourg). But France is no longer at a comparable level. In 1996, the worst quality of job tasks was in Portugal, whereas in 2001 it was in Spain. Taking change over time, there are again marked country differences. In Denmark and Finland (and to a much smaller extent in Italy), there was an improvement in average task quality. The sharpest declines were in Belgium, the UK, Spain, Greece and Sweden.

How far can these country differences be explained in terms of changes in workforce structure? Table 4.6 presents a series of regression analyses that show the relative position of each country with respect to task quality, taking Germany as the reference country. In each case, the regression coefficients show the country effect after controlling for sex, age, class, the use of new technology, the extent of upskilling, establishment size, length of service and industry. The first and second columns present the separate regressions for each year. The distinctive position of Denmark, Sweden, Finland, with particularly high levels of task quality, is evident for each of the years. However, the coefficient for France moves from positive and significant in 1996 to non-significant in 2001, while Luxembourg moves from a significant negative coefficient in 1996 to a significant positive coefficient in 2001. (It must be remembered, however, that the sample size is particularly small in Luxembourg and this may lead to a lower reliability of estimates.)

The third column of Table 4.6 gives the year change coefficient for each country, with the same set of controls. This indicates that compositional changes largely account for the score improvements in Denmark, but not in Finland or Luxembourg. However, many of the negative trends in task quality in other countries remain very clear even after structural controls. There was a statistically significant decline in task quality between the years in eight countries (Belgium, France, Great Britain, Greece, Ireland, the Netherlands, Spain and Sweden). The sharpest declines were in Belgium, Greece, Spain and Sweden. It must be remembered, however, that Sweden had an exceptionally high level of job quality in 1996. Moreover, even given the changes in the later 1990s, task quality in Sweden remained significantly higher than in all other countries apart from Denmark and Finland.

**Table 4.6 Task Quality Country effects and Country**

|               | <b>Model 1</b>                   |      | <b>Model 2</b>                   |      | <b>Models 3</b>                    |      |
|---------------|----------------------------------|------|----------------------------------|------|------------------------------------|------|
|               | <b>1996 Country Coefficients</b> |      | <b>2001 Country Coefficients</b> |      | <b>Within Country Year Changes</b> |      |
| Austria       | 0.06                             | n.s. | 0.04                             | n.s. | -.01                               | n.s. |
| Belgium       | 0.04                             | n.s. | -0.20                            | ***  | -.24                               | ***  |
| Denmark       | 0.51                             | ***  | 0.56                             | ***  | .04                                | n.s. |
| Finland       | 0.10                             | *    | 0.24                             | ***  | .15                                | ***  |
| France        | 0.16                             | ***  | 0.00                             | n.s. | -.19                               | ***  |
| Germany       | ref.                             |      | ref.                             |      | .02                                | n.s. |
| Great Britain | 0.07                             | n.s. | -0.05                            | n.s. | -.14                               | **   |
| Greece        | 0.13                             | **   | -0.12                            | *    | -.27                               | ***  |
| Ireland       | -0.05                            | n.s. | -0.22                            | ***  | -.17                               | **   |
| Italy         | -0.02                            | n.s. | -0.02                            | n.s. | -.00                               | n.s. |
| Luxembourg    | -0.13                            | **   | 0.15                             | **   | .29                                | ***  |
| Netherlands   | 0.04                             | n.s. | -0.04                            | n.s. | -.12                               | **   |
| Portugal      | -0.16                            | ***  | -0.08                            | (*)  | -.02                               | n.s. |
| Spain         | -0.05                            | n.s. | -0.24                            | ***  | -.24                               | ***  |
| Sweden        | 0.41                             | ***  | 0.13                             | ***  | -.28                               | ***  |
| N             | 6393                             |      | 6708                             |      |                                    |      |
| Adj R2        | 0.28                             |      | 0.30                             |      |                                    |      |

Note 1: OLS Regressions. Model 1 and 2 Control for sex, age, class, use of new technology, skill change, establishment size, length of service and industry for each year separately. The third column presents year change coefficients from separate regressions for each country.

Note 2: \* =  $P < 0.05$ , \*\* =  $P < 0.01$ , \*\*\* =  $P < 0.001$

The evidence provides then a rather disturbing picture of lack of progress in improving aspects of the work situation that have been shown to be crucial to opportunities for self-development and the maintenance of learning skills. Given the availability of other work specifically dedicated to this subject, the survey has not sought to measure trends across time in the other major aspect of task quality - health and safety conditions. However, it is interesting that the main source of survey data on this (European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions, 2001) also found little improvement across time taking the period 1990 to 2000. It notes; "There was no improvement in classic workplace hazards such as noise, vibrations, inhaling fumes and dangerous substances, high and low temperatures, carrying heavy loads and working in painful and tiring positions". While overall there was a slight decline in the perceived risk of work to people's health and safety (from 30% in 1990 to 27% in 2000), there was an increase between 1995 and 2000 in the report of work-related health problems such as backache, overall fatigue and headaches. In short, whether one takes the "learning" or the "physical health" aspects of task quality, the general conclusion is of a failure to achieve a significant improvement in the work environment in recent years.

### *The Intensification of work?*

A second aspect of the quality of work life that has been of central concern is that of work pressure. There is evidence that the first half of the 1990s saw a marked increase in the intensity of work, as a result of increased competitive pressure, changes in the skill requirements of jobs, the introduction of new technologies and the decline of trade union power (Green and McIntosh, 2001). Did this trend continue in the period 1996 to 2001?

The survey included four measures of work pressure that had been asked in 1996. These were:

- My job requires that I work very hard  
(5 point response scale: Strongly agree- Strongly disagree)
- I work under a great deal of pressure  
(2 point response scale: Agree-Disagree)
- I never seem to have enough time to get everything done in my job  
(5 point response scale: Strongly agree- Strongly disagree)
- I often have to work extra time, over and above the formal hours of my job to get through the work or to help out.  
(5 point response scale: Strongly agree- Strongly disagree)

The distributions for those agreeing with each question are given in Table 4.7. For each measure there was a decline in the proportion reporting that they experienced a high level of work pressure between 1996 and 2001. An overall index of work pressure was constructed by averaging the scores for the four items<sup>16</sup>. This confirms that there was a general tendency for work pressure to fall between the years. It also shows that the decline occurred for both men and women.

The final measure given in the last four rows of Table 4.7 is a question asking people whether or not there had been a significant change in "the effort you have to put into your job in the past five years". In 1996, nearly half of all employees (48%) said that there had been an increase in effort demands. In 2001, although those reporting an increase still greatly outweighed those reporting a decrease, the proportion that had experienced an intensification of work had fallen to 41% and was now lower than that for people for whom there had been no change in the effort required in their job.

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<sup>16</sup> The 5 point items were coded from 4 (strongly agree) to 0 (strongly disagree). The two point item was coded 4 (applies) and 1 (does not apply). Different versions of measure were tested with different coding of the second item but the results are unaffected. The scale has an acceptable alpha of 0.72.

**Table 4.7 Work Intensity (Employees) 1996-2001**

|                                                 | 1996 | 2001 |
|-------------------------------------------------|------|------|
| <b>Job requires that works very hard</b>        |      |      |
| Strongly agrees                                 | 28.1 | 23.2 |
| Agrees                                          | 40.1 | 41.5 |
| <b>Works under a great deal of pressure</b>     |      |      |
| Agrees                                          | 43.0 | 42.4 |
| <b>Never enough time to get everything done</b> |      |      |
| Strongly agree                                  | 15.3 | 13.3 |
| Agree                                           | 27.3 | 26.6 |
| <b>Works extra time over formal hours</b>       |      |      |
| Strongly agree                                  | 15.4 | 14.6 |
| Agree                                           | 26.2 | 27.8 |
| <b>Work Pressure Index</b>                      |      |      |
| All                                             | 2.33 | 2.29 |
| Men                                             | 2.39 | 2.36 |
| Women                                           | 2.25 | 2.20 |
| <b>Change in work effort last 5 years</b>       |      |      |
| Increased                                       | 47.5 | 41.3 |
| Same                                            | 46.1 | 51.4 |
| Decreased                                       | 6.4  | 7.3  |

In both years work pressure was strongly related to occupational class. Table 4.8 gives the results of regression analyses in which other classes are compared with that of Managers as the reference category. The analysis controlled for sex, age and country. The first two models give the results for 1996 and 2001 separately, while the third model takes the class/year interaction terms in a pooled model to assess whether there were significant changes in relative class positions across time. In 1996 all classes had significantly lower work pressure scores than managers. Work pressure scores were particularly low among service and sales workers and those in elementary occupations. The pattern was broadly similar in 2001. Service and sales workers were now less distinctive from other categories of employee than in 1996, although those in elementary occupations still had very much lower scores than all other groups. However, the final model in Table 4.8 (model 3) shows that (with the possible exception of technicians and associate professionals) there were no statistically significant changes between 1996 and 2001 in the relative work pressure experienced by employees in different occupational classes.

**Table 4.8 Occupational Class and Work Pressure**

|                          | <b>Model 1<br/>Class Coefficients<br/>1996</b> |     | <b>Model 2<br/>Class Coefficients<br/>2001</b> |     | <b>Model 3<br/>Class/Year<br/>Interactions</b> |      |
|--------------------------|------------------------------------------------|-----|------------------------------------------------|-----|------------------------------------------------|------|
| Legislators/Managers     | ref.                                           |     | ref.                                           |     | ref.                                           |      |
| Professionals            | -0.14                                          | **  | -0.17                                          | *** | -0.04                                          | n.s. |
| Technicians/ Assoc Profs | -0.24                                          | *** | -0.31                                          | *** | -0.13                                          | (*)  |
| Clerical                 | -0.48                                          | *** | -0.43                                          | *** | 0.02                                           | n.s. |
| Service & Sales          | -0.55                                          | *** | -0.43                                          | *** | 0.10                                           | n.s. |
| Craft & Related          | -0.36                                          | *** | -0.44                                          | *** | -0.12                                          | n.s. |
| Plant & Machine Ops      | -0.43                                          | *** | -0.38                                          | *** | 0.02                                           | n.s. |
| Elementary Occupations   | -0.63                                          | *** | -0.64                                          | *** | -0.04                                          | n.s. |
| Adj R2 (full model)      | 0.08                                           |     | 0.08                                           |     | 0.08                                           |      |
| N                        | 6581                                           |     | 6724                                           |     | 13305                                          |      |

Note 1: OLS Regressions. Model 1 Class Effects, controlling for Sex, Age and Country. Model 2 + Class\*Year Interactions with pooled data, controlling for Sex, Age and Country.

Note 2: \* =  $P < 0.05$ , \*\* =  $P < 0.01$ , \*\*\* =  $P < 0.001$

The general trend in the European Union towards lower work pressure conceals however major differences in the experience of different countries. To begin with, reported levels of work pressure varied substantially between countries. The first two models of Table 4.8 give regression results that show the relative work pressure in each country compared to that in Germany, taking 1996 and 2001 separately. In 1996 only two countries had significantly higher levels of work pressure than Germany – Britain and Sweden. At the other end of the scale, the South European countries and Netherlands, Luxembourg, Denmark and Belgium had distinctively lower levels of work pressure. In 2001 Britain and Sweden still stand out as distinctively high, but they have been joined by Ireland. But of the original countries with markedly lower work pressure than Germany, only the Netherlands and Luxembourg still remain distinctive.

One of the problems in such comparisons is that changes in relative position over time may reflect changes in the position of the reference country. This is clearly the case with respect to work pressure. The last column of Table 4.9 shows whether or not there was a significant change between the years in the intensity of work within each country. Only three countries saw a significant decline in work pressure between 1996 and 2001 – France, Germany and Portugal. Work pressure rose in two countries (Greece and Spain) and there was no significant change over time in any of the other countries.

**Table 4.9 Country and Work Pressure Scores**

|               | <b>Model 1</b>                   |      | <b>Model 2</b>                   |      | <b>Models 3</b>                   |      |
|---------------|----------------------------------|------|----------------------------------|------|-----------------------------------|------|
|               | <b>1996 Country Coefficients</b> |      | <b>2001 Country Coefficients</b> |      | <b>Within Country Year Change</b> |      |
| Austria       | -0.11                            | *    | 0.01                             | n.s. | -0.02                             | n.s. |
| Belgium       | -0.23                            | ***  | -0.10                            | (*)  | 0.01                              | n.s. |
| Denmark       | -0.14                            | **   | -0.05                            | n.s. | -0.10                             | n.s. |
| Finland       | -0.02                            | n.s. | 0.07                             | n.s. | -0.07                             | n.s. |
| France        | -0.09                            | (*)  | -0.09                            | (*)  | -0.19                             | **   |
| Germany       | ref.                             |      | ref.                             |      | -0.17                             | ***  |
| Great Britain | 0.16                             | ***  | 0.30                             | ***  | -0.06                             | n.s. |
| Greece        | -0.13                            | *    | 0.06                             | n.s. | 0.21                              | **   |
| Ireland       | 0.02                             | n.s. | 0.15                             | **   | -0.04                             | n.s. |
| Italy         | -0.25                            | ***  | -0.07                            | n.s. | 0.03                              | n.s. |
| Luxembourg    | -0.23                            | ***  | -0.16                            | **   | -0.10                             | n.s. |
| Netherlands   | -0.36                            | ***  | -0.14                            | **   | 0.04                              | n.s. |
| Portugal      | -0.20                            | ***  | -0.08                            | n.s. | -0.04                             | n.s. |
| Spain         | -0.31                            | ***  | -0.06                            | n.s. | 0.18                              | **   |
| Sweden        | 0.16                             | ***  | 0.34                             | ***  | -0.02                             | n.s. |
| N             | 6383                             |      | 6708                             |      |                                   |      |
| Adj R2        | 0.11                             |      | 0.09                             |      |                                   |      |

Note 1: Higher scores indicate higher work pressure

Note 2: \* =  $P < 0.05$ , \*\* =  $P < 0.01$ , \*\*\* =  $P < 0.001$

The factors underlying country differences in work pressure may reflect a wide array of factors, from relatively immediate economic pressure to longer structural characteristics of work organisation. They may be influenced for instance by the difficulty in recruiting new employees or by the degree of emphasis on increased labour productivity. If one takes annual percentage change in employment as a proxy for the likely staffing pressures on employers, there is not a significant correlation for 2001 between country employment changes and the country work pressure scores (-0.09,  $p=0.75$ ). However, there was an association between the level of work pressure and annual percentage change in labour productivity (0.54;  $p=0.04$ ). These are clearly relatively crude measures and more detailed research is needed.

## Conclusion

The quality of job tasks is of central importance for the maintenance of people's learning skills and has also been shown to be an important factor mediating the effects of work pressure on stress and psychological ill-health. Those who are confined to poor quality jobs are then less likely to acquire or maintain the competences needed to ensure employment stability in a world of rapid technological and economic change. At the same time, they are more likely to be subject to the types of pressures that lead to withdrawal from the labour market.

The evidence from the survey indicates that not only were a substantial proportion of employees in poor quality jobs, but that, at least over the period from 1996 to 2001, there had been some deterioration in the quality of job tasks rather than the type of improvement required for an effective policy of reducing risks of social exclusion. Most particularly, the quality of work tasks of the most vulnerable category of employee – the non-skilled – declined over the period and their relative position remained unchanged.

In contrast, there was no evidence to confirm the frequently asserted trend towards heightened work intensification. In most countries the level of work pressure remained unchanged from the mid-1990s. Indeed, in two countries – France and Germany – the evidence points to a small but significant reduction in work pressures.

The picture that emerges is one that differs rather sharply from analyses based on the early to mid 1990s (Capelli et al. 1997; Gallie et al. 1998) where the trend appeared to be one in which progressive upskilling, in part driven by the spread of computer technologies, was leading to task enlargement, the devolution of decision-making to employees and more intense work pressure. Further research is required to establish why such changes have occurred. But speculatively there are at least two factors that would be worth closer investigation. The first is the growth of stricter forms of external regulation of work life (for instance with respect to health and safety norms and obligations to customers/clients) that may have made employers more cautious about the degree of autonomy that should be exercised by employees. The second is the evolution of computer systems and their role in the overall work process. Whereas the earlier 1990s was marked by the spread of stand-alone computer technologies that may well have encouraged greater task discretion for employees, the second half of the 1990s saw the expansion of more integrated network systems that may have substantially facilitated closer monitoring of work performance and acted as a constraint on employees' ability to take decisions on the job.

## CHAPTER 5

### WORK PRECARIETY: SKILL DEVELOPMENT AND JOB SECURITY

The previous chapter examined the trends in the quality of job tasks with their implications for people's ability to maintain their basic learning and decision-making skills. But, in the longer-term job security also requires a regular updating and upgrading of individual skills so that people have the ability to keep pace with changing technological requirements and retain their value on the labour market in periods of economic restructuring. Skill development can take place both informally through learning on the job to cope with modifications in work practices and formally through employer training. This chapter begins by considering how opportunities for new skill acquisition have been changing, both in terms of the actual changes in the requirements of jobs and in terms of the availability of employer training at work. It then turns to consider changes in more immediate job security, looking both at people's perceptions of the current stability of their jobs and their experiences of recent unemployment.

#### *The Changing Skill and Responsibility Demands of Jobs*

It has been increasingly recognised that if people are to avoid a high risk of labour market marginalisation later in their careers, they need to be in jobs that provide on-going skill development. This not only helps protect them from skill depreciation as techniques change but it maintains the underlying learning skills that are essential for re-skilling if they are made redundant. Further, the integrating potential of work is likely to be greater where it offers some type of longer term career development, where people can acquire higher levels of skill. Did the evolution of jobs between 1996 and 2001 lead to increased opportunities for such skill and career development?

Taking the overall EU pattern, in the second half of the 1990s, there was a slight increase in the proportion of employees in highly skilled jobs and a slight decrease of those in non-skilled work. For instance, comparing Labour Force Survey data for 1995 and 2000, the share of those in professional and managerial work rose by 2.3%, while that of operatives and of employees in elementary occupations declined by 0.8%. However, such an increase may reflect generational substitution (with new more highly skilled jobs being primarily filled by new entrants) rather than experiences of skill development or mobility among those currently in the workforce.

To examine in-career experiences of skill development people were asked whether there had been a significant increase, significant decrease or little or no change in "the level of skill you use in your job" and in "the responsibility involved in your job" compared to what they were doing five years previously (or the nearest year to that if they had not been employed five years ago). In both years only 7% reported that the skill level of their work had declined, while over 40% said that it had risen (Table 5.1). Similarly, only 6% said that the responsibility in their job had declined, while over 40% had experienced increased responsibilities. The general picture is consistent with the view that there has been a process of upgrading of skills in the European Union over the last decade at least for a significant minority of employees.

But at the same time, there is some evidence that the pace of change slowed after the mid-1990s. Whereas 48% of employees had experienced upskilling at work in 1996, this was the case for 43% in 2001; similarly the proportions reporting increased responsibilities fell from 50% to 46% over the period. In both years women were less likely to have experienced increases in skill and responsibility, but the decline affected both male and female employees in a broadly similar way. Those who had been promoted were more likely in both years to have experienced increased skill and responsibility than those who had remained in jobs at the same level, though there was significant job upgrading even for the non-mobile. The decline again affected both the promoted and the stayers.

**Table 5.1 Percentages Experiencing Changes in Skill and Responsibility 1996-2001**

|                        | % Increased skill |      |           | % Increased Responsibilities |      |           |
|------------------------|-------------------|------|-----------|------------------------------|------|-----------|
|                        | 1996              | 2001 | 2001-1996 | 1996                         | 2001 | 2001-1996 |
| All Employees          | 48.4              | 43.1 | -5.3      | 49.9                         | 46.2 | -3.7      |
| Men                    | 50.6              | 45.7 | -4.9      | 52.6                         | 48.3 | -4.3      |
| Women                  | 45.5              | 39.5 | -6.0      | 46.4                         | 43.3 | -3.1      |
| Legislators/Managers   | 51.8              | 60.9 | 9.1       | 60.7                         | 68.9 | 8.2       |
| Professionals          | 53.8              | 48.5 | -5.3      | 52.7                         | 47.6 | -5.1      |
| Technicians/ Ass Profs | 58.1              | 51.2 | -6.9      | 60.4                         | 53.0 | -7.4      |
| Clerical               | 55.1              | 46.1 | -9.0      | 53.0                         | 48.4 | -4.6      |
| Service & Sales        | 45.7              | 38.9 | -6.8      | 46.7                         | 45.9 | -0.8      |
| Craft & Related        | 48.8              | 42.0 | -6.8      | 50.5                         | 43.5 | -7.0      |
| Plant & Machine Ops    | 39.4              | 31.5 | -7.9      | 39.0                         | 32.7 | -6.3      |
| Elementary Occupations | 29.3              | 24.1 | -5.2      | 36.3                         | 27.6 | -8.7      |
| Promoted               | 61.3              | 57.8 | -3.5      | 67.3                         | 62.0 | -5.3      |
| Not promoted           | 43.0              | 37.8 | -5.2      | 41.7                         | 38.4 | -3.3      |
| N                      | 6630              | 6773 |           | 6630                         | 6773 |           |

**Table 5.2 Class Effects on Changes in Job Requirements**

|                          | <b>Model 1</b>                 |      | <b>Model 2</b>                 |     | <b>Model 3</b>                 |      |
|--------------------------|--------------------------------|------|--------------------------------|-----|--------------------------------|------|
|                          | <b>1996 Class Coefficients</b> |      | <b>2001 Class Coefficients</b> |     | <b>Class/Year Interactions</b> |      |
| Legislators/Managers     | ref.                           | n.s. | ref.                           |     | ref.                           |      |
| Professionals & Managers | -0.12                          | n.s. | -0.66                          | *** | -0.16                          | n.s. |
| Technicians/ Assoc Profs | 0.18                           | n.s. | -0.55                          | *** | 0.12                           | n.s. |
| Clerical                 | -0.02                          | n.s. | -0.71                          | *** | -0.08                          | n.s. |
| Service & Sales          | -0.34                          | **   | -1.00                          | *** | -0.38                          | ***  |
| Craft & Related          | -.044                          | ***  | -1.06                          | *** | -0.45                          | ***  |
| Plant & Machine Ops      | -0.88                          | ***  | -1.55                          | *** | -0.89                          | ***  |
| Elementary Occupations   | -0.97                          | ***  | -1.58                          | *** | -1.02                          | ***  |
| Chi2 (DF)                | 419.88 (28)                    |      | 452.1(28)                      |     | 881.45 (37)                    |      |
| Sig                      | ***                            |      | ***                            |     | ***                            |      |
| N                        | 6364                           |      | 6253                           |     | 12617                          |      |

Note 1: Ordered Logistic Analyses. Model 1 and 2 give Class Effects, controlling for Sex, Age and Country, for each year separately. Model 3 gives Class\*Year Interactions with pooled data, controlling for Sex, Age and Country

Note 2: \* = P < 0.05, \*\* = P < 0.01, \*\*\* = P < 0.001

The extent of skill and responsibility upgrading were heavily affected by position in the occupational structure. Taking 1996, half or more of managers, professionals, technicians and clerical employees were in jobs where the skill and responsibility demands had increased, while this was case for only 39% of plant and machine operatives. Those in elementary occupations were particularly unlikely to have seen changes in the skill and responsibility requirements of their jobs (29% and 36% respectively). The decline in the frequency of such changes between the years affected all occupational categories other than managers. It was sharpest among clerical employees (-9 percentage points), perhaps reflecting a slower pace of change after a period of particularly rapid innovation in office technology. With respect to responsibilities, it was particularly severe for the least skilled – those in elementary occupations (-9 percentage points). In 2001, only 24% of those in elementary occupations had experienced any upgrading of their skills in the previous five years and only 28% had been given increased responsibilities in their work. Table 5.2 (Model 3) shows that the class gradient was highly significant in both years for service and sales workers, craft and related employees, machine operatives and elementary workers. Further, there was a significant widening of the class differential for each of these categories between the years with respect to changes in job requirements. The coefficients indicate that this deterioration in relative position was particularly sharp for those in elementary occupations.

There were also substantial differences by country in the extent of change in the skill and responsibility requirements of jobs (Table 5.3). Employees in Austria, Denmark, Finland, Italy and the Netherlands were consistently high in both years with respect to skill upgrading, while Portugal and Belgium were consistently low. Finland, Greece, the Netherlands and Sweden had high proportions in both years with experiences of increased responsibility, while Belgium, Spain and Portugal were consistently low. Great Britain and Ireland stood out as countries in which there had been a marked fall between 1996 and 2001 in the proportions experiencing both upskilling and increased responsibility. There was also a marked decline in the experience of skill upgrading in Spain, and in the experience of increased responsibility in Austria.

Job upgrading appears to relate in part to changes in the character of the workforce as a result of unemployment reduction. Comparing countries, the greater the reduction in unemployment between 1996 and 2001, the greater the reduction in job upskilling (correlation coefficient 0.59;  $p=0.02$ ). (There was similarly a high negative correlation with employment growth: coefficient  $-0.51$ ;  $p=0.05$ ). This may reflect the fact that the reduction of unemployment involves a particularly substantial expansion of lower skilled work, where employers are less likely to believe they will receive a good return from an investment in training. To control for this, a regression analysis was carried out on a combined index of skill/responsibility demands, constructed by averaging the scores of the two measures. Once structural factors are controlled (Table 5.4, Models 3), there is no evidence of change over the years for half of the countries. But significant declines in skill/responsibility upgrading were evident in Austria, Germany, Great Britain, the Netherlands, Ireland and Spain.

**Table 5.3 Percentage Experiencing Change in Skill and Responsibility by Country**

|               | % Increased Skill |      |           | % Increased Responsibility |      |           |
|---------------|-------------------|------|-----------|----------------------------|------|-----------|
|               | 1996              | 2001 | 2001-1996 | 1996                       | 2001 | 2001-1996 |
| Austria       | 53.4              | 47.2 | -6.2      | 54.3                       | 42.3 | -12.0     |
| Belgium       | 33.0              | 34.7 | 1.7       | 35.9                       | 40.0 | 4.1       |
| Denmark       | 48.5              | 49.5 | 1.0       | 49.4                       | 50.1 | 0.7       |
| Finland       | 67.5              | 65.7 | -1.8      | 58.3                       | 56.9 | -1.4      |
| France        | 42.8              | 42.2 | -0.6      | 48.3                       | 47.0 | -1.3      |
| Germany       | 46.0              | 40.8 | -5.2      | 51.1                       | 45.9 | -5.2      |
| Great Britain | 53.1              | 44.4 | -8.7      | 55.7                       | 44.6 | -11.1     |
| Greece        | 44.8              | 41.4 | -3.4      | 56.1                       | 54.0 | -2.1      |
| Ireland       | 53.9              | 40.3 | -13.6     | 59.8                       | 43.7 | -16.1     |
| Italy         | 52.2              | 47.0 | -5.2      | 43.7                       | 48.4 | 4.7       |
| Luxembourg    | 40.0              | 39.4 | -0.6      | 45.0                       | 40.4 | -4.6      |
| Netherlands   | 62.8              | 54.6 | -8.2      | 58.5                       | 58.0 | -0.5      |
| Portugal      | 33.1              | 32.7 | -0.4      | 44.7                       | 41.8 | -2.9      |
| Spain         | 48.1              | 36.5 | -11.6     | 39.5                       | 36.1 | -3.4      |
| Sweden        | 51.3              | 44.5 | -6.8      | 55.5                       | 56.2 | 0.7       |

**Table 5.4 Changes in Skill/Responsibility Demands of Jobs**

|               | <b>Model 1</b>                   |      | <b>Model 2</b>                   |      | <b>Models 3</b>                   |      |
|---------------|----------------------------------|------|----------------------------------|------|-----------------------------------|------|
|               | <b>1996 Country Coefficients</b> |      | <b>2001 Country Coefficients</b> |      | <b>Within Country Year Change</b> |      |
| Austria       | 0.11                             | n.s. | -0.04                            | n.s. | -0.41                             | **   |
| Belgium       | -0.64                            | ***  | -0.35                            | **   | 0.08                              | n.s. |
| Denmark       | 0.03                             | n.s. | 0.15                             | n.s. | -0.20                             | n.s. |
| Finland       | 0.54                             | ***  | 0.66                             | ***  | -0.09                             | n.s. |
| France        | -0.29                            | **   | -0.21                            | (*)  | -0.16                             | n.s. |
| Germany       | ref                              |      | ref                              |      | -0.22                             | *    |
| Great Britain | 0.16                             | n.s. | -0.18                            | n.s. | -0.47                             | ***  |
| Greece        | 0.36                             | **   | 0.14                             | n.s. | -0.26                             | n.s. |
| Ireland       | 0.38                             | **   | -0.00                            | n.s. | -0.68                             | ***  |
| Italy         | -0.05                            | n.s. | 0.26                             | *    | 0.04                              | n.s. |
| Luxembourg    | -0.32                            | *    | -0.23                            | n.s. | -0.31                             | (*)  |
| Netherlands   | 0.44                             | ***  | 0.38                             | ***  | -0.29                             | *    |
| Portugal      | -0.30                            | *    | -0.29                            | *    | -0.15                             | n.s. |
| Spain         | -0.04                            | n.s. | -0.22                            | (*)  | -0.33                             | *    |
| Sweden        | 0.04                             | n.s. | 0.14                             | n.s. | -0.12                             | n.s. |
| Chi2 (DF)     | 698.23 (42)                      |      | 568.14 (42)                      |      |                                   |      |
| Sig           | ***                              |      | ***                              |      |                                   |      |
| N             | 6200                             |      | 6081                             |      |                                   |      |

Note 1: Ordered logit analyses. The dependent variable distinguishes four training durations: none, less than one week, 1 week to 2 months, 3 months or more. Models 1 and 2 present the country coefficients relative to Germany from models controlling for sex, age, class, use of new technology, skill change and establishment size length of service and industry. Models 3 present the year coefficients from a series of ordered logit regressions carried out for each country separately.

Note 2: \* =  $P < 0.05$ , \*\* =  $P < 0.01$ , \*\*\* =  $P < 0.001$

## *Training*

The best measure of intentional effort to ensure longer-term skill maintenance is the willingness of employers to invest in training. In the survey, people were asked: "Did you receive any education or training in the last five years, which was paid for by your employer or former employer?" People who had received training were then asked how long it had lasted in total. Table 5.5 presents the proportions that received no training at all and the proportions that received a month or more training.

The most striking feature of Table 5.5 is the very high proportion of employees that had received no training at all in the period preceding either year (59% in 1996 and 55% in 2001). The proportions were broadly similar for men and women. There was an improvement between 1996 and 2001, with the proportion with no employer training falling by four percentage points. Such training as was given was typically of relatively short duration. Only 12% had had a month or more training in 1996 and 13% in 2001.

Training opportunities were heavily concentrated on those who were already in higher skilled jobs. In 2001, only about a third of managers and professionals, and less than half of technicians and clerical employees, had received no training. In contrast, the proportions without training were 69% among craft and related workers, 65% among plant and machine operatives and 82% among those in elementary occupations. Between 1996 and 2001, there had been a decline in the proportion without training among managers, clerical workers, service and sales employees and machine operatives, but the proportion of those in elementary occupations without training remained very stable between the years (81% and 82%).

Table 5.6 shows the results from a logistic regression analysis that controls for the potentially confounding effects of sex and age. The very steep gradient by occupational class is evident in both years with those in elementary occupations being the most likely to be without training. The analysis of the significance of class/year effects (Model 3) shows a significant deterioration in the relative position of those in craft and related and elementary occupations between the two years.

**Table 5.5 Percentage Receiving Employer Training in Last 5 Years**

|                          | None |      |           | 1 month + |      |           |
|--------------------------|------|------|-----------|-----------|------|-----------|
|                          | 1996 | 2001 | 2001-1996 | 1996      | 2001 | 2001-1996 |
| All                      | 59.0 | 54.9 | -4.1      | 12.4      | 13.1 | 0.7       |
| Men                      | 58.4 | 54.4 | -4.0      | 12.9      | 15.2 | 2.3       |
| Women                    | 59.8 | 55.6 | -4.2      | 11.7      | 10.4 | -1.3      |
| Legislators/Managers     | 43.3 | 32.1 | -11.2     | 16.3      | 22.7 | 6.4       |
| Professionals            | 35.4 | 33.6 | -1.8      | 24.8      | 17.7 | -7.1      |
| Technicians/ Assoc Profs | 42.0 | 40.1 | -1.9      | 21.1      | 17.8 | -3.3      |
| Clerical                 | 57.6 | 49.1 | -8.5      | 9.6       | 14.0 | 4.4       |
| Service & Sales          | 64.2 | 60.2 | -4.0      | 9.6       | 13.2 | 3.6       |
| Craft & Related          | 69.2 | 69.0 | -0.2      | 8.9       | 10.0 | 1.1       |
| Plant & Machine Ops      | 73.8 | 65.4 | -8.4      | 5.2       | 7.8  | 2.6       |
| Elementary Occupations   | 81.3 | 81.8 | 0.5       | 3.8       | 3.3  | -0.5      |

**Table 5.6 Class Effects No Training**

|                          | Model 1                 |      | Model 2                 |      | Model 3                 |      |
|--------------------------|-------------------------|------|-------------------------|------|-------------------------|------|
|                          | 1996 Class Coefficients |      | 2001 Class Coefficients |      | Class/Year Interactions |      |
| Legislators/Managers     | ref.                    |      | ref.                    |      | ref.                    |      |
| Professionals & Managers | -0.58                   | ***  | -0.21                   | ***  | 0.41                    | *    |
| Technicians/ Assoc Profs | -0.16                   | n.s. | 0.08                    | *    | 0.31                    | (*)  |
| Clerical                 | 0.31                    | *    | 0.33                    | n.s. | 0.04                    | n.s. |
| Service & Sales          | 0.62                    | ***  | 0.81                    | ***  | 0.22                    | n.s. |
| Craft & Related          | 0.96                    | ***  | 1.41                    | ***  | 0.46                    | **   |
| Plant & Machine Ops      | 1.33                    | ***  | 1.25                    | ***  | -0.05                   | n.s. |
| Elementary Occupations   | 1.47                    | ***  | 1.92                    | ***  | 0.47                    | *    |
| Chi2 (DF)                | 985.68 (28)             |      | 1138.52 (28)            |      | 2072.49 (37)            |      |
| Sig                      | ***                     |      | ***                     |      | ***                     |      |
| N                        | 6364                    |      | 6253                    |      | 12617                   |      |

Note 1: Logistic Regression Analyses. Model 1 and 2 give Class effects, controlling for Sex, Age and Country, for each year separately. Model 3 gives Class\*Year Interactions with pooled data, controlling for Sex, Age and Country.

Note 2: \* = P < 0.05, \*\* = P < 0.01, \*\*\* = P < 0.001

The chances of receiving training from an employer were also very different from one EU country to another (Table 5.7). In 1996 the proportions that had received no employer training in the previous five years ranged from 79% of employees in Italy to only 29% of employees in Finland. In 2001 they ranged from 78% of employees without training in Portugal to 24% in Denmark. In both years, Denmark, Finland and Sweden stand out as having exceptionally high proportions with training, while Greece, Portugal and Spain had very low proportions.

**Table 5.7 Percentage of Employees with no Employer Training in Last Five Years**

|               | 1996 | 2001 | 2001-1996 |
|---------------|------|------|-----------|
| Austria       | 53.5 | 51.4 | -2.1      |
| Belgium       | 68.2 | 65.1 | -3.1      |
| Denmark       | 35.8 | 22.9 | -12.9     |
| Finland       | 28.5 | 26.2 | -2.3      |
| France        | 61.7 | 67.1 | 5.4       |
| Germany       | 51.7 | 44.5 | -7.2      |
| Great Britain | 52.6 | 45.6 | -7.0      |
| Greece        | 76.5 | 77.5 | 1.0       |
| Ireland       | 58.7 | 62.5 | 3.8       |
| Italy         | 78.8 | 62.0 | -16.8     |
| Luxembourg    | 66.8 | 48.9 | -17.9     |
| Netherlands   | 49.3 | 45.9 | -3.4      |
| Portugal      | 70.6 | 78.2 | 7.6       |
| Spain         | 69.8 | 71.1 | 1.3       |
| Sweden        | 30.9 | 34.2 | 3.3       |

While these differences partly reflect differences in workforce demographics, economic structure and technical level, it is notable that the many differences persist after taking account of age, sex, length of service, occupational class, changes in job skill requirements, use of advanced technology, size of establishment, and industry. Models 1 and 2 of Table 5.8, give the country effects relative to Germany on duration of training (a four category variable ranging from none to 3 months or more). In both years, even with controls, Denmark and Sweden remain distinctively high, while Belgium, Greece, Italy, Portugal and Spain remain distinctively low with respect to the amount of training given. Finland was particularly high in 1996, but only differed from Germany at a marginal level of significance in 2001. Given its very high ranking in terms of the initial training scores, it is clear that the control variables are accounting for a good deal of its distinctiveness. Further analysis showed that it retained significantly higher levels of training than other countries when the great majority of the control variables are introduced; the crucial variable that reduces the significance of the results is the use of advanced technology. A good deal of the training provided in Finland appears to be integrally linked to the upgrading of technologies, while training in Denmark and Sweden is more independent of this.

**Table 5.8 Country and Year Effects on Employer Training (Ordered Logits)**

|               | <b>Model 1</b>      |      | <b>Model 2</b>      |      | <b>Models 3</b>                   |      |
|---------------|---------------------|------|---------------------|------|-----------------------------------|------|
|               | <b>1996 Effects</b> |      | <b>2001 Effects</b> |      | <b>Year Change Within Country</b> |      |
| Austria       | 0.04                | n.s. | -0.21               | (*)  | 0.02                              | n.s. |
| Belgium       | -0.58               | ***  | -0.94               | ***  | -0.02                             | n.s. |
| Denmark       | 0.68                | ***  | 0.80                | ***  | 0.33                              | **   |
| Finland       | 0.65                | ***  | 0.19                | (*)  | -0.18                             | n.s. |
| France        | -0.38               | ***  | -0.78               | ***  | -0.08                             | n.s. |
| Germany       | ref.                |      | ref.                |      | 0.32                              | **   |
| Great Britain | 0.03                | n.s. | -0.16               | n.s. | 0.02                              | n.s. |
| Greece        | -0.76               | ***  | -1.41               | ***  | -0.33                             | n.s. |
| Ireland       | -0.17               | n.s. | -0.60               | ***  | -0.15                             | n.s. |
| Italy         | -0.98               | ***  | -0.57               | ***  | 0.70                              | ***  |
| Luxembourg    | -0.50               | **   | -0.47               | ***  | 0.38                              | (*)  |
| Netherlands   | 0.10                | n.s. | -0.14               | n.s. | -0.02                             | n.s. |
| Portugal      | -0.56               | ***  | -1.30               | ***  | -0.41                             | (*)  |
| Spain         | -0.41               | **   | -1.10               | ***  | -0.51                             | (*)  |
| Sweden        | 0.66                | ***  | 0.33                | **   | -0.24                             | (*)  |
| N             | 6201                |      | 6080                |      |                                   |      |
| Chi2 (DF)     | 1600.96 (43)        |      | 1709.39 (43)        |      |                                   |      |

Note 1: The dependent variable distinguishes four training durations: none, less than one week, 1 week to 2 months, 3 months or more. Models 1 and 2 present the country coefficients relative to Germany from models controlling for sex, age, class, use of new technology, skill change and establishment size length of service and industry. Models 3 present the year coefficients from a series of ordered logit regressions carried out for each country separately, with the same controls.

Note 2: \* =  $P < 0.05$ , \*\* =  $P < 0.01$ , \*\*\* =  $P < 0.001$

Finally, the last set of model results presented in Table 5.8 show whether or not there had been a significant change between 1996 and 2001 in the amount of training given within each country, with structural factors held constant. It is clear that in the majority of countries there is no evidence of an improvement in training provision. The exceptions are Denmark, Germany and Italy. It must be remembered that the improvement in Denmark was from a position of already exceptionally high training provision, whereas that from Italy was from a very low starting point.

### *Job Security and Unemployment Experience*

The aspect of job quality that has been of greatest concern in recent years is that of job security. Some scenarios of the changing structure of the workforce suggest that it is becoming increasingly polarized between a secure and an insecure segment of the workforce, with the lower skilled in particular trapped in an employment sector where they were likely to experience alternate spells of short-term employment and unemployment. An alternative vision is of a polarisation of security that crosscuts the skill hierarchy, dividing those with standard and those with non-standard employment contracts. The common feature of both arguments is the view that the proportion of employees in insecure jobs is rising in most capitalist economies.

As a result an increasing proportion of the workforce is thought to be at risk of labour market marginalisation, both because of an increased probability of becoming unemployed and because of the greater difficulty of re-entering the decreasing core of stable long-term jobs.

There are diverse measures of job insecurity. The measure that has been used most frequently as evidence of rising insecurity is a question that simply asks people to what extent they feel their job is secure. However, the meaning of this is not unambiguous. The assumption is that respondents equate the term "job" with 'employment'. But in principle it is possible that the term is used with wider reference and may be taken as the particular "post" that a person occupies within an organisation. Statements about insecurity may be referring to the risk of demotion as well as the risk of dismissal and redundancy. In this survey, in addition to the standard indicator, two other measures have been used to assess different dimensions of insecurity. The first is a measure of security from dismissal, the second is the extent of people's experience of unemployment in the recent past.

### *Job Security*

Taking first the conventional survey measure of job insecurity, people were asked how true it was that "My current job is secure", with four potential responses ranging from "very true" to "not at all true". The basic distributions are given in Table 5.9.

Although in earlier time comparisons, this measure gave a picture of rising job insecurity, it is clear that this was no longer the case for the period 1996 to 2001. The proportion of employees in 2001 reporting that it was "very" or "quite true" that their job was secure was virtually identical to that in 1996. Moreover, there was a slight decline, from 14.3% in 1996 to 12.6% in 2001, in the proportion most strongly concerned about job insecurity (i.e. reporting it was "not at all true" that their job was secure). In order to take account of all categories of response, a job security score has been constructed, ranging from 1 for "not at all true" to 4 "for very true". As can be seen that last column of Table 5.9, this overall measure remained very similar over the two years, with a small but non-significant rise in the security score.

It is conceivable that the focus on employees conceals a rise of job insecurity concentrated among the self-employed. However, as can be seen in Table 5.10, this is not the case. Rather, the job security of the self-employed rose over the period. While in 1996 the self-employed were on average less secure than employees, in 2001 their security score was slightly higher. While the difference between the self-employed and employed was statistically significant in 1996, this was no longer the case in 2001. Taking all those in work, there is a small rise in the security score between 1996 and 2001, but the difference does not reach statistical significance.

**Table 5.9 Job Security among Employees 1996-2001**

| <b>My job is secure</b> | <b>Not at all true</b> | <b>A little true</b> | <b>Quite true</b> | <b>Very true</b> | <b>% very+quite</b> | <b>Overall Security Score</b> |
|-------------------------|------------------------|----------------------|-------------------|------------------|---------------------|-------------------------------|
| <b>Employees</b>        |                        |                      |                   |                  |                     |                               |
| 1996                    | 14.3                   | 23.2                 | 34.2              | 28.3             | 62.5                | 2.77                          |
| 2001                    | 12.6                   | 24.2                 | 34.8              | 28.4             | 63.2                | 2.79                          |
| <b>Men</b>              |                        |                      |                   |                  |                     |                               |
| 1996                    | 14.5                   | 22.8                 | 33.8              | 28.9             | 62.7                | 2.77                          |
| 2001                    | 12.7                   | 23.6                 | 34.4              | 29.3             | 63.7                | 2.80                          |
| <b>Women</b>            |                        |                      |                   |                  |                     |                               |
| 1996                    | 14.0                   | 23.8                 | 34.7              | 27.5             | 62.2                | 2.76                          |
| 2001                    | 12.5                   | 25.1                 | 35.2              | 27.2             | 62.4                | 2.77                          |

**Table 5.10 Job Security among the Self-Employed and All in Work**

|                      | <b>Not at all true</b> | <b>A little true</b> | <b>Quite true</b> | <b>Very true</b> | <b>% very+quite</b> | <b>Overall Security Score</b> |
|----------------------|------------------------|----------------------|-------------------|------------------|---------------------|-------------------------------|
| <b>Self-Employed</b> |                        |                      |                   |                  |                     |                               |
| 1996                 | 20.4                   | 21.8                 | 27.0              | 30.9             | 57.9                | 2.68                          |
| 2001                 | 21.7                   | 14.7                 | 30.3              | 33.3             | 63.6                | 2.75                          |
| <b>All in Work</b>   |                        |                      |                   |                  |                     |                               |
| 1996                 | 15.2                   | 23.0                 | 33.1              | 28.7             | 61.8                | 2.75                          |
| 2001                 | 14.1                   | 22.6                 | 34.0              | 29.2             | 63.2                | 2.78                          |

Note: Ns (weighted) for the self-employed were 1174 in 1996, 1355 in 2001; Ns for all in work were 7804 in 1996, 8265 in 2001.

This aggregate stability of job security scores conceals rather different trends among occupational classes. As can be seen in Table 5.11, there was a decline between 1996 and 2001 in the security scores of managers and of plant and machine operatives. In contrast there was an improvement in the security of professionals and technicians. These changes led to rather different patterns of relative class security in the two years (Table 5.12). In 1996, there was a fairly clear gradient, with security declining relative to that of managers with each class level. But in 2001, professionals were significantly more secure than managers. Similarly there was no longer any clear difference in job security between managers on the one hand and technical and clerical employees on the other. But service and sales, craft, machine and plant operatives and elementary employees still had distinctively lower security levels.

The year/class interactions in Model 3 of Table 5.12 show that while professionals and those in the intermediate classes had significantly improved their position relative to managers over the period, there had been no significant improvement in the position of either plant and machine operatives or those in elementary occupations.

**Table 5.11 Job Security Scores by Class**

| <b>Job Security Index (Secure)</b> | <b>1996</b> | <b>2001</b> | <b>2001-1996</b> |
|------------------------------------|-------------|-------------|------------------|
| Legislators/Managers               | 3.07        | 2.96        | -0.11            |
| Professionals                      | 2.95        | 3.16        | 0.21             |
| Technicians/ Assoc Profs           | 2.83        | 2.92        | 0.09             |
| Clerical                           | 2.86        | 2.83        | -0.03            |
| Service & Sales                    | 2.62        | 2.69        | 0.07             |
| Craft & Related                    | 2.63        | 2.64        | 0.01             |
| Plant & Machine Ops                | 2.67        | 2.42        | -0.25            |
| Elementary Occupations             | 2.56        | 2.51        | -0.05            |

Note: Higher scores indicate greater security.

**Table 5.12 Occupational Class Effects on Job Security (Ordered Logits)**

| Employees                                           | Model 1<br>1996 |      | Model 2<br>2001 |      | Model 3<br>Interacts |      |
|-----------------------------------------------------|-----------------|------|-----------------|------|----------------------|------|
| Legislators/Managers<br>Professionals &<br>Managers | ref.            |      | ref.            |      | ref.                 |      |
| Technicians/ Assoc Profs                            | -0.17           | n.s. | 0.43            | ***  | 0.64                 | ***  |
| Clerical                                            | -0.31           | **   | -0.04           | n.s. | 0.43                 | **   |
| Service & Sales                                     | -0.32           | **   | -0.13           | n.s. | 0.21                 | n.s. |
| Craft & Related                                     | -0.77           | ***  | -0.41           | **   | 0.40                 | **   |
| Plant & Machine Ops                                 | -0.74           | ***  | -0.59           | ***  | 0.30                 | (*)  |
| Elementary Occupations                              | -0.71           | ***  | -0.99           | ***  | -0.15                | n.s. |
|                                                     | -0.86           | ***  | -0.77           | ***  | 0.18                 | n.s. |
| Chi2 (DF)                                           | 321.63 (28)     |      | 509.17 (28)     |      | 772.33 (37)          |      |
| Sig                                                 | ***             |      | ***             |      | ***                  |      |
| N                                                   | 6364            |      | 6253            |      | 12617                |      |

Note 1: Ordered Logit Analyses. Model 1 and 2 give Class effects relative to managers, controlling for Sex, Age and Country, for each year separately. Model 3 gives Class\*Year Interactions with pooled data, controlling for Sex, Age and Country

Note 2: \* = P < 0.05, \*\* = P < 0.01, \*\*\* = P < 0.001

### *Risk of Individual Dismissal*

If the job security measure, discussed in the last section, is the most general indicator of different aspects of security, the extent to which employees are institutionally protected from dismissal has played a particularly important part in the discussion of the increased risks related to the deregulation of employment. The survey included two questions designed to capture vulnerability to dismissal. The first asked "How long do you think it would be before a person doing your sort of job would be dismissed in your organisation if they persistently arrived late?" There were six response categories: within a week, within a month, within six months, within a year, within more than a year and never. The second question used exactly the same format, but was posed in relation to a situation where a person "persistently did not work hard".

Did security from dismissal decline over the period 1996 to 2001, as is assumed by arguments focusing on the declining regulation of labour markets in the European Union? The overall distributions for the two years are given in Table 5.13.

**Table 5.13 Dismissal Times for Lateness and Poor Work Performance (Employees)**

| <b>FOR LATENESS</b>              |                    |                     |                   |                |           |
|----------------------------------|--------------------|---------------------|-------------------|----------------|-----------|
|                                  | <b>&lt;1 month</b> | <b>&lt;6 months</b> | <b>&lt;1 year</b> | <b>1 year+</b> | <b>DK</b> |
| <b>All</b>                       |                    |                     |                   |                |           |
| 1996                             | 38.2               | 17.7                | 6.2               | 17.6           | 20.3      |
| 2001                             | 37.4               | 16.9                | 4.7               | 16.7           | 24.2      |
| <b>Men</b>                       |                    |                     |                   |                |           |
| 1996                             | 38.4               | 17.9                | 6.3               | 16.8           | 20.6      |
| 2001                             | 37.8               | 17.6                | 4.9               | 18.1           | 21.5      |
| <b>Women</b>                     |                    |                     |                   |                |           |
| 1996                             | 37.9               | 17.5                | 6.2               | 18.6           | 19.8      |
| 2001                             | 36.9               | 16.0                | 4.5               | 14.8           | 27.8      |
| <b>FOR DEFICIENT WORK EFFORT</b> |                    |                     |                   |                |           |
|                                  | <b>&lt;1 month</b> | <b>&lt;6 months</b> | <b>&lt;1 year</b> | <b>1 year+</b> | <b>DK</b> |
| <b>All</b>                       |                    |                     |                   |                |           |
| 1996                             | 31.2               | 20.2                | 7.5               | 20.0           | 21.2      |
| 2001                             | 30.3               | 18.6                | 7.1               | 18.8           | 25.2      |
| <b>Men</b>                       |                    |                     |                   |                |           |
| 1996                             | 31.9               | 19.6                | 8.0               | 19.3           | 21.1      |
| 2001                             | 31.2               | 19.1                | 7.2               | 21.0           | 21.5      |
| <b>Women</b>                     |                    |                     |                   |                |           |
| 1996                             | 30.2               | 20.9                | 6.7               | 20.9           | 21.3      |
| 2001                             | 29.0               | 17.9                | 6.9               | 15.8           | 30.3      |

As a rough approximation, dismissal within less than a month can be taken as an indicator of high vulnerability and dismissal after a year or more as an indicator of high security. The distributions are broadly similar for the two questions, although vulnerability to dismissal is somewhat greater in the event of persistent lateness than of deficiencies of work effort. In both cases, there is little evidence of change over time. In 1996, 38% of employees reported that they were at risk of dismissal within a month, while in 2001 the figure was 37%. With respect to lack of work effort, the comparable proportions were 31% and 30% respectively. A rather smaller proportion of people were in jobs with high security (dismissal taking a year or more), but there was again little evidence of significant change over the years. For lateness the proportions were 18% in 1996 and 17% in 2001; for lack of work effort, 20% and 19% respectively. A significant proportion of people had little idea of how well they were protected. In both years these were quite evenly spread in terms of occupational position. Men and women had a similar likelihood of being in highly vulnerable jobs in both years. However, the proportion of men in very secure jobs remained stable over time, while that of women declined.

**Table 5.14 Risk of Dismissal in < 1 Month by Occupational Class**

|                          | Lateness |      |           | Lack of Work Effort |      |           |
|--------------------------|----------|------|-----------|---------------------|------|-----------|
|                          | 1996     | 2001 | 2001-1996 | 1996                | 2001 | 2001-1996 |
| Legislators/Managers     | 24.2     | 38.9 | 14.7      | 20.0                | 28.7 | 8.7       |
| Professionals            | 17.3     | 20.3 | 3.0       | 21.2                | 15.1 | -6.1      |
| Technicians/ Assoc Profs | 30.3     | 28.8 | -1.5      | 21.1                | 22.5 | 1.4       |
| Clerical                 | 34.1     | 33.9 | -0.2      | 29.9                | 26.8 | -3.1      |
| Service & Sales          | 46.8     | 46.9 | 0.1       | 39.6                | 37.3 | -2.3      |
| Craft & Related          | 48.2     | 43.7 | -4.5      | 37.7                | 37.8 | 0.1       |
| Plant & Machine Ops      | 53.0     | 51.0 | -2.0      | 36.0                | 39.6 | 3.6       |
| Elementary Occupations   | 46.3     | 42.1 | -4.2      | 41.7                | 38.7 | -3.0      |

The overall figures again conceal very sharp differences for employees in different occupational classes (Table 5.14). In both 1996 and 2001, less than a quarter of professionals were at risk of being dismissed within a month for lateness, whereas this was the case for approximately half of those in service and sales, craft and related, plant and machine operatives and in elementary occupations. With respect to deficient work effort only 21% of professionals were at risk of rapid dismissal in 1996 and the proportion was even smaller (13%) in 2001. The comparable proportions for those in elementary occupations were 42% and 41% respectively. In general there was little change over time for most occupational groups. The most vulnerable groups remained as insecure as in 1996. The exceptions were that, on both measures, the security of managers declined over the years on both measures, while that of professionals rose with respect to deficient work effort.

Table 5.15 shows relative class risks of dismissal, using an averaged index that takes account of the wider set of responses<sup>17</sup>. The ordered logit analyses control for age, sex, country, size of establishment and industry. The first two models show the class risks relative to managers in each year separately, while the third model shows the coefficients for the change in class risks between the two years. Professionals and the intermediate classes significantly increased their security relative to managers between the years (although this was partly due to the deterioration in the position of managers rather than any improvement in their own position). However, there was no relative improvement in the position of machine operatives and those in the least skilled jobs (elementary occupations).

<sup>17</sup> The codes of the two measures were grouped into four categories: within a month, within six months, within a year, a year or more, 'Don't know' responses omitted. The risk of dismissal index is the average of the two measures.

**Table 5.15 Class Effects on Risk of Dismissal (Employees)**

|                          | <b>Model 1</b>                 |      | <b>Model 2</b>                 |      | <b>Model 3</b>                 |      |
|--------------------------|--------------------------------|------|--------------------------------|------|--------------------------------|------|
|                          | <b>1996 Class Coefficients</b> |      | <b>2001 Class Coefficients</b> |      | <b>Class/Year Interactions</b> |      |
| Legislators/Managers     | ref.                           |      | ref.                           |      | ref.                           |      |
| Professionals & Managers | 0.39                           | **   | 0.94                           | ***  | 0.53                           | **   |
| Technicians/ Assoc Profs | 0.01                           | n.s. | 0.45                           | ***  | 0.34                           | *    |
| Clerical                 | -0.40                          | ***  | 0.24                           | (*)  | 0.39                           | *    |
| Service & Sales          | -0.86                          | ***  | -0.31                          | *    | 0.34                           | *    |
| Craft & Related          | -0.61                          | ***  | 0.02                           | n.s. | 0.61                           | ***  |
| Plant & Machine Ops      | -0.85                          | ***  | -0.53                          | ***  | 0.17                           | n.s. |
| Elementary Occupations   | -0.73                          | ***  | -0.29                          | *    | 0.29                           | n.s. |
| Chi2 (DF)                | 1397.89 (40)                   |      | 987.46 (40)                    |      | 172.62 (49)                    |      |
| Sig                      | ***                            |      | ***                            |      | ***                            |      |
| N                        | 4775                           |      | 4462                           |      | 9237                           |      |

Note 1: Ordered Logit Analyses. Model 1 and 2 give Class effects, controlling for sex, age and country, size of establishment and industry for each year separately. Model 3 gives Class\*Year Interactions with pooled data, with same controls.

Note 2: \* = P < 0.05, \*\* = P < 0.01, \*\*\* = P < 0.001

Vulnerability to individual dismissal also depended on the country a person worked in. Models 1 and 2 in Table 5.16 show the risks relative to Germany. The analyses include controls for individual characteristics (sex, age and length of employment), and a range of work characteristics (occupational class, use of new technology, skill change, establishment size and industry). The Northern countries (Finland and Sweden and to a lesser extent Denmark) stand out in both years as having relatively high levels of protection. But this was also the case for the Netherlands and for Italy. In contrast, Spain has a distinctively low level of protection, consistent with its extensive use of temporary employment contracts. The third analysis shown in the Table (Models 3) gives the year change coefficient estimated separately for each country with the same set of controls. There was no change between 1996 and 2001 in vulnerability to dismissal in the majority of countries, but it did increase in Belgium, Greece, Ireland and Italy.

**Table 5.16 Country Effects on Risk of Dismissal (Employees)**

| Employees     | Models 1     |     | Model 2      |      | Models 3                    |      |
|---------------|--------------|-----|--------------|------|-----------------------------|------|
|               | 1996 Effects |     | 2001 Effects |      | Year Changes Within Country |      |
| Austria       | 0.18         |     | -0.04        |      | -0.30                       | (*)  |
| Belgium       | 0.44         | **  | -0.11        | n.s. | -0.55                       | **   |
| Denmark       | 0.88         | *** | 0.71         | ***  | -0.05                       | n.s. |
| Finland       | 1.17         | *** | 0.77         | ***  | -0.31                       | (*)  |
| France        | 0.15         |     | 0.19         | n.s. | 0.11                        | n.s. |
| Germany       | ref.         |     | ref.         |      | 0.05                        | n.s. |
| Great Britain | 0.14         |     | 0.07         |      | -0.16                       | n.s. |
| Greece        | 0.18         |     | -0.20        | n.s. | -0.45                       | *    |
| Ireland       | 0.29         | *   | -0.43        | **   | -0.60                       | **   |
| N. Ireland    | 0.68         |     | 0.09         |      | -0.98                       | n.s. |
| Italy         | 1.45         | *** | 0.68         | ***  | -0.47                       | *    |
| Luxembourg    | 0.31         | (*) | 0.70         | ***  | 0.29                        | n.s. |
| Netherlands   | 1.07         | *** | 0.69         | ***  | -0.13                       | n.s. |
| Portugal      | 0.51         | *** | 0.73         | ***  | -0.03                       | n.s. |
| Spain         | -0.64        | *** | -0.34        | *    | 0.30                        | n.s. |
| Sweden        | 1.74         | *** | 1.39         | ***  | -0.13                       | n.s. |
| N             | 4660         |     | 4369         |      |                             |      |
| Chi2 (DF)     | 1428.01 (43) |     | 1226.12 (43) |      |                             |      |
| Sig           | ***          |     | ***          |      |                             |      |

Note 1: Ordered Logit Analyses. Models 1 and 2 present the country coefficients relative to Germany from models controlling for sex, age, class, use of new technology, skill change and establishment size length of service and industry. Models 3 present the year coefficients from a series of ordered logit regressions carried out for each country separately.

Note 2: \* = P < 0.05, \*\* = P < 0.01, \*\*\* = P < 0.001

### *Experience of Unemployment*

The final measure of insecurity is the actual experience that an employee had had of unemployment in the previous five years. Whereas the risk of dismissal is likely to reflect primarily the institutional constraints on management, unemployment experience is also likely to be affected by the extent of economic restructuring and the business cycle. Table 5.17 shows the proportions of people in each year with no experience of unemployment, one experience or more than one. In both years the great majority of employees had not experienced unemployment. But it can be seen that between 1996 and 2001 there was a slight (but statistically significant) decline in the proportion of employees that had been unemployed (from 19% in 1996 to 16% in 2001). The main trends were identical for men and women.

**Table 5.17 Percentage with Experience of Unemployment in Last 5 Years (Employees)**

|              | <b>Never</b> | <b>Once</b> | <b>1+</b> |
|--------------|--------------|-------------|-----------|
| <b>All</b>   |              |             |           |
| 1996         | 80.8         | 12.6        | 6.6       |
| 2001         | 83.8         | 10.7        | 5.5       |
| <b>Men</b>   |              |             |           |
| 1996         | 81.7         | 12.3        | 6.0       |
| 2001         | 84.2         | 10.2        | 5.6       |
| <b>Women</b> |              |             |           |
| 1996         | 79.7         | 13.0        | 7.3       |
| 2001         | 83.3         | 11.3        | 5.4       |

The differences between average year frequencies are dwarfed by the major differences in class risks of unemployment (Table 5.18). In 1996, whereas only 6% of managers and 17% of professionals had been unemployed in the previous five years, the proportion rose to 22% of craft and related workers, 24% of plant and machine operatives and 29% of those in elementary occupations. Recent experience of unemployment was lower in 2001 for most occupational classes. But, in contrast to the main trend, it rose among managers and clerical employees.

**Table 5.18 Proportion with Experience of Unemployment in last five years by Occupational Class.**

|                          | 1996 | 2001 | 2001-1996 |
|--------------------------|------|------|-----------|
| Legislators/Managers     | 5.5  | 9.6  | 4.1       |
| Professionals            | 16.9 | 10.0 | -6.9      |
| Technicians/ Assoc Profs | 15.7 | 13.2 | -2.5      |
| Clerical                 | 14.7 | 16.1 | 1.4       |
| Service & Sales          | 19.0 | 17.1 | -1.9      |
| Craft & Related          | 22.2 | 19.6 | -2.6      |
| Plant & Machine Ops      | 24.1 | 20.0 | -4.1      |
| Elementary Occupations   | 29.1 | 24.2 | -4.9      |

The result of these changes was some reduction in unemployment differentials between managers and those in other classes. As can be seen in Table 5.19, once sex, age and country had been controlled, in 1996 all classes had higher risks of unemployment experience than managers. In 2001, however, there was no significant difference between managers, professionals and technicians. Craft and related workers, plant and machine operatives and those in elementary occupations still had substantially higher risks of unemployment. However, it can be seen from Model 3, which gives the class/year change effects, that there had been a significant reduction over the period in differentials even for employees in these classes.

**Table 5.19 Class Effects on Unemployment Risks (Logit Coefficients)**

|                          | Model 1     |     | Model 2     |     | Model 3               |     |
|--------------------------|-------------|-----|-------------|-----|-----------------------|-----|
|                          | 1996        |     | 2001        |     | Class /Year Interacts |     |
| Legislators/Managers     | ref.        |     | ref.        |     | ref.                  |     |
| Professionals & Managers | 1.11        | *** | -0.02       |     | -1.20                 | *** |
| Technicians/ Assoc Profs | 1.02        | *** | 0.20        |     | -0.92                 | **  |
| Clerical                 | 0.89        | *** | 0.43        | *   | -0.55                 | (*) |
| Service & Sales          | 1.22        | *** | 0.42        | *   | -0.88                 | **  |
| Craft & Related          | 1.61        | *** | 0.71        | *** | -1.58                 | *** |
| Plant & Machine Ops      | 1.81        | *** | 0.81        | *** | -1.00                 | **  |
| Elementary Occupations   | 1.90        | *** | 1.01        | *** | -0.94                 | **  |
| Chi2 (DF)                | 612.37 (28) |     | 253.51 (28) |     | 773.83 (37)           |     |
| Sig                      | ***         |     | ***         |     | ***                   |     |
| N                        | 6184        |     | 6174        |     | 12358                 |     |

Note 1: Logistic Regression Analyses. Model 1 and 2 give Class effects, controlling for Sex, Age and Country, for each year separately. Model 3 gives Class\*Year Interactions with pooled data, controlling for Sex, Age and Country

Note 2: \* = P < 0.05, \*\* = P < 0.01, \*\*\* = P < 0.001

Finally, there were again marked country differences in security risks (Table 5.20). In 1996 the proportion of employees with an experience of unemployment in the previous five years ranged from just over 30% in Finland and Spain to 6% in Luxembourg and 12% in Austria. In 2001, it ranged from 32% in Greece to 2% in Luxembourg. Table 29 shows the country differences relative to Germany with controls for individual and work situation characteristics. In 1996 previous unemployment experience was highest in Finland, France, Belgium, Sweden and Spain and it was lowest in Luxembourg. In 2001 it was particularly high in Greece and low in Luxembourg and the Netherlands.

In the majority of countries the trend had been for a decrease in the proportion of employees with recent unemployment experience. This was particularly marked in France, the Netherlands and Spain. But in Greece (and to a much smaller extent in Portugal, Ireland and Austria) there was an inverse trend of rising unemployment risks. However, these changes (Models 3, Table 5.21) were not statistically significant in the majority of countries once account was taken of compositional factors. But there were significant reductions in unemployment experience in Belgium, Finland, France, the Netherlands and Sweden. Greece was the only country that saw a significant rise over the period.

In broad terms this clearly reflected marked improvement in the labour market conditions over the period. As was seen in Chapter 1 (Table 1.1) unemployment rates fell in all countries, with the possible exception of Greece, which may have seen an increase (although the figures for Greece must be treated with caution as they are not fully comparable). Comparing countries, there is clear association between the extent of reduction of unemployment and the decline in unemployment experiences (correlation of 0.53,  $p=0.04$ ). But the frequency of individual experiences of unemployment can be a consequence of factors other than the unemployment rate (such as employer staffing policies) and there is no simple pattern of correspondence between the decline in the unemployment rate in a particular country and the decline in previous unemployment experience. The particularly marked reduction in the level of unemployment in Finland and Spain corresponds closely to the pattern at the level of individual experiences, but the considerable reduction of unemployment in Ireland was not accompanied by a corresponding reduction in unemployment experience. Inversely, the significant decline in the proportion of people with a previous experience of unemployment in France, was not accompanied by a particularly distinctive decline in unemployment rates.

**Table 5.20 Proportion with an Experience of Unemployment in Last Five Years by Country (Employees)**

|               | <b>1996</b> | <b>2001</b> | <b>2001-1996</b> |
|---------------|-------------|-------------|------------------|
| Austria       | 11.9        | 13.9        | 2.0              |
| Belgium       | 19.4        | 13.9        | -5.5             |
| Denmark       | 25.9        | 19.6        | -6.3             |
| Finland       | 31.6        | 19.3        | -12.3            |
| France        | 26.2        | 15.8        | -10.4            |
| Germany       | 14.8        | 16.3        | 1.5              |
| Great Britain | 18.4        | 16.3        | -2.1             |
| Greece        | 14.9        | 31.8        | 16.9             |
| Ireland       | 17.2        | 19.6        | 2.4              |
| Italy         | 14.1        | 13.7        | -0.4             |
| Luxembourg    | 6.4         | 2.3         | -4.1             |
| Netherlands   | 22.1        | 9.2         | -12.9            |
| Portugal      | 13.8        | 15.4        | 1.6              |
| Spain         | 31.2        | 20.7        | -10.5            |
| Sweden        | 22.4        | 19.2        | -3.2             |

**Table 5.21 Country Effects on Unemployment Experience in Last Five Years (Employees)**

|               | Models 1     |      | Model 2      |      | Models 3                   |      |
|---------------|--------------|------|--------------|------|----------------------------|------|
|               | 1996 Effects |      | 2001 Effects |      | Within Country Year Change |      |
| Austria       | 0.15         | n.s. | -0.07        | n.s. | -0.14                      | n.s. |
| Belgium       | 0.70         | **   | 0.06         | n.s. | -0.60                      | *    |
| Denmark       | 0.44         | *    | 0.32         | (*)  | -0.05                      | n.s. |
| Finland       | 1.22         | ***  | 0.20         | *    | -1.21                      | ***  |
| France        | 0.90         | ***  | 0.04         | n.s. | -0.85                      | ***  |
| Germany       |              |      |              |      | 0.07                       | n.s. |
| Great Britain | 0.17         | n.s. | -0.01        | n.s. | -0.11                      | n.s. |
| Greece        | -0.31        | n.s. | 0.83         | ***  | 1.10                       | ***  |
| Ireland       | 0.30         | n.s. | 0.08         | n.s. | -0.29                      | n.s. |
| Italy         | 0.10         | n.s. | 0.00         | n.s. | 0.31                       | n.s. |
| Luxembourg    | -1.08        | **   | -2.07        | ***  | -0.72                      | n.s. |
| Netherlands   | 0.49         | *    | -0.75        | ***  | -1.10                      | ***  |
| Portugal      | -0.16        | n.s. | -0.19        | n.s. | -0.28                      | n.s. |
| Spain         | 0.58         | **   | 0.29         | n.s. | -0.35                      | n.s. |
| Sweden        | 0.64         | ***  | 0.26         | n.s. | -0.50                      | *    |
| N             | 6035         |      | 6006         |      |                            |      |
| Chi2 (DF)     | 2210.66 (43) |      | 1431.15 (43) |      |                            |      |
| Sig           | ***          |      | ***          |      |                            |      |

Note 1: Ordered Logit Analyses. Models 1 and 2 present the country coefficients relative to Germany from models controlling for sex, age, class, use of new technology, skill change and establishment size length of service and industry. Models 3 present the year coefficients from a series of ordered logit regressions carried out for each country separately.

Note 2: \* = P < 0.05, \*\* = P < 0.01, \*\*\* = P < 0.001

## Conclusions

From the point of view of a concern with the risks of social exclusion, the extent to which work offers opportunities for updating and acquiring new work skills is of central importance. It is necessary if people's skills are to keep pace with the changing technological environment and remain valuable on the labour market in the event of the downsizing or closure of their current organisations. But, although employees were more likely to have been upskilled in recent years than deskilled, the general trend was one of a reduced frequency of in-career skill upgrading compared to the mid-1990s. Most worryingly, the vulnerability of the group most at risk – the low-skilled – particularly increased over the period, with both an absolute and relative deterioration in their position.

This picture was reinforced by the analysis of developments with respect to employer training. While, overall, employers were training a somewhat larger proportion of their employees in 2001 than in 1996, the low-skilled had been largely excluded from this development. Training opportunities remained highly stratified by occupational class. There was no change in the very low rates of training for the low-skilled that prevailed in 1996, and in relative terms their position had grown worse.

But while there are grounds for thinking that the longer-term vulnerability of the low-skilled may have increased, in the shorter-term there was no evidence of a deterioration in job security. There had been no change between 1996 and 2001 in the extent to which people perceived their jobs as secure or insecure, and similarly no change in perceived vulnerability to dismissal for inadequate work performance (although the non-skilled remained very much less secure on both counts than other categories of employee). Taking the experience of unemployment, people in work were less likely to have been unemployed in the recent past and the markedly disadvantaged position of the low-skilled in this respect had improved somewhat. It is likely that the major factor accounting for this was the general improvement in the state of the EU economies over this period and the consequent tightening of labour markets. But to the extent that the growth in shorter-term security is dependant on the conjuncture of the labour market, it is clearly an aspect of the quality of work that may be highly vulnerable to renewed deterioration given the volatility of the economic performance of the past decade.

## CHAPTER 6

### SOCIAL PRECARITY AND PERSONAL INTEGRATION

The previous chapters have traced the changes over time in the precariousness of people's living and work conditions. But to what extent do such factors affect subjective social integration? We take two key dimensions of subjective social integration. The first is people's personal sense of integration. If people are socially integrated, this should be reflected in relatively high levels of satisfaction with their lives and low levels of psychological distress. The second is their satisfaction with the broader society in which they live, in particular with its distributional processes and with the functioning of its political institutions. The present chapter considers the change over time in personal integration and examines some of the factors that affected this in 2001. It starts with an examination of their commitment to employment, their job satisfaction and the stress they experience from work. It then continues with a broader analysis of the factors that affect life satisfaction and psychological well-being. The next chapter turns to people's perceptions of the wider society.

#### *Employment Precarity, Job Satisfaction and Work Stress*

##### *Employment Commitment*

The relationship between employment precarity and subjective well-being is likely to depend in part on the centrality of employment in people's lives and the importance they attach to different aspects of employment. If having a job becomes less central to people's life values or if they become less demanding about the nature of the characteristics of jobs, then changes in the quality of employment are likely to have less impact on personal satisfaction. At the same time, commitment to employment is a central (and increasingly important) normative expectation in Western societies and people's acceptance of it when they are of working age is frequently taken as an indicator of their personal integration.

The survey contained a commonly used measure of non-financial employment commitment. This asked people: "If you were to get enough money to live as comfortably as you would like for the rest of your life, would you continue to work, not necessarily in your present job, or would you stop working?". Table 6.1 compares the results for 1996 and 2001.

It is clear from the figures for both years that employment motivation is problematic in the European workforce. Only about half of the overall workforce would wish to continue working if there were no financial necessity. The proportions are particularly low among employees and they are lower among male than among female employees. But above all, it should be noted that employment commitment falls to a very low point among those in the least skilled occupations. For instance, in 2001, while 51% of all employees would wish to continue in paid work even if there were no financial necessity, this was the case for only 40% of employees in elementary occupations. In both years a higher proportion of those in elementary occupations would withdraw from employment than continue to work.

**Table 6.1 Non-financial Employment Commitment**

| <b>Proportion which would:</b>          | <b>Continue to work</b> | <b>Stop Working</b> | <b>Don't Know</b> |
|-----------------------------------------|-------------------------|---------------------|-------------------|
| <b>All in work</b>                      |                         |                     |                   |
| 1996                                    | 48.0                    | 44.2                | 7.8               |
| 2001                                    | 52.2                    | 38.3                | 9.5               |
| <b>Self-Employed</b>                    |                         |                     |                   |
| 1996                                    | 54.6                    | 37.8                | 7.6               |
| 2001                                    | 57.7                    | 32.1                | 10.3              |
| <b>Employed</b>                         |                         |                     |                   |
| 1996                                    | 46.8                    | 45.3                | 7.9               |
| 2001                                    | 51.1                    | 39.5                | 9.4               |
| <b>Employed Men</b>                     |                         |                     |                   |
| 1996                                    | 46.3                    | 43.9                | 9.7               |
| 2001                                    | 49.1                    | 42.1                | 8.8               |
| <b>Employed Women</b>                   |                         |                     |                   |
| 1996                                    | 47.4                    | 47.0                | 5.6               |
| 2001                                    | 53.9                    | 35.9                | 10.2              |
| <b>Employees Elementary Occupations</b> |                         |                     |                   |
| 1996                                    | 35.5                    | 55.3                | 9.2               |
| 2001                                    | 40.5                    | 49.3                | 10.3              |

There is however a positive side to the picture. Despite frequent predictions about the decline of the work ethic, the period between 1996 and 2001 saw a small but statistically significant ( $p < 0.001$ ) strengthening of people's attachment to the labour market. This was the case not only for the self-employed, but also for the employed. It was also true for both male and female employees and for those in low-skilled occupations.

What accounts for the very sharp class gradient in employment motivation? It has been noted in chapters 4 and 5 that those in elementary occupations were in substantially lower quality jobs on all of the dimensions of job quality. It seems plausible that where people experience work as monotonous, lack control over the work process, experience little in the way of skill improvement or training and experience higher levels of insecurity, they will come to develop a rather lower level of attachment to employment. This is confirmed by Table 6.2, which takes the pooled data for the two surveys. The first column of the table presents the class coefficients, with controls just for age, sex, and country. It shows that, while professional and technical employees have exceptionally high levels of commitment, both craft workers and those in elementary occupations have sharply lower levels of employment commitment.

The second column shows the coefficients once controls have been introduced for the different quality of work factors. This has little effect on the level of commitment for professionals and technicians. But the quality of work accounts for the entire negative effect for commitment among those in the craft and elementary occupational groups. By far the strongest factor is the quality of the work task, although both the experience of skill improvement and job security also make a contribution.

**Table 6.2 Class Effects on Employment Commitment (Employees)**

|                          | <b>Model 1<br/>Class<br/>Coefficients</b> |      | <b>Model 2<br/>Class<br/>Coefficients</b> |      |
|--------------------------|-------------------------------------------|------|-------------------------------------------|------|
| Legislators/Managers     | Ref.                                      |      | Ref.                                      |      |
| Professionals & Managers | 0.62                                      | ***  | 0.67                                      | ***  |
| Technicians/ Assoc Profs | 0.25                                      | **   | 0.43                                      | ***  |
| Clerical                 | -0.04                                     | n.s. | 0.20                                      | *    |
| Service & Sales          | -0.15                                     | (*)  | 0.16                                      | (*)  |
| Craft & Related          | -0.30                                     | ***  | 0.09                                      | n.s. |
| Plant & Machine Ops      | -0.13                                     | n.s. | 0.34                                      | ***  |
| Elementary Occupations   | -0.46                                     | ***  | 0.09                                      | n.s. |
| Task Quality             |                                           |      | 0.36                                      | ***  |
| Work Pressure            |                                           |      | -0.03                                     | n.s. |
| Job Upgrading            |                                           |      | 0.15                                      | ***  |
| Employer Training        |                                           |      | 0.03                                      | (*)  |
| Job Security             |                                           |      | 0.11                                      | ***  |
| Chi2 (DF)                | 1071.13 (29)                              |      | 1395.31 (34)                              |      |
| Sig                      | ***                                       |      | ***                                       |      |
| N                        | 12617                                     |      | 12455                                     |      |

Note 1: Logistic Regression Analyses. Model 1 gives Class effects, controlling for sex, age, country and year. Model 3 gives, with same controls, + task quality, work pressure, job upgrading, employer training and job security.

Note 2: \* =  $P < 0.05$ , \*\* =  $P < 0.01$ , \*\*\* =  $P < 0.001$

### *Job Satisfaction*

It is now well established that job satisfaction cannot simply be read off from evidence about work conditions. It will depend upon individual characteristics and the nature of expectations. The survey contained a question on overall job satisfaction, which asked people "All in all, how satisfied would you say you are with your job?" Responses were on a seven point scale ranging from 1 for "completely satisfied" to 7 for "completely dissatisfied".

Taking the overall trend for job satisfaction, there was no statistically significant difference between 1996 and 2001 (Table 6.3). There was however a difference by sex. In both years, men's satisfaction scores were higher than women's. However, whereas levels of job satisfaction remained unchanged for men, there was a statistically significant increase in women's job satisfaction.

**Table 6.3 Overall Job Satisfaction 1996 - 2001**

|                        | 1996 | 2001 | Change 2001-1996 |      |
|------------------------|------|------|------------------|------|
| All Employees          | 5.00 | 5.05 | 0.05             | n.s. |
| Men                    | 5.04 | 5.07 | 0.02             | n.s. |
| Women                  | 4.95 | 5.02 | 0.08             | *    |
| Managers               | 5.27 | 5.34 | 0.07             | n.s. |
| Professionals          | 5.14 | 5.39 | 0.25             | ***  |
| Technicians            | 5.21 | 5.19 | -0.02            | n.s. |
| Clerical               | 4.98 | 5.02 | 0.05             | n.s. |
| Sales and Service      | 4.89 | 4.92 | 0.03             | n.s. |
| Craft                  | 4.90 | 4.95 | 0.05             | n.s. |
| Operatives             | 4.90 | 4.90 | 0.00             | n.s. |
| Elementary Occupations | 4.68 | 4.53 | -0.15            | (*)  |

If those in elementary occupations are taken, a rather different picture emerges. There is a negative coefficient for overall job satisfaction (although it is only at a marginal level of significance). A further test (unshown) of the change in relative class effects between the years shows that there was no change in relative job satisfaction for most classes. But for those in elementary occupations, there is some evidence of an increased gap (a coefficient of -0.20, at the  $p=0.07$  level of significance).

Finally, how far can class differences in job satisfaction be accounted for in terms of differences in job quality? Table 6.4 compares the class coefficients without and then with the job quality measures. In Model 1, which restricts the controls to sex, age, country and year, there is a very marked class gradient in job satisfaction, with a particularly sharp break between those in elementary occupations and other classes. However, once the job quality measures are taken into account in Model 2, the negative class effects for job dissatisfaction disappear entirely. Those in elementary occupations are no longer distinctive and there is even a significant positive coefficient for machine operatives. It is again task quality that has the strongest effect, followed by job security and the level of work pressure.

**Table 6.4 Class Effects on Job Satisfaction (Employees)**

|                        | <b>Model 1<br/>Class Coefficients</b> |      | <b>Model 2 Class<br/>Coefficients</b> |      |
|------------------------|---------------------------------------|------|---------------------------------------|------|
| Professionals          | 0.00                                  | n.s. | 0.02                                  | n.s. |
| Technicians            | -0.07                                 | n.s. | 0.07                                  | n.s. |
| Clerical               | -0.21                                 | ***  | 0.00                                  | n.s. |
| Sales and Service      | -0.30                                 | ***  | 0.03                                  | n.s. |
| Agriculture            | 0.10                                  |      | 0.15                                  | n.s. |
| Craft                  | -0.34                                 | ***  | 0.06                                  | n.s. |
| Operatives             | -0.35                                 | ***  | 0.18                                  | **   |
| Elementary Occupations | -0.63                                 | ***  | -0.06                                 | n.s. |
| Task Quality           |                                       |      | 0.44                                  | ***  |
| Work Pressure          |                                       |      | -0.23                                 | ***  |
| Job Upgrading          |                                       |      | 0.18                                  | ***  |
| Employer Training      |                                       |      | -0.01                                 | n.s. |
| Job Security           |                                       |      | 0.29                                  | ***  |
| Adj R2                 | 0.06                                  |      | 0.21                                  |      |
| N                      | 13306                                 |      | 13098                                 |      |

Note 1: OLS Regression Analyses. Model 1 gives Class effects, controlling for sex, age, country and year. Model 3 gives, with same controls, + task quality, work pressure, job upgrading, employer training and job security.

Note 2: \* =  $P < 0.05$ , \*\* =  $P < 0.01$ , \*\*\* =  $P < 0.001$

### *Work-Related Stress*

A major concern in recent years has been that developments in the nature and organisation of work may be leading to higher levels of work stress that in the longer term may be damaging to health. The survey contained a number of measures of work stress. Five of these were designed to provide indicators of the frequency or persistence of stressful events. People were asked how often they:

- Find their work stressful
- Come home from work exhausted
- Find your job prevents you giving the time you want to your partner or family
- Feel too tired after work to enjoy the things you would like to do at home
- Find that your partner / family gets fed up with the pressure of your job

In each case there was a five point response set: always, often, sometimes, hardly ever, never.

Table 6.5 presents the results in two ways. The first two columns show the proportion in each year that reported either "always" or "often" for each item. The third and fourth columns give the average scores for each item with scores running from 5 for "always" to 1 for "never". The final column shows the significance of the year change in the score measure.

**Table 6.5 Work-Related Stress (Employees) 1996-2001**

|                                      | % Always or Often |      | Stress Scores |      | Sig yr Diff |
|--------------------------------------|-------------------|------|---------------|------|-------------|
|                                      | 1996              | 2001 | 1996          | 2001 |             |
| Finds work stressful                 | 35.8              | 30.6 | 3.17          | 3.06 | ***         |
| Comes home from work exhausted       | 35.1              | 24.9 | 3.14          | 2.87 | ***         |
| Too little time for the family       | 21.8              | 18.8 | 2.60          | 2.46 | ***         |
| Too tired to enjoy home life         | 24.8              | 20.0 | 2.74          | 2.64 | ***         |
| Partner fed up with your job         | 12.9              | 10.3 | 2.21          | 2.11 | ***         |
| Increase in work stress last 5 years | 45.8              | 40.0 |               |      |             |

In 2001, nearly a third (31%) of employees reported that they found their work regularly stressful and a quarter that they came from work exhausted. Three of the measures examine the stress generated by the conflict demands of work and family life. Approximately 20% of employees reported that work demands were "always" or "often" detrimental to their family and home lives. Finally 10% report interpersonal family tension as a result of their work load, with their partners being "fed up" with their job.

Clearly work stress is a major problem for a substantial sector of the workforce. However, at least in comparison to the situation in 1996, it does not appear to have been increasing. On all of the five indicators, whether one takes the proportion reporting high levels of stress or the overall score, there was some decline in levels of work-related stress between 1996 and 2001. Further, when people were asked directly whether the level of stress in their job had increased, decreased or stayed the same over the last five years, the proportion reporting an increase in stress was reduced from 46% in 1996 to 40% in 2001. The proportion that had experienced a decrease in stress remained identical (8% in both years), while the proportion saying there had been no change rose from 46% to 52%.

**Table 6.6 Work-Related Stress Index by Sex and Occupational Class**

|                          | 1996 | 2001 | 2001-1996 | Sig Year Change |
|--------------------------|------|------|-----------|-----------------|
| All                      | 2.79 | 2.63 | -0.16     | ***             |
| Male                     | 2.79 | 2.62 | -0.17     | ***             |
| Female                   | 2.79 | 2.63 | -0.16     | ***             |
| Legislators/Managers     | 2.96 | 2.72 | -0.24     | ***             |
| Professionals            | 2.92 | 2.71 | -0.21     | ***             |
| Technicians/ Assoc Profs | 2.81 | 2.66 | -0.15     | ***             |
| Clerical                 | 2.63 | 2.50 | -0.13     | ***             |
| Service & Sales          | 2.74 | 2.70 | -0.04     | n.s.            |
| Craft & Related          | 2.84 | 2.59 | -0.25     | ***             |
| Plant & Machine ops      | 2.89 | 2.67 | -0.22     | ***             |
| Elementary Occupations   | 2.76 | 2.40 | -0.36     | ***             |

Note: \* = P < 0.05, \*\* = P < 0.01, \*\*\* = P < 0.001

An overall work stress index was constructed by averaging the five items in Table 6.5. As can be seen in Table 6.6, this confirms the general trend to a reduction in work stress and shows that the pattern was the same for both men and women and for employees in most occupational classes. The exception is service and sales workers, where there was no significant decrease in work stress between the years. Work stress declined for the overall workforce in the majority of the EU countries. But there was no significant change in stress levels in Belgium, Finland, Greece, Italy and the Netherlands.

How did the different dimensions of work task quality affect vulnerability to work stress? Model 1 of Table 6.7 shows the direct effects of task quality, work pressure, job upgrading and security. The analyses take the pooled data for the two years. The model controls for age, sex, country, year and occupational class.

It is clear that by far and away the strongest factor accentuating work stress was the pressure of work in the job. But it was notable that job upgrading and even training were also associated with higher stress levels. In contrast, both high task quality and particularly job security were very significant factors reducing work stress.

Some research has suggested that one of the key features of higher task quality (especially the learning opportunities and the capacity for control provided by the job) is that it reduces stress not only through its direct effects, but also through mediating the impact of work pressure on stress levels. In Model 2 of Table 6.7, this is tested by introducing an interaction term between task quality and work pressure. As can be seen this is indeed negative and statistically significant, consistent with the view that high task quality does make it easier for people to cope with pressures at work, thereby reducing its effects on psychological strain.

**Table 6.7 Work Quality and Work-Related Stress**

|                            | Model 1 |     | Model 2 |      |
|----------------------------|---------|-----|---------|------|
|                            | Coeff   | Sig | Coeff   | Sig  |
| Task Quality               | -0.06   | *** | -0.02   | n.s. |
| Work Pressure              | 0.54    | *** | 0.57    | ***  |
| Job Upgrading              | 0.04    | *** | 0.04    | ***  |
| Employer Training          | 0.03    | *** | 0.03    | ***  |
| Job Security               | -0.09   | *** | -0.09   | ***  |
| Task Quality*Work Pressure |         |     | -0.02   | *    |
| Adj R2                     | 0.39    |     | 0.39    |      |
| N                          | 11490   |     | 11490   |      |

Note: \* = P < 0.05, \*\* = P < 0.01, \*\*\* = P < 0.001

### *Social Precarity, Life Satisfaction and Psychological Distress*

The focus of this final section moves from the arena of people's commitment to and sense of well-being in employment to the broader sense of personal well-being in life. The analysis is now extended to include those in all of the different employment statuses – self-employed, employed, unemployed and non-actives. There are two principal measures in the survey that provide relevant indicators. The first is a single item measure of life satisfaction. People were asked: "Would you say that you are very satisfied, fairly satisfied, not very satisfied or not at all satisfied with the life you lead?" Higher scores on the measure indicate greater dissatisfaction with life.

The second, arguably more stringent indicator, is a measure of psychological distress, based on six items from the General Health Questionnaire (Goldberg 1972, 1978), a well-tested measure of propensity to anxiety and depression.

- The question format was:
- Would you say that you have:
- Lost much sleep over worry
- Been feeling unhappy and depressed
- Been losing confidence in yourself
- Been feeling you could not overcome your difficulties
- Been feeling constantly under strain
- Been thinking of yourself as a worthless person

There was a four point response set: not at all, no more than usual, rather more than usual, much more than usual. An overall psychological distress scale was constructed as the average score across the six items. Higher scores indicate greater psychological distress.

Table 6.8 presents the mean scores for 1996 and 2001, together with the significance of the change in the mean values between the years. Overall there was a small but clearly significant decline between the years in both dissatisfaction with life and psychological distress. With respect to dissatisfaction with life, the pattern was very similar for men and women. However, while men's psychological distress levels declined over the period, this was not the case for women.

Turning to the patterns for those in different employment statuses, it can be seen that there was an improvement in the life satisfaction of those in jobs, both among the employed and the self-employed. However, there was no evidence of a similar improvement in the scores for either the unemployed or the non-actives. Even more striking, for none of the employment status categories was there evidence of a reduction in psychological distress between the years. This suggests that the overall improvement noted above must have been due to a shift in the proportion of people in the different employment status categories. Comparing the two surveys, there had been a decrease in the proportion unemployed (where psychological distress was particularly high) of five percentage points and a rise in the proportion in work (where psychological distress was much lower) of three percentage points.

**Table 6.8 Dissatisfaction with Life and Psychological Distress 1996-2001**

|               | Dissatisfaction with Life |      |      | Psychological Distress |      |      |
|---------------|---------------------------|------|------|------------------------|------|------|
|               | 1996                      | 2001 | Sig. | 1996                   | 2001 | Sig. |
| All           | 2.07                      | 2.00 | ***  | 0.64                   | 0.62 | ***  |
| Men           | 2.07                      | 1.99 | ***  | 0.58                   | 0.55 | ***  |
| Women         | 2.07                      | 2.02 | ***  | 0.70                   | 0.69 | n.s. |
| Employed      | 1.96                      | 1.93 | ***  | 0.57                   | 0.57 | n.s. |
| Self-Employed | 2.01                      | 1.91 | *    | 0.63                   | 0.66 | n.s. |
| Unemployed    | 2.83                      | 2.85 | n.s. | 0.99                   | 0.94 | n.s. |
| Non-Active    | 1.98                      | 1.98 | n.s. | 0.62                   | 0.61 | n.s. |

Note: \* =  $P < 0.05$ , \*\* =  $P < 0.01$ , \*\*\* =  $P < 0.001$

How was personal well-being affected by the different aspects of precarity highlighted in earlier chapters of the report? This was assessed by introducing into the same model indicators of income, poverty, social isolation, employment status and work quality. At the same time, control variables were added for age, sex, and country and political orientation. The analyses were carried out in two phases. In the first (models 1 and 3) employment status was included without measures of work quality. In the second (models 2 and 4) interaction terms were introduced to examine the implications of work quality for employees. Table 6.9 gives the estimates for the different precarity variables, taking account both of other aspects of precarity and of the control variables.

The first rows of Table 6.9 show the effects of the degree of precarity in people's work and labour market position. The reference category for employment status is people who were not in the labour market (the non-actives). Employees are usually taken to be the least precarious group, with the most favourable conditions for social integration. But the results provide no evidence that employment *per se* raises personal well-being compared to non-activity. As can be seen from models one and three, employee status was associated with slightly greater dissatisfaction with life (once other factors were controlled for) than was the case for non-actives, while there was no difference with respect to psychological distress. The crucial factor was the nature of employment. Those who were in higher quality jobs were very significantly more satisfied with their lives and had substantially lower psychological distress (conversely those with poor quality work tasks had much lower levels of personal well-being). A more detailed analysis (not shown) confirmed that these estimates remained unchanged when further controls were introduced for occupational class. Moreover both higher work pressure and particularly job insecurity had strong negative effects for life satisfaction and psychological well-being. An unexpected finding is that the receipt of employer training in last five years also had negative effects on both measures, although it should be noted that the actual upgrading of jobs in terms of skill and responsibility was associated with better psychological health. Given the importance of training as a strategy for providing longer-term security, this clearly needs careful investigation in future research.

Turning to those in other employment statuses, it is notable that the two measures give quite different results for the self-employed. Other things equal, the self-employed had had higher levels of satisfaction with life, but were more likely to suffer from psychological distress. Presumably the latter may reflect the anxieties that come from the responsibilities for ensuring financial viability.

For the unemployed, the results confirm a pattern that has been shown consistently in the literature in the last decade. Those who are currently unemployed have considerably worse scores on both measures of well-being than those who are non-active. However, the less expected feature of the data is the result with respect to previous experience of unemployment. Those who have been unemployed at some time previously in the last five years also have higher levels of dissatisfaction with life and lower psychological well-being. This suggests that the effects of the experience of unemployment may be marked over quite long periods of time, even when people are no longer jobless. A variant analysis (not shown) restricted to those currently employees shows virtually identical effects of previous unemployment for this subgroup (coefficients of .20,  $p < 0.001$  for life satisfaction; and .10  $p < 0.001$  for psychological distress). In short, the experience of unemployment would appear to scar people in a relatively lasting way.

**Table 6.9 Life Satisfaction and Psychological Distress 1996-2001**

|                                  | Dissatisfaction with life |           | Psychological Distress |          |
|----------------------------------|---------------------------|-----------|------------------------|----------|
|                                  | Model 1                   | Model 2   | Model 3                | Model 4  |
| Employed                         | .04 *                     | .14 **    | .01 n.s.               | -.08 *   |
| Task Quality                     |                           | -.15 ***  |                        | -.03 *** |
| Work Pressure                    |                           | .03 **    |                        | .09 ***  |
| Employer Training                |                           | .04 ***   |                        | .03 ***  |
| Job Upgrading                    |                           | -.02 n.s. |                        | -.05 *** |
| Job Insecurity                   |                           | .20 ***   |                        | .11 ***  |
| Self Employed                    | -.02 n.s.                 | -.10 ***  | .08 ***                | .04 *    |
| Unemployed                       | .49 ***                   | .53 ***   | .10 ***                | .12 ***  |
| Prev. Unemployment               | .23 ***                   | .19 ***   | .12 ***                | .10 ***  |
| Financial Difficulty             | .74 ***                   | .73 ***   | .36 ***                | .36 ***  |
| Lowest Q Income                  | .28 ***                   | .26 ***   | .12 ***                | .12 ***  |
| 2 <sup>nd</sup> Lowest Q Income  | .08 ***                   | .06 **    | .01 n.s.               | .12 ***  |
| 2 <sup>nd</sup> Highest Q Income | -.02 n.s.                 | -.02 n.s. | .02 n.s.               | .01 n.s. |
| Social Isolation Index           | .39 ***                   | .37 ***   | .31 ***                | .30 ***  |
| Adj R2 (Full Model)              | .26                       | .26       | .26                    | .27      |

Note 1: Significant positive coefficients for life dissatisfaction indicate greater dissatisfaction; significant positive coefficients for psychological distress indicate greater psychological distress. Ns for life dissatisfaction (model 1:15268; model 2 15172); for psychological distress (model 1: 14781; model 2 14690). Controls included age, sex, country and political orientation.

Note 2: \* =  $P < 0.05$ , \*\* =  $P < 0.01$ , \*\*\* =  $P < 0.001$

The lower rows of Table 6.9 show the impact of the financial and social aspects of precarity examined in chapter 2. The experience of financial difficulty is clearly the single strongest factor associated with well-being, whichever measure is taken. Moreover, there is a clear effect for both increased dissatisfaction with life and increased psychological distress of being in the lowest quartile with respect to household income. Being in a household in the second lowest income quartile also has negative effects on life satisfaction, but is less consistently related to psychological distress.

Finally the model included the measure of social isolation developed in chapter 2. This reflected the extent to which people were cut off from personal relationships in their family and community. It can be seen that this had a very strong effect in undermining both life satisfaction and psychological well-being. It was the third strongest factor (after financial difficulty and current unemployment) for life satisfaction, and the second strongest factor (after financial difficulty) affecting psychological distress.

## Conclusions

On most of the measures of personal well-being examined in the chapter, the trend between 1996 and 2001 was towards greater social integration. For instance, among those in jobs, although overall levels of employment commitment remained remarkably low, commitment appeared to have grown somewhat stronger over the period. At the same time, while work stress remained an important problem for a substantial sector of the workforce, there was some decrease in indicators of work-related stress and of conflict between work and family life. It was only in respect to job satisfaction that there was no evidence of change (although there was an increase in the job satisfaction of women). Moreover, taking the population as a whole, people's satisfaction with their lives increased and psychological distress decreased (although not for women).

However, the analyses confirm that the various aspects of precarity that have been examined in previous chapters – whether those relating to people's financial circumstances, their integration in social networks, their employment status or the quality of their jobs – have very clear implications for the sense of personal well-being in society.

Low task quality, higher levels of work pressure and job insecurity undermined commitment to employment, reduced job satisfaction and increased work-related stress. They also appeared to have wider effects in reducing overall satisfaction with life and heightening psychological distress.

Taking the population as a whole our evidence confirms the very severe effects of unemployment on people's personal well-being. But it is notable that, once other factors (such as income and social networks) have been controlled, employment per se did not lead to a higher degree of satisfaction with life or greater psychological well-being than prevailed among those who were non-active. The positive effects of employment for personal integration depend upon the quality of jobs.

Finally, it is clear that both the financial and social aspects of precarity had very strong implications for personal well-being. Financial difficulty was the single strongest predictor of both dissatisfaction with life and psychological distress, while social isolation also had sharp negative effects on both measures.

## Chapter 7

### **SOCIAL INSECURITY AND ATTITUDES TO SOCIETY AND THE WELFARE STATE**

In the 1960s, there were a large number of studies by sociologists and political scientists on the question of political alienation, emphasising above all the subjective aspect of this phenomenon. According to these researchers, an individual may be regarded as politically alienated when he or she has a sense of being detached from society, of no longer belonging politically, of being a non-player in the game played by the politicians<sup>18</sup>. Though the concept of alienation is little used nowadays, the question of political disillusionment and withdrawal from everything pertaining to the life of the polis still remains, not least when people are at risk of poverty and experience problems of social integration.

Does social insecurity, as we have defined it in this report, have its own specific effect on attitudes to society and the Welfare State? That is the question at the heart of this chapter.

The underlying hypothesis of our analysis is that social insecurity generates not only difficulties coping with the constraints of daily living, and a risk of social isolation and psychological distress, but also a deep dissatisfaction with society and with the way democracy works, as well as particular expectations of the Welfare State.

This chapter has two sections. The first concerns attitudes to society, and the second attitudes to the Welfare State.

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<sup>18</sup> Among these research works, we may single out: Dwight G. Dean, "Alienation and Political Apathy", *Social Forces*, 1960, vol. 38, n°3, pp. 185-189, Wayne E. Thompson and John E. Horton, "Political Alienation as a force in Political Action", *Social Forces*, 1960, vol. 38, n°3, pp. 190-185, Martin E. Olsen, "Two Categories of Political Alienation", *Social Forces*, 1969, vol. 47, n°3, pp. 288-299, Ada W. Finifter, "Dimensions of Political Alienation", *The American Political Science Review*, 1970, vol. 64, n°2, pp. 389-410.

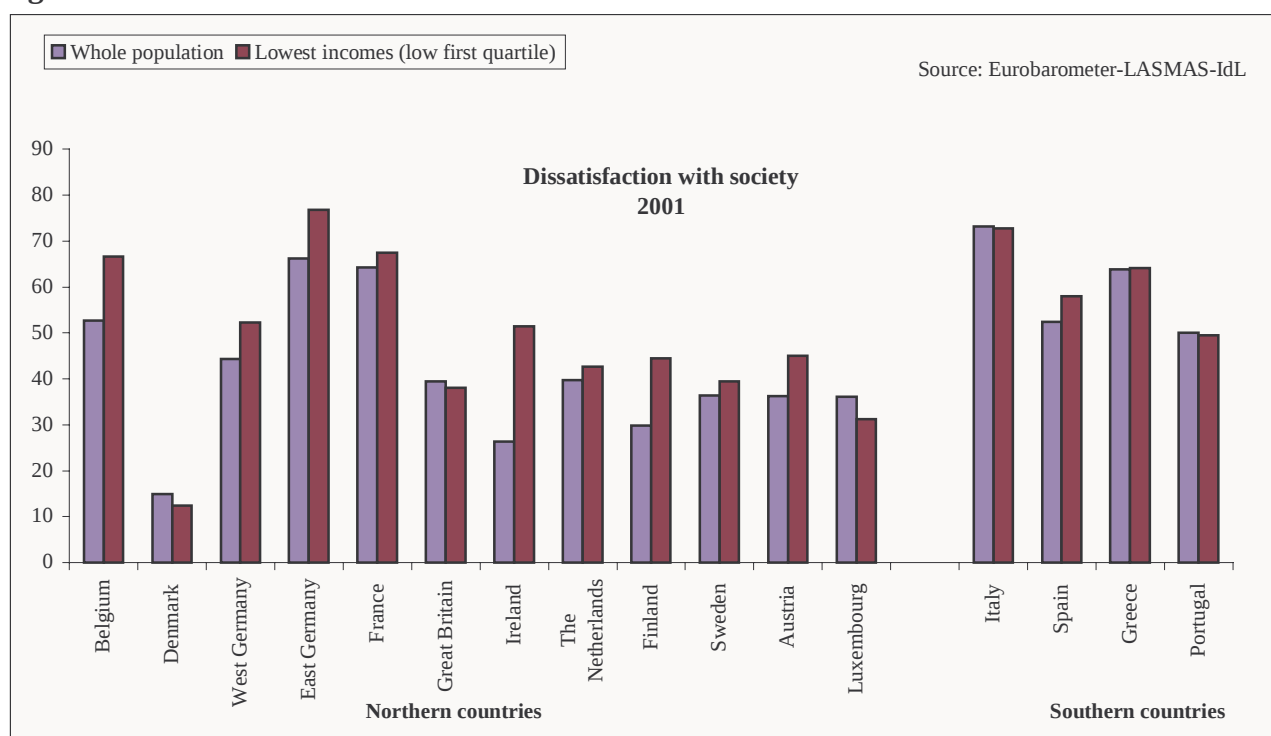
## *Attitudes to society*

For our analysis of attitudes to society, we have two indicators in the 2001 survey: dissatisfaction with the society in which one lives, and dissatisfaction with the way democracy works in one's own country. These two indicators have much in common, in that they enable us to assess the difficulty individuals have in being part of society and participating as citizens in communal life by voicing their opinions. Dissatisfaction with society can equally mean having difficulty in finding one's place within it, feeling a sense of injustice, or suffering from a lack of social recognition; and dissatisfaction with the way democracy works in one's country can be a matter of the same difficulty and the same sufferings.

### *Dissatisfaction with society*

Dissatisfaction with the society one lives in varies widely from country to country. It is very rare in Denmark and particularly high in eastern Germany, France, Italy and Greece (cf. figure 7.1). In most countries, dissatisfaction is more common among those whose income is at or below the lower quartile than for the population as a whole.

**Figure 7.1**



While gender is not a significant factor in dissatisfaction with society, we have to stress that the under-25s are distinctly less dissatisfied in this respect than the other age groups, none of which differed significantly from the whole (cf. table 7.1).

As might be expected, we also find that the unemployed are markedly (and significantly) more dissatisfied than those in paid work. This finding is certainly to be related to the results of research into the social unease felt by the unemployed generally, above all when they can see no likelihood of their situation improving after many months of fruitless job-hunting. Dissatisfaction with the society in which they live is the expression of their feelings of bitterness and despair.

We may note that the logistic regression confirms the pattern given by figure 7.1, and in particular the finding that those whose incomes are lowest are particularly dissatisfied. Furthermore, dissatisfaction with society falls steadily as income rises, so that we may infer that individuals' disposable income is not only a factor in their well-being or contrariwise in their difficulty coping with daily living, but also a precondition of their social integration, as the sociologists of consumption, continuing the work of Maurice Halbwachs<sup>19</sup>, have already shown.

The logistic regression also confirms the national differences apparent from the graph above. There is a marked tendency to dissatisfaction to be seen in all the southern countries.

The indices of (negative) well-being also have a significant effect: social isolation, the deterioration of local surroundings, and social devaluation each increase the likelihood of being dissatisfied with society.

Lastly, we find that job insecurity is a significant factor increasing dissatisfaction with society, and the quality of work a significant factor reducing it. Recent research has shown that the people least integrated into working life (job insecurity or poor working conditions) are also the least integrated into social life and those who most tend to regard politics and public institutions in general as remote<sup>20</sup>. Our present result further confirms this.

To summarise, we may say that dissatisfaction with the society one lives in is an indicator of social integration.

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<sup>19</sup> Cf. Maurice Halbwachs, *La classe ouvrière et les niveaux de vie. Recherches sur la hiérarchie des besoins dans les sociétés industrielles contemporaines*, Paris, Alcan, 1912. ["The working class and living standards. Research into the hierarchy of needs in modern industrial societies" Apparently no English translation.]

<sup>20</sup> Cf. Serge Paugam, *Le salarié de la précarité. Les nouvelles formes de l'intégration professionnelle*, Paris, PUF, coll. "Le lien social", 2000. [Wage earners and insecurity; the new forms of occupational integration]

**Table 7.1 Logistic regression for the probability of being dissatisfied with the society one lives in**

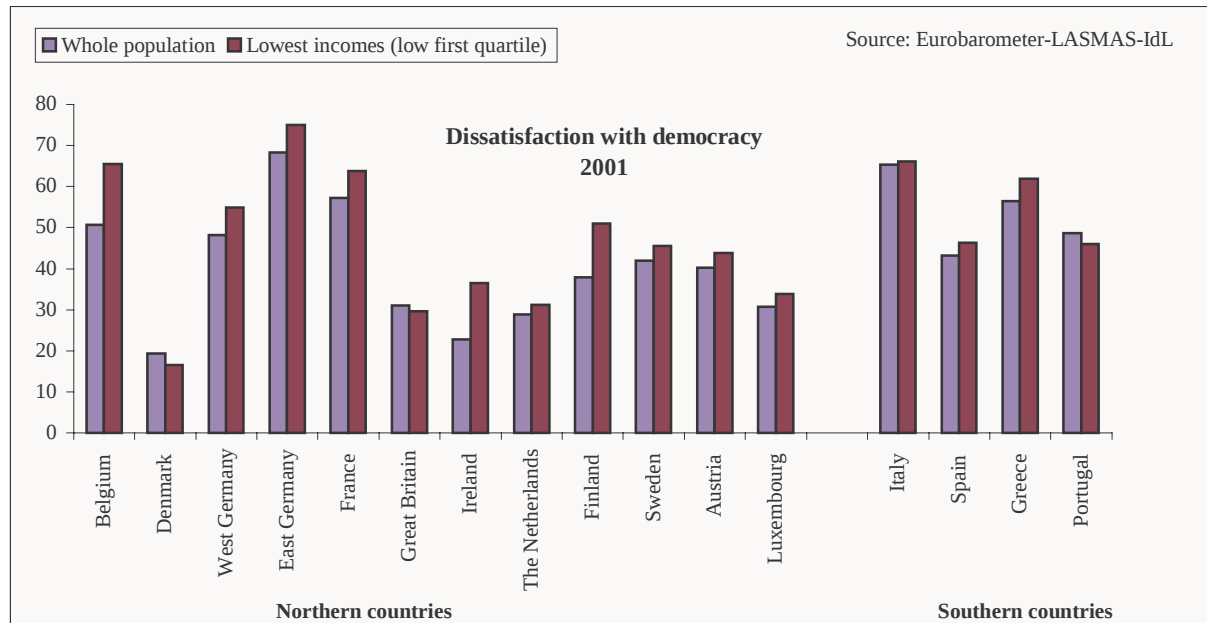
| <b>Variables</b>                        |                                     | <b>B. Sig</b>    |
|-----------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|------------------|
| <b>Constant</b>                         |                                     | -0.99***         |
| <b>Gender</b>                           |                                     |                  |
| <b>Men</b>                              |                                     | <i>Reference</i> |
| <b>Women</b>                            |                                     | 0.05 ns          |
| <b>Age</b>                              | 15 - 24                             | -0.31***         |
|                                         | 25 - 34                             | -0.04 ns         |
|                                         | 35 - 44                             | <i>Reference</i> |
|                                         | 45 - 54                             | 0.06 ns          |
|                                         | 55 - 64                             | -0.01 ns         |
|                                         | 65+                                 | -0.07 ns         |
| <b>Employment status</b>                | In paid work                        | <i>Reference</i> |
|                                         | Unemployed                          | 0.54***          |
|                                         | Inactive                            | 0.06 ns          |
| <b>Income</b>                           | below lower quartile                | 0.18**           |
|                                         | lower quartile to median            | 0.12*            |
|                                         | median to upper quartile            | 0.01 ns          |
|                                         | above upper quartile                | <i>Reference</i> |
| <b>Country</b>                          |                                     |                  |
| NORTHERN COUNTRIES                      | Belgium                             | 0.65***          |
|                                         | Denmark                             | -1.15***         |
|                                         | Germany-West                        | 0.33***          |
|                                         | Germany-East                        | 1.07***          |
|                                         | France                              | 1.00***          |
|                                         | Great Britain                       | <i>Reference</i> |
|                                         | Ireland                             | -0.54***         |
|                                         | Netherlands                         | 0.14 ns          |
|                                         | Finland                             | -0.51***         |
|                                         | Sweden                              | -0.01 ns         |
|                                         | Austria                             | 0.04 ns          |
|                                         | Luxembourg                          | 0.03 ns          |
| SOUTHERN COUNTRIES                      | Italy                               | 0.03 ns          |
|                                         | Spain                               | 1.50***          |
|                                         | Greece                              | 0.70***          |
|                                         | Portugal                            | 0.96***          |
| <b>Negative quality of life indices</b> | Social isolation                    | 0.12***          |
|                                         | Deterioration of local surroundings | 0.13***          |
|                                         | Social devaluation                  | 0.11***          |
| <b>Work and employment</b>              | Task quality                        | -0.14***         |
|                                         | Work pressure                       | 0.06*            |
|                                         | Career development                  | 0.06 ns          |
|                                         | Job insecurity                      | 0.25***          |

\*: P < 0.05, \*\*: P < 0.01, \*\*\*: P < 0.001, ns: not significant

### *Dissatisfaction with democracy*

Dissatisfaction with the way democracy works also varies widely from country to country. Once more, Denmark is seen to be a country where dissatisfaction is rare, even among the poorest. It is frequent in eastern Germany, France, Italy and Greece: the same countries in which we have already found widespread dissatisfaction with society (cf. figure 7.2).

**Figure 7.2**



Women seem a little less likely to be dissatisfied, *ceteris paribus*, than men; also, young people under 25 tend less to be dissatisfied with democracy than the other age groups.

We also find, in the case of dissatisfaction with democracy, the same effects of unemployment, poverty, negative quality of life indices and characteristics of the work and employment as for dissatisfaction with society. These two forms of dissatisfaction are therefore quite similar: both express a deep social discontent; and it is clear that they are not unrelated to difficulties in social integration.

**Table 7.2 Logistic regression for the probability of being dissatisfied with the way democracy works in one's own country**

| <b>Variables</b>                        |                                                                                                                                                       | <b>B. Sig</b>                                                                                                                           |
|-----------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Constant</b>                         |                                                                                                                                                       | -1.30***                                                                                                                                |
| <b>Gender</b>                           |                                                                                                                                                       |                                                                                                                                         |
| <b>Men</b>                              |                                                                                                                                                       | <i>Reference</i>                                                                                                                        |
| <b>Women</b>                            |                                                                                                                                                       | -0.06*                                                                                                                                  |
| <b>Age</b>                              | 15 - 24<br>25 - 34<br>35 - 44<br>45 - 54<br>55 - 64<br>65+                                                                                            | -0.39***<br>-0.05 ns<br><i>Reference</i><br>0.08 ns<br>0.06 ns<br>-0.06 ns                                                              |
| <b>Employment status</b>                | In paid work<br>Unemployed<br>Inactive                                                                                                                | <i>Reference</i><br>0.62***<br>0.05 ns                                                                                                  |
| <b>Income</b>                           | below lower quartile<br>lower quartile to median<br>median to upper quartile<br>above upper quartile                                                  | 0.20***<br>0.13*<br>0.04 ns<br><i>Reference</i>                                                                                         |
| <b>Country</b>                          |                                                                                                                                                       |                                                                                                                                         |
| NORTHERN COUNTRIES                      | Belgium<br>Denmark<br>Germany-West<br>Germany-East<br>France<br>Great Britain<br>Ireland<br>Netherlands<br>Finland<br>Sweden<br>Austria<br>Luxembourg | 0.95***<br>-0.51***<br>0.85***<br>1.56***<br>1.14***<br><i>Reference</i><br>-0.30**<br>0.03 ns<br>0.25**<br>0.62***<br>0.60***<br>0.22* |
| SOUTHERN COUNTRIES                      | Italy<br>Spain<br>Greece<br>Portugal                                                                                                                  | 1.51***<br>0.70***<br>1.04***<br>0.67***                                                                                                |
| <b>Negative quality of life indices</b> | Social isolation<br>Deterioration of local surroundings<br>Social devaluation                                                                         | 0.08***<br>0.13***<br>0.10***                                                                                                           |
| <b>Work and employment</b>              | Task quality<br>Work pressure<br>Career development<br>Job insecurity                                                                                 | -0.08*<br>0.02 ns<br>0.07 ns<br>0.27***                                                                                                 |

\*: P < 0.05, \*\*: P < 0.01, \*\*\*: P < 0,001, ns: not significant

Moreover, if these two forms of dissatisfaction are particularly widespread among those people who are least well integrated into the economic, social and political life of their country, this is bound to cause problems for social cohesion at both national and European levels. Both forms in fact contain a danger of social polarisation which could manifest itself in various kinds of radicalism, and in greater violence and more acute insecurity<sup>21</sup>.

### *Attitudes to the Welfare State*

In most European societies, the more disadvantaged groups are likely to be getting assistance from the Welfare State, though its amount and form varies depending on the country in which they live. These benefits are rights and guarantees designed to counter the risks of poverty and exclusion. Attitudes to the Welfare State may therefore vary also, from country to country and according to the extent of the difficulties that face people in daily living.

They can be studied on the basis of a number of indicators; we have chosen three for this section: an indicator of approval of government social policy, an indicator of solidaristic attitudes and, lastly, an indicator of severity towards the unemployed.

### *Approval of government social policy*

As elements of an attitude of approval towards government social policy, we have used the following six variables to construct an index:

- It is the responsibility of the government to reduce the differences between those with high and low incomes;
- The government should ensure that all children have a decent standard of living;
- The government should provide everyone with a guaranteed basic income;
- The government should provide decent housing for all who cannot afford it.
- The government should provide a job for everyone who wants one;
- The government should provide a decent standard of living for the unemployed.

The Cronbach test produces a satisfactory coefficient of 0.78, indicating that the variables used in the construction of this index do indeed measure the same underlying dimension.

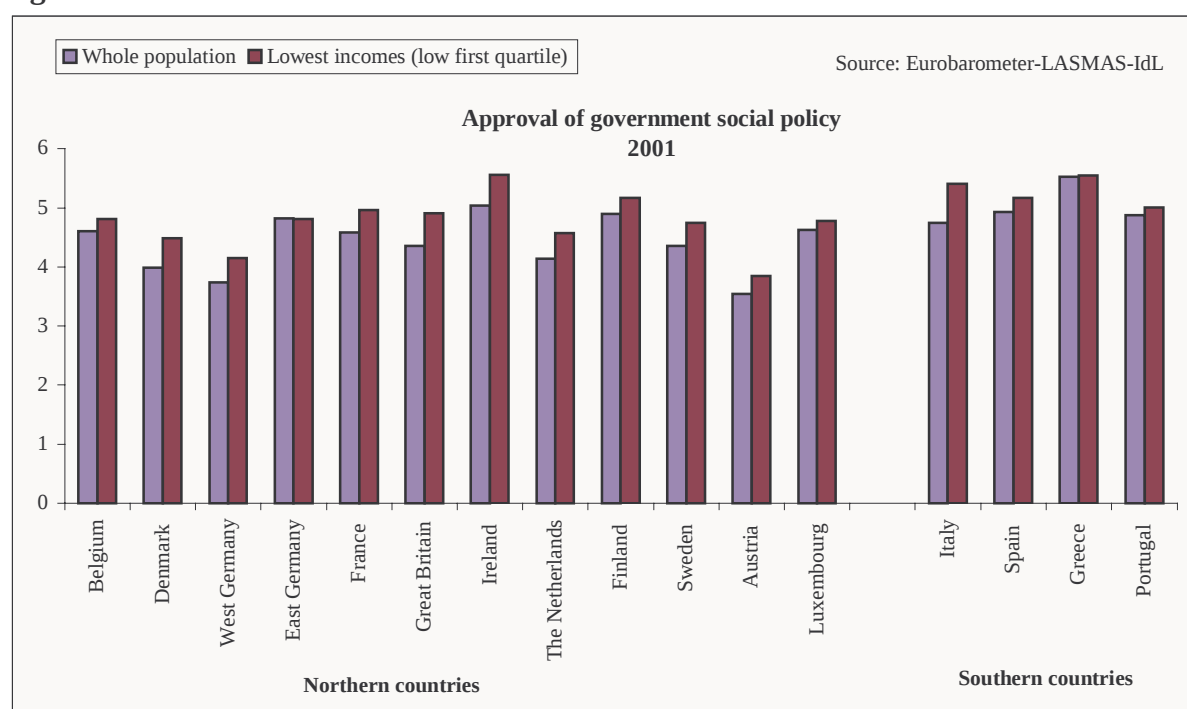
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<sup>21</sup> A recent survey has shown that those employees who are least well integrated within their firm and in their working lives are distinctly keener than others on a radical transformation of society. Cf. S. Paugam, *Le salarie de la precarite*, *ibid*.

This index also varies from country to country. In countries with a less highly developed social policy, the index is particularly high; and this is particularly true of southern countries, where expectations seem to be great. On the other hand, in certain northern countries, the index is lower, especially in Denmark, western Germany, the Netherlands and Austria (cf. figure 7.3). These results bode well in a sense for the harmonisation of European social policies, in that public opinion in the countries which seem behind at present appears to be truly in favour of catching up.

We may also point out that the index is higher for the people whose income is at or below the lower quartile than for the population as a whole. The poorest 25% are more in favour of government social policy than the other income categories: this seems a near-universal tendency, since only the eastern Länder of Germany appear to be a slight exception, for here no statistically significant divergence between the views of the poorest and those of the population as a whole is to be found.

**Figure 7.3**



This support for the principle of a social policy of government intervention does not significantly vary according to gender (cf. table 7.3). In terms of age, on the other hand, the under-25s and over-65s are significantly less in favour of government social policy than the reference age group (35 to 44). It should be remembered that the financial burdens on individuals are lighter for young people under 25, many of whom are still dependent on their parents, and for older people; this certainly explains, at least in part, their more detached attitude to social security.

We also find that the unemployed have a significantly more favourable attitude to government social policy than those in paid work. *Ceteris paribus*, this attitude also becomes significantly less common as income rises. We may therefore conclude that it is the poorer groups, and those less well integrated into the job market, who most support social policy, in other words the people whose material situation and social status depend on this type of intervention to a great extent.

The two indices of rundown local surroundings and social devaluation also have a significant positive effect on the likelihood of approving the idea of government social policy, indicating that the greatest expectations of the Welfare State are to be found among the disadvantaged. We need to stress, though, that instability of employment has a slightly negative effect on the probability of being in favour of government social policy. We might explain this anomaly by suggesting that people who have an insecure job are liable to feel threatened by the unemployed or those on benefit, especially by those they regard as reluctant to take on hard work; they may wish to distinguish themselves socially from such "scroungers" by validating the view that they are able to get benefit without truly looking for work. This attitude of disapproval towards social policy would then be an expression of the need for a particular social distinction, one which might certainly be necessary to make undervalued and unpleasant employment conditions more bearable.

Lastly, we should also note that those who have enjoyed some career development are favourable to social policy as well: we may surmise that this group has been able to benefit from such assistance, for instance in training.

**Table 7.3 Logistic regression for the probability of approving of government social policy**

| <b>Variables</b>                        |                                     | <b>B. Sig</b>    |
|-----------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|------------------|
| <b>Constant</b>                         |                                     | 3.84***          |
| <b>Gender</b>                           |                                     |                  |
| <b>Men</b>                              |                                     | <i>Reference</i> |
| <b>Women</b>                            |                                     | 0.03 ns          |
| <b>Age</b>                              | 15 - 24                             | -0.12**          |
|                                         | 25 - 34                             | -0.04 ns         |
|                                         | 35 - 44                             | <i>Reference</i> |
|                                         | 45 - 54                             | 0.02 ns          |
|                                         | 55 - 64                             | -0.04 ns         |
|                                         | 65+                                 | -0.16***         |
| <b>Employment status</b>                | In paid work                        | <i>Reference</i> |
|                                         | Unemployed                          | 0.59***          |
|                                         | Inactive                            | 0.43***          |
| <b>Income</b>                           | below lower quartile                | 0.38***          |
|                                         | lower quartile to median            | 0.26***          |
|                                         | median to upper quartile            | 0.16***          |
|                                         | above upper quartile                | <i>Reference</i> |
| <b>Country</b>                          |                                     |                  |
| NORTHERN COUNTRIES                      | Belgium                             | 0.24***          |
|                                         | Denmark                             | -0.29***         |
|                                         | Germany-West                        | -0.61***         |
|                                         | Germany-East                        | 0.37***          |
|                                         | France                              | 0.26***          |
|                                         | Great Britain                       | <i>Reference</i> |
|                                         | Ireland                             | 0.73***          |
|                                         | Netherlands                         | -0.20**          |
|                                         | Finland                             | 0.46***          |
|                                         | Sweden                              | -0.04 ns         |
|                                         | Austria                             | -0.76***         |
|                                         | Luxembourg                          | 0.30***          |
| SOUTHERN COUNTRIES                      | Italy                               | 0.32***          |
|                                         | Spain                               | 0.59***          |
|                                         | Greece                              | 1.10***          |
|                                         | Portugal                            | 0.43***          |
| <b>Negative quality of life indices</b> | Social isolation                    | 0.01 ns          |
|                                         | Deterioration of local surroundings | 0.04***          |
|                                         | Social devaluation                  | 0.05**           |
| <b>Work and employment</b>              | Task quality                        | -0.08**          |
|                                         | Work pressure                       | -0.03 ns         |
|                                         | Career development                  | 0.19***          |
|                                         | Job insecurity                      | -0.08*           |

\*: P < 0.05, \*\*: P < 0.01, \*\*\*: P < 0,001, ns: not significant

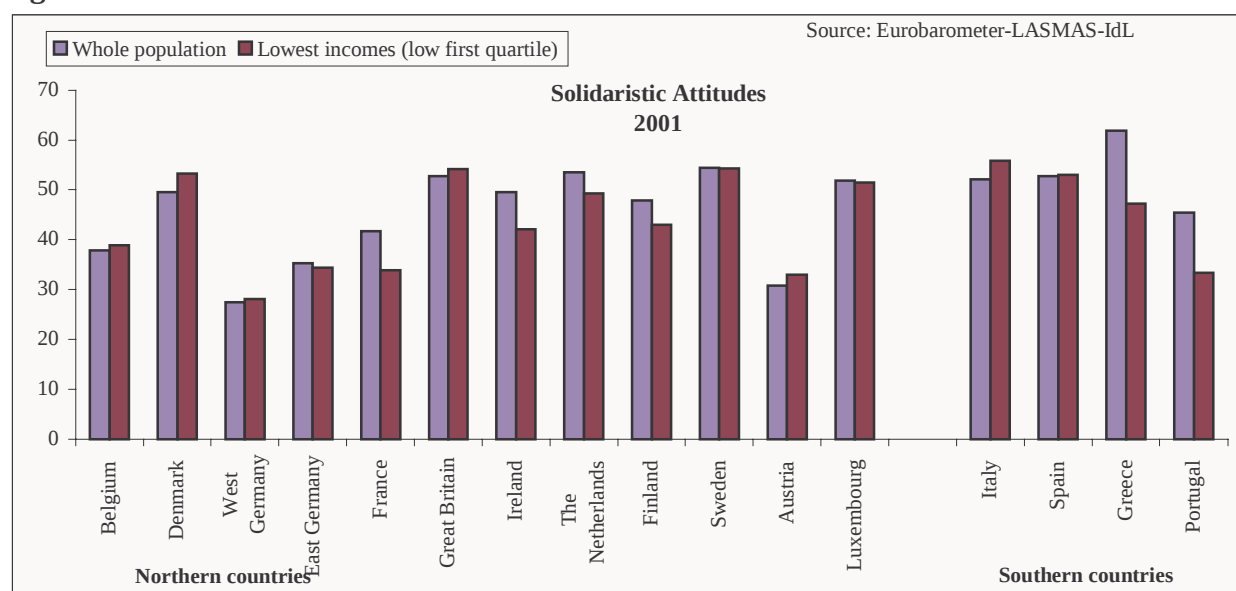
### *Solidaristic attitudes*

Solidaristic attitudes may be established on the basis of the proposition: "I would be ready to pay more tax if it were definitely used to improve the situation of the poor". To accept higher taxes for the sake of the poor is not only a generous towards those less privileged than oneself, but also reflects a sense of civic participation and social justice: an act stemming from a personal decision but at the same time belonging to an overall vision of a common life and of social and national cohesion.

Among the countries where this attitude is the most widespread we find Denmark, Great Britain, Sweden, and Luxembourg; also Italy and Spain (cf. figure 7.4). In Germany and Austria it is a great deal less frequent; we may suppose that in Germany thanks to the application of the subsidiarity principle and the important role given to charity associations at local level, it is more acceptable to look for solutions to poverty first in local affinity networks before turning to the idea of greater tax-funded intervention by the central government. We may also surmise that the large-scale transfers from western Germany to the eastern region after reunification, which resulted among other things in a sizeable increase in direct and indirect taxation, may in the end have made the Germans somewhat more lukewarm about redistribution towards the poor.

Solidaristic attitudes are less widespread among the lowest income groups than in the population as a whole, in all countries except Belgium, Denmark, Great Britain and Italy. While the poorest groups are a little less prepared to pay more taxes, this is surely because their situation does not allow them to.

**Figure 7.4**



Other things being equal, women have a slightly less solidaristic attitude than men (cf. table 7.4). The under-25s and over-65s, also, are less solidaristic than the people of 35 to 44 years, which tallies with the tendency already found in the case of the index of approval of government social policy. We may note that the unemployed are not significantly more solidaristic than those in paid work, though the economically inactive are.

We can confirm from this logistic regression that those with the lowest incomes are significantly less solidaristic than the other income groups; and the national differences of figure 7.4 are also as significant.

The indices of social isolation, social devaluation and task quality at work all have a positive effect on readiness to pay more taxes for the sake of the poor. Job insecurity on the other hand, has an effect negative on this attitude.

We may therefore conclude that people whose difficulties are financial or material and whose future is uncertain find it harder than others to declare that they could pay more taxes for the sake of the poor: these people are already aware of being poor themselves, and may have reflected that social policy is already pointing them out as priority targets. On the other hand, people who suffer from social isolation or social devaluation feel more spontaneously solidaristic because they hope that an upsurge of solidarity will give them more chance to participate.

**Table 7.4 Logistic regression for the probability of agreeing with the proposition:  
"I would be prepared to pay more taxes if I was certain they would be used to  
improve the situation of the poor"**

| <b>Variables</b>                        |                                     | <b>B. Sig</b>    |
|-----------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|------------------|
| <b>Constant</b>                         |                                     | 0.22*            |
| <b>Gender</b>                           |                                     |                  |
| <b>Men</b>                              |                                     | <i>Reference</i> |
| <b>Women</b>                            |                                     | -0.06*           |
| <b>Age</b>                              | 15 - 24                             | -0.28***         |
|                                         | 25 - 34                             | -0.06 ns         |
|                                         | 35 - 44                             | <i>Reference</i> |
|                                         | 45 - 54                             | -0.01 ns         |
|                                         | 55 - 64                             | -0.09 ns         |
|                                         | 65+                                 | -0.23***         |
| <b>Employment status</b>                | In paid work                        | <i>Reference</i> |
|                                         | Unemployed                          | 0.14 ns          |
|                                         | Inactive                            | 0.17**           |
| <b>Income</b>                           | below lower quartile                | -0.31***         |
|                                         | lower quartile to median            | -0.10 ns         |
|                                         | median to upper quartile            | -0.05 ns         |
|                                         | above upper quartile                | <i>Reference</i> |
| <b>Country</b>                          |                                     |                  |
| NORTHERN COUNTRIES                      | Belgium                             | -0.55***         |
|                                         | Denmark                             | -0.18*           |
|                                         | Germany-West                        | -1.07***         |
|                                         | Germany-East                        | -0.71***         |
|                                         | France                              | -0.39***         |
|                                         | Great Britain                       | <i>Reference</i> |
|                                         | Ireland                             | -0.03 ns         |
|                                         | Netherlands                         | 0.05 ns          |
|                                         | Finland                             | -0.24**          |
|                                         | Sweden                              | 0.07 ns          |
|                                         | Austria                             | -0.93***         |
|                                         | Luxembourg                          | -0.04 ns         |
| SOUTHERN COUNTRIES                      | Italy                               | 0.01 ns          |
|                                         | Spain                               | 0.05 ns          |
|                                         | Greece                              | 0.35***          |
|                                         | Portugal                            | -0.24**          |
| <b>Negative quality of life indices</b> | Social isolation                    | 0.04*            |
|                                         | Deterioration of local surroundings | 0.01 ns          |
|                                         | Social devaluation                  | 0.07**           |
| <b>Work and employment</b>              | Task quality                        | 0.10**           |
|                                         | Work pressure                       | 0.01 ns          |
|                                         | Career development                  | -0.04 ns         |
|                                         | Job insecurity                      | -0.16**          |

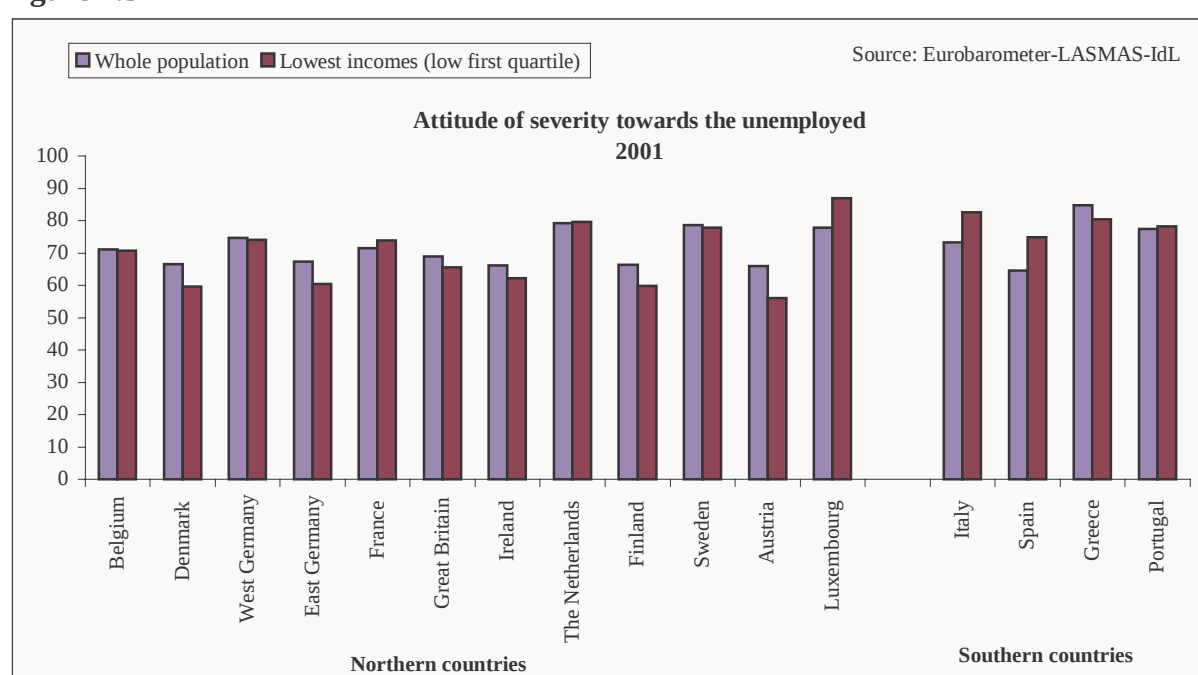
\*: P < 0.05, \*\*: P < 0.01, \*\*\*: P < 0,001, ns: not significant

### *Severity of attitudes towards the unemployed*

Lastly, we should note that a high proportion of people in each country agree with the proposition "people without a job should be forced to accept one quickly, even if it's not as good as what they used to do" (cf. figure 7.5).

This high proportion is probably to be ascribed to the improvement in the economic climate and the reduction of unemployment. In a period where jobs are being created, the unemployed who do not find work are more likely to be suspected of not wanting it.

**Figure 7.5**



As might be expected, the unemployed themselves do not subscribe to this notion. People under 35, people whose income is below the median, and people with little job security are also significantly less likely to agree with this proposition (cf. table 7.5).

The results of the logistic regression also confirm wide national differences. Of the northern countries, the Netherlands and Sweden are the most favourable to this proposition. These two countries are well known to have developed very active job access policies, and the population probably thinks quite favourably of these. We may also note, however, the case of Denmark, again a country with an active policy on access to employment, but where opinion is nonetheless significantly less in agreement with such severity towards the unemployed. Among southern countries, opinion in both Greece and Portugal is more likely to agree with it than in Italy or Spain.

**Table 7.5 Logistic regression for the probability of agreeing with the proposition: "people without a job should be forced to accept one quickly, even if it's not as good as what they used to do".**

| Variables                        |                                     | B. Sig    |
|----------------------------------|-------------------------------------|-----------|
| Constant                         |                                     | 1.15***   |
| Gender                           |                                     |           |
| Men                              |                                     | Reference |
| Women                            |                                     | 0.05 ns   |
| Age                              | 15 - 24                             | -0.16**   |
|                                  | 25 - 34                             | -0.15**   |
|                                  | 35 - 44                             | Reference |
|                                  | 45 - 54                             | 0.07 ns   |
|                                  | 55 - 64                             | 0.35***   |
|                                  | 65+                                 | 0.47***   |
| Employment status                | In paid work                        | Reference |
|                                  | Unemployed                          | -0.77***  |
|                                  | Inactive                            | -0.24***  |
| Income                           | below lower quartile                | -0.16**   |
|                                  | lower quartile to median            | -0.19**   |
|                                  | median to upper quartile            | -0.07 ns  |
|                                  | above upper quartile                | Reference |
| Country                          |                                     |           |
| NORTHERN COUNTRIES               | Belgium                             | 0.05 ns   |
|                                  | Denmark                             | -0.24**   |
|                                  | Germany-West                        | 0.18 ns   |
|                                  | Germany-East                        | -0.05 ns  |
|                                  | France                              | 0.04 ns   |
|                                  | Great Britain                       | Reference |
|                                  | Ireland                             | -0.15 ns  |
|                                  | Netherlands                         | 0.51***   |
|                                  | Finland                             | -0.11 ns  |
|                                  | Sweden                              | 0.45***   |
|                                  | Austria                             | -0.20*    |
|                                  | Luxembourg                          | 0.34**    |
| SOUTHERN COUNTRIES               | Italy                               | 0.20*     |
|                                  | Spain                               | -0.24**   |
|                                  | Greece                              | 0.90***   |
|                                  | Portugal                            | 0.44***   |
| Negative quality of life indices | Social isolation                    | -0.04 ns  |
|                                  | Deterioration of local surroundings | -0.02 ns  |
|                                  | Social devaluation                  | -0.01 ns  |
| Work and employment              | Task quality                        | -0.04 ns  |
|                                  | Work pressure                       | -0.03 ns  |
|                                  | Career development                  | 0.03 ns   |
|                                  | Job security                        | -0.15**   |

\*: P < 0.05, \*\*: P < 0.01, \*\*\*: P < 0.001, ns: not significant

## Conclusion

We have shown in the first section of this chapter that dissatisfaction with the society one lives in and dissatisfaction with the way democracy works both vary widely from country to country. These two forms of dissatisfaction are very rare in Denmark, and particularly widespread in eastern Germany, France, Italy and Greece. The unemployed, and those with the lowest incomes are particularly prone to dissatisfaction in both these areas; and the indices of negative well-being also have a significant effect: the social isolation, run-down local surroundings and social devaluation make it more likely a person will be dissatisfied with society. We also find that job insecurity is a factor in dissatisfaction with society, while quality of work tends to promote satisfaction. We may therefore conclude that these two forms of dissatisfaction are similar, both expressing a deep social discontent which we may regard as more or less generally shared.

The second section showed that approval for the principle of government intervention in social policy also varies from country to country. In countries where social policy is less developed the index is particularly high, especially in southern countries, where expectations appear to be considerable. On the other hand, in certain northern countries, the index is lower, especially in Denmark, western Germany, the Netherlands and Austria. We concluded that public opinion in the countries which seem behind at present appears to be truly in favour of catching up; if so, this ought increasingly to find expression in greater harmonisation of European social policies. The results also confirmed that support for the principle of government intervention in the form of social policy is stronger among the unemployed, the poorest groups, and those who have enjoyed some career development, that is, those whose material situation and social status may depend – or may have depended – on such intervention.

It will also be recalled that among the countries with the most widespread readiness to pay more taxes we found Denmark, Great Britain, Sweden, and Luxembourg; and also Italy and Spain. The lowest income groups tend not to accept the idea of paying more taxes, no doubt because their situation does not allow it. Job insecurity contributes negatively to solidaristic attitudes, while task quality at work is a positive factor. Lastly, we should note that a high proportion of people in each country agree with the proposition "The unemployed should be forced to take a job quickly, even if it is not as good as their previous job". We may surmise that the reduction in unemployment and the creation of jobs is making this view more popular, even though the issue of occupational insecurity still remains and is inducing those professionally concerned with issues of job access and placement to think more and more about the quality of jobs.

## Chapter 8

### Conclusion

Our detailed results are presented in the summary and the text of the chapters. Here we confine ourselves to highlighting just a few of the broader conclusions and pointing to some of their implications for the future development of welfare policies.

First, compared to 1993, there has been a decline both in the proportion of people directly experiencing financial difficulty and in the visibility of poverty. This is consistent with the marked fall in unemployment rates and the general improvement in economic conditions over this period. However, this general trend towards the reduction of poverty has to be taken in the context of considerable differences between countries, with some of the Southern countries still showing very high levels (and particularly long durations) of subjective poverty. Further, the general trend to improvement has been accompanied by an increase in some of the difficulties experienced by the poor for instance with respect to meeting housing costs, the lack of social support and dissatisfaction with family and social life. While this pattern may be explicable partly in terms of the changing composition of the poor as economic circumstances improved, it is notable that there has been a marked trend over the same period towards a less sympathetic interpretation of poverty on the part of the general population which could well have made social relationships more difficult for the poor. Hence while the problem of the precarity of living conditions may have grown smaller in terms of the numbers involved, the demands on effective policy for helping those who are still poor may have grown greater.

Turning to longer term determinants of the risk of social exclusion, the evidence suggests that employment growth since 1996 had not been accompanied by an improvement in several aspects of work that are of particular importance for reducing future risks of marginalisation. There has been no improvement (rather a decline) in task quality, which is important for the maintenance of people's motivation to remain in employment and for the preservation of their learning and decision-making skills. While the overall trend is still towards higher skill levels, there has been a decline compared to the mid-1990s in the pace of upskilling. Most worryingly, there has been no sign of progress in developing the opportunities for skill maintenance and skill development for the low-skilled, the category that is the most vulnerable to job loss and labour market marginalisation. However, we found no evidence that there has been a marked intensification of work. Further, while a substantial proportion of the workforce experienced high levels of stress at work, there has been some decline rather than a rise in stress compared with the mid-1990s.

There is also evidence of improvement in short-term job security, reflecting the reduction of unemployment over the period. But, given its dependence on the economic cycle, short-term job security remains problematic. There is clearly a vital need to improve the quality of the jobs and of the work skills of the low skilled so that they will be in a stronger position on the labour market in periods of economic difficulty.

Precarity in both living and work conditions appears to have serious implications not only for people's personal experiences but also for their attitudes to the wider society. Those in a more precarious work situation were less committed to employment, had lower job satisfaction and higher work-related stress. Precarity in both work and living conditions was associated with lower life satisfaction and increased psychological distress. Given the severe implications of precarity for people's personal welfare it is understandable that it also appeared to influence the way people viewed the society they lived in. Those who suffered from precarity, across the range of dimensions we studied, were significantly more dissatisfied by the society they lived in and by the functioning of its democratic institutions. In short, in addition to their importance for the risk of marginalisation and social exclusion, precarity in living and work conditions are deeply problematic for the social cohesion of society.

The report raises three questions concerning current policies to combat poverty and social exclusion. These relate to the implications of such policies for stigmatisation; the need to extend policies to issues of the quality of jobs and finally the persisting differences in experiences between the Northern and Southern European societies.

The policies initially developed from the late 1970s to counter the effects of a sharp rise in unemployment and poverty aimed above all to reduce the level of unemployment and to help people (and their families) who had fallen into a marginal position on the labour market by offering a range of options to facilitate both occupational and social reinsertion. For most of the time these policies were underpinned by a type of collective empathy towards the unemployed and the excluded, since, at the height of the employment crisis, poverty was seen as arising above all from social injustice. With the return to growth and the improvement in the economic context, this empathy has sharply diminished.

At the same time, there has been a re-orientation of employment policy, reflecting concern about the risks of social exclusion for the long-term unemployed. Increasingly the tendency has been to move away from the social management of mass and long-term unemployment in order to more actively encourage job acquisition. At one level this has involved the provision of more individualised counselling and monitoring and increased training opportunities. At another it has involved tighter control of the steps taken by the unemployed to obtain work, the creation of financial incentives for those who get back to work and the imposition of sanctions against those who are judged to be insufficiently active. The survey results suggest that this policy re-orientation is accepted by the majority of people in each country, given the prevalence of agreement with the proposition that the unemployed should be forced to take a job rapidly, even if it is less good than the one they had previously.

Such policies may contribute to more rapid re-insertion in employment, in particular for those with relevant skills. However, they also have the potential risk of entrenching a type of social dualism in a climate which we have seen has already become more unfavourable to the disadvantaged. They may increase the risk of stigmatisation for low-skilled long-term unemployed people, who are blamed for their difficulties, irrespective of the problems they have encountered in their lives and the real structural barriers to their reinsertion.

It is important, then, to assess carefully the long-term implications of the shift in the nature of policies against unemployment and social exclusion to ensure that they do not have the effect of increasing discrimination against those requiring specific types of help or by encouraging a distinction between what were known in an earlier historical period as the 'good' and the 'bad' poor. Our report underlines the fact that the poor population in every country is heterogeneous, that the difficulties and needs encountered are highly variable and that deep and persistent poverty, often transferred from one generation to the next, have not disappeared in Europe. To reinforce social cohesion, it is vital to continue to construct a diversified set of mechanisms to improve the chances of those experiencing greatest hardship to participate in the economic, social and political life of their country.

For many years, policies against poverty and social exclusion have focused on unemployment and its social consequences. Given the evidence on the severity of the effects of unemployment, policy makers have increasingly emphasised that the key to the exit from poverty lies through access to employment. Getting people into work has become a privileged axis of policy. Throughout this period, policy makers in most countries have passed in silence over the crucial question of the quality of jobs. Our report shows that it is not sufficient to have a job to be well integrated into the world of work. Employment *per se* cannot adequately protect against poverty in the longer-run when a substantial proportion of jobs are insecure or poorly paid. There remains, as has been seen, a considerable proportion of employees in jobs that are not enriching and that offer little in the way of career perspectives. The recent pattern of change in this respect is not encouraging, implying a potentially increasing risk of eventual financial hardship and precarity for a significant sector of the workforce. There is then an urgent need to develop policies designed to improve the skills of employees exposed to this risk and to help them, together with the unemployed, obtain jobs that are better adapted to facilitate long-term social integration.

Finally, our report has underlined the very marked differences between the Northern European countries, on the one hand, and the Southern European countries, on the other, with respect to poverty and the way it is perceived. It is clear that poverty is more of a conjunctural phenomenon in the Northern countries and more of a structural phenomenon in the Southern. Poverty was more frequently seen as resulting from a "collapse" in people's circumstances in the North whereas in the South it was viewed to a much greater extent as "inherited poverty". There may well be pressures to reduce such differences. It has been seen that subjective poverty is very widespread in the Southern countries, reflecting a high level of frustration with people's living standards and a desire for radical change.

It was also evident that expectations with respect to social policies are high. Progress in catching up with respect to both economic and social development is clearly important in the interests of social cohesion within these countries and, more broadly, within the European Union. An important stimulus to achieving this in the countries that lag behind in terms of adequate social protection lies in the extension of European initiatives for enhanced co-ordination of policies to combat poverty and social exclusion, thereby promoting greater convergence in levels of provision for the disadvantaged.

## TECHNICAL ANNEX 1 - DATA ANALYSIS

Our approach in the use of indicators has had to be pragmatic given the constraints of the data available. Where possible we have grouped questionnaire items to produce scores or indices of key measures. Examples of this are to be found in our measures for social isolation, task quality, work pressure, work strain, psychological distress and attitudes to welfare. A score or scale based on several correlated items provides more reliable information than any of the component items. But this is only a valid procedure if there is a reasonable degree of scale reliability. Before bringing together a group of items to form a composite measure, the items were tested by means of a reliability analysis. The statistical measure used to summarise inter-item reliability was Cronbach's alpha. As a broad criterion of adequacy, we have adopted the threshold of a Cronbach's alpha of .60. However, in a questionnaire that is relatively wide-ranging in its objectives, it is not practical to cover all domains in this way and in many instances we have been obliged to use individual questions as indicators. This is also necessitated by the concern for comparability with previous surveys, since questions in these were often asked only in this form.

In cases where we have produced summative scales, our main procedure for analysis has been multiple regression analysis by the ordinary least squares (OLS) method. Ordinary least squares regression requires that the dependent variable should be approximately normally distributed. It has great practical advantages by comparison with other methods, especially that the results have a direct numerical interpretation.

However, in cases where the outcome variable is binary (yes-no): for instance whether or not a person has experienced unemployment in a certain period. It is not appropriate to apply ordinary regression to this case. Instead we have carried out logistic regression analysis. For a binary outcome what one observes is the relative frequency with which "yes" and "no" occur. In logistic regression analysis this is then converted into the form of odds. The term 'odds' is used as in betting: if the outcome occurs nine times out of ten, then the odds-on are 9 to 1. For computational convenience it is actually the natural logarithm of this ratio, or log-odds, which is used. The analysis then estimates the effects of the other variables under consideration on this outcome measure.

Sometimes the outcome variable has several ordered categories, but not sufficiently many to justify the use of ordinary regression. The definition of the response set is such that one knows that particular categories of response are "higher" or "lower" than others, but it is not possible to assume that the distance between categories is equal. In this case, we have used an ordered logit procedure, which is an extension of logistic regression to multiple categories.

All of these regression procedures require the selection of reference categories, to which an effect is compared. For instance, a variable for men has the reference category of women. In the case of the analysis of changes in work precarity, the situation in each particular country has been compared to that of Germany. The choice of reference country can be guided by both theoretical and statistical considerations. It is important for the reference to have clear meaning for readers, so that they can interpret what deviations from the reference category imply. Here it has been assumed that there would be higher familiarity with the institutions of Germany as a country than would be the case with some of the smaller countries. It also has the advantage of being fairly centrally placed with respect to many of our measures so that there tend to be a range of positive and negative deviations. Finally, it provides a good base in terms of sample numbers and thereby reduces the risk of results reflecting a poorly measured base category.

## TECHNICAL ANNEX 2 – RESPONSE RATES

| <b>EB56.1</b>                | <b>B</b> | <b>DK</b> | <b>WG</b> | <b>EG</b> | <b>GR</b> | <b>E</b> | <b>F</b> | <b>IRL</b> | <b>NIRL</b> |
|------------------------------|----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|----------|----------|------------|-------------|
| N° of interviewers           | 105      | 86        | 239       | 217       | 44        | 103      | 110      | 90         | 32          |
| N° of sampling points        | 132      | 100       | 210       | 210       | 101       | 142      | 110      | 125        | 38          |
| N° of starting points        | 132      | 100       | 210       | 210       | 202       | 174      | 110      | 125        | 38          |
| N° of effective contacts     | 2144     | 2817      | 1363      | 1339      | 2393      | 1378     | 1397     | 2732       | 706         |
| N° of refusals               | 1072     | 1780      | 345       | 311       | 1386      | 329      | 383      | 1691       | 394         |
| N° of interviews interrupted | 43       | 36        | 0         | 0         | 3         | 49       | 12       | 41         | 3           |
| N° of completed interviews   | 1029     | 1001      | 1031      | 1009      | 1004      | 1000     | 1004     | 1000       | 304         |
| Response rate (%)            | 48       | 36        | 76        | 75        | 42        | 73       | 72       | 37         | 43          |

| <b>EB56.1</b>                | <b>I</b> | <b>L</b> | <b>NL</b> | <b>A</b> | <b>P</b> | <b>FIN</b> | <b>S</b> | <b>GB</b> |
|------------------------------|----------|----------|-----------|----------|----------|------------|----------|-----------|
| N° of interviewers           | 115      | 55       | 113       | 110      | 47       | 77         | 149      | 112       |
| N° of sampling points        | 103      | 74       | 113       | 166      | 165      | 170        | 56       | 112       |
| N° of starting points        | 115      | 119      | 113       | 170      | 180      | 170        | 210      | 112       |
| N° of effective contacts     | 1750     | 904      | 2099      | 1583     | 1663     | 2497       | 2012     | 3435      |
| N° of refusals               | 676      | 282      | 1025      | 358      | 628      | 1402       | 995      | 1708      |
| N° of interviews interrupted | 47       | 11       | 49        | 151      | 34       | 83         | 17       | 1019      |
| N° of completed interviews   | 992      | 611      | 1025      | 1074     | 1001     | 1012       | 1000     | 708       |
| Response rate (%)            | 56       | 68       | 49        | 68       | 60       | 41         | 50       | 21        |

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## Questionnaire

Q.2. For each of the following, please tell me if you think it absolutely necessary to live properly nowadays or not?

| READ OUT                                                                 | ABSOLUTELY<br>NECESSARY | NOT<br>ABSOLUTELY<br>NECESSARY | DK |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------|--------------------------------|----|
| 1. Having a good job                                                     | 6 1                     | 2                              | 3  |
| 2. Having a good education                                               | 7 1                     | 2                              | 3  |
| 3. Living with a partner with whom one has a good relationship (N)       | 8 1                     | 2                              | 3  |
| 4. Having children (N)                                                   | 9 1                     | 2                              | 3  |
| 5. Seeing friends regularly (N)                                          | 10 1                    | 2                              | 3  |
| 6. Having sufficient leisure time and the means to enjoy it              | 11 1                    | 2                              | 3  |
| 7. Having at least one holiday a year                                    | 12 1                    | 2                              | 3  |
| 8. Being on friendly terms with the neighbours                           | 13 1                    | 2                              | 3  |
| 9. Being able to go out with friends or family                           | 14 1                    | 2                              | 3  |
| 10. Having sufficient accommodation for everyone to have their own space | 15 1                    | 2                              | 3  |
| 11. Being able to be useful to others                                    | 16 1                    | 2                              | 3  |
| 12. Feeling recognised by society                                        | 17 1                    | 2                              | 3  |
| 13. Having a successful career (N)                                       | 18 1                    | 2                              | 3  |
| 14. Participating in associations, unions or parties (M)                 | 19 1                    | 2                              | 3  |

EB40 - Q.83 - TREND MODIFIED

Q.3. In your opinion, what would be the very lowest net weekly income that your household would have to have in order to make ends meet, given the present circumstances and composition of your household? Net income is after tax and social security contributions have been deducted. (ONE ANSWER ONLY)  
(INT: IF "DK", CODE '000000000' - IF "REFUSAL", CODE '999999999')

+---+---+---+---+---+---+---+---+---+---+ 20  
| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |  
+---+---+---+---+---+---+---+---+---+---+

EB56.1 - NEW

Q.4. Is the total net weekly income of your household higher, lower or more or less the same as this figure?

Higher..... 21 1  
Lower..... 2  
More or less the same..... 3  
DK..... 4  
Refusal..... 5

EB5 - Q.153 - TREND MODIFIED

Q.5. How well do you get by with your household's income? (SHOW CARD - READ OUT - ONE ANSWER ONLY)

With great difficulty..... 22 1 GO TO Q.6  
With difficulty..... 2 GO TO Q.6  
Easily..... 3 GO TO Q.9  
Very easily..... 4 GO TO Q.9  
DK..... 5 GO TO Q.9  
Refusal..... 6 GO TO Q.9

EB40 - D.29.g - TREND MODIFIED

IF "WITH DIFFICULTY", CODE 1 OR 2 IN Q.5, OTHERS GO TO Q.9

Q.6. How long has your household been in this financial situation? (ONE ANSWER ONLY)

|                        |    |   |
|------------------------|----|---|
| Less than a year.....  | 23 | 1 |
| 1 year.....            |    | 2 |
| From 2 to 3 years..... |    | 3 |
| From 4 to 5 years..... |    | 4 |
| From 6 à 10 years..... |    | 5 |
| Over 10 years.....     |    | 6 |
| DK.....                |    | 7 |
| Refusal.....           |    | 8 |

EB56.1 - NEW

Q.7. Have any of the following events had an effect on your household's current financial situation? (SHOW CARD - READ OUT - MULTIPLE ANSWERS POSSIBLE)

|                                                        |    |     |
|--------------------------------------------------------|----|-----|
| I have a low paid job.....                             | 24 | 1,  |
| I lost my job.....                                     |    | 2,  |
| My partner lost his(her) job.....                      |    | 3,  |
| I broke up with the person with whom I was living..... |    | 4,  |
| I had a child.....                                     |    | 5,  |
| My child(ren) started school.....                      |    | 6,  |
| I had health problems.....                             |    | 7,  |
| I retired.....                                         |    | 8,  |
| My partner retired.....                                |    | 9,  |
| No, none of these (SPONTANEOUS).....                   |    | 10, |
| DK.....                                                |    | 11, |
| Refusal.....                                           |    | 12, |

EB56.1 - NEW

Q.8. When do you think your household will be out of this difficult financial situation? (SHOW CARD - READ OUT - ONE ANSWER ONLY)

|                          |    |   |
|--------------------------|----|---|
| In less than a year..... | 25 | 1 |
| In 1 year.....           |    | 2 |
| In 2 or 3 years.....     |    | 3 |
| In 4 or 5 years.....     |    | 4 |
| In 6 to 9 years.....     |    | 5 |
| In 10 years or more..... |    | 6 |
| Never (SPONTANEOUS)..... |    | 7 |
| DK.....                  |    | 8 |
| Refusal.....             |    | 9 |

EB56.1 - NEW

ASK ALL

Q.9. In the last twelve months, have you, or any member of your household, had problems in...? (SHOW CARD WITH SCALE)

| READ OUT                                               | NO<br>PROBLEM | SOME<br>PROBLEMS | A LOT OF<br>PROBLEMS | ENORMOUS<br>PROBLEMS | DK |
|--------------------------------------------------------|---------------|------------------|----------------------|----------------------|----|
| 1. paying the rent or mortgage                         | 26 1          | 2                | 3                    | 4                    | 5  |
| 2. paying the water, gas, electricity or heating bills | 27 1          | 2                | 3                    | 4                    | 5  |
| 3. paying for food                                     | 28 1          | 2                | 3                    | 4                    | 5  |
| 4. repaying loans (other than for housing)             | 29 1          | 2                | 3                    | 4                    | 5  |

EB40 - D.29.f - TREND

Q.10. In the area where you live, are there people who live in one or the other of the following situations? (SHOW CARD - READ OUT - MULTIPLE ANSWERS POSSIBLE)

|                                      |       |            |
|--------------------------------------|-------|------------|
| Situation of extreme poverty.....    | 30 1, | GO TO Q.11 |
| Situation of poverty.....            | 2,    | GO TO Q.11 |
| At risk of falling into poverty..... | 3,    | GO TO Q.13 |
| Nobody in these situations.....      | 4,    | GO TO Q.13 |
| DK.....                              | 5,    | GO TO Q.13 |

EB40 - Q.68.a - TREND

IF "SITUATION OF POVERTY", CODE 1 OR 2 IN Q.10, OTHERS GO TO Q.13

Q.11. Do you ever happen to see for yourself the conditions in which these people really live?  
(IF YES) Do you see these conditions often, sometimes or rarely?

|                     |      |            |
|---------------------|------|------------|
| Yes, often.....     | 31 1 | GO TO Q.12 |
| Yes, sometimes..... | 2    | GO TO Q.12 |
| Yes, rarely.....    | 3    | GO TO Q.12 |
| No, never.....      | 4    | GO TO Q.13 |
| DK.....             | 5    | GO TO Q.13 |

EB40 - Q.70 - TREND MODIFIED

IF "YES", CODE 1, 2 OR 3 IN Q.11

Q.12. Would you say that, for the most part, these people...? (SHOW CARD - READ OUT - ONE ANSWER ONLY)

|                                                         |      |
|---------------------------------------------------------|------|
| have always been in their present situation.....        | 32 1 |
| have fallen into it after knowing something better..... | 2    |
| DK.....                                                 | 3    |
| Refusal (N).....                                        | 4    |

EB40 - Q.71 - TREND MODIFIED

ASK ALL

Q.13. Why in your opinion are there people who live in need? Here are four opinions: which is closest to yours? (SHOW CARD - READ OUT - ONE ANSWER ONLY)

|                                                     |      |
|-----------------------------------------------------|------|
| Because they have been unlucky.....                 | 33 1 |
| Because of laziness and lack of willpower.....      | 2    |
| Because there is much injustice in our society..... | 3    |
| It's an inevitable part of modern progress.....     | 4    |
| None of these (SPONTANEOUS).....                    | 5    |
| DK.....                                             | 6    |

EB40 - Q.74 - TREND

Q.14. Here are some reasons, which might explain why people are socially excluded. Which three do you think are the most common? (SHOW CARD - READ OUT - MAXIMUM 3 ANSWERS)

|                                             |    |     |
|---------------------------------------------|----|-----|
| Social welfare cuts.....                    | 34 | 1,  |
| Lack of concern amongst neighbours.....     |    | 2,  |
| Sickness.....                               |    | 3,  |
| Family break-ups.....                       |    | 4,  |
| Their parents were poor.....                |    | 5,  |
| Losing community spirit in our society..... |    | 6,  |
| Alcoholism.....                             |    | 7,  |
| Long-term unemployment.....                 |    | 8,  |
| They live in a poor area.....               |    | 9,  |
| Drug abuse.....                             |    | 10, |
| They don't plan for the future.....         |    | 11, |
| Lack of education.....                      |    | 12, |
| They are lazy.....                          |    | 13, |
| They have too many children.....            |    | 14, |
| They are immigrants.....                    |    | 15, |
| They have chosen to be like this.....       |    | 16, |
| DK.....                                     |    | 17, |

EB40 - Q.72 - TREND

Q.15. Which of these statements comes closest to your view? (SHOW CARD - READ OUT - ONE ANSWER ONLY)

|                                                                  |    |   |
|------------------------------------------------------------------|----|---|
| Anyone is at risk of poverty at some point in their lives.....   | 35 | 1 |
| The risk of poverty is confined to certain groups of people..... |    | 2 |
| None of these two statements (SPONTANEOUS).....                  |    | 3 |
| DK.....                                                          |    | 4 |

EB56.1 - NEW

Q.16. In the last five years, have you ever been unemployed, or not?

|          |    |   |
|----------|----|---|
| Yes..... | 36 | 1 |
| No.....  |    | 2 |

(IF YES) How many times have you been unemployed in the last five years?  
(INT.: IF "NEVER", CODE '00' - IF "REFUSAL", CODE '98' - IF "DK", CODE '99')

+--+--+ 37  
| | |  
| | |  
+--+--+

EB40 - Q.15.c - TREND

IF "YES", CODE 1 IN Q.16

Q.17. For how long in total have you been unemployed in the last five years?

|                                          |    |   |
|------------------------------------------|----|---|
| Less than a week.....                    | 38 | 1 |
| From a week to less than 3 months.....   |    | 2 |
| From 3 months to less than 6 months..... |    | 3 |
| From 6 months to less than 1 year.....   |    | 4 |
| From 1 year to less than 2 years.....    |    | 5 |
| From 2 years to less than 3 years.....   |    | 6 |
| 3 years or more.....                     |    | 7 |
| DK.....                                  |    | 8 |
| Refusal.....                             |    | 9 |

EB40 - Q.15.d - TREND MODIFIED

ASK ALL

Q.18. For each of these statements, please tell me if it applies to your situation, or not.

| READ OUT                                                                    | YES  | NO | DK | NOT APPLICABLE |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------|------|----|----|----------------|
| 1. My partner has a paid job                                                | 39 1 | 2  | 3  | 4              |
| 2. I have a child at home under five years of age                           | 40 1 | 2  | 3  | 4              |
| 3. I have close friends or family who are poor                              | 41 1 | 2  | 3  | 4              |
| 4. I have close friends or family who are much richer than I am             | 42 1 | 2  | 3  | 4              |
| 5. I talk to my neighbours almost every day                                 | 43 1 | 2  | 3  | 4              |
| 6. I meet my friends several times a week                                   | 44 1 | 2  | 3  | 4              |
| 7. I meet up with relatives from outside the household several times a week | 45 1 | 2  | 3  | 4              |
| 8. Over half of my friends are unemployed                                   | 46 1 | 2  | 3  | 4              |
| 9. Over half of my friends are in paid work                                 | 47 1 | 2  | 3  | 4              |
| 10. I am a member of a leisure or sports club                               | 48 1 | 2  | 3  | 4              |
| 11. I am a member of a voluntary or charitable organisation                 | 49 1 | 2  | 3  | 4              |
| 12. I am a member of a political party                                      | 50 1 | 2  | 3  | 4              |
| 13. I go regularly to church (or to another place of worship)               | 51 1 | 2  | 3  | 4              |

EB56.1 - NEW

Q.19. If you had any of the following problems, is there anyone you could rely on to help you, from outside your own household?

| READ OUT                                                                                        | YES  | NO | DK |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------|----|----|
| 1. If you were feeling depressed                                                                | 52 1 | 2  | 3  |
| 2. If you needed help finding a job for yourself or a member of your family                     | 53 1 | 2  | 3  |
| 3. If you needed to borrow money to pay an urgent bill, like electricity, gas, rent or mortgage | 54 1 | 2  | 3  |

EB44.3 - Q.86 - TREND

Q.20. I am now going to ask you to talk to me about different aspects of your everyday life. For each of them, could you tell me if you think this aspect of your life is very good, fairly good, fairly bad or very bad? (SHOW CARD WITH SCALE - ONE ANSWER ONLY)

| READ OUT                                                                           | VERY GOOD | FAIRLY GOOD | FAIRLY BAD | VERY BAD | DK |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------|-------------|------------|----------|----|
| 1. Your house or flat                                                              | 55 1      | 2           | 3          | 4        | 5  |
| 2. The area where you live                                                         | 56 1      | 2           | 3          | 4        | 5  |
| 3. Your income                                                                     | 57 1      | 2           | 3          | 4        | 5  |
| 4. Your standard of living                                                         | 58 1      | 2           | 3          | 4        | 5  |
| 5. Travel facilities for going to work, shopping (M)                               | 59 1      | 2           | 3          | 4        | 5  |
| 6. Your state of health                                                            | 60 1      | 2           | 3          | 4        | 5  |
| 7. The time you have available to do the things you have to do                     | 61 1      | 2           | 3          | 4        | 5  |
| 8. The medical services in your local area (N)                                     | 62 1      | 2           | 3          | 4        | 5  |
| 9. Your social entitlements in case of sickness, invalidity, unemployment, old age | 63 1      | 2           | 3          | 4        | 5  |
| 10. The consideration shown to you by other people                                 | 64 1      | 2           | 3          | 4        | 5  |
| 11. The shopping facilities in your local area (N)                                 | 65 1      | 2           | 3          | 4        | 5  |
| 12. The job opportunities in your local area (N)                                   | 66 1      | 2           | 3          | 4        | 5  |
| 13. The level of noise where you live (N)                                          | 67 1      | 2           | 3          | 4        | 5  |

EB40 - Q.85 - TREND MODIFIED

Q.21. Do you agree or disagree with the following statements? (SHOW CARD WITH SCALE - ONE ANSWER ONLY)

| READ OUT                                                                       | STRONGLY<br>AGREE | AGREE | NEITHER<br>AGREE<br>NOR DISAGREE | DISAGREE | STRONGLY<br>DISAGREE | DK |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------|-------|----------------------------------|----------|----------------------|----|
| 1. I have felt lonely at some time during the last two weeks                   | 68 1              | 2     | 3                                | 4        | 5                    | 6  |
| 2. I don't feel that the value of what I do is recognised by the people I meet | 69 1              | 2     | 3                                | 4        | 5                    | 6  |
| 3. It's difficult to have close friends in the area in which I live            | 70 1              | 2     | 3                                | 4        | 5                    | 6  |
| 4. I feel left out of society                                                  | 71 1              | 2     | 3                                | 4        | 5                    | 6  |
| 5. I feel left out of my family                                                | 72 1              | 2     | 3                                | 4        | 5                    | 6  |
| 6. I don't feel that I have the chance to play a useful part in society        | 73 1              | 2     | 3                                | 4        | 5                    | 6  |
| 7. Some people look down on me because of my income or job situation           | 74 1              | 2     | 3                                | 4        | 5                    | 6  |
| 8. I feel that there is a risk that I could fall into poverty                  | 75 1              | 2     | 3                                | 4        | 5                    | 6  |
| 9. The area in which I live has buildings in a bad state of repair             | 76 1              | 2     | 3                                | 4        | 5                    | 6  |
| 10. There is a lot of unemployment in the area in which I live                 | 77 1              | 2     | 3                                | 4        | 5                    | 6  |
| 11. There are problems of drug abuse in the area in which I live               | 78 1              | 2     | 3                                | 4        | 5                    | 6  |
| 12. The area in which I live has a lot of vandalism and theft                  | 79 1              | 2     | 3                                | 4        | 5                    | 6  |
| 13. There is a lot of violence in the area in which I live                     | 80 1              | 2     | 3                                | 4        | 5                    | 6  |
| 14. The area in which I live has not got a good reputation                     | 81 1              | 2     | 3                                | 4        | 5                    | 6  |

EB56.1 - NEW

D.15. a) What is your current occupation?  
b) (IF NOT DOING ANY PAID WORK CURRENTLY - CODES 1 TO 4 IN D.15.a) Did you do any paid work in the past?  
What was your last occupation?

|                                                                                                              | a) CURRENT<br>OCCUPATION | b) LAST<br>OCCUPATION |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------|
| NOT WORKING                                                                                                  |                          |                       |
| Responsible for ordinary shopping and looking after the home, or without any current occupation, not working | 82 1                     |                       |
| Student                                                                                                      | 2                        |                       |
| Unemployed or temporarily not working                                                                        | 3                        |                       |
| Retired or unable to work through illness                                                                    | 4                        |                       |
| SELF EMPLOYED                                                                                                |                          |                       |
| Farmer                                                                                                       | 5                        | 83 1                  |
| Fisherman                                                                                                    | 6                        | 2                     |
| Professional (lawyer, medical practitioner, accountant, architect, etc.)                                     | 7                        | 3                     |
| Owner of a shop, craftsmen, other self-employed person                                                       | 8                        | 4                     |
| Business proprietors, owner (full or partner) of a company                                                   | 9                        | 5                     |
| EMPLOYED                                                                                                     |                          |                       |
| Employed professional (employed doctor, lawyer, accountant, architect, etc.)                                 | 10                       | 6                     |
| General management, director or top management (managing directors, director general, other director)        | 11                       | 7                     |
| Middle management, other management (department head, junior manager, teacher, technician)                   | 12                       | 8                     |
| Employed position, working mainly at a desk                                                                  | 13                       | 9                     |
| Employed position, not at a desk but travelling (salesmen, driver, etc.)                                     | 14                       | 10                    |
| Employed position, not at a desk, but in a service job (hospital, restaurant, police, fireman, etc.)         | 15                       | 11                    |
| Supervisor                                                                                                   | 16                       | 12                    |
| Skilled manual worker                                                                                        | 17                       | 13                    |
| Other (unskilled) manual worker, servant                                                                     | 18                       | 14                    |
| NEVER DID ANY PAID WORK                                                                                      |                          | 15                    |

EB55.2 - D.15 - DEMO TREND

IF "UNEMPLOYED" OR "NON-ACTIVE", CODE 1, 2, 3 OR 4 IN D.15.a

Q.22. Which of these statements comes closest to your personal position? (SHOW CARD - READ OUT - ONE ANSWER ONLY)

|                                                                                   |      |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------|
| I would like a full-time paid job and I am actively looking for one.....          | 84 1 |
| I would like a part-time paid job and I am actively looking for one.....          | 2    |
| I would like a paid job, but I am not actively looking for one at the moment..... | 3    |
| I do not want a paid job.....                                                     | 4    |
| DK.....                                                                           | 5    |

EB56.1 - NEW

IF "EMPLOYED" OR "SELF-EMPLOYED", CODE 5 TO 18 IN D.15.a, OTHERS GO TO Q.44

Q.23. For you personally, how important do you think each of the following is in choosing a job? Would you say it is very important, important, neither important nor unimportant, not important or not important at all? (SHOW CARD WITH SCALE - ONE ANSWER ONLY)

| READ OUT                                                           | VERY<br>IMPORTANT | IMPORTANT | NEITHER<br>IMPORTANT NOR<br>UNIMPORTANT | NOT<br>IMPORTANT | NOT<br>IMPORTANT<br>AT ALL | DK |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------|-----------|-----------------------------------------|------------------|----------------------------|----|
| 1. A job that leaves a lot of leisure time                         | 85 1              | 2         | 3                                       | 4                | 5                          | 6  |
| 2. A secure job                                                    | 86 1              | 2         | 3                                       | 4                | 5                          | 6  |
| 3. A high income                                                   | 87 1              | 2         | 3                                       | 4                | 5                          | 6  |
| 4. A job that allows you to work independently                     | 88 1              | 2         | 3                                       | 4                | 5                          | 6  |
| 5. Friendly people to work with                                    | 89 1              | 2         | 3                                       | 4                | 5                          | 6  |
| 6. A job that gives good promotion opportunities                   | 90 1              | 2         | 3                                       | 4                | 5                          | 6  |
| 7. A job that enables you to use your own initiative               | 91 1              | 2         | 3                                       | 4                | 5                          | 6  |
| 8. A job with flexible working hours                               | 92 1              | 2         | 3                                       | 4                | 5                          | 6  |
| 9. A job that gives you the opportunity to use your abilities      | 93 1              | 2         | 3                                       | 4                | 5                          | 6  |
| 10. Convenient hours of work                                       | 94 1              | 2         | 3                                       | 4                | 5                          | 6  |
| 11. Good training provision                                        | 95 1              | 2         | 3                                       | 4                | 5                          | 6  |
| 12. A job that allows you to work all or a lot of the time at home | 96 1              | 2         | 3                                       | 4                | 5                          | 6  |
| 13. A job with a lot of variety (N)                                | 97 1              | 2         | 3                                       | 4                | 5                          | 6  |
| 14. A job with an easy workload (N)                                | 98 1              | 2         | 3                                       | 4                | 5                          | 6  |

EB44.3 - Q.77 - TREND MODIFIED

Q.24. What is the full title of your main job?  
(INT.: PROBE TO GET CLEAR JOB TITLE - ISCO CODING - OFFICE CODING)

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+---+ 99  
| | |  
| | |  
+---+

EB44.3 - Q.10 - TREND

Q.25. Which of these categories best describes your job? (SHOW CARD - READ OUT - ONE ANSWER ONLY)

|                                                              |     |   |
|--------------------------------------------------------------|-----|---|
| Self-employed with employees.....                            | 100 | 1 |
| Self-employed without employees.....                         |     | 2 |
| Manager(ess).....                                            |     | 3 |
| Foreman or supervisor.....                                   |     | 4 |
| Other employee, permanent job.....                           |     | 5 |
| Other employee, seasonal, temporary or casual job.....       |     | 6 |
| Other employee, under contract or for fixed time period..... |     | 7 |
| Other (SPONTANEOUS).....                                     |     | 8 |
| DK.....                                                      |     | 9 |

EB44.3 - Q.11 - TREND

Q.26. How many people are employed at your workplace? (SHOW CARD - READ OUT - ONE ANSWER ONLY)

|                                |     |   |
|--------------------------------|-----|---|
| I work entirely on my own..... | 101 | 1 |
| Less than 10 people.....       |     | 2 |
| From 10 to 24 people.....      |     | 3 |
| From 25 to 49 people.....      |     | 4 |
| From 50 to 99 people.....      |     | 5 |
| From 100 to 499 people.....    |     | 6 |
| 500 people or more.....        |     | 7 |
| DK.....                        |     | 8 |

EB44.3 - Q.13 - TREND

Q.27. What does the firm or organization that you currently work for actually make or do?  
(INT.: PROBE TO GET CLEAR INFORMATION - NACE CODING - OFFICE CODING)

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+---+---+ 102  
| | |  
| | |  
+---+---+

EB44.3 - Q.14 - TREND

Q.28. How long have you been continuously employed by this employer/continuously self-employed?  
(INT.: IF LESS THAN A YEAR, CODE '00' FOR NUMBER OF YEARS AND FILL IN ONLY NUMBER OF MONTHS - IF "REFUSAL", CODE '98' - IF "DK", CODE '99')

Number of years:

+---+---+ 103  
| | |  
| | |  
+---+---+

Number of months:

+---+---+ 104  
| | |  
| | |  
+---+---+

EB44.3 - Q.15 - TREND

Q.29. How many hours do you usually work a week in your job, including overtime? Please do not include meal breaks. If it varies, take the average over the last 4 weeks.  
(INT.: IF "REFUSAL", CODE '998' - IF "DK": CODE '999')

Number of hours:

+---+---+---+ 105  
| | | |  
| | | |  
+---+---+---+

EB44.3 - Q.23.a - TREND

Q.30. a) If you were to get enough money to live as comfortably as you would like for the rest of your life, would you continue to work, not necessarily in your present job, or would you stop working?

|                       |     |   |
|-----------------------|-----|---|
| Continue to work..... | 106 | 1 |
| Stop working.....     |     | 2 |
| DK.....               |     | 3 |

EB44.3 - Q.40.a - TREND MODIFIED

Q.30. b) If you were completely free to choose, how many hours a week would you like to work overall?  
(INT.: IF "REFUSAL", CODE '998' - IF "DK", CODE '999')

Number of hours:

+---+---+ 107  
| | | |  
| | | |  
+---+---+

EB44.3 - Q.40.b - TREND MODIFIED

Q.31. For each of the following statements, please tell me if it applies to you, or not?

| READ OUT                                                                                                          | APPLIES | DOES NOT APPLY | DK |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------|----------------|----|
| 1. My job is a part-time job (N)                                                                                  | 108 1   | 2              | 3  |
| 2. I work for a temporary employment agency (N)                                                                   | 109 1   | 2              | 3  |
| 3. The organisation I work for is in the private rather than the public sector                                    | 110 1   | 2              | 3  |
| 4. I can use almost all of my experience, skills and abilities in my present job                                  | 111 1   | 2              | 3  |
| 5. The total number of hours I work varies from week to week                                                      | 112 1   | 2              | 3  |
| 6. My job involves the use of computerised or automated equipment                                                 | 113 1   | 2              | 3  |
| 7. I work under a great deal of pressure                                                                          | 114 1   | 2              | 3  |
| 8. I work with other employees in a group or team that has responsibility for organising how the work is done (N) | 115 1   | 2              | 3  |
| 9. I have had an injury at work in the last five years (N)                                                        | 116 1   | 2              | 3  |
| 10. I have been promoted while I have been with my current employer                                               | 117 1   | 2              | 3  |
| 11. My job is funded as part of a government training or job creation scheme (N)                                  | 118 1   | 2              | 3  |
| 12. I am a member of a trade union (N)                                                                            | 119 1   | 2              | 3  |
| 13. The number of people employed in my organisation has been reduced over the last three years (N)               | 120 1   | 2              | 3  |

EB44.3 - Q.19 - TREND MODIFIED

Q.32. Here is a list of statements about your current job. For each of them, please tell me if it is very true, quite true a little true or not at all true? (SHOW CARD WITH SCALE)

| READ OUT                                                                     | VERY TRUE | QUITE TRUE | A LITTLE TRUE | NOT AT ALL TRUE | DK |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------|------------|---------------|-----------------|----|
| 1. I have a lot of say over what happens at work (M)                         | 121 1     | 2          | 3             | 4               | 5  |
| 2. My job allows me to take part in making decisions that affect my work     | 122 1     | 2          | 3             | 4               | 5  |
| 3. There is a lot of variety in my work                                      | 123 1     | 2          | 3             | 4               | 5  |
| 4. My job requires that I keep learning new things                           | 124 1     | 2          | 3             | 4               | 5  |
| 5. My job is interesting                                                     | 125 1     | 2          | 3             | 4               | 5  |
| 6. My job is secure                                                          | 126 1     | 2          | 3             | 4               | 5  |
| 7. I get a lot of support from management when there is pressure at work (N) | 127 1     | 2          | 3             | 4               | 5  |
| 8. I have good friends at work (N)                                           | 128 1     | 2          | 3             | 4               | 5  |
| 9. My organisation is facing financial difficulties at the moment (N)        | 129 1     | 2          | 3             | 4               | 5  |

EB44.3 - Q.20 - TREND MODIFIED

Q.33. How much do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements describing your job? Do you strongly agree, agree, neither agree nor disagree, disagree or strongly disagree? (SHOW CARD WITH SCALE)

| READ OUT                                                                                                              | STRONGLY<br>AGREE | AGREE | NEITHER AGREE<br>NOR DISAGREE | DISAGREE | STRONGLY<br>DISAGREE | DK |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------|-------|-------------------------------|----------|----------------------|----|
| 1. My job requires that I work very hard                                                                              | 130 1             | 2     | 3                             | 4        | 5                    | 6  |
| 2. I never seem to have enough time to get everything done in my job                                                  | 131 1             | 2     | 3                             | 4        | 5                    | 6  |
| 3. I often have to work extra time, over and above the formal hours of my job, to get through the work or to help out | 132 1             | 2     | 3                             | 4        | 5                    | 6  |
| 4. I work almost all the time at very high speed (N)                                                                  | 133 1             | 2     | 3                             | 4        | 5                    | 6  |
| 5. I work almost all the time to tight deadlines (N)                                                                  | 134 1             | 2     | 3                             | 4        | 5                    | 6  |
| 6. Most of the time my work involves short repetitive hand or arm movements (N)                                       | 135 1             | 2     | 3                             | 4        | 5                    | 6  |
| 7. I have a great deal of influence in deciding what tasks I do (N)                                                   | 136 1             | 2     | 3                             | 4        | 5                    | 6  |
| 8. I have a great deal of influence in deciding how to do my tasks (N)                                                | 137 1             | 2     | 3                             | 4        | 5                    | 6  |
| 9. I am willing to work harder than I have to in order to help this organisation succeed (N)                          | 138 1             | 2     | 3                             | 4        | 5                    | 6  |
| 10. I find that my values and this organisation's values are very similar (N)                                         | 139 1             | 2     | 3                             | 4        | 5                    | 6  |
| 11. I am proud to be working for this organisation (N)                                                                | 140 1             | 2     | 3                             | 4        | 5                    | 6  |
| 12. I would turn down another job elsewhere with more pay in order to stay with this organisation (N)                 | 141 1             | 2     | 3                             | 4        | 5                    | 6  |
| 13. I am likely to get a better job in this organisation in the next three years (N)                                  | 142 1             | 2     | 3                             | 4        | 5                    | 6  |
| 14. I am likely to get a better job with another employer in the next three years (N)                                 | 143 1             | 2     | 3                             | 4        | 5                    | 6  |

EB44.3 - Q.21 - TREND MODIFIED

Q.34. I would like you to compare your current job with what you were doing five years ago (even if you were in the same job). For each of the following things would you say there has been a significant increase compared to five years ago, a significant decrease or little or no change?  
(INT.: IF NOT IN WORK 5 YEARS AGO, GO BACK TO WHEN STARTED WORKING IN PAST 5 YEARS)

| READ OUT                                    | SIGNIFICANT<br>INCREASE | SIGNIFICANT<br>DECREASE | LITTLE/ NO<br>CHANGE | DK |
|---------------------------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|----------------------|----|
| 1. Job security                             | 144 1                   | 2                       | 3                    | 4  |
| 2. The level of skill you use in your job   | 145 1                   | 2                       | 3                    | 4  |
| 3. The variety of tasks you perform         | 146 1                   | 2                       | 3                    | 4  |
| 4. The effort you have to put into your job | 147 1                   | 2                       | 3                    | 4  |
| 5. The responsibility involved in your job  | 148 1                   | 2                       | 3                    | 4  |
| 6. The stress involved in your job          | 149 1                   | 2                       | 3                    | 4  |
| 7. The provision of training                | 150 1                   | 2                       | 3                    | 4  |
| 8. Tightness of supervision over your job   | 151 1                   | 2                       | 3                    | 4  |
| 9. Your job satisfaction (N)                | 152 1                   | 2                       | 3                    | 4  |

EB44.3 - Q.22 - TREND MODIFIED

Q.35. Suppose there was to be some decision made at your place of work that changed the way you do your job. Do you think that you personally would have any say in the decision about the change, or not? (IF YES) How much influence over the decision do you think that you personally would have? A great deal, quite a lot or just a little?

|                                     |     |   |
|-------------------------------------|-----|---|
| No.....                             | 153 | 1 |
| Yes, a great deal of influence..... |     | 2 |
| Yes, quite a lot of influence.....  |     | 3 |
| Yes, just a little influence.....   |     | 4 |
| DK.....                             |     | 5 |

EB44.3 - Q.26 - TREND

Q.36. Do you think that you should have more say in the decisions that affect your work, or are you satisfied with the way things are?

|                                   |     |   |
|-----------------------------------|-----|---|
| Should have more say.....         | 154 | 1 |
| Satisfied the way things are..... |     | 2 |
| DK.....                           |     | 3 |

EB44.3 - Q.27 - TREND

Q.37. Did you receive any education or training in the last five years, which was paid for by your employer or former employer? (IF YES) How long in total?

|                                           |     |    |
|-------------------------------------------|-----|----|
| No.....                                   | 155 | 1  |
| Yes, a few hours - less than one day..... |     | 2  |
| Yes, 1 or 2 days.....                     |     | 3  |
| Yes, from 3 to 5 days.....                |     | 4  |
| Yes, from 6 days to 2 weeks.....          |     | 5  |
| Yes, from 3 to 4 weeks.....               |     | 6  |
| Yes, from 1 to 2 months.....              |     | 7  |
| Yes, from 3 to 6 months.....              |     | 8  |
| Yes, from 7 months up to 1 year.....      |     | 9  |
| Yes, more than one year.....              |     | 10 |
| DK.....                                   |     | 11 |

EB44.3 - Q.79 - TREND

Q.38. How long do you think it would be before a person doing your sort of job would be dismissed in your organisation if they persistently...? (SHOW CARD WITH SCALE)

| READ OUT             | WITHIN<br>A WEEK | WITHIN<br>A MONTH | WITHIN<br>6 MONTHS | WITHIN<br>A YEAR | WITHIN MORE<br>THAN A YEAR | NEVER | DK |
|----------------------|------------------|-------------------|--------------------|------------------|----------------------------|-------|----|
| 1. arrived late      | 156 1            | 2                 | 3                  | 4                | 5                          | 6     | 7  |
| 2. did not work hard | 157 1            | 2                 | 3                  | 4                | 5                          | 6     | 7  |

EB44.3 - Q.32 - TREND

Q.39. In general, how would you describe relations at your workplace between management and employees? Would you say they are very good, quite good, neither good nor bad, quite bad or very bad?

|                           |     |   |
|---------------------------|-----|---|
| Very good.....            | 158 | 1 |
| Quite good.....           |     | 2 |
| Neither good nor bad..... |     | 3 |
| Quite bad.....            |     | 4 |
| Very bad.....             |     | 5 |
| DK.....                   |     | 6 |

EB44.3 - Q.34 - TREND

Q.40. a) I am going to read out a list of various aspects of jobs. Please choose between the two ends of this scale. If you are completely dissatisfied with that particular aspect of your present job, you give a score of 1. If you are completely satisfied with that particular aspect of your present job, you give a score of 7. The scores between 1 and 7 allow you to say how close to either side you are. (SHOW CARD WITH SCALE)

| READ OUT                                                      | 1<br>COMPLETELY<br>DISSATISFIED | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7<br>COMPLETELY<br>SATISFIED |
|---------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------|---|---|---|---|---|------------------------------|
| 1. Your pay                                                   | 159 1                           |   |   |   |   |   | 7                            |
| 2. The opportunities to use your abilities                    | 160 1                           |   |   |   |   |   | 7                            |
| 3. Being able to use your own initiative                      | 161 1                           |   |   |   |   |   | 7                            |
| 4. The chance to develop yourself (N)                         | 162 1                           |   |   |   |   |   | 7                            |
| 5. The scope for innovation and creativity (N)                | 163 1                           |   |   |   |   |   | 7                            |
| 6. The hours you work                                         | 164 1                           |   |   |   |   |   | 7                            |
| 7. The amount of work                                         | 165 1                           |   |   |   |   |   | 7                            |
| 8. The variety in the work                                    | 166 1                           |   |   |   |   |   | 7                            |
| 9. The possibility of achieving your work targets (N)         | 167 1                           |   |   |   |   |   | 7                            |
| 10. Your job security                                         | 168 1                           |   |   |   |   |   | 7                            |
| 11. The relations with your supervisor or manager             | 169 1                           |   |   |   |   |   | 7                            |
| 12. Your promotion prospects                                  | 170 1                           |   |   |   |   |   | 7                            |
| 13. The training provided                                     | 171 1                           |   |   |   |   |   | 7                            |
| 14. The ability to contribute something useful to society (N) | 172 1                           |   |   |   |   |   | 7                            |

EB44.3 - Q.36.a - TREND MODIFIED

Q.40. b) All in all, how satisfied would you say you are with your job? (SHOW SAME CARD)

| READ OUT | 1<br>COMPLETELY<br>DISSATISFIED | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7<br>COMPLETELY<br>SATISFIED |
|----------|---------------------------------|---|---|---|---|---|------------------------------|
| Your job | 173 1                           |   |   |   |   |   | 7                            |

EB44.3 - Q.36.b - TREND

| Q.41. How often do you...? (SHOW CARD WITH SCALE)                                     |        |       |           |             |       |    |                |  |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------|-------|-----------|-------------|-------|----|----------------|--|
| READ OUT                                                                              | ALWAYS | OFTEN | SOMETIMES | HARDLY EVER | NEVER | DK | NOT APPLICABLE |  |
| 1. find your work stressful                                                           | 174 1  | 2     | 3         | 4           | 5     | 6  | 7              |  |
| 2. work in dangerous or unhealthy conditions (N)                                      | 175 1  | 2     | 3         | 4           | 5     | 6  | 7              |  |
| 3. have headaches as a result of work (N)                                             | 176 1  | 2     | 3         | 4           | 5     | 6  | 7              |  |
| 4. have muscular pains as a result of work (N)                                        | 177 1  | 2     | 3         | 4           | 5     | 6  | 7              |  |
| 5. get verbally abused for example by clients, patients or pupils (N)                 | 178 1  | 2     | 3         | 4           | 5     | 6  | 7              |  |
| 6. come home from work exhausted                                                      | 179 1  | 2     | 3         | 4           | 5     | 6  | 7              |  |
| 7. keep worrying about job problems after you leave work (N)                          | 180 1  | 2     | 3         | 4           | 5     | 6  | 7              |  |
| 8. find it difficult to unwind at the end of the workday (N)                          | 181 1  | 2     | 3         | 4           | 5     | 6  | 7              |  |
| 9. find your job prevents you from giving the time you want to your partner or family | 182 1  | 2     | 3         | 4           | 5     | 6  | 7              |  |
| 10. feel too tired after work to enjoy the things you would like to do at home        | 183 1  | 2     | 3         | 4           | 5     | 6  | 7              |  |
| 11. feel too tired after work to go out with friends (N)                              | 184 1  | 2     | 3         | 4           | 5     | 6  | 7              |  |
| 12. find that your partner/family gets fed up with the pressure of your job           | 185 1  | 2     | 3         | 4           | 5     | 6  | 7              |  |

EB44.3 - Q.37 - TREND MODIFIED

Q.42. (IF "EMPLOYED", CODE 10 TO 18 IN D.15.a)  
How likely or unlikely is it that you will lose you job or decide to leave your employer for some reason over the next 12 months? Would you say it is very likely, quite likely, not very likely or not at all likely?  
(IF "SELF-EMPLOYED", CODE 5 TO 9 IN D.15.a)  
How likely or unlikely is it that you will be forced to close or decide to close your business/ top quit your job for some reason over the next 12 months? Would you say it is very likely, quite likely, not very likely or not at all likely?

|                        |       |            |
|------------------------|-------|------------|
| Very likely.....       | 186 1 | GO TO Q.43 |
| Quite likely.....      | 2     | GO TO Q.43 |
| Not very likely.....   | 3     | GO TO Q.44 |
| Not at all likely..... | 4     | GO TO Q.44 |
| DK.....                | 5     | GO TO Q.44 |

EB44.3 - Q.38 - TREND

IF "LIKELY", CODE 1 OR 2 IN Q.42

Q.43. Why do you think you may leave you current employer/close your business/quit your job? (SHOW CARD - READ OUT - MULTIPLE ANSWERS POSSIBLE)

|                                                                  |        |
|------------------------------------------------------------------|--------|
| The organisation/workplace will close down.....                  | 187 1, |
| I will be declared redundant.....                                | 2,     |
| I will reach normal retirement age.....                          | 3,     |
| My contract of employment will expire.....                       | 4,     |
| Running my own business is no longer financially worthwhile..... | 5,     |
| I will take early retirement.....                                | 6,     |
| I will decide to leave and work for another employer.....        | 7,     |
| I will decide to leave and work for myself as self-employed..... | 8,     |
| I will leave to look after my home/relatives/children.....       | 9,     |
| Other (SPONTANEOUS).....                                         | 10     |
| DK.....                                                          | 11     |

EB44.3 - Q.39 - TREND

ASK ALL

Q.44. Please say how much you agree or disagree with each of the following statements? (SHOW CARD WITH SCALE)

| READ OUT                                                                                                        | STRONGLY<br>AGREE | SLIGHTLY<br>AGREE | NEITHER AGREE<br>NOR DISAGREE | SLIGHTLY<br>DISAGREE | STRONGLY<br>DISAGREE | DK |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------------------|----------------------|----------------------|----|
| 1. Differences in income in (OUR COUNTRY) are too large                                                         | 188 1             | 2                 | 3                             | 4                    | 5                    | 6  |
| 2. In our society, the rich get richer and the poor get poorer                                                  | 189 1             | 2                 | 3                             | 4                    | 5                    | 6  |
| 3. It is the responsibility of the government to reduce the differences between those with high and low incomes | 190 1             | 2                 | 3                             | 4                    | 5                    | 6  |
| 4. The government should ensure that all children have a decent standard of living                              | 191 1             | 2                 | 3                             | 4                    | 5                    | 6  |
| 5. The government should spend less on benefits for the poor                                                    | 192 1             | 2                 | 3                             | 4                    | 5                    | 6  |
| 6. The government should provide everyone with a guaranteed basic income                                        | 193 1             | 2                 | 3                             | 4                    | 5                    | 6  |
| 7. I would be ready to pay more tax if it were definitely used to improve the situation of the poor             | 194 1             | 2                 | 3                             | 4                    | 5                    | 6  |
| 8. The government should provide decent housing for all who cannot afford it                                    | 195 1             | 2                 | 3                             | 4                    | 5                    | 6  |
| 9. The government should provide a job for everyone who wants one                                               | 196 1             | 2                 | 3                             | 4                    | 5                    | 6  |
| 10. The government should provide a decent standard of living for the unemployed                                | 197 1             | 2                 | 3                             | 4                    | 5                    | 6  |
| 11. The unemployed should be forced to take a job quickly, even if it is not as good as their previous job      | 198 1             | 2                 | 3                             | 4                    | 5                    | 6  |
| 12. The unemployed should be given the time and opportunity to improve their education and skills               | 199 1             | 2                 | 3                             | 4                    | 5                    | 6  |
| 13. Workers need strong trade unions to protect their interests                                                 | 200 1             | 2                 | 3                             | 4                    | 5                    | 6  |
| 14. The fight against poverty and social exclusion should be a priority objective for the European Union        | 201 1             | 2                 | 3                             | 4                    | 5                    | 6  |
| 15. The government should do more to reduce the risk of poverty and social exclusion among new immigrants       | 202 1             | 2                 | 3                             | 4                    | 5                    | 6  |

EB56.1 - NEW

Q.45. Would you say that you have not at all, no more than usual, rather more than usual, much more than usual...?  
(SHOW CARD WITH SCALE - ONE ANSWER ONLY)

| READ OUT                                                 | NOT<br>AT ALL | NO MORE<br>THAN USUAL | RATHER MORE<br>THAN USUAL | MUCH MORE<br>THAN USUAL | DK |
|----------------------------------------------------------|---------------|-----------------------|---------------------------|-------------------------|----|
| 1. lost much sleep over worry                            | 203 1         | 2                     | 3                         | 4                       | 5  |
| 2. been feeling unhappy and depressed                    | 204 1         | 2                     | 3                         | 4                       | 5  |
| 3. been losing confidence in yourself                    | 205 1         | 2                     | 3                         | 4                       | 5  |
| 4. been feeling you could not overcome your difficulties | 206 1         | 2                     | 3                         | 4                       | 5  |
| 5. been feeling constantly under strain                  | 207 1         | 2                     | 3                         | 4                       | 5  |
| 6. been thinking of yourself as a worthless person       | 208 1         | 2                     | 3                         | 4                       | 5  |
| 7. had problems of high blood pressure (N)               | 209 1         | 2                     | 3                         | 4                       | 5  |

EB44.3 - Q.83 - TREND MODIFIED

Q.46. Would you say you are very satisfied, fairly satisfied, not very satisfied or not at all satisfied with each of the following things? (SHOW CARD WITH SCALE)

| READ OUT                                         | VERY<br>SATISFIED | FAIRLY<br>SATISFIED | NOT VERY<br>SATISFIED | NOT AT ALL<br>SATISFIED | DK |
|--------------------------------------------------|-------------------|---------------------|-----------------------|-------------------------|----|
| 1. With the life you lead                        | 210 1             | 2                   | 3                     | 4                       | 5  |
| 2. Your leisure life at home                     | 211 1             | 2                   | 3                     | 4                       | 5  |
| 3. Your social life outside the house            | 212 1             | 2                   | 3                     | 4                       | 5  |
| 4. Your family life                              | 213 1             | 2                   | 3                     | 4                       | 5  |
| 5. With the way democracy works in (OUR COUNTRY) | 214 1             | 2                   | 3                     | 4                       | 5  |
| 6. With the kind of society we live in           | 215 1             | 2                   | 3                     | 4                       | 5  |

EB44.3 - Q.103 - TREND

Q.47. Before you were 18, did you experience any of the following problems? (SHOW CARD - READ OUT - MULTIPLE ANSWERS POSSIBLE)

|                                                                                |        |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------|
| Your parents had major financial difficulties.....                             | 216 1, |
| You lived with only one parent who had to struggle to maintain the family..... | 2,     |
| A parent died.....                                                             | 3,     |
| Your parents' marriage broke up.....                                           | 4,     |
| Your parents quarrelled frequently.....                                        | 5,     |
| You were badly treated by adults.....                                          | 6,     |
| You were physically or verbally bullied by other children at school.....       | 7,     |
| Your school studies were disrupted.....                                        | 8,     |
| One of your parents was unemployed for some time.....                          | 9,     |
| You had health problems that lasted for a long time.....                       | 10     |
| None of these (SPONTANEOUS).....                                               | 11     |
| DK.....                                                                        | 12     |
| Refusal.....                                                                   | 13     |

EB56.1 - NEW