



What are Public Services Good at? Success of Public Services in the Field of Human Resource Management

Study Commissioned by the Slovenian EU Presidency

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the Member States of the European Union**

by

**Professor Dr. Christoph Demmke/Thomas Henökl, Researcher, EIPA
and Timo Moilanen, Researcher, University of Helsinki**



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Unfortunately, much “of the dislike for government and bureaucracy is based on misinformation, no information, and information disregarded” (Bozeman).

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I. Introduction: What are public services (not) good at? – Simple question and a complex issue

The management of Human Resources is moving through a fascinating but also disorienting period throughout Europe. During the last decades almost all national (and sub-national) public services have introduced major HR reforms. “Long-standing taken for granted assumptions and orthodoxies no longer hold. Traditional public services are under pressure to change and seem to be evolving – but into what?”¹ What has been achieved and what has been a failure? And where are we going? These are just a few questions that will be addressed in this study.

The discussion of what has been achieved throughout the last decades is the most controversial issue of all. Many experts feel strongly on what to conclude about performance and successes but also about public services failures, even though it turns out to be very difficult to find clear answers. Yet, it is important to find responses to the effects of all HRM reforms within the last decades.

During recent years, the Member States and their national public administrations have been very eager in strengthening citizen rights, facilitating access to information, increasing efforts in satisfying citizen- and customer needs and informing citizens about their rights in their fight against any form of maladministration (and against too many “administrative burdens”). As important as these developments are, they also illustrate a certain dilemma: whereas citizen- and customer orientation is improving, most citizens remain extremely critical as to the quality of the public services. Consequently, positive developments are rarely acknowledged. When people are asked whether they think that delivery facts in specific policy areas (education, criminal justice, asylum and immigration, transport and health services) have been achieved or not over the last few years, most do not believe that services had improved. Instead, demands as to the quality of services are constantly rising. Thus, citizens often perceive the delivery of public services as their right; companies complain about too high costs and state authorities suffer from too many obligations.

Moreover, the public services are not very good in perception management. Due to the need to serve the common good they have rarely learned how to market themselves. There is no tradition of reporting on successes and achievements. Furthermore, media and politicians only exceptionally discuss the positive aspects of public services and HRM-policies. Instead, the media focus on deficiencies and public service failures (e.g. problems with waiting lists in hospitals, poor education systems, inefficiencies in social security systems, failures in security, cases of corruption, waste of money in construction etc.).

However, before entering into a discussion of what is not running well (which seems to be a relatively easy task) it is worth starting by asking what we mean when we talk about *successes, achievements, good administration or good governance* in the field of HRM.

Throughout the last few years almost all Member States (and the European Institutions) have been very active in fighting against different forms of maladministration.² In the meantime, core principles of good administration have been transformed into legally binding rules in almost all Member States of the European Union such as the right:

¹ E.Ferlie/L.Lynn/C.Pollitt, Introductory Remarks, in: The Oxford Handbook of Public Management, 2005, p. 1.

² Statskontoret, Principles of Good Administration, Stockholm 2005.

- to have ones affairs handled impartially and fairly and within a reasonable time
- to be heard before any individual measure is taken that would affect the citizen adversely
- to have access to his or her file, regarding any individual measure that would affect him or her
- the obligation to state reasons in writing for all decisions
- the right of access to documents.

The European Institutions have also adopted a European Code of Good Administrative Behaviour, which includes substantive principles for establishing a good administration (lawfulness, non-discrimination and proportionality) as well as a number of obligations for the different EU administrations. These examples show that the Member States have increased their efforts in order to help and support citizens in their fight against any form of maladministration (which includes issues like unreasonable delay in responding to citizen requests, impoliteness, failure to apply the law or rules properly, failure to provide information etc). Only recently, the Member States and the European Commission have launched an ambitious Action Programme to reduce the administrative burden of existing regulation in the EU. As part of this, a reduction target of 25% was agreed by the EU and Member States to be achieved by 2012.

All of these developments are important and positive steps towards strengthening citizen's rights and in creating good administrations and good governance in Europe. This can be called a success. However, good administration and fighting maladministration is not the focus of this study. Instead, this survey is analysing perceptions of progress in the field of HRM.

As we will see later on it is easier to identify principles of good administration than to identify successes in the field Human Resource Management. For example, identifying successes involves a number qualitative and quantitative criteria and variables (such as political and legal issues (constitutional issues, political strategies, attitudes of politicians, role of the legislator), financial indicators (resources available, management of resources, personnel costs), organisational criteria (organisational efficiency, organisational attractiveness, image etc.) and HR indicators (goal achievement, individual performance, motivation, satisfaction etc³). Consequently, there is no "absolute" set of theoretical approaches to our topic. Furthermore, the extent/nature/pace of administrative reform is dependent on a range of factors which differ from country to country *vis-à-vis* the particular objectives chosen initially for the reform programme, the industrial relations environment, the power of public service unions, consensus on the need to maintain a partnership approach to modernisation, differing national priorities etc. Administrative reform must reflect the reality of these variables in particular countries, resulting inevitably in different mixes of private and public HR Management Systems".

Moreover, positive results of HR reforms are more difficult to define in the public services than in the private sector because performance standards are not limited to economic, quality and customer satisfaction criteria. Instead they also include constitutional, regulatory and political standards, as well as the common interest.

Citizens are becoming more critical and demanding as to both performance and integrity of public services and civil servants. They are not only asking for high-quality services; but

³ C. Talbot, Performance Management, in: Handbook of Public Management, op. cit., p.494.

claiming more transparency, accountability, better controls, integrity, anti-discrimination, fairness, flexibility, individual treatment and citizen- and customer orientation. As important as these claims are, they are in constant conflict with other tasks of the state authorities (e.g. equal treatment, need to interfere in privacy and human rights, fight against crime, natural disasters, diseases, terrorism, racism etc.) and the impossible task to serve all individual needs.

Also within the public services, the civil servants have become more demanding and critical. Traditional public service features such as hierarchical decision-making, centralism, subordination, lack of transparency, formal treatment, rigidity and lack of involvement in decisions are less tolerated. More and more public employees are asking for more responsibility, job control, job autonomy, transparency, pluralism, flexibility, diversity, decentralisation of responsibilities and involvement in decisions. As we will see in this study, the relationship between public employees and their leaders is about to change. Whereas participative approaches and communication are gaining importance in the relationship between superiors and employees, respect for leaders is also decreasing.

This study will concentrate on the perception of different categories of employees (top managers, middle management, and employees) and their attitudes towards HR reforms and HR policies. Thus, a success will be defined as what public employees see as improvement, progress or competitive advantage. As such, the term “success” is a very ambivalent and contradictory “proverb”. For example, success in the field of HRM can be defined as an increase in efficiency but endangers other norms such as fairness, diversity and rule of law, a reduction in red-tape and administrative burdens to the benefit of customers and people but also a reduction in citizen rights, more and better access to information but also a new flood of information, more transparency but also less privacy etc.

Consequently, there cannot be a general "good HRM" for all Member States since the design of HRM always depends on the particular organisational needs. Moreover, HRM is only successful if it helps the organisation to achieve its own objectives. In a nutshell, the general goal of the HRM is to ensure that organisations have (1) an adequate number of (2) skilled and (3) well-motivated employees. In fact, HRM reforms are always complex and ambivalent. According to an OECD study HRM is still a neglected subject⁴. Thus, successes and achievements are very close to failures and shortcomings.

⁴ OECD, HRM in the Public Sector – A Neglected Subject, Paris 2002 (Paper written by Bram Steijns, Rotterdam).

II. Methodology

1. Introduction

Study cases of good administration, good governance and *successes* in public services take us to the heart of current debates about the modern public service capacities to govern and to manage public services. To affix the label “successes” to public services is risky business. The risk is doubled when “successes” is attributed to new ideas, innovation and improvements in the field of public services whereas – at the same time - ideas are widespread that public services are not innovative and the poor performance of public services is a major reason for public distrust. Not surprisingly, many researchers are more interested in cases that are likely to attract a lot of attention, such as cases of corruption, public scandals, waste of public money, poor performance and quality management etc.

Even though this focus is understandable, it clearly hinders the development of evidence, knowledge and awareness of positive developments and cases of “good administration”. What is clearly missing is literature and studies about improvements in the field of HRM and the attitude of public employees about the nature and effects of recent developments in this area. There is also very little evidence about the impact of recent HR-reforms on motivation, satisfaction etc., progress in working conditions, developments as regards the attractiveness of public service employment as well as recruitment and HR policies in comparison to the private sector. Moreover, little is known on whether certain categories of staff (managers, older employees, women, minorities etc.) have witnessed improvements over the last years whereas other categories of staff have not.

Given the limited attention and knowledge to the dimension of positive developments, it is not surprising that there is no specific theory on “good administration” and “successes”. Discussing successes may also be seen as naïve if the emphasis is put purely on positive aspects while excluding other more critical issues. Thus, one aim of this study is to close this gap and to identify in which HR-fields improvements could be noted without pretending that “everything is golden”. Furthermore, critical results of the survey must also be mentioned. Otherwise it would be impossible to define the standards and criteria for positive developments. Thus, identifying successes in the field of HRM is not possible without identifying what has not already been achieved. Therefore, in addition, this study will look at potential failures in the field of HRM.

However, from a practical point of view, the most important objective of this study is to identify areas where positive developments can be recognised from the point of view of the employees (ranging from top management to lower ranking employees). Here, another interest is to gain evidence on whether managers and employees, older and younger employees, men and women have different perceptions about the impact and the results of HRM reforms. For example, is it possible that top managers have a different perception about positive HR developments than other employees? If yes, what could be the reasons? What may be the factors that produce different performance levels in different countries, traditions and organisational structures? And why are certain HR policies more successful than others? Moreover, it is important to know whether different administrative traditions and administrative structures (career vs. position systems) “produce” similar or different best practices and cases of “Good Administration”. Finally, in this study we aim to detect and understand similarities and differences in the nature of and results of national HR policies. Do HR policies as we know them serve us well and how are we to judge if they do or not? How well do different HR policies perform in comparison to private sector practices?

In order to shed more light on these issues, the research team had developed a questionnaire with a number of open-ended and closed questions. For the closed questions, respondents are asked to simply tick the right boxes. The open-ended questions concern issues such as:

- What do you do in order to improve the image of the public services? (Marketing campaigns, improvement of recruitment procedures, media campaigns, investing in internal procedures etc.)
- What are the greatest challenges in improving the image of the public services? (Specific tasks of the public service, constitutional and legal obligations, complexity of rules concerning the rule of law, fairness issues etc.)
- In your own opinion, what has improved within recent years in the field of HRM?
- Why were these successes possible at all? What were the contextual factors that allowed for these innovations and successes?

The scope of the survey encompasses in most cases central (federal) public administration in the EU Member States. As responsibilities for HR policies have been decentralised in many cases to ministry or agency level, respondents to this study could also use examples from selected public sector organisations (Ministries, agencies). Because of the current high degree of decentralisation in the field of public service (law) many Member States could only answer for certain organisations, sectors or for the “core” central civil services. Only in rare cases were respondents able to answer for the whole public service. Therefore, this survey should not be seen as representative for the present situation in the whole public sector and also not for the regional- and local level.

Our questionnaire was sent in electronic form to the members of the EUPAN-HR Working Group and published on the EUPAN website⁵. In total 363 public employees responded to this study⁶. From these there were 198 employees, 122 line managers and 43 top managers. This participation rate allows for the identification of general trends. However, it is clearly too low to be statistically significant. Even more, further research and a higher participation sample would be needed to draw real conclusions. The response rate also shows that the data is probably rather elitist in the sense that the percentage of (top) managers is relatively high and all respondents had to answer in the English language (which is not a custom in many countries).

Within this study, the opinions, recommendations and suggestions of the individual public employees are quoted or presented in italics. However, we will refrain from mentioning their (organisational) affiliation and also their names, titles etc. At the same time, this semi-anonymous approach enables us to compare the attitudes of different categories of staff from different administrative traditions and administrative systems.

Following the positive experiences under the previous Presidencies at Working Group level, a workshop was organised with the EUPAN-HRM Work Group in order to discuss some of the above mentioned fields and to gain additional input from the EU Member States. The workshop was held in January 2008. At the second meeting in April 2008 the preliminary

⁵ <http://www.eupan.eu>

⁶ In total, 49 Members of the EUPAN Network contributed to the study. This high response illustrates that not only Members from the HRM Working Group have contributed to this study. Instead members from other Working Group (IPSAG) and Directors-General have also participated.

findings of the survey were presented, discussed and cross-checked within the Working Group. Due to the need to reach a broader (and more representative) audience we would like to suggest to the EUPAN network to continue with this study and also to invite other partners (e.g. the European Trade Unions – TUNED) to actively participate in this study.

2. Structural features of public service systems – the importance of public administration tradition and HR system

Earlier surveys for the different EU Presidencies have given evidence that different historical traditions and cultures⁷ as well as HR systems have had a considerable impact on public management modernisation paths and on the outcomes of HR reforms. The relevance of context and diversity in European public administrations has important implications for the concept of mutual learning and good practice. To adequately tackle the questions of context and diversity in this study and to go beyond descriptions of individual countries or cases, the participating countries were clustered according to two dimensions, (1) public administrative tradition and (2) public service and HR system.

The relevance of different public administrative traditions such as the classic contrast between continental public law systems on the one hand, and Anglo-Saxon common law systems on the other hand, is often found in comparative administrative research. In this survey, the participating countries were assigned to the different public administration traditions or models as follows:

Table 1. Public Administration Tradition by Country

Public administration tradition	Countries
Anglo-Saxon tradition	Ireland (IE), Malta (MT), United Kingdom (UK)
Continental European tradition	Austria (AT), Belgium (BE), France (FR), Germany (DE), Luxemburg (LU), Netherlands (NL), Slovenia (SI)
Mediterranean/South European tradition	Cyprus (CY), Greece (EL), Italy (IT), Portugal (PT), Spain (ES)
Scandinavian tradition	Denmark (DK), Estonia (EE), Finland (FI), Sweden (SE)
Eastern European tradition	Czech Republic (CZ), Hungary (HU), Lithuania (LT), Poland (PT), Slovakia (SK), Latvia (LV)
New Member States (South-Eastern tradition)	Bulgaria (BG), Romania (RO)

This categorisation is based on an earlier survey in 2006 where the classification was discussed and agreed upon within the HRWG-members to secure plausibility. Nevertheless, shortcomings and difficulties of such categorisations – e.g. the fading relevance of certain differences – remain and have to be kept in mind. For example, assigning the Netherlands and Slovenia to the Continental European tradition and Ireland and Malta to the Anglo-Saxon tradition as well as the classification of the Baltic States to different categories seems open to discussion. Moreover, the authors are well aware that there are considerable differences amongst the Eastern European countries and also between the new Member States Romania and Bulgaria.

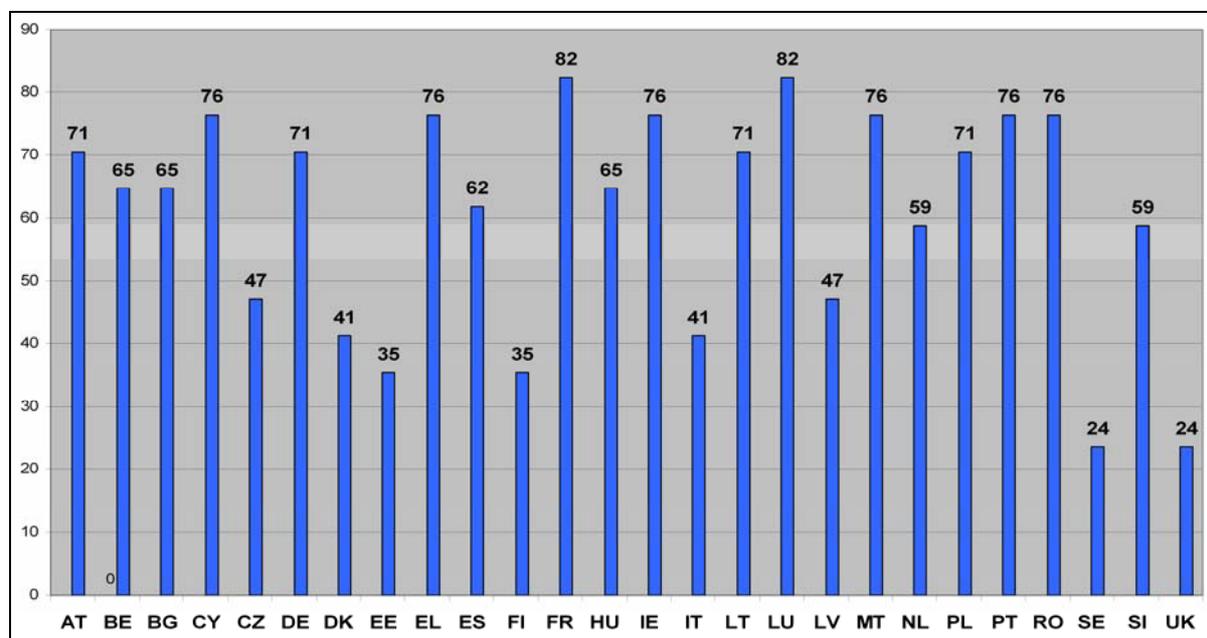
⁷ K.Schedler/E.Proeller (Eds.), Cultural Aspects of Public Management Reform, 2007.

As the main focus of this survey lies on HR topics, the states were also clustered according to the predominant orientation of their HR system. We thereby follow a model, developed earlier, which is introducing a distinction of two main patterns of public service employment that are assumed to have a profound effect on a country's public administration culture:

- **Career-based systems** are characterised by the dominance of life-long public service careers, specific criteria for initial entry, a strong emphasis on career development with a high relevance of seniority and a relatively strong differentiation between private and public sector employment;
- **Position-based systems** are characterised by a focus on selecting the candidates for each position, more open access and a higher mobility between private and public sector employment.

As a result of a broad range of other reforms in most public administrations over the last decade, there is, at the beginning of the 21st century, no longer a civil service model that could be described as a 'classical career model'. Today, pure career or position models simply no longer exist. Instead of clear-cut categories, there seems to be a trend towards hybrid systems that combine elements of both pure systems. An analysis by Demmke/Henökl of the different national HR systems on the basis of 17 indicators/characteristics (such as specific civil service employment rules, existence of lifetime tenure, specific pension scheme or degree of centralisation of HRM competencies⁸) shows that there are still considerable differences between the HR systems in the various countries (see Figure 1).

Figure 1. Characteristics of public administration systems in the EU Member States



For this survey, in order to assign the countries to either of the two types, a 60% mark of all career-system indicators was used to draw the line between career-based and position-based systems.

⁸ Own calculations based on a HRWG-survey in the Member States of the EU, EIPA, 2007/2008.

Table 2. HR System by Country

HR System	Countries
Career-based HR system	AT, BE, BG, CY, FR, DE, EL, HU, IE, LT, LU, MT, PL, PT, RO, SK, ES
Position-based HR system	CZ, DK, EE, FI, IT, LV, NL, SI, SE, UK

Since this grouping of HR systems is still very broad and does not always allow for a good comparison when comparing different career systems like Germany and Romania, or different position systems like Latvia and Sweden, we have decided to further narrow down the classification into different groups of career and position systems and have excluded all those groupings that did not include enough responses to our study. As a consequence, five groups were included in the analysis⁹. The other five groups (as shown in the Table 3 below in dark colours) were included as long as this was statistically possible and allowed for general comparisons and conclusions.

Table 3. Public Administration Tradition and HR system by Country

Public administration tradition and HR system	Countries
Continental Career Systems	AT, BE, DE, FR, LU
Continental Position Systems	NL, SI
Mediterranean Career Systems	CY, EL, ES, PT
Mediterranean Position System	IT
Scandinavian Position Systems	DK, EE, FI, SE
Eastern European Career Systems	HU, LT, PL, SK
Eastern European Position System	LV, CZ
Anglo-Saxon Position System	UK
Anglo-Saxon Career System	IE, MT
South-Eastern Career Systems	BG, RO

3. Work approach

The study commissioned by the Slovenian EU Presidency has been carried out by researchers from the European Institute of Public Administration and from the University of Helsinki. Following positive experiences under the previous presidencies at working group level, two workshops were organised with the HRM Work Group to initiate discussions on some of the topics and questions for this survey, and also in order to gain additional input from the EU Member States. The workshops were held in Ljubljana on 28 January 2008 and on 23 April 2008 in Brussels where the preliminary findings of the survey were discussed and cross-checked within the Working Group.

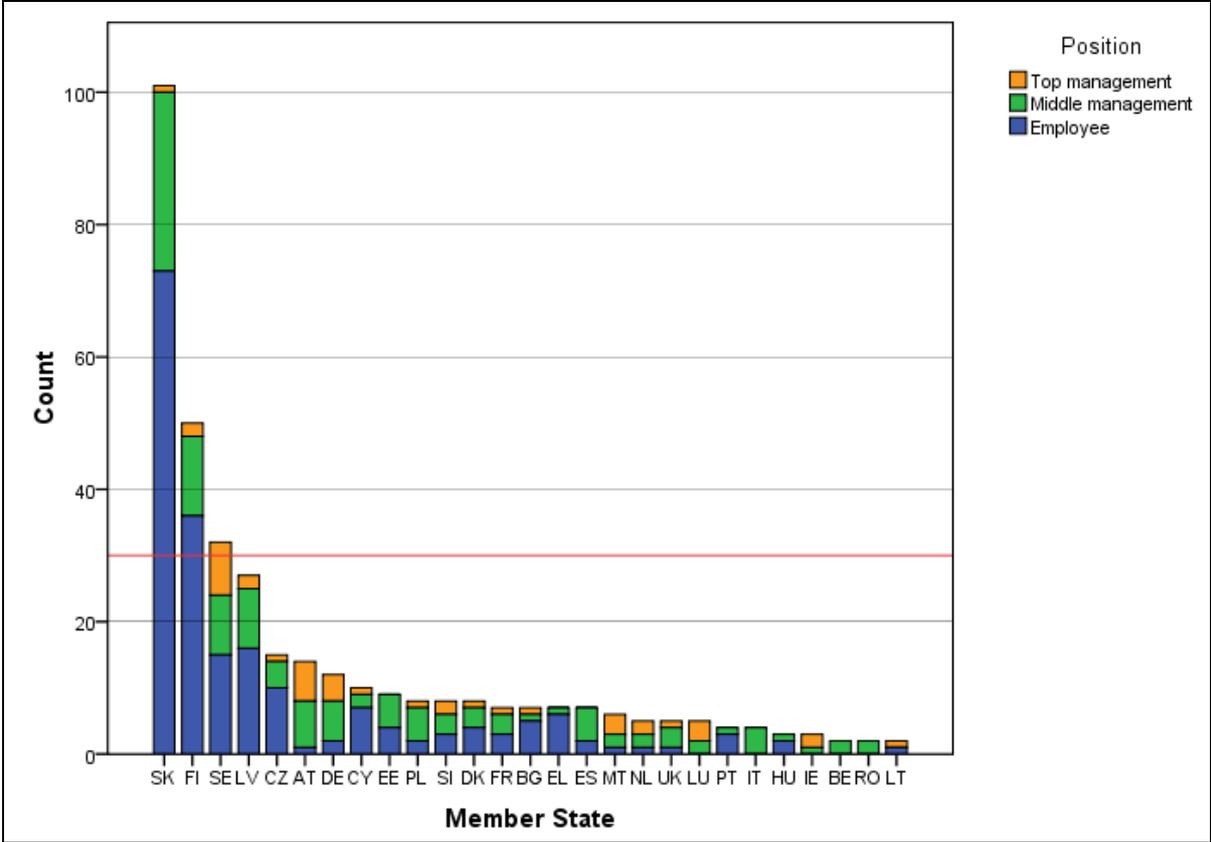
As regards the working methodology, a questionnaire was sent in electronic form to the EUPAN HR Working Group members from all EU countries to be returned by 22 February 2008. In addition, the members of the HRM-working group were also invited to contact

⁹ These five groups contain 323 responses (40+28+99+114+42) while 40 responses are excluded. In total these five groups contain 89% of all data. Please see Figure 3 for more details.

employees, line and top managers from their own or other administrations to complete the online version of this survey. This innovative approach had been chosen for the first time by the Portuguese EU Presidency (2007) to gain additional and unique experiences and ideas directly from public sector managers.

In fact, this methodology worked well and received quite positive comments from several Member States. The medium-term programme 2008-2009 for the cooperation among the Directors-General responsible for public administration in the EU Member States suggests that, as a consequence, for future HRWG surveys questionnaires should “if possible, be submitted to different levels of respondents”. In total, 27 Member States of the EU contributed to this study. Amongst the participating countries the participation rate varied from 101 (Slovakia) to 2 (Belgium, Romania and Lithuania). Figure 2 shows the origin of the answers.

Figure 2. Survey Responses by Member State and Position



As Table 4 illustrates, most responses were sent in from Eastern European (156) and Scandinavian (99) and followed by Continental European countries (53) and Mediterranean (32) countries. Since the response rates from Anglo-Saxon countries (14 answers, 3,9% of all answers) and from the new Member States (9 answers, 2,5% of all answers) were relatively low the following discussions and statistical interpretations will focus mostly on the Eastern, Scandinavian, Continental and Mediterranean countries.

Table 4. Response Rate by Administrative Tradition
(Frequencies in parenthesis)

Public Administration Tradition	Relative frequency
Anglo-Saxon Tradition	3,9 (14)
Continental European Tradition	14,6 (53)
Mediterranean/South European Tradition	8,8 (32)
Scandinavian Tradition	27,3 (99)
Eastern European Tradition	43,0 (156)
New Member States (South-Eastern Tradition)	2,5 (9)
Total	100,0 (363)

In total, we have clustered our analysis into several background variables such as public administrative traditions, HR systems, age and sex. This combination of variables allows an analysis as to different results and attitudes in the different administrative systems and amongst the different categories of staff, age and sex. For example, we will be able to identify whether top managers have different attitudes to certain HR reforms than lower employees and whether men have different opinions than women. The latter will be most important when analysing successes and failures in the field of gender policies, anti-discrimination and diversity policies. Basic statistical information regarding HR systems and sex can be obtained from Table 5 and Table 6.

Table 5. Response Rate by HR System
(Frequencies in parenthesis)

Administrative Structure	Rel. frequency
Career-based HR System	55,1 (200)
Position-based HR System	44,9 (163)
Total	100,0 (363)

Table 6. Response Rate by Sex
(Frequencies in parenthesis)

Sex	Rel. frequency
Male	38,7 (136)
Female	61,3 (215)
Total	100,0 (351)

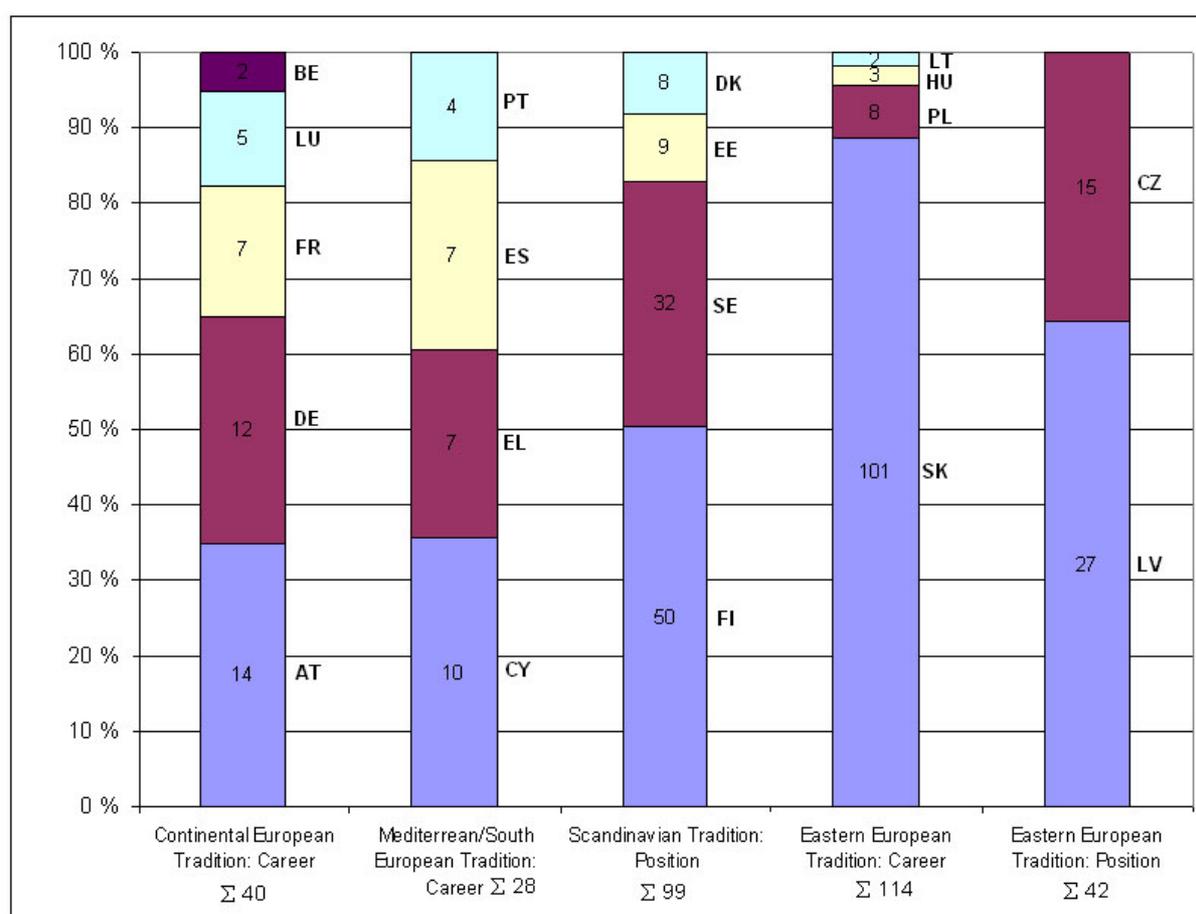
As we can see the total response rates varied greatly according to the different public administration traditions and HR systems (see Table 7 below). In particular, the responses from the UK, MT, IE, NL, IT, RO and BG were relatively low.

Table 7. Response Rate by Public Administration Tradition and HR System
(Frequencies in parenthesis)

Public Administration Tradition	Rel. frequency
Anglo-Saxon Tradition: Career (IE, MT)	2,5 (9)
Anglo-Saxon Tradition: Position (UK)	1,4 (5)
Continental European Tradition: Career (AT, BE, DE, FR, LU)	11,0 (40)
Continental European Tradition: Position (NL, SI)	3,6 (13)
Mediterranean/South European Tradition : Career (CY, EL, ES, PT)	7,7 (28)
Mediterranean/South European Tradition : Position (IT)	1,1 (4)
Scandinavian Tradition: Position (DK, EE, FI, SE)	27,3 (99)
Eastern European Tradition: Career (HU, LT, PL, SK)	31,4 (114)
Eastern European Tradition: Position (CZ, LV)	11,6 (42)
New Member States: Career (BG, RO)	2,5 (9)
Total	100,0 (363)

Therefore, we have decided that we could use the following five classifications with at least 28 responses per cluster (see Figure 3). This means that for some statistics in this study we compared only five public administration traditions and HR systems.

Figure 3. Responses by Public Administration Tradition and HR System and Member State¹⁰



¹⁰ Excluded cases (total 40): IE 3, MT 6, UK 5, NL 5, SI 8, IT 4, BG 7, RO 2

As a result of the comparative and innovative empirical approach, this study may be considered as a pioneering work in the field of comparative HRM research within the EUPAN network. However, we are well aware of the difficulties and challenges involved. To begin with, the fact that this study had to be accomplished within less than five months, without doubt, represented one of the biggest challenges. In addition, although the high rate of participation in this new form of study exceeded our expectations and confirms the great interest in this subject, the study is still based on a very limited sample of national and individual data on an issue that is highly sensitive and ‘political’ and in some countries also rather controversial.

Due to the divergent backgrounds of the participating countries and the lack of additional empirical ‘hard facts’, this study never intended to assess which countries or administrations are more successful than others. Instead, this study intends to initiate a critical, open and constructive dialogue on positive and negative developments in the field of HR reforms. Such a comparative dialogue necessitates the ability to address difficult issues (such as fairness, trust, competence and professionalism) and the courage to also express openly dissenting opinions. We believe that the interest in contributing to this study and the findings – several are very promising and others are surprising in that they contradict some common sense doctrines of public management reform - can be interpreted as an indicator of the increasing level of awareness, the growing care and diligence devoted to the implementation and handling of assessment systems, and of the willingness to engage in such a dialogue. Thus, despite the inherent limitations, we hope that this study will generate a productive debate within the EUPAN network.

The authors of this study would like to thank Judita Bagon from the Slovenian EU Presidency and her excellent team, the members of the EUPAN-HRM-group and all national experts who have contributed to this study for their valuable support and for helping us to successfully carry out this study.

Christoph Demmke, Thomas Henökl and Timo Moilanen

III. Theoretical Part

1. The reform of public services and the concept of change

For many observers, the reform of public administration and management seems to be a simple story: the transformation from an old paradigm (old public administration – bureaucracy) to a new one (New Public Management). However, while more and more experts doubt that there is a new universal paradigm – a “New Public Management” – few doubt that there was an old one¹¹, although the critics of the old (career based and bureaucratic) paradigm tend to cite relatively few sources and mainly focus on Max Weber and to a lesser extent Frederick Taylor. Generally, the old paradigm is dismissed as being too hierarchical, neutral, inflexible, hostile to discretion, closed and non-transparent, not focused on efficiency and not enhancing (organisational or individual) performance. Or as an OECD-study puts it: “The rhetoric of the times had identified government as “the problem” rather than “the solution”¹².

The discussions about the old and new paradigm also show that our culture is deeply influenced by the concept of positive change and the restless search for better models, ideas and solutions. This stands in striking contrast to the fact that even experts have no clear understanding of how public administration is changing¹³. There is also little evidence as to whether change processes produce better results; if so, which change processes and which reform instruments? What we do know, however, is that they constantly produce new results – sometimes for the better, sometimes for the worse. Thus, also in the field of Public Management the best of both worlds cannot be achieved, but it is worth searching for. The fact that this search will be endless is no reason to be pessimistic.

Moreover, management science promotes the linear development belief that there is always a better way to do things. Management theory therefore often matches our own cultural belief that anything new is better and promising. For example, the introduction of new information technologies is generally seen as a very positive development that will enhance the transparency, efficiency and effectiveness of public services. Modernisation and change is a western concept that promises change, progress and a way to better things. The best known claim for modernisation is the book by Osborne/Gaebler (1992)¹⁴ in which the authors state that western societies are moving to a new “entrepreneurial” paradigm of public management, replacing the outdated turn-of-the-century rule-bound design. It is precisely because of this promise, it seems, that new public management theories seem so popular. In reality, however, “modernisation” is also an inherently ambiguous idea¹⁵ since “much depends on which meaning of “modernisation” is at issue”¹⁶. Today, some observers even claim that public administration in the 21st century has arrived in a new era of post-modernity¹⁷.

¹¹ Lynn, L., The Myth of the Bureaucratic Paradigm: What Traditional Public Administration really Stood for, in: Public Administration Review, March/April 2001, Vol. 61, No. 2, p.144

¹² OECD, op. cit., 2002

¹³ A.Benz, Status und Perspektiven der Politikwissenschaftlichen Verwaltungsforschung, in: Die Verwaltung, Nr. 3/2003, pp. 369.

¹⁴ D.Osborne, T.Gaebler, Reinventing Government, Cambridge M.A., 1992.

¹⁵ C.Hood, The Art of the State, Clarendon Press, Oxford 1998, p. 195

¹⁶ Hood, The Art of the State, op.cit, p.219

¹⁷ See Ellen Mastenbroek, De postmoderne overheid: wens of werkelijkheid?, in: Bestuurswetenschappen, No. 2, 2003.

In “The art of the State” (1998), Hood distinguishes between four possible meanings of modernisation:

- Modernisation as deep change. As regards this concept, it would be at least questionable as to “whether fundamental social relationships will always change because technology changes (...) or whether common technology will lead to common organisation”¹⁸. In addition, another question is whether or not “old” public management issues could really be solved.
- Modernisation as irreversible change. Here, the claim of irreversible change is more rhetorical and cannot hold up in the face of sound logic (what about going back or turning in cycles?). Are we not turning back to some classical scientific management ideas when it comes to performance measurement, target-setting etc.?
- Modernisation as convergent change. Although claims can be made for certain common internationalisation and convergence processes, there is no indication that the different public sectors are moving towards a common administrative model.
- Modernisation as beneficent change. “The fact that something is new or inevitable does not necessarily mean it is desirable”¹⁹.

The current reform of public services perhaps best reflects a mixture of the second and third assumptions about change. While public administrations are not disappearing, they are nevertheless subject of great reforms. Traditional government is transforming into “Governance”²⁰, although this does not necessarily mean that we are taking a step forward in solving problems and offering better solutions. Also, the “evolving models of government are not intrinsically liberal or conservative, effective or ineffective – they are simply different and new and thus require some careful thought on the part of those who care about good governance and well-functioning public administration.”²¹

As we will also see in this study, some administrative reforms have improved the situation; however, others have not. “Techniques for organisational engineering come and go with remarkable rapidity. New techniques come into fashion and old ones go out, much like the outfits modelled in Paris, Milan, and New York.”²² Unfortunately, until today no public management theory offers a comprehensible theory and explanation of changing processes. At the same time nobody denies the need to constantly reform the national public services; everybody wants the public sector to become more effective, efficient and transparent. Consequently, all reform projects are designed to reach these objectives.

However, the question "where do reforms lead to?" is difficult to answer: “The question of what has resulted from the many reforms is obviously an absolutely fundamental one. Yet it is not at all simple. The label result can be applied to many different aspects, and may incorporate a variety of concepts (...). A full discussion of ‘results’ therefore embraces the wider question of ‘results’ for whom, defined by whom, against what objectives?”²³ The same can be said for the discussion on successes.

¹⁸ Hood, *The Art of the State*, op. cit., p.199

¹⁹ Hood, *The Art of the State*, op. cit., p.206

²⁰ H.G. Fredrickson, *Whatever happened to Public Administration? Governance, Governance Everywhere*, in: Ferlie et al, *The Oxford Handbook of Public Management*, op. cit., pp.282.

²¹ E. C. Kamarck, *Public Servants for Twenty-First-Century Government*, in John D Donahue/Joseph S. Nye (eds.), *For the People, Can we fix Public Service?*, Brookings Institution Press, Washington D.C. 2003, p.134

²² J.D. Aberbach/B.A. Rockman, *In the Web of Politics, Three Decades of the U.S. Federal Executive*, 2000, p.9

²³ C. Pollitt/G.Bouckaert, *Public Management Reform, A Comparative Analysis*, Oxford University Press, 2000, p.97

Due to their rational approach to Public Management Reforms in Europe, Pollitt and Bouckaert (2000)²⁴ wonder about the “large optimism about the potential of public sector reforms” and the results: trade-offs balances, limits, dilemmas and paradoxes²⁵. In their study of public management reform in Europe, the authors reveal several dilemmas and contradictions within public management reform. One has to do with the goal of motivating staff and the promotion of cultural change, while at the same time tenure is weakened and the downsizing of projects is going on. They are also worried about the instability that seems to reign in public organisations, and point to several negative consequences of current reforms, especially the danger that they will destroy institutional memory and negatively affect morale and trust.

Some decades ago, Lindblom suggested that “decisions within this political setting can never be wholly rational but (...) are of a “bounded rational” nature”. That is to say, instead of insisting on an “optimal solution”, the public policy maker must be satisfied with what is “good enough”, or as Lindblom suggested, must “muddle through.”²⁶ Today, representatives of the new institutionalism in organizational analysis suggest that (HRM-) reforms are strongly influenced by clichés, myths, public- and political interests and expectations and public images.

A conceptual understanding of the reform process in public organisations inevitably leads back to the work of Simon, who did not deny the possibility of change processes as a result of rational processes. However, he showed that organisations never work purely rationally or perfectly: “We forget sometimes that an organisation is a group of people behaving. These people are not tools or machines. They have feelings, hopes, and fears. They get sick, hungry, angry, frustrated, happy, and sad. Their behaviour is subject to a whole range of influences extending back to their births...”²⁷ Very important “is the role that communication plays in the day-to-day work of every organisation. Without communication, not even the first steps can be taken toward human cooperation, and it is impossible to speak about organisational problems without speaking about communication...”²⁸ At the root of public administration are continuous conflicts and communication blockages due to:

- Language barriers (misinterpretation and misunderstanding)
- Differing frames of reference (different mental understanding of definitions)
- Geographical distance impeding the communication process (over Units, Countries, Ministries)
- Status distance as a filtering process throughout hierarchical levels of organisation
- Self-protection (individuals tend to communicate more those things that are to their benefit)
- Pressure of work (people tend to overlook important matters)
- Censorship (limitations on the flow of information by authority or force)

Changes in the public sector may also be a result of solving problems or of failure to address challenges (e.g. fighting unemployment). Solutions and reforms may contribute to improvements but – later on – to deteriorations, or even create entirely new problems.

²⁴ Pollitt/Bouckaert, op. cit.

²⁵ Pollitt/Bouckaert, op. cit., p.149

²⁶ C. E. Lindblom, *The Science of Muddling through*, in *Public Administration Review*, 1959

²⁷ H. Simon, *Public Administration*, Alfred Knopf, New York, 1973, p. 55

²⁸ H. A. Simon, Donald W. Smitburg, Victor A. Thomas, *The Communication Process*, in: Richard, J. Stillman, *Public Administration*, Fourth Edition, Houghton Company, Boston 1988, p.254

Reforms might therefore produce “waves” of different outcomes which are difficult to predict. There may be improvements in some policies, but – at the same time - deteriorations in other fields (e.g. advancing human rights and democracy, enhancing fairness, equality and non-discrimination, reducing crime, improving welfare, reforming public transport, guaranteeing peace and stability, protecting the environment, reducing disease and enhancing consumer protection, ensuring safe drinking water, promoting financial stability, increasing access to education, integrating minorities etc²⁹). In all these different dossiers, the civil service plays a crucial role and different ministries may produce different results.

Also, in the field of the European Integration process, numerous experts have tried to offer conceptual understandings about the “European reform process”. Federalists, Intergovernmentalists, Functionalists and “Spill-over” theorists have exchanged well-founded arguments over the past few decades. However, the integration process still offers elements for many theoretical explanations. For example, it has not only brought with it forms of legal harmonisation but even some elements of political and administrative convergence, approximation, cooperation, and - for some years – open coordination, co-regulation and self-regulation.

Moreover, because of the great importance of the integration process in general, it is easy to overstate convergence (but neither should it be underestimated). Recent public management theories suggest that even reforms in those areas where the EU integration process exercise only a limited impact are travelling the same road. Some claim that partial convergence exists, whereas others are of the opinion that even among the most similar countries, convergence has been exaggerated. “These differing views may be founded partly on the sheer difficulty of doing large-scale comparative research on administrative change” due to the huge amount of material and linguistic barriers etc.³⁰. In his paper “Clarifying convergence”, Pollitt proposes a distinction between:

- Discursive convergence – more and more people are talking about the same concepts
- Decisional convergence – the authorities decide to adopt a particular form, policy or technique
- Practical convergence – public sector organisations begin to work in similar ways
- Results convergence – reforms produce similar or identical results and effects³¹

Research about these different stages is obviously more difficult for “Practical convergence” and “Results convergence” although a recent Eurobarometer survey (EB 67, 2007) demonstrates an impressive level of outcome convergence regarding citizen satisfaction levels in some selected policy fields.

Furthermore, “convergence at one stage does not necessarily mean convergence at the next”³² – far from it. According to Pollitt, the “hypothesis proposed is that the extent of convergence declines rapidly as one moves through the four stages.”³³ Within the OECD countries there is considerable evidence of discursive convergence and also some form of decisional convergence. There is, however, limited information on practice or results convergence.

²⁹ P.C. Light, Government’s Greatest Achievements of the Past Half Century, in: Reform Watch (Brookings Institute), Vol. 2, November 2000.

³⁰ Pollitt, C., Clarifying convergence, in: Public Management Review, No. 4, Issue 1, 2002, pp.470

³¹ Pollitt, Clarifying, op. cit., p. 477.

³² Pollitt, Clarifying, op. cit., p. 478.

³³ Pollitt, Clarifying, op. cit., p. 483.

When analysing change processes, progress and successes in the field of HR management, one should also take into consideration the fact that the objectives of most HRM reforms are complex. Objectives are not simply to improve the quality of services and the performance of people, but also to respect the rule of law, citizen rights, enhance efficiency, increase productivity, save resources and serve political interests. Many critical observers even argue that the most important objectives of HRM reform are saving resources, increasing organisational performance and enhancing flexibility. They claim - as Woodrow Wilson did in 1887 - that public administration is a field of business. Others, however, are of the opinion that the public service is different to the private sector and that its specific characteristics (e.g. fairness, non-discrimination, equality, rule of law) will ensure that it remains so. Whatever the right answer, one thing is sure: the above mentioned different HR objectives are always conflictual and – sometimes – contradictory. Consequently, the term “HR success” is ambivalent in itself.

Indeed, fundamental questions as to the objectives of public sector reform were discussed more seriously in the past than in the present. For example, in the United States, at the beginning of the 20th century, the so-called Brownlow Committee stated: “in proceeding to the reorganisation of the government it is to keep prominently before us the ends of reorganisation. Too close a view of machinery most not cut off from sight the true purpose of efficient management. Economy is not the only objective, though reorganisation is the first step to savings; the elimination of duplication and contradictory policies is not the only objective, though the new organisation will be simple and symmetrical; higher salaries and better jobs are not the only objectives, though these are necessary; better business methods and fiscal controls are not the only objectives, though these too are demanded. There is but one grand purpose, namely, to make democracy work today in our national government; that is, to make our government an up-to-date, efficient, and effective instrument for carrying out the will of the nation. It is for this purpose that the government needs thoroughly modern tools of management”³⁴.

Today, most modern reform concepts lack a coherent answer as to the real objectives of HRM reforms. The popular notion of “doing more with less” is such a concept. Also, prescriptions about how to structure organisations tend to have their origins in reactions against failures (or perceived failures) of current institutions, rather than looking at what should be achieved instead. Consequently, programmes “for organisational success often amount to turning round what is seen as a recipe for disaster”³⁵ “Slowly, however, the euphoria starts to wear off, then new heaven and new earth start to look all too much like the old ones, and the cycle of disappointment begins again”³⁶.

In the past, experts in the field of public administration have argued that changes in public administration resemble a zero-sum game between efficiency, effectiveness and responsiveness and that public administration reform is always caught in “proverbs”, dilemmas and paradoxes.

Our theoretical assumption in this study is also that – although there are good reasons for criticising traditional public services - most reform strategies and vocabularies are full of “proverbs”, and the results of the reform trajectories seem to produce as many problems as suggestions for improvement. The calls for more *flexibility, innovation, change, performance*

³⁴ Brownlow, Louis, Merriam, Charles E, Gulik, Luther, Report of the President’s Committee on Administrative Management (1937), in: Shafritz, J.M./A.C.Hyde, Classics of Public Administration, The Dorsey Press, Chicago, Illinois, 2.edition 1987, p.94

³⁵ Hood, The Art of the State, op. cit., p.23/24

³⁶ Hood, The Art of the State, op. cit., p.195

and *less bureaucracy* are very general and lack specific knowledge about the nature of public sector employment and civil service structures. More than this, the “reform process” lacks a conceptual understanding about its own concepts.

However, this does not imply that things cannot improve as a consequence of reform initiatives. In fact, as we will see later on many recent developments are very positive and can be called successes.

2. Public management theories – a new realism?

In this study we will reject the idea that a new public management should be compared to an old public administration since such a comparison would be far too superficial. Public bureaucracies are neither simply “black” nor “white”, nor are they the same in every country and in every culture. Classical traditional systems like the Prussian-, Napoleonic-, Westminster or Chinese model were also never the same. As we will see in this study the Member States with career systems also differ in detail. The same can be said for the position-system countries.

In addition, if we accepted a comparison between an old public administration and a new public management, the new model would always win. However, as we will see in this study, countries who are supposed to have adopted New Public Management approaches are not necessarily more successful than more traditional countries. This would be too easy a conclusion.

Besides, there is no one-size-fits-all *new public management*. In the meantime, many studies have given evidence that different historical traditions and cultures as well as HR systems have a considerable impact on public management modernisation paths. Equally, the OECD, which in the past has shown a strong preference for observing ‘universal trends’ of public administration modernisation, has underlined diversity and the relevance of context. The 2005 report ‘Modernising Government – The Way Forward’ came to the conclusion that “modernisation is dependent on context” and that “there are no public management cure-alls” (OECD 2005, p.13).

In all public service models Human Resource Management reforms are mostly political, judicial and economic (or a mixture of all). The combination of political interests, financial pressures, a bad image of the public service and hasty reforms mean that reform strategies in the civil service and HRM reforms do not always follow theoretical models and are not based on the exchange of rational arguments and clear-cut facts. Often it seems that the wish for a new and better administration says more about aspirations, beliefs and culture than about the real need for reforms. As such, the call for *change, innovation, flexibility, creativity and performance* does not say anything about effects and outcomes.

In the field of HRM, too often, reform initiatives make proposals on how to improve the individual performance of the employees without considering that most of them are actually performing very well. A number of HRM studies in the public sector also ignore why public employees are mostly satisfied with their work and perform well, even when – sometimes – they are poorly paid. In the United States, Al Gore (1993) argued that the fundamental problem of managing the public sector would be the “system” but not the people (“civil servants”)³⁷.

³⁷ see also the whole report: National Performance Review, From Red Tape to Results: Creating a Government that Works Better and Costs Less, Government Printing Office, Washington D.C., 1993

In the meantime the public discourse about the role and importance of public services is also about to change. The New Public Management hype has reached its peak after the fall of the Berlin Wall, when many observers called for quick privatisation, outsourcing, delegation and decentralisation of the highly rigid, hierarchical and ineffective public services in Central and Eastern Europe. All of these recommended reforms had a strong ‘efficiency’ focus and aimed at ‘doing more with less’. In particular the discussions about governmental and public sector performance changed abruptly after the terrorist attacks in New York, Madrid, London and - later - the natural disasters in New Orleans and in South East Asia. New global security threats and new risks (e.g. bird flu), have also triggered renewed discussions about the need for strong public services and the protection of populations. In the United States, two conclusions were drawn from the September 11 attacks:

- Firstly, that ‘the public sector’ and government working methods are important, and indeed critical, for the nation’s well-being; and
- Secondly, that defects in government operations are most readily discovered in events of crisis or scandal - all too often after the damage has been done” (Davidson 2000, p. 2).

The shift in perception about the need for a strong and effective public service has also provoked new discussions about the negative effects of a pure “efficiency” focus in the public sector. In Europe, discussions about public sector performance slowly moved away from a naïve admiration of the one-size-fits-all-theories (‘doing more with less’) and towards path-dependency theories. In particular, concerns about the emergence of new paradoxes (Hesse/Hood 2003³⁸), dilemmas (Emery/Giauque³⁹) and trade-offs (Pollitt/Bouckaert 2004⁴⁰), new challenges (e.g. demographic challenges), capacity problems, staff shortages (mostly in the IT, health and education sectors), more evidence about inefficiencies and programme failures as a consequence of privatisation, outsourcing and downsizing policies, and about the state’s responsibility in fighting terrorism, climate change, increasing levels of poverty and growing income differences between rich and poor have all played an important role in the shift of the public management debate. With the changing focus in the public performance debate, there was also a change in assumptions of what instruments and measures are likely to induce better individual and organisational performance. At the beginning of the 21st century, the public discourse on both sides of the Atlantic is becoming more pragmatic. Experts and citizens are no longer asking for ‘less state involvement’ but for better services, higher quality, more effectiveness and efficiency, respect for equity and non-discrimination issues, diversity management, the rule of law, democracy, fairness and dignity.

More criticism is also coming from “inside” the public service. Employees want to see changes and reforms. Often, they complain about too many rules, too much bureaucracy, slow procedures, stress at work, poor leadership and too few incentives for personal development. Any observer would agree that these criticisms are based not only on assumptions, but often on “real life” experiences.

This new “realism” in the field of Public Management is being welcomed since it also allows for better explanations as to why the national public services – despite many common pressures and challenges – follow different paths and priorities, and, why they produce different reform outcomes.

³⁸ J.J. Hesse/C.Hood/G.Peters, *Paradoxes in Public Sector Reform*, Berlin, 2003.

³⁹ Y.Emery/D.Giauque (eds.), *Dilemmes de la GRH Publique*, 2007

⁴⁰ G.Bouckaert/C.Pollitt, *Public Management Reform*, op. cit.

3. Progress over time. The link between organisational structures and personality

For a long time opinions prevailed in the European societies that public officials were linked to the authority of the state and could not be regarded as employees like in the private sector. This group of public employees was seen as “agents” who were supposed to uphold the rule of the law and to execute governmental policies. For many years, almost all Member States had designed their public organisations in specific ways because they expected that integrity and values would be the result of specific organisational features. In the field of HRM, a hierarchical and centralised organisational structure, clear and rigid career paths, lifetime tenure, seniority, advantageous pension systems and rigid remuneration systems were introduced in order to reduce as far as possible the danger of too much political influence, corruption, misconduct, the exercise of private interests and instability of government. According to Weber the special status and specific working conditions should both guarantee the neutrality of the civil servant and make him a loyal server of the state. In “Politik als Beruf” (Politics as a Vocation) Weber suggested that civil servants should administer without fight, passion and emotion. Communication should be “dehumanised” by eliminating feelings like hate and other irrational and emotional elements. The civil servant should not do the task of a politician: fighting!⁴¹

Public Servants were servants of the Leviathan (T. Hobbes) who stood above society. Thus, for a long time, governments as well as civil servants were more concerned with regulation, control and the implementation of programmes than with evaluating their activities’ outcomes, citizens’ concerns and consumer satisfaction. Since the notion of social services did not exist (until the 1950s only a few countries had anti-poverty programmes or initiatives in the field of food safety, social security or environmental protection), most existing ‘public services’ were in the area of tax, transport, health, inspections, research, military, and police. Consequently, for a long time people were not allowed to question government authorities at all and citizens had no right to challenge cases of “maladministration”. In fact, the most important task of the state sector was to control rather than to serve society and its citizens. Therefore, public servants were rather *executors* and not managers. Moreover, public officials were linked to the authority of the state and could not be regarded as employees like in the private sector. They were seen as a specific category of public employees who were supposed to prepare, implement and to execute governmental policies. Being a civil servant, as it were, implied ‘performing well’. Questioning whether public organisations and public servants performed well was highly inopportune - sometimes almost dangerous for those who criticised government.

Today, this has completely changed. Public servants are more accessible, more transparent, accountable and assume more responsibilities than ever before. Moreover, our study revealed that 52,6% of all respondents of this study agreed that public officials are better qualified than before. Only a small minority (13,4%) was of the opinion that this is not the case.

Seen from this historical point of view, contemporary public services can demonstrate clear progress in many fields; for example, positive developments in the field of customer- and citizen rights (and a much more sophisticated administrative law). However, at the same time new challenges are also emerging and citizen demands are rising. Furthermore, media and citizens have become more critical and are questioning whether civil servants should be treated differently at all. At the same time public perceptions are still popular that civil

⁴¹ Max Weber, *Politik als Beruf*, Reclam, Stuttgart 1999, p. 32.

servants have different personalities, are motivated by different incentives, work less hard than employees in the private sector, are more security-minded, more rule-oriented and are not very innovative.

Today, in most Member States' public services are still distinct from private services. Specific organisational structures and distinct working conditions have also survived. However, differences between the sectors are fading but still (surprisingly) little is known of the relationship between organisational structure and public performance or even between organisational structure and individual behaviour. For example: are countries with career systems more or less successful in HR policies than countries with position systems? Are public officials more or less satisfied in career-system countries? Are public officials more or less motivated in countries with position systems? Do public officials perform better or worse than private sector employees? Are public officials less corrupt in career-system countries?

Most experts so far have offered a number of explanations as to why behaviour and performance of public organisations and public officials differ from private sector organisations and their employees, e.g. too many rules, too little delegation and decentralisation, too much political influence, too little motivation, not enough performance incentives, no individualised development strategies and instruments, decision-making procedures which are too slow. Another widely believed explanation is that public employees have too much protection against being laid off, too few incentives to perform, too little external pressure (from clients and citizens) and too many privileges. With their structures, as the story goes, public employees do not have to work hard and well since it would be very difficult to dismiss or discipline them for poor performance. In this scenario, the public sector suffers from too many poor performers.

“Given the bleak reputation of public bureaucracy, one might also expect lower work satisfaction there”⁴², different attitudes to the work and different incentive structures compared to those working in the private sector. Due to this bad image, only a few experts give uncritical support to the bureaucracy. Instead, much more representative is the observation of Max Weber who believed that the individual becomes a “cog” in the machinery of modern bureaucracy. Weber saw this development as threatening for an open-minded individual.

However, there is still remarkably little evidence about the interaction among personality, organisational structure, and bureaucratic behaviour⁴³. Since the beginning of the twentieth century, many experts (Weber, Merton, Allison, Thompson, Goodsell, Brewer) observed that there is a connection between organisational structure and personality. A widespread popular assumption suggests that organisational structures do cause changes and influence personality. This means that a classical career system or bureaucratic structure will also influence the personality of a civil servant. Another theory suggests that specific personalities seek particular organisational structures.

Merton (1940)⁴⁴ was actually the first scientist to analyse the connection between personality and bureaucratic structure. According to him, “...the bureaucratic structure exerts a constant

⁴² B. Bozeman/H. R., Organizational Rules and the “Bureaucratic Personality” in: American Journal of Political Science, Vol. 42, No. 1, 1998, p.462

⁴³ Bozeman, Bureaucracy and Tape, 1999, p.42

⁴⁴ R.K. Merton, Bureaucratic Structure and Personality, in: Shafritz, Jay M./Hyde Albert C., Classics of Public Administration, The Dorsey Press, Chicago, Illinois, 2.Edition 1987, pp.111

pressure upon the official to be methodical, prudent, disciplined. (...). An effective bureaucracy demands reliability of response and strict devotion to regulations....”⁴⁵

According to Merton, the bureaucrat’s official life is structured in terms of a graded career, promotion by seniority, pensions, incremental salaries, etc., “all of which are designed to provide incentives for disciplined action and conformity to the official regulations (...). But these very devices (...) also lead to an over-concern with strict adherence to regulations which induces timidity, conservatism, and technicism.” Another feature of the traditional bureaucratic structure, “the stress on depersonalisation of relationships, (...), the dominant role of general, abstract rules, tends to produce conflict in the bureaucrat’s contacts with the public or clientele. (...) The impersonal treatment of affairs which are at times of great personal significance to the client gives rise to the charge of “arrogance” ...”⁴⁶

In fact, the process of alienation of the individual's personality starts with a demand for control by the organisation. This is implemented by an official through rule compliance, with an emphasis on correctness. As a consequence, individuals become defensive, rigid and reliable. Later on, this behaviour (rigidity, slowness, resistance to change, attachment to rules, excessive discipline, need to control) was called “bureaupathic” behaviour (Thompson).

Merton demonstrated that certain bureaucratic structures do indeed influence behaviour:

- *Seniority and career*: “The career structure supports an over-concern with strict adherence to regulations”
- *Esprit de corps*: “There is a sense of common identity for all those who work together in a bureaucracy. They share the same interests and there is relatively little competition in so far as promotion is based on seniority; group aggression is thus minimised. This esprit de corps may lead, however, to personnel defending their entrenched interests rather than assisting the higher officials or clients of the organisation”
- *Process of sanctification*: “There is a tendency for certain bureaucratic norms, originally introduced for technical reasons, to become rigidified and “sacred”.”
- *Impersonality*: “The personality of the official is “nucleated” about the norm of impersonality. This, in association with the bureaucrat’s tendency to categorise all matters of concern to the organisation, frequently causes the peculiarity of individual cases to be ignored. Since the client inevitably tends to be convinced of the special features of his own problem, he often objects to such treatment. This gives rise to charges of the bureaucrat being arrogant and haughty in his behaviour.”

According to this concept, a traditional bureaucratic structure produces a bureaucratic personality which can be defined by the following:

- Subordination: a willingness to comply fully with the orders of the superior
- Compartmentalisation: confidence in expert judgement and a need to restrict one’s concerns to one’s own area of specialisation
- Impersonalisation: a preference for impersonal or formal relationships with other individuals
- Rule conformity: a desire for adherence to rules, regulations and standard operating procedures

⁴⁵ Merton, in: Shafritz/Hyde, op. cit., p.112

⁴⁶ Merton, in: Shafritz/Hyde, op. cit., p.112

Merton's explanations supported the view of the private entrepreneur as an innovator and individualist and the civil servant as a conformist and someone avoiding innovation. At the same time, the notion emerged of a bureaucratic personality and the belief that adult personality socialisation develops through work organisation.

Another argument as to why public organisations "produce" a certain type of personalities has to do with the long and complicated hiring and recruitment procedures in the national public services. These procedures were more and more seen to "interfere with the selection of highly motivated individuals" who were easily lost to private organisations.

However, after the Second World War, more authors claimed that these classical views were not correct and that civil servants and public organisations differ from each other and also show a high degree of flexibility. For example, Kohn (1971) found in his empirical analysis that officials were "more intellectually flexible, more open to new experience, and more self-directed in their values than are those who work in non-bureaucratic organisations"⁴⁷. Mayntz and Luhmann (1973) also revealed that people for whom "security" is very important are mostly interested in a career in the civil service.

In the following, the traditional view of the rigid bureaucrat was called more and more into question⁴⁸. Allinson concluded in his study (1984) that the "traditional image of the bureaucrat, with his dissatisfaction and insecurities reflected in pathological behaviour patterns, is not generally applicable"⁴⁹. The rigid bureaucrat concept is a false image⁵⁰. According to Allinson, the average bureaucrat is "probably engaged in non-managerial clerical work, relatively satisfied in his job, (...) well adjusted individual who has found his niche in the organisational world. He is amenable to a degree of autonomy and will use his discretion as long as he is given a clear indication of what is expected of him... He understands the need for rules, documentation, standard procedures and specialist skills, and may well be more capable of exercising the self-discipline necessary in their use than the most prone to criticising him (...). Thus the popular view of the modern bureaucrat may be an injustice"⁵¹.

Similarly to Allinson, Goodsell revealed that "the empirical evidence reviewed to verify the "bureaucratic mentality" does very little to assure us that it actually exists. Bureaucrats have not shown to be less flexible and open-minded than non-bureaucrats and they do not appear more rules-oriented. Indeed, much evidence points to little difference between bureaucrats and ordinary people"⁵².

In his polemic "The Case for Bureaucracy", Goodsell presented interesting socio-demographic information and data about the *average civil servant*. He concluded that the average "civil servant" is in fact not very much different from other citizens. In reality, the average civil servant is middle aged, comes from the middle class, represents different religions, political and educational backgrounds and is either female or male (but the composition of the sexes is different according to functions and (top positions)). Goodsell concluded that "bureaucrats are ordinary people". They teach children, manage forests,

⁴⁷ C. W. Allinson, *Bureaucratic Personality and Organisation Structure*, University of Leeds, 1984, p.39

⁴⁸ Allinson, *op. cit.*, p.40

⁴⁹ Allinson, *op. cit.*, p.114

⁵⁰ Allinson, *op. cit.*, p.39

⁵¹ *Ibid.*

⁵² C. E. Goodsell, *The Case for Bureaucracy, A Public Administration Polemic*, Third Edition, Chatham, New Jersey, p. 123

programme computers, chase speeders, arbitrate labour disputes, calculate benefit-cost ratios, inspect meat, enforce environmental permits, conduct research, negotiate contracts, prepare laws, fight wars etc. “ Within a point or two, bureaucrats as a whole are identical with the general public in their concern about crime, drugs, the environment, welfare, and the condition of the cities. Their views are similarly close on capital punishment, premarital sex, school busing, and fundamentalist religion. Overall, comparability outweighs contrast...”⁵³ A study by Nye revealed surprising news: “There is little difference between sectors and more congruence than divergence in people’s answers to questions about the importance of work in their lives, how hard they work...”⁵⁴. People are also very satisfied in the public sector⁵⁵.

All of these developments no longer fit into Merton’s perception of the traditional bureaucrat. Contrary to this, public servants are adapting to new requirements. They are changing as much as the whole society is changing. At least the classical bureaucrat is “dead”.

4. Why is it difficult to talk about positive aspects of public services?

*“There are quite significant differences depending on which service or field of administration one is thinking of. Generally speaking those services which are close to citizens or which they know very well have quite a good image (examples are the police, defence forces). On the other hand, the public doesn’t know which part of the public sector a particular service belongs to; the credit may go to a wrong destination. The perception of the state personnel on the image is more positive than that of the public at large.”
(Finland – middle management)*

After years of public service bashing and discussions around the existence (or not) of a specific public service motivation, what seems to be missing today is a public affirmation about the importance of the public services and the people who work for the common good. Obviously, discussing public service successes is difficult since citizens have a right to expect that public servants perform well anyway. Public Officials are paid with tax payers’ money and they spend (amongst others) tax payers’ money. Consequently, people have a right to expect that public servants perform well. However, it is precisely because of this (high) expectation that it is difficult to talk (and research) about successes. Furthermore, discussing successes is risky business. Public services do not have a specific purpose like profit making (in the private sector). Rather “goal achievement” and “fulfilment of duties” and “working for the common good” are more important objectives. In all public administration systems the most important public service values (such as fair and standardised treatment, neutrality, stability, hierarchy and impartiality) are “static” and “conservative” whereas the societal values are “fluent”, “modern” and call for efficiency, reform, change, innovation, flexibility and performance. The tension between these two concepts and values explain another difficulty in identifying positive developments.

As we will see later on in this study discussions about progress, successes, improvements, values, trust, social capital and ethical standards are always connected with beliefs, perceptions, traditions and administrative structures. The development of values is also changing as national and European societies communicate more and cooperate within a global

⁵³ C. E. Goodsell, *The Case for Bureaucracy*, op. cit., p. 114.

⁵⁴ P. Norris, *Is there still a Public Service Ethos? Work Values, Experience, and Job Satisfaction among Government Workers*, in: Donahue/Nye, *For the People*, op. cit., p.87

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*

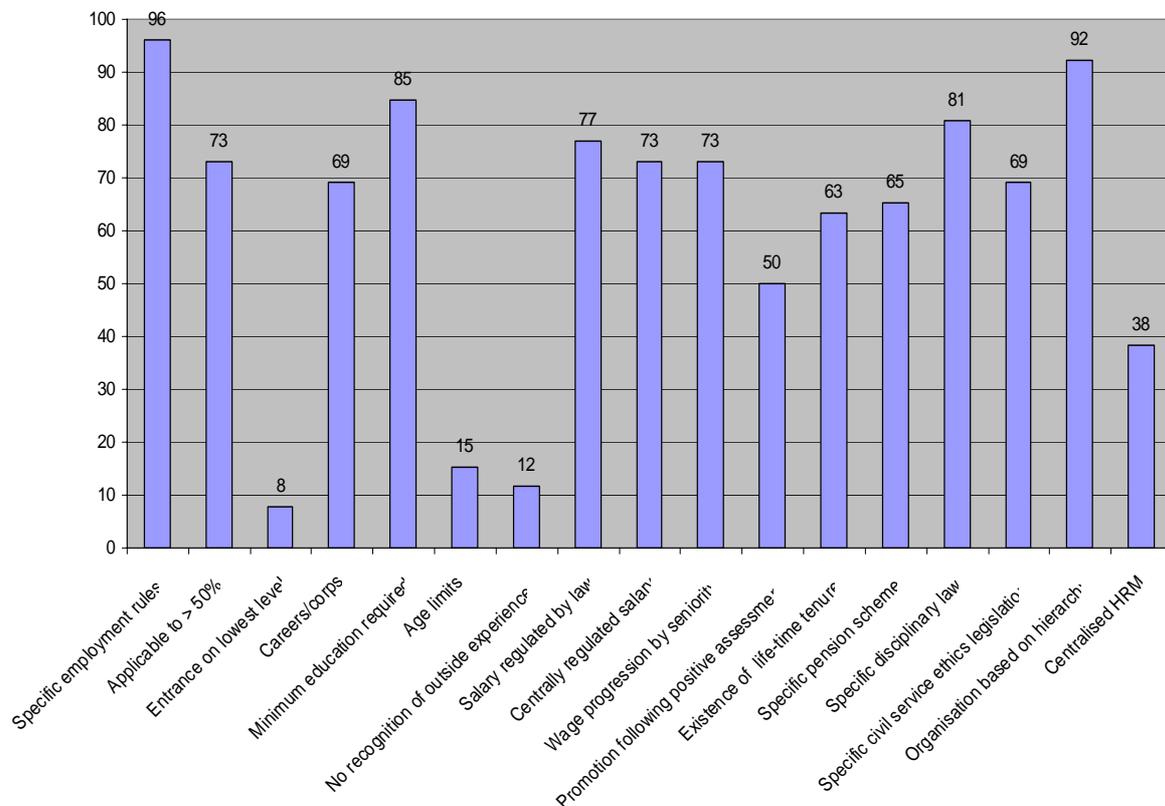
context. However, in the field of public management, citizens cannot easily be convinced about a value change in the public services. Stereotypes about public organisations and civil servants are not changing easily although they were shaped in a world that no longer exists. Today one may wonder whether public organisations can still be described as “rule bound bureaucratic organisations”: Concepts like “Governance”, “Change Management”, “Performance Management”, “Decentralisation of HR responsibilities”, “Knowledge Management”, “Life-long learning”, “Total Quality Management”, “Value Management”, “Competence Management”, “Accountability”, and “Performance-Related pay” are reforms that have been introduced a number of years ago. In addition, in many civil services, decentralisation trends were introduced, organisational structures and recruitment procedures have changed, budgets reduced, working time patterns were modified, performance management systems adopted, (top) officials were nominated on time, pay- and pension systems reformed and – more generally - alignment trends between the public- and private sector pursued. To this should be added the impact of the European Integration Process on the public services.

A recent analysis⁵⁶ of the development of HR policies in the Member States of the EU has shown that many traditional features of the national public services are about to change. Whereas specific employment rules (e.g. a public law status) still exist for public officials in almost all Member States of the EU (except the UK) other classical features of civil service laws are disappearing. For example, general age limits (which are – generally – prohibited by EU law) no longer exist. Today, most responsibilities in the field of HR are decentralised, many Member States have abolished the life-tenure of civil servants, specific pension schemes have been reformed, age limits exist only for certain categories of staff, recruitment and access to the public service is no longer restricted to the lowest level of the career, services outside the public services are more recognised than ever, salary schemes have been decentralised etc.

⁵⁶ Survey by Christoph Demmke and Thomas Henökl on the development of career and position systems (2007). This survey was carried out amongst the Members of the HRM-working group of the EUPAN network. The Member States were asked whether the national civil service and HR structures correspond to 17 classical career system indicators. 26 Member States contributed to this survey.

Figure 4. Development of HR Policies in the EU Member States

Overview - all items in 26 EU Member States



These tremendous changes in the field of HR have not yet reached the public. Still, most people have perceptions about public servants and working conditions that reflect the situation from a long time ago. At least one reason for this can be found in the public services themselves. Until today, public services are not very good at marketing and informing the public about changes that have taken place.

However, the most important reason for the difficulties in identifying positive developments stem from the underlying conviction that governments, public services, management and their personnel are not performing well enough. The reasons for this are identified by too much bureaucracy and red tape, rigidity and too many rules, too little delegation and decentralisation, structures that are too centralised, too few rewards and procedures that are too slow.

Another reason is political and ideological. Often, media and politicians express more dissatisfaction than satisfaction with the public sector and with civil servants in general and campaign against the “bureaucrats” and the expensive, slow, inefficient, unresponsive and expensive bureaucracies. Almost every political party or politician can be sure of the massive support of the electorate if measures are announced which aim at better public performance. “Bashing bureaucrats” is an evergreen on the political agenda no matter whether political affiliations are more left or right. In fact, performance management can serve any political master, since everybody will agree that there is always a need and possibility to improve the performance of public organisations. On the other hand, this also has a number of negative side-effects. Whereas it is relatively easy and popular to “sell” negative messages to the public, the positive sides of public service work are only rarely discussed. However, showing

the successes of public service work would be important in order to increase public trust and improve the image of the public services.

Political criticism is mostly directed at too many rules (“bureaucracy”) and mostly towards the public service, since it is the administration “that carries the burden of enforcing regulation, popular or not. It may be, of course, that bureaucrats are inclined to carry out unpopular regulations as strictly as popular ones. That, naturally enough, would lead to their being targets of hostility or ridicule. Politicians can then have it both ways: produce regulations to satisfy some constituencies, and then rail against their enforcement to other constituencies”⁵⁷. Politicians often try to win elections by criticising the bureaucracy. “For many politicians seeking national office, running against government and the bureaucracy was the ticket to ride (...). The bureaucracy was a vulnerable target...”⁵⁸

In fact, Europeans are very ambivalent about government and the public services. One reason for this critical image was the expansion of the public services after the Second World War when the tasks of the state evolved (especially in the social and education sector) and more and more people were recruited as civil servants. Consequently, public employment reached a new peak at the end of the seventies and beginning of the eighties. As a consequence of the widening of the public sector, it also became less clear why functions, e.g. in the field of education, research, social security etc. should be treated differently to those in the private sector. This expansion of the civil services and – in many cases – the preferential treatment of civil servants (especially as regards job security and social security provisions) has improved the attractiveness of public service employment but not necessarily the image of the public services.

Especially the Quality Conferences (the latest took place in Finland in 2006) have shown that it is possible (and increasingly popular) to present success stories in quality management. However, whereas many Member States demonstrated interesting success stories in different fields (new IT policies, new total quality management approaches, customer friendly services, new standards for hospitals, electronic parking ticketing, improved waste collection, better public order policing, improved local public services through online and one-stop services, options for paying taxes online, enhanced public information and data management, more transparency etc.) success stories in central HRM policies were rather rare. Surprisingly, only few seem to be interested in presenting success stories in the field of central HR issues.

5. Relationship between successes, good administration and trust

5.1. The change of values in our societies – decreasing trust and social capital?

“The image of the public sector in our country has constantly improved during last few years due to many improvements and the abolishment of many administrative burdens for citizens and enterprises. But people still see the public service as slow and rigid. They want to see some changes regarding the easier registration of companies and the services of e-Government.”
(Slovenia, middle management)

Although many people criticise traditional bureaucratic features and call for more reforms, flexibility, innovation, performance in the public service they also fear the loss of traditional

⁵⁷ Aberbach/Rockman, In the Web, op. cit., p.7

⁵⁸ Aberbach/Rockman, In the Web, op. cit., p.161

values because of the effects of these reforms. Perceptions about the loss of values in our societies are as old as mankind. For example, in his book “The Division of Labour in Society” (1893), Durkheim, a French sociologist, introduced the concept of *anomie*. He used *anomie* to describe a condition that was occurring in society. This meant that rules on how people ought to behave towards one another were breaking down. *Anomie*, simply defined, is a state where norms are confused, unclear or absent. According to Durkheim, it is a situation of normlessness. *Anomie* therefore refers to a breakdown of social norms and it is a condition where norms no longer control the activities of members in society. Changing conditions as well as adjustment of life leads to dissatisfaction, conflict, and deviance. Durkheim observed that social periods of disruption, e.g. economic depression, brought about greater *anomie*. Durkheim felt that sudden societal change caused a state of *anomie*. A similar theory was presented later on in the USA by Merton (“Social Structure and Anomie”, 1938).

Furthermore, research about the effects of “individualisation” (Beck⁵⁹), rationalisation (Weber, Foucault⁶⁰) and (post-) modernisation (Habermas⁶¹) showed that all of these trends have an impact on the social-coherence in our societies and changing norms and values. As a consequence of these processes, traditional authorities, mass organisations, political parties, churches etc. are changing in importance. Instead people “pick” and “choose” what is good and useful for them.

The concept of “social capital” also claims that social networks and social engagement are about to disappear. According to Putnam the concept of social capital can be defined as “features of social organisation, such as trust, norms, and networks that can improve the efficiency of society by facilitating coordinated action”⁶². Putnam claimed that Americans are withdrawing from civil society and engage less in social networks, groups, organisations etc. In the book “The Corrosion of Character” Sennett described (mostly) the negative effects of the flexibilisation of our working life. In this publication he claimed that the internationalisation of the economies (globalisation) and the flexibilisation of the labour market lead to a loss of social capital. Contrary to this, Field⁶³ believes that post-modern conditions are more favourable for social capital. Newer studies also show that the importance (and membership) of social, religious, cultural or political organisations etc. is changing but not decreasing. In addition recent value surveys show that traditional norms and values are not vanishing completely. In addition, unethical behaviour and corruption is not tolerated to a great degree by the European population. The fact that values are simply not fading is also supported by the European Values Study 1999/2000⁶⁴ which compared values and perceptions among the European population. This study shows that support for societal values, e.g. democracy, is still strong and not decreasing.

On a national level, two studies have been published in the Netherlands on the development of values and norms in Dutch society (including some comparative observations with respect

⁵⁹ U.Beck, Riskogesellschaft, Auf dem Weg in eine andere Moderne, 1986

⁶⁰ M.Weber, The Protestant Ethics and the Spirit of Capitalism, 1930 (translated), Economy and Society, (translated 1978); M. Foucault, L’ordre du discours, 1971

⁶¹ J. Habermas, The Theory of Communicative action, 1981.

⁶² Putnam, Bowling Alone: The Collapse and Revival of American Community, 2001.

⁶³ J. Field, Social Capital, 2003.

⁶⁴ Source book of the 1999/2000 European Values Study Surveys, The European Values Study: A Third Wave, Loek Halman, Tilburg University, 2001.

to various European countries)⁶⁵. In 2003, a report by the Dutch Scientific Council for Governmental Policy (*Wetenschappelijke Raad voor het Regeringsbeleid – WRR*) published a report on norms and values (*Waarden, Normen en de last van het gedrag*)⁶⁶. This report shows that the vast majority of the Dutch population was convinced that crime is increasing in 1980 and 1996. In reality, crime was increasing – but only among young men between the ages of 18 and 30.

The results of this report as well as another survey about “Moral in the public opinion” (2004) contrasted at least to some degree with popular stereotypes regarding an ongoing moral and ethical decline in our societies. In fact, both studies concluded that citizens have surprisingly clear attitudes about what they believe is accepted moral and ethical behaviour and what is not. Regarding the question of whether existing laws must be respected and enforced for example, only a very small minority believed that this should not be the case.

The acceptance of the rule of law, individual freedoms, e.g. the right to express an opinion, right to be protected against discrimination, right to vote, support for principle of democracy, etc. are also very widely accepted among European citizens. In addition, voluntary engagement in religious, political or cultural organisations is not decreasing but remains quite stable. Furthermore, the growing individualism in our societies does not seem to lead to less voluntary social engagement. “Individualism is not the same as egoism”⁶⁷.

The report of the above Dutch Scientific Council arrived at another important conclusion: according to the authors, people have an even stronger opinion about what they believe is good and bad than they did in former times.

The above results are confirmed in a study by Smeltz and Sweeny who show that – although perceptions differ about what ethical behaviour is - different forms of unethical behaviour, such as corruption and fraud, are not accepted by the vast majority of the population.

However, all existing surveys, studies and comparative reports reveal that perceptions about values differ among European countries. Moreover, values are constantly changing and ethical behaviour is not limited to a single type. Rather, from a European point of view, there are different national and regional perceptions regarding different forms of unethical behaviour. For example, Europeans differ in their attitude towards tax fraud, social security fraud, paying under the table, driving too fast, driving under the influence of alcohol, soft drugs, waste disposal, etc.⁶⁸

In some Member States, surveys exist relating to the ethical perceptions and ethical behaviour of civil servants. However, there are no comparable statistics available relating to the perception of civil servants regarding ethical behaviour in the European public services.

⁶⁵ Social and Cultural Planning Agency [*Sociaal en Cultureel Planbureau*], Paul Dekker/Joep de Hart/Paul de Beer/assisted by Christa Hubers, *De moraal in de publieke opinie (Morals in Public Opinion)*, The Hague, 2004, <http://www.scp.nl>; Scientific Council for Government Policy [*Wetenschappelijke Raad voor het Regeringsbeleid – WRR*], *Waarden, Normen en de last van het gedrag (Values, standards and the burden of behaviour)*, The Hague 2003

⁶⁶ Wetenschappelijke Raad voor het Regeringsbeleid (WRR), “*Waarden, Normen en de last van het gedrag*”, 2003.

⁶⁷ Sociaal en Cultureel Planbureau, *De moraal in de publieke opinie*, op. cit., p.81 (translation).

⁶⁸ Wetenschappelijke Raad voor het Regeringsbeleid, *Normen en waarden*, op. cit., p. 74-80

Today, discussions around ‘trust’ are somehow replacing (or repeating?) the former “discourses” around the loss of values and social capital. At least they should be seen in this context. Consequently, it is difficult to identify whether these discussions have somehow become a fashion as they did some time ago around the topic of “value changes”. Nevertheless, these discussions are important.

‘Trust’ covers a wide range of topics, from inter-organisational cooperation to citizen attitudes. For example, La Porta et. al.⁶⁹ find that higher levels of interpersonal trust increase government performance, tax compliance and decrease corruption. Similar to the wording ‘governance’, ‘trust’ is used as a buzzword, encompassing a variety of content but suffering from conceptual confusion and controversies. Even though the need for public sector reforms is often motivated by referring to declining levels of trust and satisfaction, there is no evidence that trust levels are declining or that low-trust countries initiate reforms which should lead to an increase in trust. Contrary to this, the Eurobarometer (2007) shows that “the level of trust among Europeans in their national institutions has also increased very strongly since autumn 2006”. Overall, there is more evidence for fluctuating levels of trust in the different countries; instead, most countries have up and down trends...

Other studies (e.g. in the United Kingdom) show that other institutions (multinational companies) and other categories of private sector employees (e.g. journalist) are less trusted than public officials.

A study (2006)⁷⁰ in the United Kingdom shows that “politicians are much less trusted to tell the truth than members of most professions: while the vast majority of the public say they trust doctors, teachers, judges and police officers, less than a quarter trust government ministers, as few as trust estate agents; three in ten trust MPs in general...” The integrity of those who hold public office matters to the public. More people say it is very important that MPs and Government ministers should not take bribes, that they should tell the truth and that they should not use their power for their own personal gain than those who think it is very important they should be competent at their jobs. Truthfulness is highly prized. Three-quarters of the public think it is ‘extremely important’ that MPs and Government ministers should tell the truth – only the requirement that they should not take bribes is rated as important by more of the public. The public also rate highly the importance of those in public office not using their power for their own personal gain: three-quarters think it very important that MPs and ministers do not use their power for their own personal gain (and only a minority believe that most MPs or ministers actually do so). Few from the public suspect politicians as a group of outright corruption – only 7% say they think ‘all’ or ‘most’ Government ministers take bribes, and 6% that all or most MPs do. However, the 2006 survey found a greater degree of public doubt than in 2003/04: while the last survey found 80% saying that few or no MPs take bribes and only 3% that they didn’t know, the present survey found 21% saying “don’t know”, with those prepared to express confidence that such abuse is rare falling to 63%. A similar shift in opinion was found in perceptions of whether Government ministers take bribes or not. This sharp change from the results of the previous survey applied only to the question of bribery; there was no movement to any similar degree in other aspects of politicians’ perceived behaviour. The public apply very similar standards to senior public officials as they do to MPs and Government ministers in terms of the behaviour they demand. In general they express somewhat more confidence that officials are meeting those standards than that politicians are doing so.”⁷¹

⁶⁹ R. La Porta et al., Trust in Large Organizations, Working Paper, No. W5864,

http://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=10378 (last time checked on 9 April 2008).

⁷⁰ Social Research Institute, Survey of Public Attitudes towards conduct in Public Life, London 2006, pp.11.

⁷¹ Ibid.

This survey shows that a) high standards of integrity are important, b) public perceptions are changing quickly and c) public trust is a very fragile and vulnerable concept. There may even be a tendency towards higher expectations. Generally people expect holders of public service and public servants to have very high standards of integrity.

5.2. Citizens' attitudes towards governments' achievements

"The civil service does not have a very positive image. Customers still feel that the public services are not very efficient and that the civil servants are not as productive and competent as the workers in the private sector. During the last five years there has been an effort to change that image. In fact, with the implementation of new services and ICT, the public services became more friendly and trustworthy for customers."

(Poland - employee)

"Though it has been changing, it is still regarded as not citizen-friendly, it takes too much time to have your matter settled, there is too much bureaucracy, and civil servants tend to be procedure-oriented and not customer-oriented. Public service is still associated with oldish women smoking a cigarette, drinking coffee and doing nothing. The situation is different in those institutions where young people work."

(Poland – middle management)

Today, blaming public dissatisfaction and low trust on poor performance is popular but sound empirical backing is absent. Research shows that the relationship between image, attractiveness, trust and performance is far from obvious. If public services are improving this does not necessarily lead to higher levels of trust and a better image. Furthermore, citizen's evaluations of public services are not only based on rational facts and real developments. Even if certain public services and results have improved this does not mean that people believe that this is indeed the case.

A British study on "Public Attitudes to Public Services" showed that the public is not convinced that better delivery of public services has been achieved even if this can be proved by facts. When people were asked whether they thought that delivery facts in education, criminal justice, asylum and immigration, transport and health services had been achieved or not over the last few years most replied that they did not believe that services had improved.

Table 8. British Study on Public Attitudes to Public Services

I am now going to read out a number of statements about how Britain's public services have changed over the last few years. For each one, I would like you to tell me whether you think it is true or false.

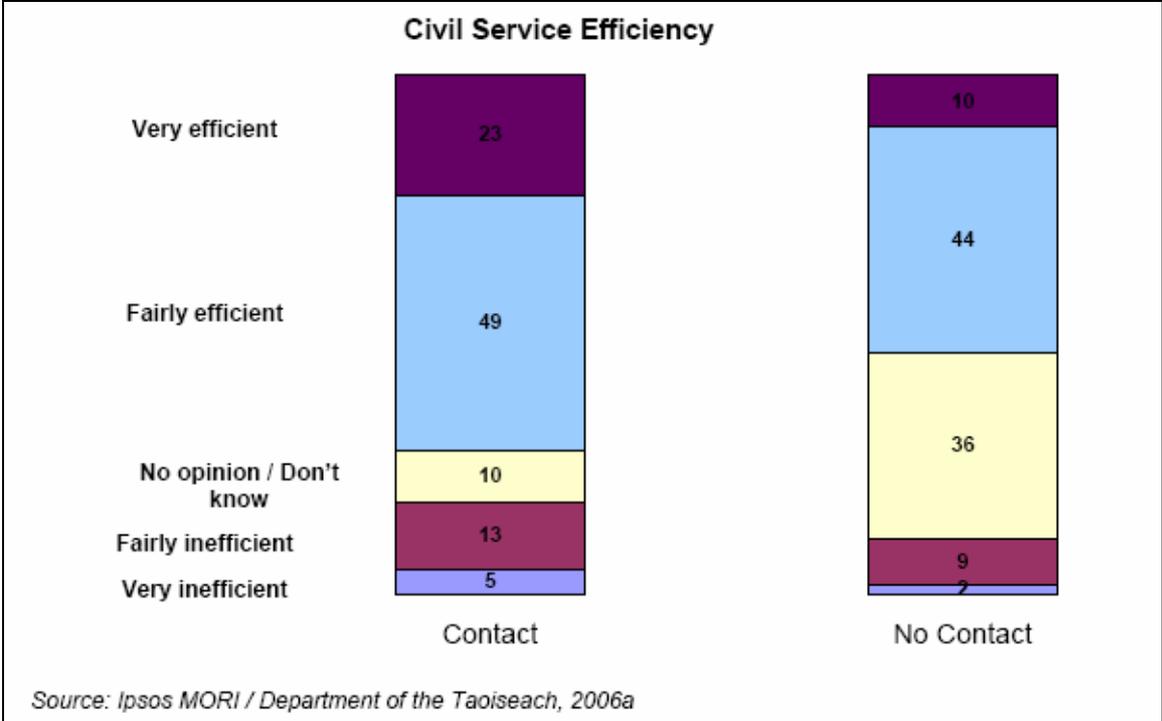
	True %	False %	Don't know %
There is faster access to treatment in NHS hospitals	36	57	7
Getting a GP appointment is quicker	39	56	5
There are thousands more doctors and nurses working in the NHS	27	65	9
Fewer people die from cancer and heart disease	53	40	6
Breast cancer treatment is now the fastest ever	62	23	16
Patients have more choice about their treatment and care	46	46	8
Average waiting times for NHS surgery have increased	58	36	6
There are thousands more teachers	22	69	9
Exam results in schools are now the best ever	55	36	9
There are free nursery places for all 4 year olds	27	52	21
The number of students going to university is the highest ever	71	21	9
There are smaller class sizes in primary and secondary schools	31	57	13
Truancy levels are the highest ever	68	22	10
Crime is falling	20	76	4
Burglary has been cut by 40%	26	65	9
Police numbers are the highest ever	43	47	10
There are stricter penalties for persistent offenders	24	70	6
Violent crime is rising	83	13	3
Asylum applications have fallen dramatically in the last 12 months	28	63	9
Asylum applications are higher now than 5 years ago	80	14	6
More money is being invested in public transport	49	44	8
There are more train services	27	59	14
More people are using buses	26	67	8
Old trains are being replaced with new ones	45	47	9
Fewer people are killed or seriously injured on the roads	35	58	8
Road improvements to tackle congestion are under way	61	35	4

* = positive delivery fact

Moreover, evidence also shows that when citizens are treated well by a local public official they do not generalise this experience to their impression of the whole public service. On the other hand: if people are treated badly by a local administrator or administration, they generalise their experience to the whole public service. Moreover, if people have little contact with (local) public services this is by no means a reason not to have an (often negative) opinion. At the same time, positive experiences with public services can easily be combined with very negative attitudes towards the whole public sector, government, the public services etc. However, when asked to rate public service efficiency, studies show that citizens who have no direct encounters with public services have a more critical attitude than those who have direct contacts. This shows that it is important to bring people into contact with the public services. Or at least, to better inform them about what the public services are doing.

Evidence shows that “those who have had contact with the civil service in the recent past tend to be generally more well-disposed towards the civil service, and tend to rate it as being more efficient. The fact that the proportion that had very favourable opinions is significantly higher amongst those who contacted the civil service than those that did not suggested “that the general public’s *experiences* of the civil service are significantly more positive than their *impressions*” (Ipsos MORI/Department of the Taoiseach, 2006a, p. 30). Generally, the results point towards the positive influence of direct experience on the public’s opinion of the civil service as a whole. This is reinforced by other data from the survey, which showed that 62% of those who had had contact with the civil service in the previous 12 months agreed with the statement that ‘the civil service has become more customer-focused over the past 3 years’, compared to 47% of those who had no contact”⁷². This shows that it makes sense to better and more rationally inform about the “real life within the public services”.

Figure 5. Perception of Civil Service Efficiency by Contact and No Contact



In fact, public performance and citizens perceptions are two things and opinions easily become detached from reality. Mostly neglected in discussions about public performance is the fact that individual opinions are strongly influenced by norms, attitudes, cultural factors and historical experiences. Here, the role and attitude of the media and the political level play a very important role. In the end, there are two strategies to improve the public attitude towards the public services. One would be to improve the quality of public services (or enhancing the quality of services); and the other would be to convince media, politicians and public services to report on the public services more often and in a realistic way. The second strategy is most likely to be more effective than the first.

⁷² Institute of Public Administration, Survey Research on Public Perceptions and Attitudes Towards Public Services, Working Paper no. 2, 2006

5.3. Public-Private comparisons and the development of public service values

Are public officials more ethical than private sector employees? As naïve as this question may seem to be, it is important to find an answer to it. Since Public Officials exercise important societal functions they can be expected to have strong ethical foundations.

On the other hand, whoever “sees government and business values as contradictory, will probably also stress the potential dangers of interaction”⁷³. “Fears are often expressed that exposing managers to the private sector might cause them to lose their integrity....”⁷⁴ The discussion about possible differences between the public and private sector is often intermingled with the discussion about problems arising from an intermingling of different values⁷⁵.

Thus, whereas some Member States are of the opinion that public- and private sector values are different, others point to the need to look at the issue from a case by case basis. According to this view, the differences within the different institutions and companies are probably much more significant than the differences between the public and the private sector as a whole. For example, studies show that the types of work, organisational culture etc. affect the values of an employee. Thus, values differ from ministry to ministry and from agency to agency. Also, professional values exist regardless of whether an organisation belongs to the public service or not.

Today, most recent changes in HRM reforms stem from the fact that, as far as most of the civil service is concerned; more and more people believe that there is no longer any cogent reason for considering the public function to be of greater value than those functions performed by the private sector⁷⁶. For many people today, civil servants “occupy positions similar to those in private enterprises with only one difference: public administration is a different branch of trade.”⁷⁷ In 1982, Niessen, in his preliminary report to the Dutch government, underlined the fact that a number of private individuals could pretend that they also exercise tasks for the public good⁷⁸. Hence, no greater value is attached to the public interest than to the private⁷⁹. It is clear that these observations challenge not only career systems but also the classical justification for specific organisational structures and a specific legal status of civil servants. If the civil servant would be the same as a bank employer or a farmer, a special legal relationship would appear to be superfluous. This would also make professional civil servants under a public law dispensable, as all you would need is a manager, technician, office worker, lecturer, specialist or secretary, all of whom who have to respect the same values as everybody else.

All employees only assume a different function from an employee working in a bank, a chemical plant or in the field of biotechnology who is fulfilling an equally valuable role in

⁷³ With the permission of the authors: Leo W.J.C. Huberts, /Emile W. Kolthoff/Hans van den Heuvel, The Ethics of Government and Business: What is valued most, EGPA Study Group “Ethics and Integrity in Governance”, Paper presented in Portugal, July 2003 (not to be quoted in publications)

⁷⁴ Ibid.

⁷⁵ Ibid.

⁷⁶ See C. Demmke, *Civil Services between Tradition and Reform*, Maastricht, 2004, p. 94.

⁷⁷ R. Niessen, *Legal Position of civil servants; the process of standardisation*, in: Ministerie van Binnenlandse Zaken en Koningsrijksrelaties (ed.), *The Dutch Civil Service*, Kluwer, Netherlands, 2004, p.27

⁷⁸ C.R. Niessen, *Preliminary report to the Dutch Government 1982, Bestaat er aanleiding de rechtspositionele verschillen tussen ambtenaren en civielrechtelijke werknemers te handhaven? [Is it necessary to maintain a distinction between civil servants and private sector employees regarding legal status?]* p. 146.

⁷⁹ See Demmke, *Civil Services*, op. cit., p. 94.

their job (which is essential to ensure the stability and preservation of the social system). A doctor or teacher working in a private school or hospital, therefore, performs just as important a function as a public servant such as a police officer or tax official. In addition, it would be difficult to argue why teachers (if they are civil servants) should be civil servants with specific ethics in one country if they perform well in other countries without that civil service status. In fact, differences in mentality and motivation of job attitude have more to do with individual characteristics and the sector in which they work.

On the other hand, Brewer (2003) compared civil servants and other citizens with regard to several important civic attitudes and behaviours that are closely related to social capital. These elements include social trust (in politics, institutions, neighbours etc.), social altruism (e.g. helping other people), equality, tolerance, humanitarianism, and civic participation. This empirical survey concluded that “public employment is a substantively important and highly significant predictor of civic participation. Overall, public servants are far more active in civic affairs than are other citizens, and they appear to be catalysts for the building of social capital in society at large”⁸⁰. The study does not distinguish between career civil servants and other public employees. However, it suggests that abolishing “bureaucrats” would also have an important negative impact on society as a whole. Any plans for alignment and privatisation of working conditions should also take these effects into account.

A study by Huberts/Kolthoff/van den Heuvel on “The Ethics of Government and Business: What is valued most?”⁸¹, concludes that public servants value *expertise* as the most important value. Whether this is also the most important value for private sector employees is not known. However, when asked what the key values should be, civil servants mentioned “meeting targets” as the most important key principle of their work⁸². “Meeting targets” is also an important value for private sector employees. Furthermore, the authors of the study conclude that civil servants are confronted in their daily life with a considerable number of values that are more or less valid in the public- and private sector: accountability, collegiality, competitiveness, consistency, cooperativeness, courage, dedication, effectiveness, efficiency, expertise, honesty, impartiality, innovativeness, lawfulness, obedience, profitability, responsiveness, self-fulfilment, selflessness, service orientation, social equity, sustainability, transparency.

Another survey by van den Heuvel, Huberts and Verberk on the values of Dutch civil servants arrives at interesting conclusions⁸³. According to the authors, morality is likely to be higher in the public sector or the same as in the private sector⁸⁴, but the authors do not find any difference between ethics of senior officials and ordinary workers. Besides, civil servants often face dilemmas where they have to decide on issues where different values contradict one another (rule of law versus efficiency). Depending on the dilemma (citizens orientation versus correctness), these situations are valued very differently and differ from situation to situation⁸⁵. However, it would be unfair to suggest that people from the private sector are more corrupt and immoral and that civil servants are moral. “It is perfectly possible, in the mixed economy of service provision, for an individual to take with them an ethos from one

⁸⁰ G. A. Brewer, Building Social Capital: Civic Attitudes and Behavior of Public Servants, in: Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory, Vol. 13, No 1, 2003, p.5

⁸¹ Ibid.

⁸² L. Huberts/E.W. Kolthoff and J.H.J. van den Heuvel, “The Ethics of Government and Business: What is valued most?” 2002, p. 8

⁸³ J.H.J. van den Heuvel/L.W.J.C. Huberts/S. Verberk, Het Morele Gezicht van de Overheid, Lemma, Utrecht, 2002.

⁸⁴ J.H.J. van den Heuvel/L.W.J.C. Huberts/S. Verberk, Het Morele Gezicht, op. cit., p.93

⁸⁵ J.H.J. van den Heuvel/L.W.J.C. Huberts/S. Verberk, Het Morele Gezicht, op. cit., pp.114/115

institution to another (...) whether in the public or private sector...The culture within the organisation is the crucial factor.”⁸⁶ However, it is clear that people coming from outside also bring other values with them.

The above mentioned studies show that, at present, it seems that nobody can say for sure whether values and morals in the public sector are different or similar to those in the private sector. However, it is possible to conclude that moral “dimensions and criteria can be applied to all kinds of organisations (...) and business ethics and public sector ethics share at least some basic values and norms.”⁸⁷

Today, despite all the differences in culture, tradition, ideology and in detail between proponents of alignment and a specific career civil service, all Member States seem to share the position that at the beginning of the 21st century civil servants are no longer people who just take and give orders or implement and execute laws. For example, the right to safe and healthy working conditions, the right to fair wages, the right to freedom of expression, the right to participate in the formulation of working conditions, the right to strike (with some exceptions), equal treatment issues and working time issues should not differ too much in the public and private sector, as well as the right to take autonomous decisions in appraising, recruiting, training and in remunerating employees. The public organisations are also in a process of organisational reform and are trying to flatten the hierarchies. Nowadays, the argument that treating people with respect and dignity is gaining ground. This also applies to the treatment of public officials: “We cannot expect public servants to treat fellow citizens with respect and dignity if they themselves are not treated with respect and dignity”⁸⁸. More and more, it is also accepted that public services “act in response to shared values, loyalty, citizenship, and the public interest”⁸⁹.

In fact, the national public services and the people who are employed in the public services have developed into rather heterogeneous bodies with very different categories of staff and different values. Also, whereas for a long time, public organisations were very different from private companies, this is much less clearer in the 21st century. Today, a distinction between the “public service” and “business” is more difficult to make because of many new forms of outsourcing, public-private partnerships, alignments of status etc. The US scholar Hal Rainey is therefore right when claiming that “clear demarcations between the public and private sectors are impossible, and oversimplified distinctions between public and private organisations are misleading”⁹⁰. The same is true for public- and private managers. Although differences prevail it is nowadays much more difficult to say that public managers are very different from private sector managers.

5.4. The uneasy relationship between government performance and citizens’ trust

Despite the negative image of the “bureaucracy”, “no nation lacking a big bureaucracy and a powerful government has the means of insuring either its liberty or its welfare”⁹¹. In addition, one may wonder why a number of countries still have a relatively traditional bureaucratic

⁸⁶ United Kingdom, Seventh Report of the Public Administration Committee, p. 4.

⁸⁷ Huberts/Kolthoff/van den Heuvel, op. cit., p.4 .

⁸⁸ J.V.Denhardt/R.B. Denhardt, *The New Public Service*, 2007, p.164

⁸⁹ Denhardt/Denhardt, *The New Public Service*, op.cit, p.163.

⁹⁰ H. G. Rainey, *Understanding and Managing Public Organisations*, Third Edition, Jossey Bass, San Francisco, 2003, p.62

⁹¹ Dwight Waldo, op. cit., p. 69

career system, and why also in other countries, the public services still rely on at least some bureaucratic principles (specialisation, hierarchy, formalisation, rule orientation, special status etc.). Moreover, it is difficult to say whether so-called position-system countries (e.g. Sweden, The Netherlands, Italy, United Kingdom, Estonia) are less bureaucratic, more attractive, more effective and more efficient than career-system countries and that public officials there are more or less motivated and better performing than in career systems.

How can this be explained in times of bureaucratic criticism?

For Weber, bureaucracy was nothing more or less than a specific form of organisation which “has both good and bad qualities; it is a neutral term rather than one referring to only the negative traits of organisations.”⁹² Weber was convinced that a bureaucratic structure would be the most efficient form of organisation, evolving from a primitive to a rational and complex order. He also believed that a bureaucracy was the most rational form of organisation. According to Weber, a bureaucracy is “superior to any other form in precision, in stability, in stringency of its discipline, and its reliability. It thus makes possible a particularly high degree of calculability of results for the heads of organisations and for those acting to it...”⁹³ Weber listed in detailed fashion the major elements of the formal structure of bureaucracy. Three of the most important attributes in his concept of bureaucracy were the division of labour, hierarchical order, and impersonal rules – keystones to any functioning bureaucracy. “Entrance into an office (...) does not establish a relationship to a person ...but to impersonal and functional purposes.”⁹⁴

According to Bozeman, “the expectation of standard treatment is a great strength of bureaucracy. Favouritism, nepotism, bribery, and other forms of corruption are inimical to modern bureaucracy; they are pathologies rather than inherent characteristics. Standardisation is often unsatisfying to individuals because most of us, in our roles as private citizens or as organisational representatives, wish to emphasise our uniqueness and the special nature of our claims. Indeed, we are unique and our claims often are special.”⁹⁵ “We do not love bureaucracy, but we need it, at least until we devise workable alternative organisational schemes that permit us to retain the features of bureaucracy that we embrace eagerly – predictability and stability, rationality, reliance on expertise, equitable treatment – while discarding the features we hate – rigidity, inability to deal with special needs, and a setting of barriers between officialdom and citizens.”⁹⁶

Thus, traditional bureaucratic principles are as important as they are ambivalent. The same can be said for the advantages and disadvantages of career systems. Another reason may be that bureaucracies can take numerous forms and “Bureaucracy is not so much a menace or blight on the human spirit as a means of getting things done. Sometimes it is effective in getting things done, at other times it is not so effective.”⁹⁷

In a study by Gaydushek (“Bureaucracy: is it efficient? Is it not? Is that the Question?”⁹⁸), the author comes to the conclusion that although “debureaucratisation may be desirable”, bureaucratic organisations guarantee more stability and, primarily, more “uncertainty

⁹² Stillmann, Richard, J., *Public Administration*, op. cit., p.37

⁹³ Stillman op. cit., p.39

⁹⁴ Max Weber, in Shafritz/Hyde, op. cit., p.52

⁹⁵ Bozeman, *Bureaucracy and Red Tape*, op. cit., p.27

⁹⁶ Bozeman, *Bureaucracy and Red Tape*, op. cit., p. 29

⁹⁷ Bozeman, *Bureaucracy and Red Tape*, op. cit., p. 13

⁹⁸ G.Gaydushek, “Bureaucracy: is it efficient? Is it not? Is that the Question?”, in: *Administration and Society*, Vol.34, No 6, January 2003, pp. 700-723.

reduction” – all factors that are especially important for most of the new Member States. One important advantage of a bureaucratic structure is its “predictability and certainty”. This analysis fits with the studies of Ziller who argues that a bureaucratic apparatus is closely linked to the idea of the *Rechtsstaat*. However, according to Ziller, the notion of the *Rechtsstaat* and “law as such is not an obstacle to administrative reform, nor to the introduction of management: it is a set of tools which can be used well or badly according to the quality of legal education of those who have to set up and implement new modes of management.”⁹⁹

At the same time Max Weber warned against the rationalisation process and warned that organisations and people would slowly turn into “machines”. Also today, many people are well aware about the disadvantageous and negative sides of public bureaucratic organisations and rigid career systems. However, they are less aware about the advantageous of public organisations.

5.5. Performance and trust

“Public sector is trying to control complex social and economic issues in a situation where they only have partial control due to the forces of globalisation. Also the public have higher expectations of civil servants in the 24 hour media age.” (UK- middle management)

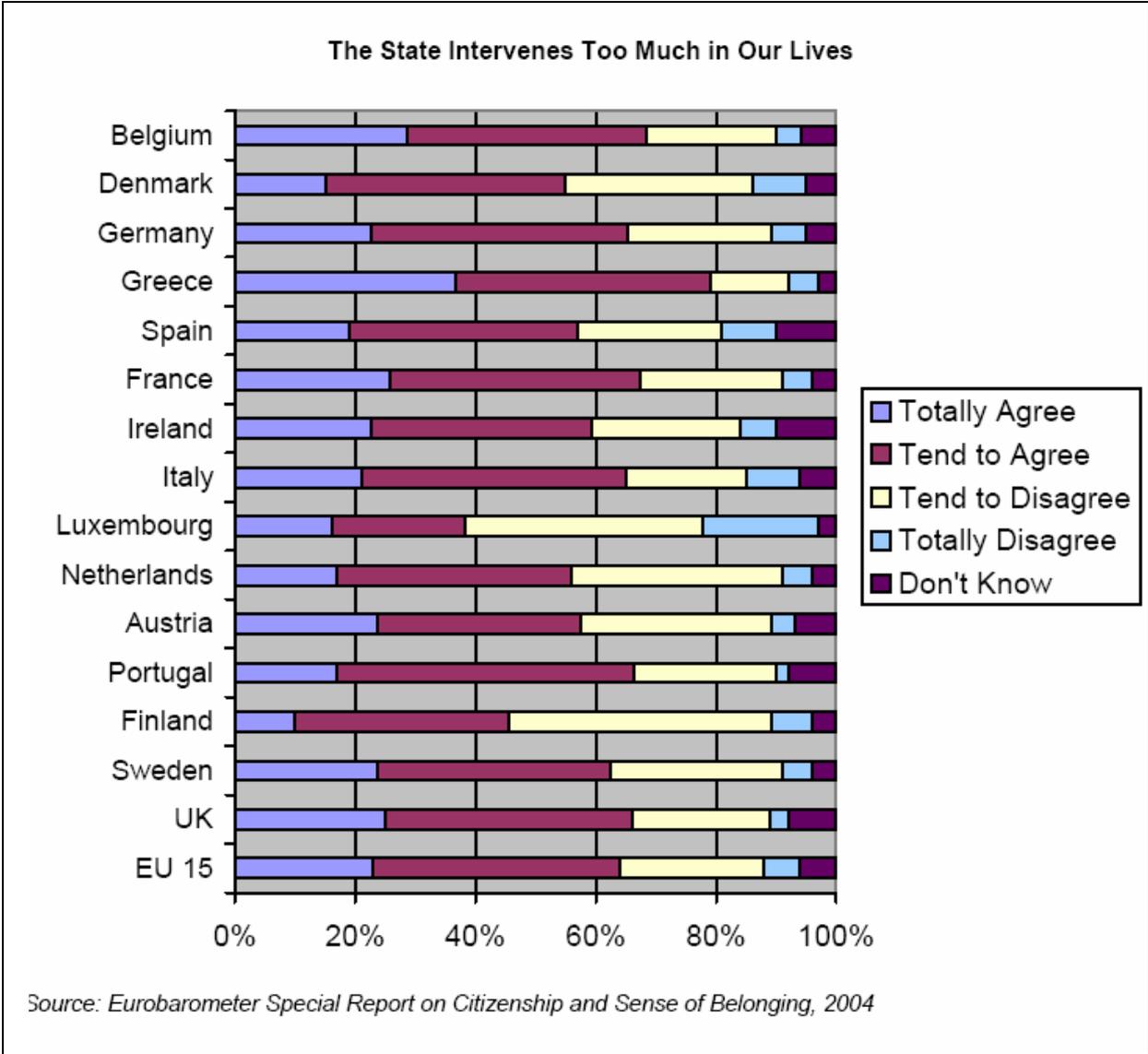
“The majority of the respondents in a study on the attitude of the Austrian population towards public administration (source: Study on the attitude towards public administration, Fessel, 2004) describes their experiences with authorities as very positive (28%) or rather positive (60%), only 11% report negative experiences. Compared to 1990, attitudes towards public administration have improved. In general, the impression of the behaviour and the attitudes of public employees towards citizens - after a strong increase of critical attitudes during the past decades - have significantly improved. However, scepticism concerning the individual’s possibility of asserting themselves against authorities is still widespread. (Fessel, 2004) From the perspective of the federal employees, the image of the federal administration has significantly improved in the past decade. (Austria – top management)

A performing public sector may improve citizens’ image of the public administration and consequently their trust in government. Distrust is then a result of a gap between actual performance and expected performance. Patterns of distrust however, do not correspond to reform activities. On the other hand, it is also not possible that countries that are not known for ambitious reform projects have lower levels of trust. The same is true for reform oriented countries and their levels of high trust. “Government discourse takes for granted that increased administrative performance is a prerequisite for citizens’ trust in government and it seems convinced that reform will restore citizens’ trust in government. Whether citizens’ main motivation for distrust is vested in the functioning of the public administration, rather than in the political functioning of government or in societal developments is still an open

⁹⁹ J. Ziller, The Continental System of Administrative Legality, in: G.Peters/J.Pierre (Eds.), Handbook of Public Administration, 2003, p. 267.

question”¹⁰⁰. On the other hand, people distrust state authorities because they believe that public authorities tend to interfere too much in their lives.

Figure 6. Level of State Intervenes by EU-15



“Absence of public trust on the other hand, when crossing a certain threshold, may lower civil servants’ morale (Aberbach and Rockman, 2000: 21). Citizens approaching public services with very low expectations and acting accordingly in an assertive way, may be faced with a self-fulfilling prophecy, as his or her inimical attitude does not stimulate the front-level bureaucrat to deliver outstanding service. Satisfied customers motivate public sector staff, and having high satisfaction ratings may strengthen an organisation in budget negotiations, budgets that allow them to perform even better. An organisation that is trusted becomes an employer of choice, and this may attract the best and the brightest, which could eventually increase performance (...) Comparing public sector performance across nations and political systems seems to be a difficult if not impossible task, due to different public sector structuring and to differences in policy (for a detailed comment, see Van de Walle et al., 2004). We do not observe automatic increases in trust in government in countries where public sector

¹⁰⁰ S. Van de Walle/ G.Bouckaert, Perceptions of productivity and performance in Europe and the USA. *International Journal of Public Administration*

performance is high. Even in theory, a causal relationship between increased performance and higher trust is difficult to uphold. Citizens who distrust government tend to generalise their opinion to all aspects of government. Government performance will subsequently be evaluated in a negative way. Positive predispositions towards government in a similar way tend to give a distorted view of how citizens perceive the functioning of the administration. Performance evaluations are then merely specifications of the overall attitude towards government rather than a genuine evaluation of the public sector's functioning."¹⁰¹

5.6. (Un-)Ethical behaviour and public trust

Is unethical behaviour increasing or decreasing? There is not enough time and space to discuss all of these developments here. However, claims that unethical behaviour is increasing (and levels of public trust are decreasing) are difficult to prove with hard facts. Today, it is increasingly popular to link the discussions on ethics with those about the development of public trust. Many people believe that more rules and standards bring higher levels of public trust. In reality, the concept of public trust is very complex.¹⁰² For example, whereas many observers believe that levels of public trust are constantly decreasing, the reality is that levels of public trust vary from country to country and from institution to institution. Levels of public trust also fluctuate. For example, Bovens and Wille¹⁰³ discuss ten different factors that have an impact on the level of public trust (performance of the public sector, general perceptions of the government, the economic situation, scandals and dramas, media reporting, change of political culture, changing expectations, emergence of a new generation with different values, changing role of middle class). Bovens and Wille come to the conclusion that the perception of the policies of the government has the strongest impact on the sudden changes of public trust.

Not long ago, politicians, Holders of Public Office and Public Officials were not suspected of having conflicts of interest when exercising additional honorary positions. Today almost all ancillary activities are seen as sources of potential conflicts of interests. This can be interpreted in positive but also in more critical ways. For example, strict regulations for public officials and Holders of Public Office can be justified with the importance of their position and the impact of the decisions they take on the society in general. The difficulty is that it is important to distinguish between ethical requirements and moral requirements. The higher the ethical requirements for legislators and ministers, the more likely it is that "ethics" will be abused for political reasons or – also – by the media. Throughout the last few years especially ethical issues are also becoming a political instrument. Ethics are also increasingly linked with moral arguments. Despite the fact that rules which regulate conflicts of interest should not involve moral judgments on Holders of Public Office ethics, laws are also becoming a "moral measurement" and people and the media "place stigma" on those who violate them¹⁰⁴. According to Stark, the "problem with conflict of interest law is that it has become a mortal stigmatisation when, in reality, it is just law."¹⁰⁵

Consequently, positive intentions can easily turn into unintentional and perverse effects. Therefore a better balance is needed between effective rules and standards and the need to

¹⁰¹ Van de Walle/Bouckaert, G., Perceptions of productivity, op. cit

¹⁰² S.van de Walle, Perceptions of Administrative Performance: The Key to Trust in Government? Dissertation, University of Leuven, Nr. 79, 2004.

¹⁰³ M.Bovens/A.Wille, Waar bleef het vertrouwen in de overheid?, in: Bestuurskunde, 2006/4, pp.50.

¹⁰⁴ A. Stark, Conflict of Interest in American Public Life, Harvard, Cambridge, 2000, p.266.

¹⁰⁵ Ibid..

avoid too much scrutiny and suspicion. It is true that Holders of Public Office and Public Officials have an important public mission. At the same time they are “watched”, controlled, and monitored as never before. Thus, the danger is that ever more rules, tougher disclosure requirements, stricter monitoring structures, and additional transparency requirements will reveal more violations of rules and standards. However, this development produces the opposite of what rule-makers intend to achieve: public trust is decreasing because the citizens have the perception that their Holders of Public Office are less ethical than they were before. Ultimately, the price to be paid for the introduction of more rules and standards can also be even more of a public disappointment.

Despite the growing amount of literature, studies and policy recommendations there is still no common understanding as regards the development of unethical behaviour. The difficulties cannot only be found in detecting conflicts of interests. Today, the existence of more rules in the field of conflicts of interests also brings possibilities for more rule violations. However, an increasing number of violations is no indicator that different forms of unethical behaviour are increasing as such. Only decades ago, fewer violations were detected because fewer rules were in place. However, it could well be that unethical behaviour was more frequent than today.

Demmke suggests that dynamics, contradictions and unintentional side effects of governmental reform processes produce neither less nor more ethical challenges. Rather new reform initiative and changing concepts of governance always create new forms of unethical behaviour, conflicts of interests and new ethical challenges. At the same time, new rules and standards, growing awareness and new policies also have a positive impact as to the effectiveness of measures. Consequently, certain ethical challenges may also be reduced, decrease or even disappear¹⁰⁶.

This observation is comparable to those made by Thompson in the United States who observes that “Ethics in Congress deserves greater attention not because members are more corrupt (they are not), not because citizens are more distrustful (they are), but because the institution itself continually poses new ethical challenges. The complexity of the institutional environment in which Members of Congress work invites more calls for accountability and creates new occasions for corruption. As the circumstances of potential corruption change, so too must the institutions of actual enforcement.”¹⁰⁷

This study will not be able to give a reliable picture as to the development of unethical behaviour. In fact, there seems to be more evidence for the argument that whereas some forms of unethical behaviour decrease, others are rather stable and others increase. Different forms of unethical behaviour and conflicts of interest may also increase and decrease at the same time. In the meantime it is common sense that ethical rules and codes of ethics make little sense as long as they are not accepted by the personnel, and maintained, cultivated and implemented with vigour. The results of our study show that the public employees who responded to this study are of the opinion that ethical rules are better known than before (Table 9). Only 19% of respondents disagreed. These results are very promising.

¹⁰⁶ C. Demmke, Ethik und Integrität in den öffentlichen Diensten in Europa, in: Zeitschrift für öffentliche und gemeinwirtschaftliche Unternehmen, 2006, 1., pp. 68.

¹⁰⁷ D. F. Thompson, Overcoming the Conflict of Interest in Congressional Ethics, Paper for the Panel on “Congressional Ethics Enforcement”, Woodrow Wilson International Center, Washington, D.C., January 16, 2007, p.22.

Table 9. Ethical Rules Are Better Known
(Frequencies in parenthesis)

	Rel. frequency
Fully Agree	11,5 (41)
Agree	33,9 (121)
Neutral	30,5 (109)
Disagree	11,8 (42)
Fully disagree	7,6 (27)
Cannot say	4,8 (17)
Total	100,0 (357)

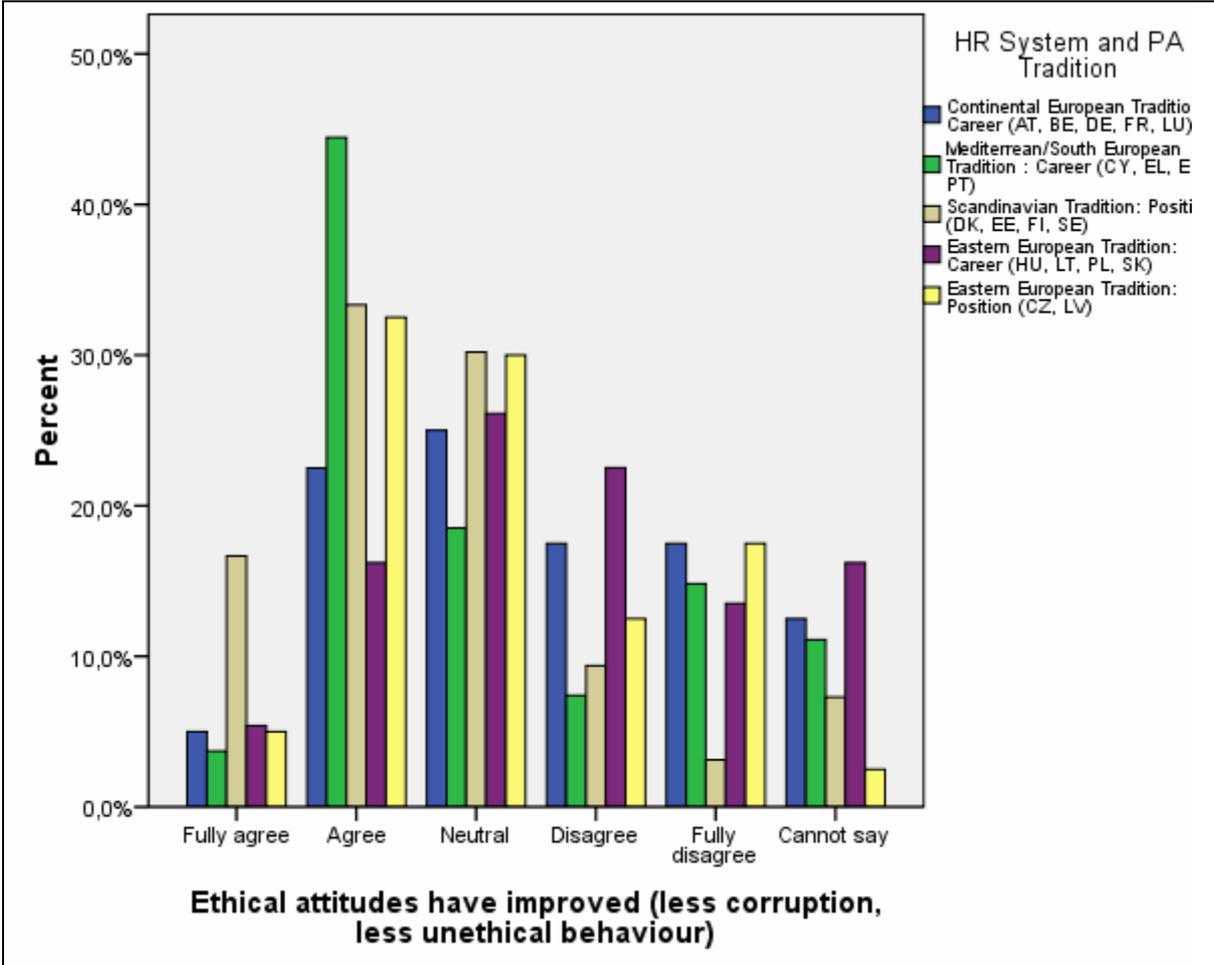
Other findings are equally positive. Whereas the public believes that ethical violations are increasing, 36% of the respondents to this study are of the opinion that ethical attitudes have improved within the last 15 years while 26% believe that ethical standards have deteriorated.

Table 10. Ethical Attitudes Have Improved (Less Corruption, Less Unethical Behaviour)
(Frequencies in parenthesis)

	Rel. frequency
Fully Agree	9,6 (34)
Agree	26,8 (95)
Neutral	27,7 (98)
Disagree	14,1 (50)
Fully disagree	11,6 (41)
Cannot say	10,2 (36)
Total	100,0 (354)

However, this observation needs to be qualified. Many respondents from the Eastern European countries were especially of the opinion that unethical behaviour is increasing whereas respondents from Scandinavia and from Mediterranean countries said that it is decreasing (see Figure 7).

Figure 7. Improvement of Ethical Attitudes by Public Administration Tradition and HR System



The development of the different forms of unethical behaviour and conflicts suggest that reforms in the different Member States should concentrate more on some issues than on others and regulate ethics – according to the issue at stake – with a different mix of instruments.

Table 11. Is Unethical Behaviour Increasing – Or Not?

Field/Sector	Increase/Decrease?
General values, standards and principles Acceptance of laws, standards, principles and values	Values are changing, overall no loss of values Generally higher expectations as to ethical behaviour More awareness of ethical rules and standards, Generally high level of distrust
Corruption Bribery	Overall, little evidence about developments, Indexes on Bribery and Corruption (Transparency International) Generally no evidence on increasing levels of corruption and fraud.
Nepotism	Little evidence, more awareness for negative consequences due to recent scandals (e.g. in the World Bank). Because of more awareness decreasing rather than increasing.
Fraud and theft Abuse of organisational resources	More possibilities to abuse internal and org. resources for own benefit. Especially as regards the abuse of information technologies for own purposes
Violation of general principles such as confidentiality, serving the public interest, loyalty etc.	Generally no evidence about increasing levels More rules and standards lead to more violations? Higher requirements as to declarations of interests
Conflicts of interests – involvement in post employment activities that potentially conflict with duties	Possibly increasing levels of CoI due to more contact with private sector, more mobility etc.; however, also more rules and standards
Involvement in professional activities, secondary activities, memberships that potentially conflict with duties	Possibly increasing during to more contacts with lobbyists. However, secondary activities, memberships, honorary activities not seen as posing CoI for a long time. Thus, new CoI
Abuse of position, information, insider dealings	No evidence, possibly increasing levels because of more contacts between private- and public sector. Also more regulated
Gift taking and taking of benefits	Possibly decreasing due to more awareness of strict rules
General development of unethical behaviour (harassment, mobbing, impoliteness, unfair behaviour, discrimination etc.)	No evidence about increasing levels; more rules and standards may provoke more violations of rules

Whereas in some cases strict and new rules make sense in one country, in others soft instruments and awareness raising may be more effective. Thus, it becomes of primary interest to find answers to the question of which instruments are best designed to fight the

different forms of unethical behaviour. Can some of these problems be better confronted with more and stronger rules? With codes? More transparency? More training? Or alternatively could these objectives also be better achieved with fewer standards and fewer requirements? As necessary as these discussions are, the focus of the discussion is still about the effectiveness and the pros and cons of (more) rules and standards in the field. Partisans and opponents of the different camps can roughly be divided into those who a) claim that more and better rules are needed and those b) who believe that new rules and regulatory regimes may impact negatively and have contradictory effects. In the following, we will present the arguments from both sides.

Critics (Anechiarico and Jacobs¹⁰⁸, Mackenzie¹⁰⁹, Stark¹¹⁰, Saint-Martin/F. Thompson¹¹¹, Behncke¹¹², Bovens¹¹³ etc.) argue that more rules of ethics do not necessarily provide an efficient response to a potential decline of public trust and integrity issues but may cause even more cynicism regarding public and political institutions. The problem, critics say, is that the expansion of ethics regulations and more public discussions about the need for more and better (conflicts of interest) rules have not contributed to a rise in public confidence in government. In fact, the calls for more and better ethics have the opposite effect. More “ethics regulations and more ethics enforcers have produced more ethics investigations and prosecutions.....Whatever the new ethics regulations may have accomplished...they have done little to reduce publicity and public controversy about the ethical behaviour of public officials.”¹¹⁴

Most ethics experts are indeed of the opinion that more rules, even if well managed may not build more trust, Contrary to this, they may decrease public trust “by generating a sense that all lawmakers are fundamentally untrustworthy”¹¹⁵. The most prominent case is the situation in the United States where: “Legions of lawyers and journalists earn their living from ethics lawsuits and scandals. In particular after scandals, a new wave of conflicts of interest, financial disclosure or gift acceptance regulations seemed to be the appropriate way to re-establish public trust by signalling that “something was being done.” These ethics measures have mostly been introduced by politicians with an eye on the perceived problem of decreasing public trust. The intention of *increasing* public trust, however, was never met in reality. Quite to the contrary, meanwhile the ethics infrastructure in the US has reached a level in which it contributes to further *undermining* public trust....The complaint about scandals, corruption and low ethical standards always seems justified and the promise to establish higher standards is always likely to be a promising means to gain votes. Similarly, most presidential candidates from Dwight D. Eisenhower to Bill Clinton tried to gain profile by emphasising the “ethics gap” and announcing uniform and higher standards of behaviour for

¹⁰⁸ F.Anechiarico/J.B. Jacobs, *The Pursuit of Absolute Integrity*, 1996.

¹⁰⁹ G.C. Mackenzie, *Scandal Proof, Do Ethics Laws Make Government Ethical?* 2002.

¹¹⁰ A. Stark, *Conflict of Interest*, 2000.

¹¹¹ Saint-Martin, D./Thompson, T., *Public Ethics and Governance: Standards and Practices in Comparative Perspective*, Vol.14, 2006.

¹¹² N. Behncke, *Ethik-Maßnahmen für die öffentliche Verwaltung – Modeerscheinung oder Mauerblümchen?*, in: Bogumil, J./Jann, W./Nullmeier, F. (eds.), *Politik und Verwaltung, Politische Vierteljahresschrift*, No.37/2006, pp.250.

¹¹³ M. Bovens, *Het Ongelijk van Dales*, in: *Bestuurskunde*, 2006/1, pp.64.

¹¹⁴ Mackenzie, op. cit., p.112.

¹¹⁵ B.A. Rosenson, *The Costs and Benefits of Ethics Laws*, in: Saint-Martin/Thompson, *Public Ethics and Governance*, op. cit., p.137

the federal government, tightening post-employment restrictions or enlarging the financial disclosure requirements.”¹¹⁶

As Behnke shows, “in spite of the individual rationality of these strategies, the collective irrationality lies in the fact that ever more transparency, ever higher standards and tighter regulations create ever more violations of ethical rules, more scandals and more investigations, thus undermining the legitimacy of the institution and destroying public trust and creating collective costs that far outweigh the individual benefits. In addition to the individual rationality leading to collective irrationality, the last element that makes the situation a real Prisoners' Dilemma is the fact that no built-in mechanism can stop this arms race.”¹¹⁷ The assumption on the part of the legislators and Members of Government who favour the adoption of new rules and standards is that this will have a positive effect and increase public trust in government. However, a strong focus on ethics, too strict approaches, too much publicity and too many rules may also undermine public trust.

5.7. Is the development towards more transparency requirements a success?

*“We have a long tradition of a transparent public sector – with the internet it has become even more transparent. It is fairly efficient, effective and trustworthy (not corrupt). People trust the public sector.”
(Sweden – employee)*

More transparency, openness, accountability, new ethical rules and access to government-held information are widely applauded as remedies for public and individual deficiencies. Requirements for more transparency are supposed to discipline institutions making information about their potential conflicts of interest public. Like this, transparency especially is positively related to ethical behaviour because public exposure is presumed to act as a stimulus: The more the public knows about Holders of Public Office and top civil servants, the better they behave. Transparency and openness requirements are also popular since they are widely supposed to make institutions and their office holders both more trustworthy and more trusted. In addition, more reporting requirements about conflicts of interest should contribute positively to public trust. Thus, many experts in the field propose that top employees should be required to disclose more personal information.

However, these suggestions are not without difficulties. For example, public disclosure requires effective management systems and may produce (depending on how strict the requirements are and how many people are required to make detailed reports) huge quantities of information. Another question is whether this information – which is offered for public scrutiny – is of interest and understandable to the wider public. So far, experience suggests that this is not the case. For example, in Canada “there’s surprisingly a great interest in having a public registry but there seems to be very little interest in reading it.”¹¹⁸ Also in the USA: “This has become one of the great empty rituals in all American life. Almost no one looks at any of these reports.”¹¹⁹

¹¹⁶ N.Behncke, Ethics as Apple Pie The arms race of ethical standards in congressional and presidential campaigns", EGPA-Paper, "Ethics and Integrity of Governance: A transatlantic dialogue", Leuven, June 2005, p.1/2

¹¹⁷ Behncke, Ethics as Apple Pie, op. cit., p.3

¹¹⁸ Shapiro, Office of the Ethics Commissioner, Issues and Challenges 2005.

¹¹⁹ Mackenzie, Scandal Prove, op. cit, p. 154.

Another challenge is that financial disclosure and public registers can easily be politically abused because of “the high degree of partisanship that occurs on a given issue.” Political parties seem to use the instrument of public disclosure for their own political purposes. Similarly, declarations and registers offer many ways of being abused for populist (media) purposes. On a more personal level, financial reporting can also provoke jealousy over income, activities and unequal rewards. Thus, despite all positive intentions the reporting requirement does not only have the intended effect. Instead it also has a number of unintentional, negative effects.

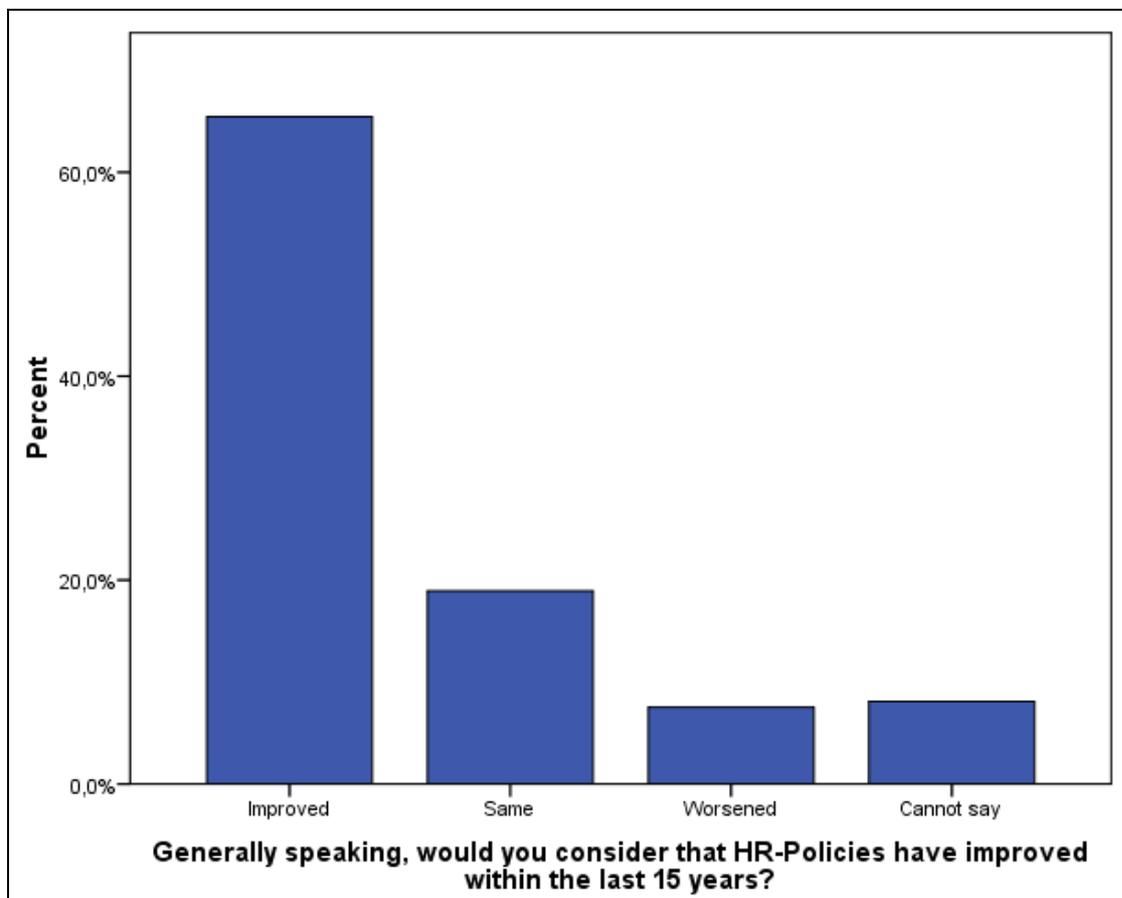
It remains to be seen whether this trend towards more transparency requirements and reporting obligations will continue. Especially in the US, claims for more freedom of information, transparency, and rules on ethics and conflicts of interests have increased. However, especially since 11 September 2001, claims for other rights built on confidentiality, secrecy and the restriction of the right to privacy have also become more prominent. It is still an open question as to how the past trend towards more openness and transparency will be combined with new trends, which call for more control, tighter management of information, better individual performance monitoring, restriction of human rights etc.

IV. Empirical Part

1. General remarks

The “good news first”: Our survey reveals that 65% of all respondents to this study consider that HR policies have improved over the last years (Figure 8). Without doubt, this can be called a *success*. However, when analysing the answers as to the effects of individual HR reforms and HR policies, the results are less “rosy”. Moreover, results differ enormously amongst the different national administrative traditions and cultures (Figure 11, p. 54). Also top managers have different perceptions than other categories of staff (Figure 9, p. 52). Finally, older employees differ from younger employees and men from women, not on all issues but at least as regards some important ones. Thus, our analysis confirms European-wide common trends and European-wide differences at the same time. It also shows that the results of HR policies differ between and amongst the various career- or position-system countries.

Figure 8. Overall Picture of HR-Policy Improvements within Last 15 Years



In some cases we could also note great differences amongst countries that belong to the same HR structure (e.g. Austria and Romania) or even the same administrative tradition (e.g. Austria vs. Germany). However, in some other cases perceptions of top managers, older and younger employees and between men and women were also surprisingly similar. Consequently, because of the prevalence of national economical, institutional, social and political differences identifying common successes, role models and best practices in the field of “successful HR management” remains a huge theoretical and practical challenge.

2. How have HR policies evolved over the last years?

As we have seen earlier (in chapter IV. 1) one of the greatest successes in the field of HRM seems to be the fact that the vast majority of public employees consider that HR policies have improved within the last 15 years. All Member States, administrative traditions, public service systems, categories of staff, ages and sexes evaluated the past developments as overall positive. This can be interpreted in the sense that the general reform trend in the field of HR is considered to be a successful trend. Thus, the Member States should be encouraged to continue with the present reform process in the field of HRM.

However, there are some important clarifications to be made. For example, top managers see the developments as more positive than other categories of staff (see Figure 9 below). Whereas more than 80% of all top managers made a positive assessment, approximately 60% of the employees had a positive opinion. Despite these differences the positive ratings from the employees are still considerably higher than the negative ratings.

Figure 9. Overall Picture of HR-Policy Improvements within Last 15 Years by Position

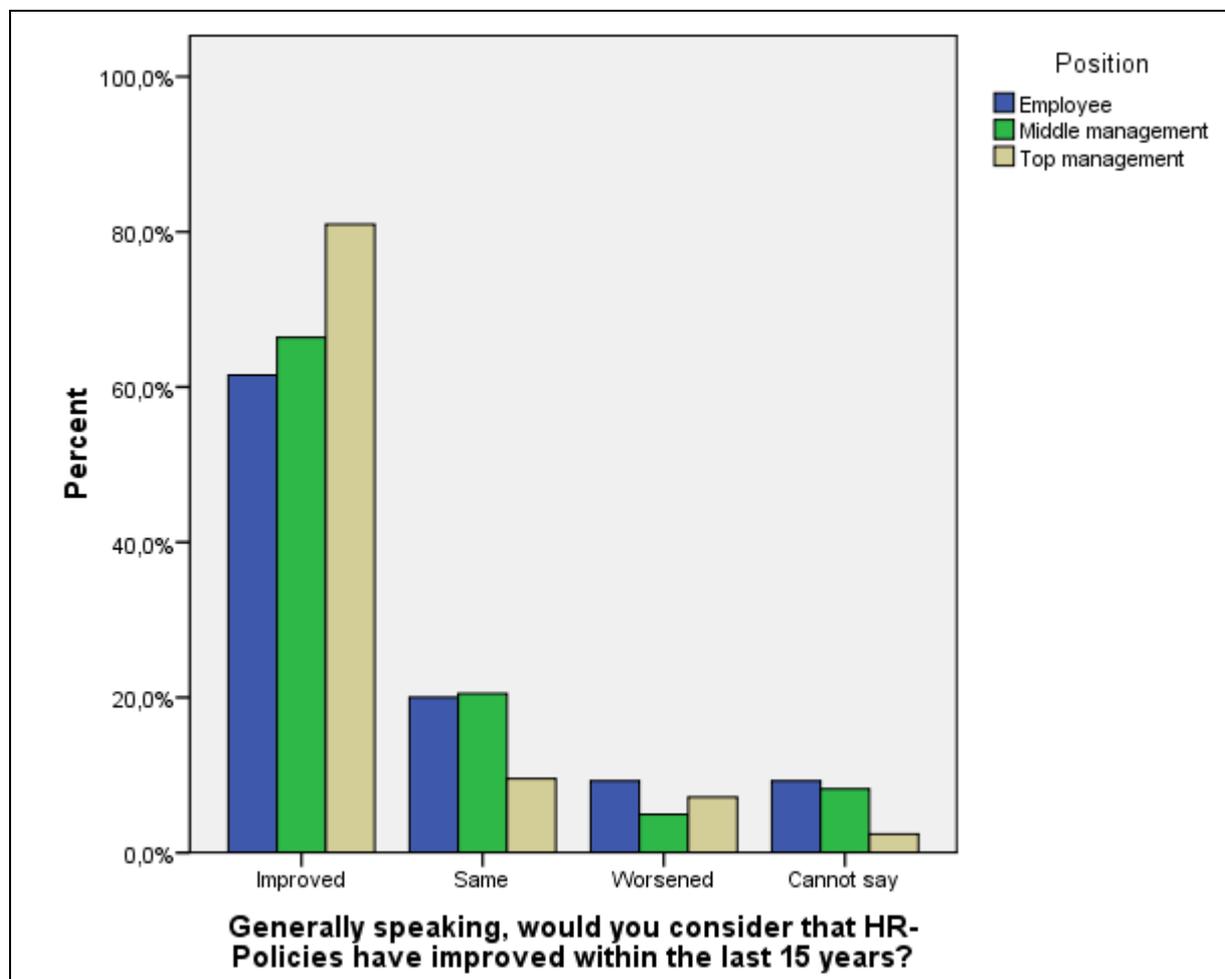
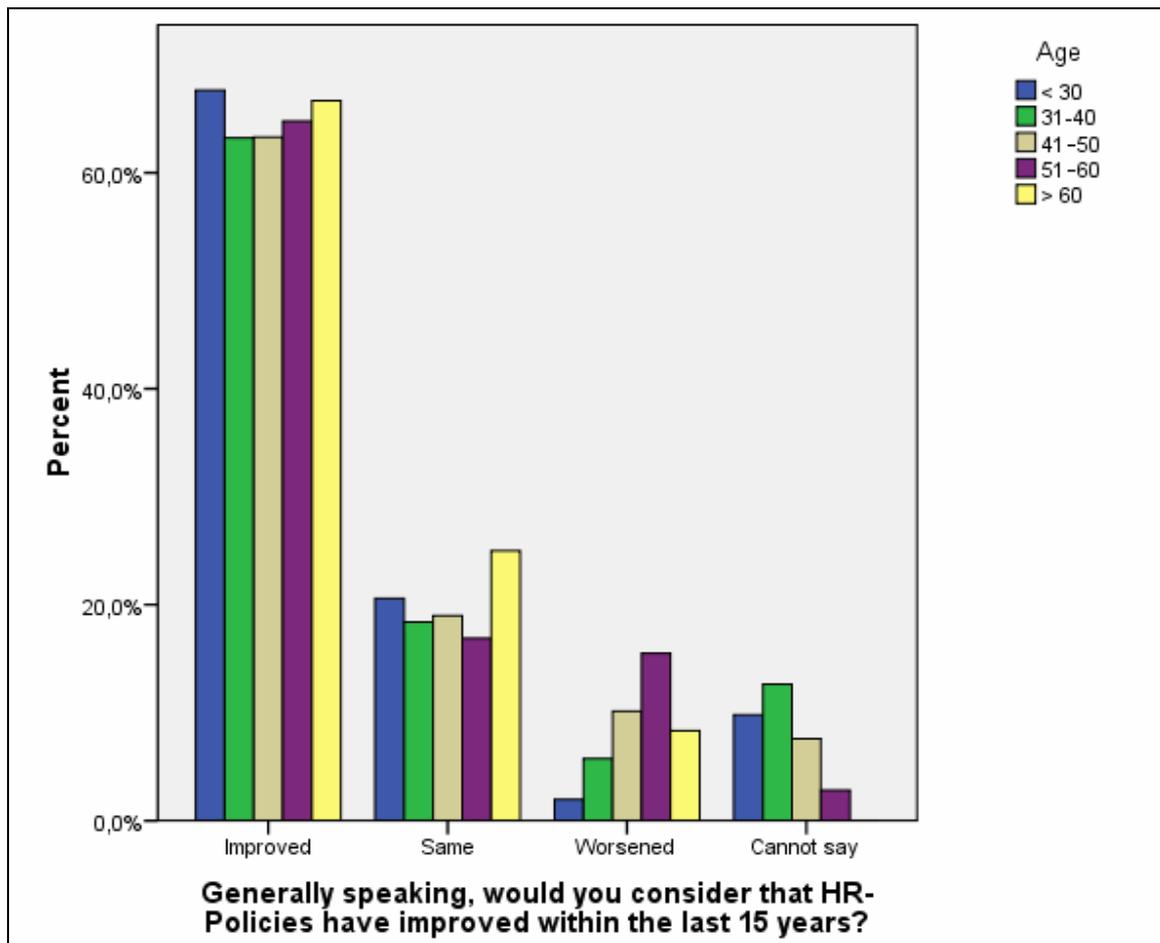
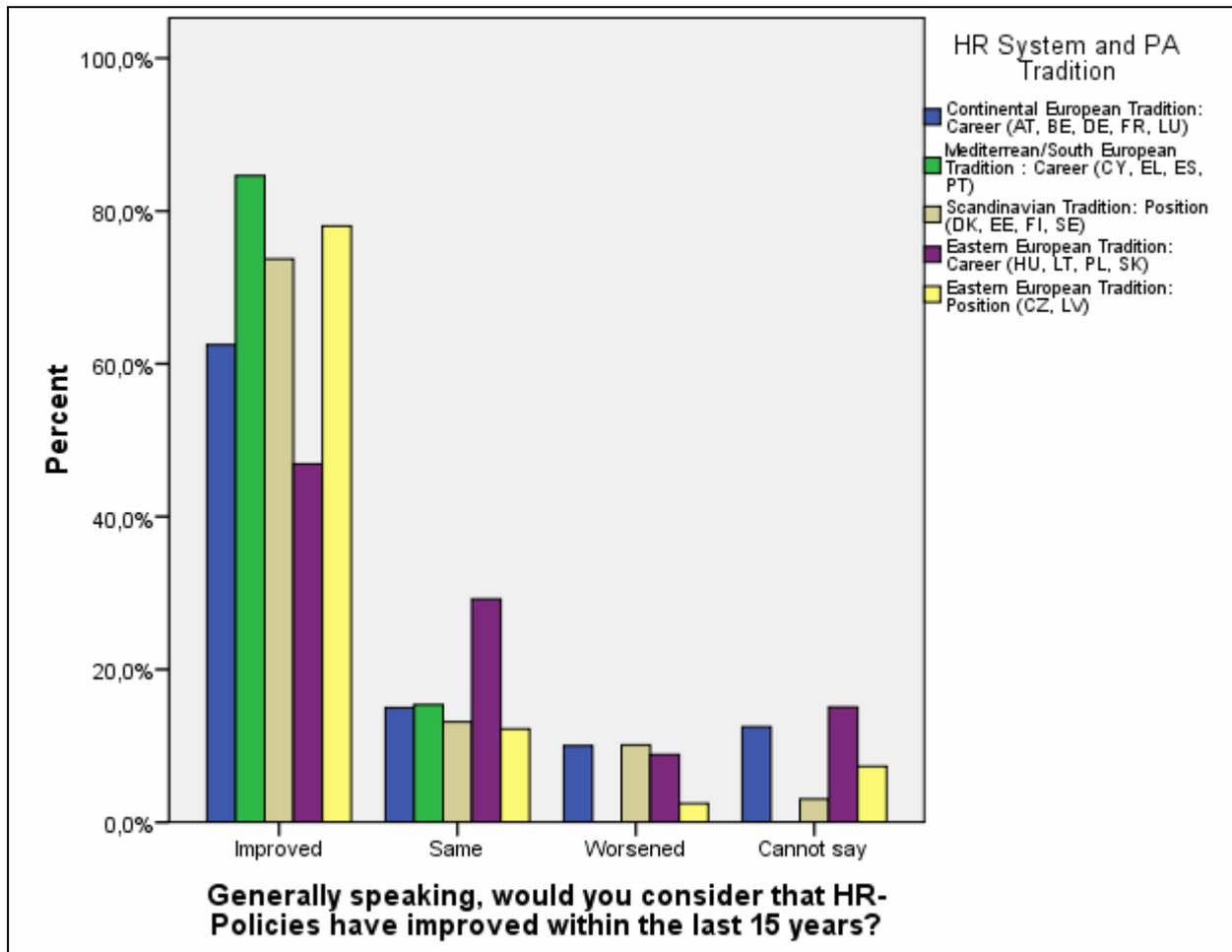


Figure 10. Overall Picture of HR-Policy Improvements within Last 15 Years by Age



As can be seen from Figure 11, the overall positive evaluation of the developments differs amongst the different administrative traditions. Figures range between 85% (from Mediterranean countries) and 47% (from Eastern European Career Tradition). In more detail, respondents from Hungary, Lithuania, Poland and Slovakia were less optimistic than their colleagues from the other countries. Surprisingly, the respondents from the Eastern European position countries (Czech Republic and Latvia) were much more positive than their colleagues from the other Eastern European Career-system countries.

Figure 11. Overall Picture of HR-Policy Improvements within Last 15 Years by Public Administration Tradition and HR System

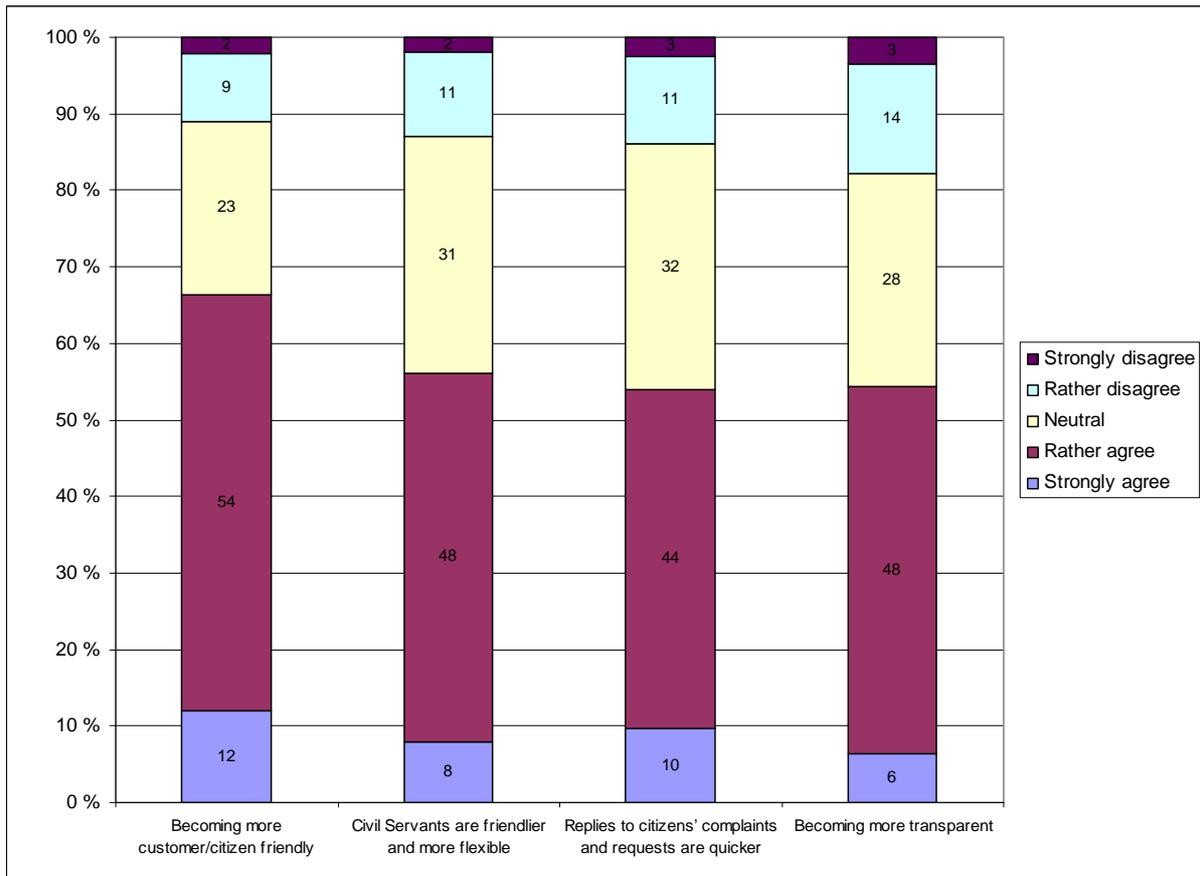


3. Successful trends in the field of HRM

One important interest in this survey is to get more evidence as to general developments in the field of HRM policies. We asked the respondents to reply to whether the public services had become more transparent, more customer- and citizen friendly, whether citizens' complaints are managed quicker and whether civil servants have become friendlier. More specifically we also wanted to know whether HR reforms have improved within the last 15 years, administrative costs have reduced, the public services have become less rule-oriented, civil servants are better qualified etc. Because of the mass of received data (and the lack of time and resources) we will in this chapter focus only on the analysis of some issues. For example, the results as regards the efforts in the field of de-bureaucratization and cost reduction seemed to us of particular importance.

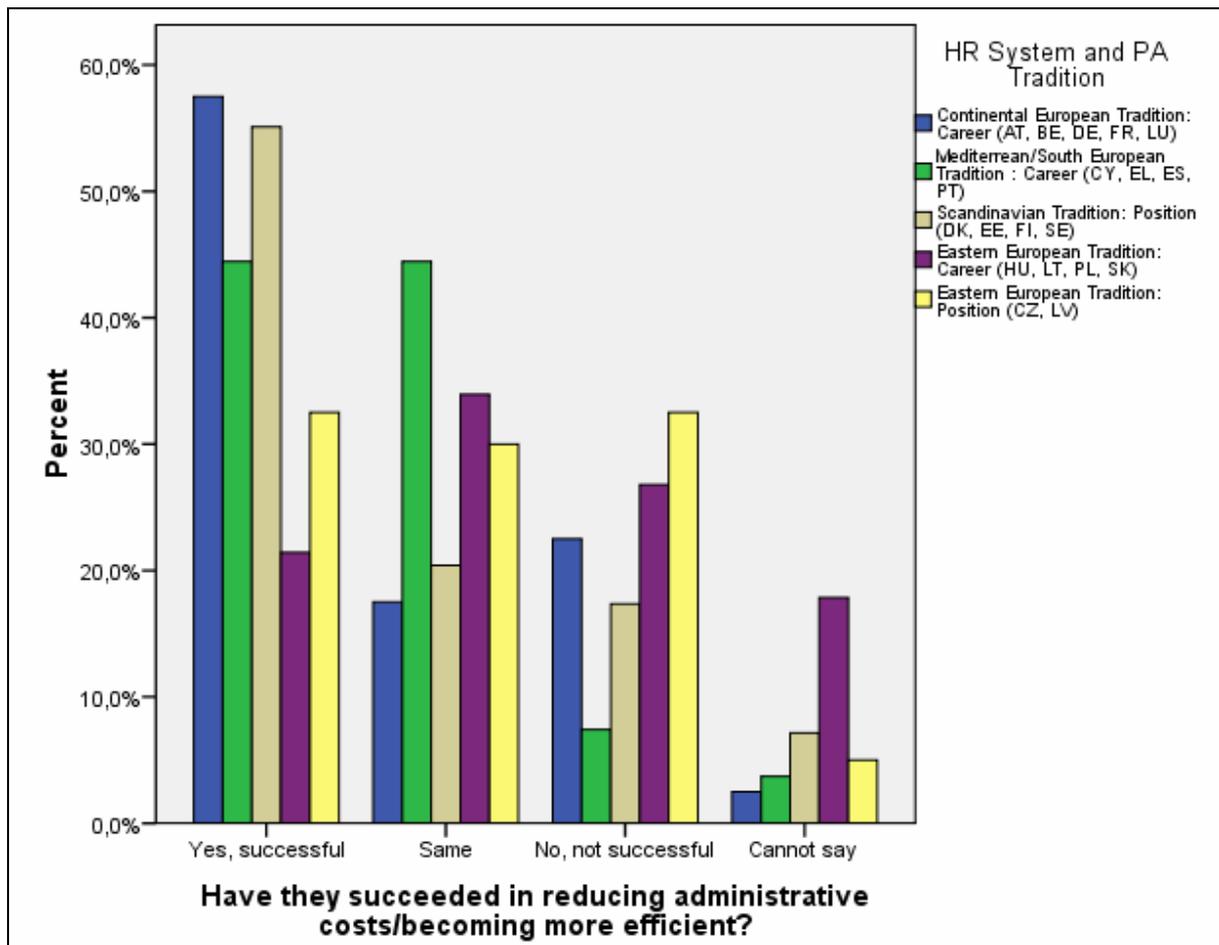
However, it should be noted that - overall - the answers from the Member States showed a certain coherence and were - generally - positive. However, some developments were evaluated more positively than others. The most positive outcome was the fact that more than 65% of all respondents were of the opinion that the public services have become more customer and citizen friendly (see Figure 12). About 11% believed that this is not the case. Another very positive result concerns the fact that citizens' complaints and requests are managed quicker than before.

Figure 12. Evolvement of Public Services Over Last Few Years



On the other side, as can be seen the perception of positive and/or negative developments differ (at least sometimes) very much according to the different public service systems, administrative traditions, the different categories of staff and amongst men and women. Thus the perception of the results and effects of HR reforms are very much linked to institutional and cultural issues. This can be seen when analysing the question whether administrative costs could be reduced (Figure 13).”

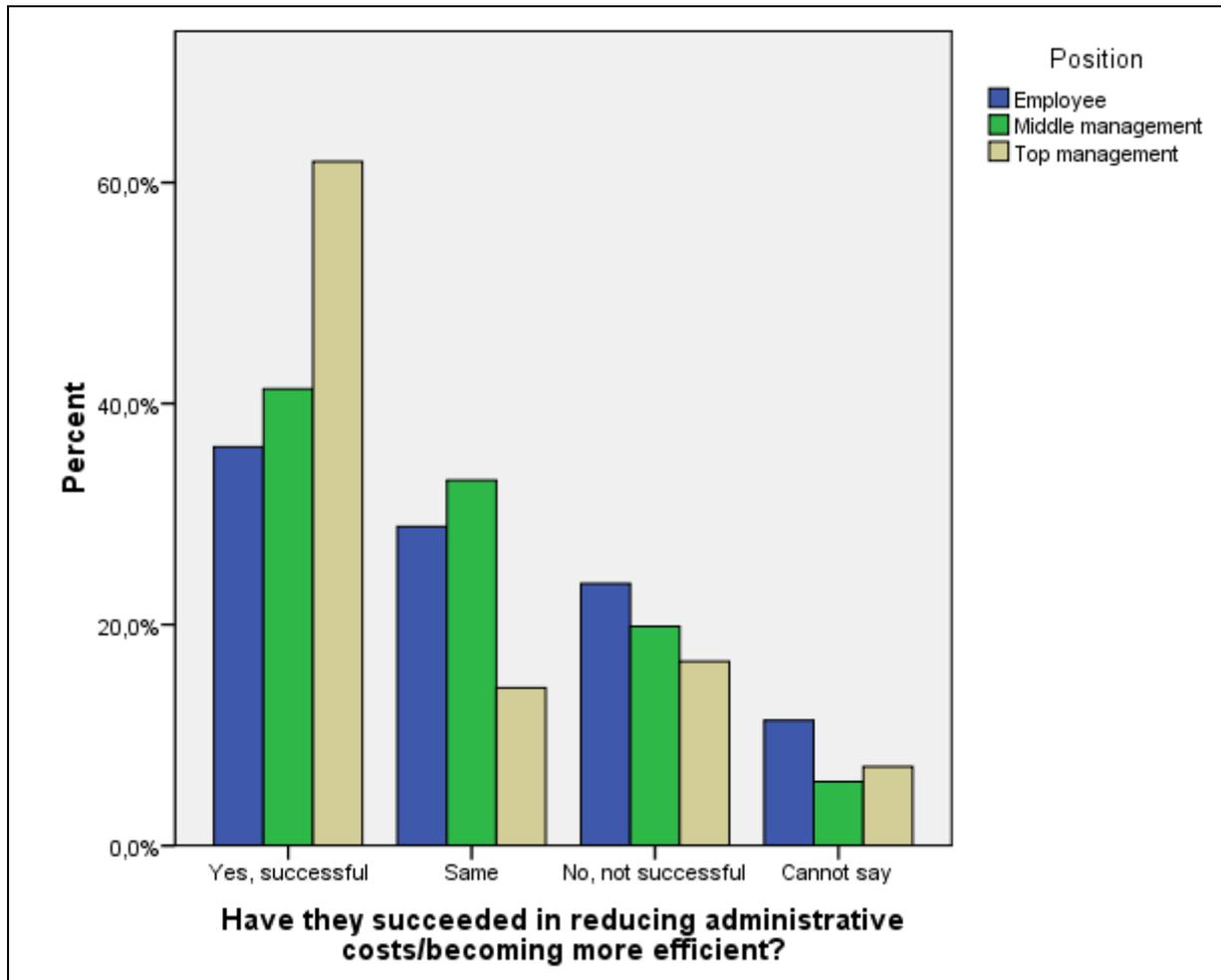
Figure 13. Reduction of Administrative Costs by Public Administration Tradition and HR System



Overall, about 45% of all respondents replied that the public services were successful in reducing administrative costs/becoming more efficient. This is a very important success since reducing administrative costs and easing administrative burdens figure high on the political agenda of all countries (and also of the agenda of European Union in the Lisbon agenda context). Whereas 59% of all respondents from the Continental Career-system countries agree that administrative costs were reduced, this figure is only 24% for all Eastern European countries. It is also important to note the existing great national differences. Whereas 54% of the respondents from the old Member States have a positive opinion, the figures for the new Member States are only 30%. Some 28% of the respondents from Eastern European countries are even of the opinion that their countries are not successful in reducing costs.

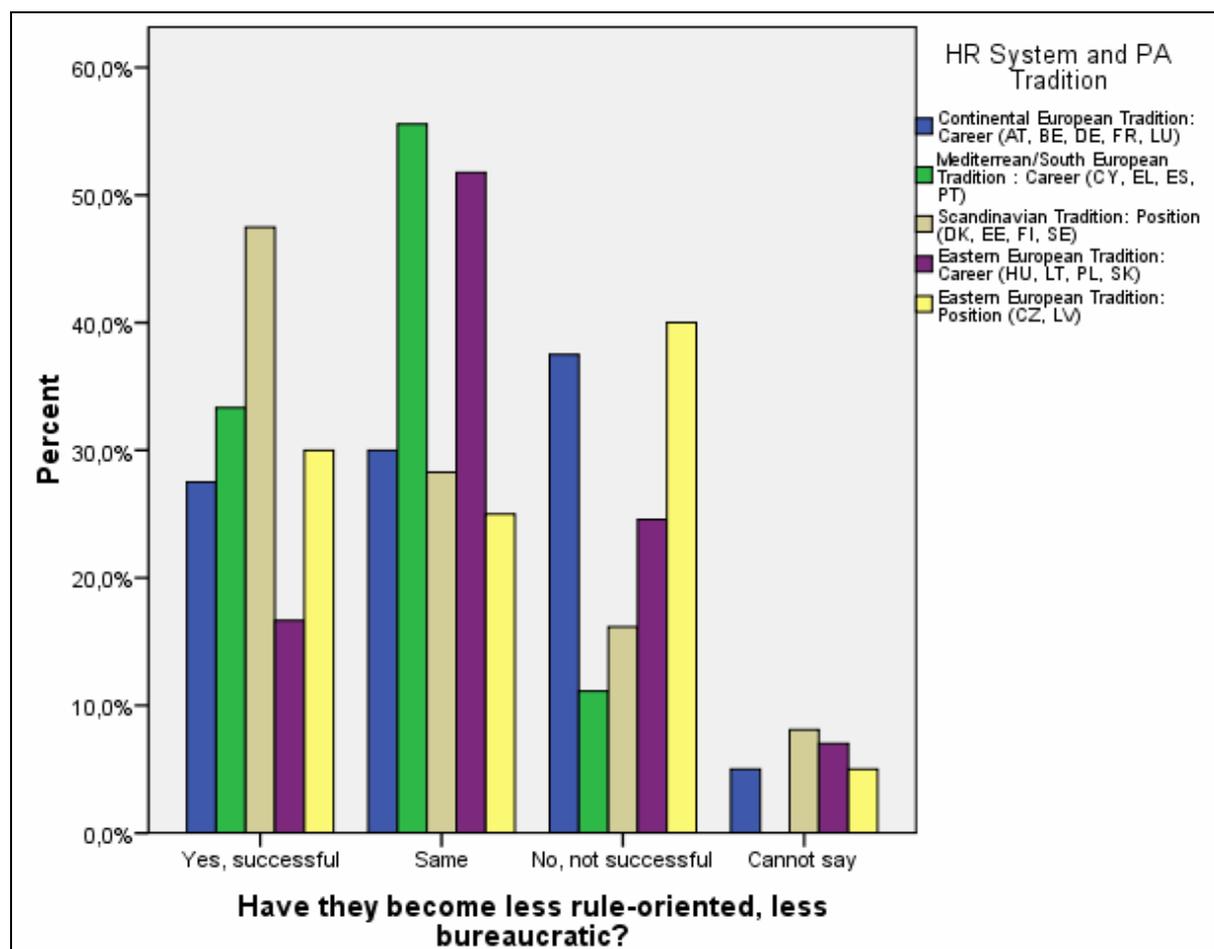
Many employees from all categories also reported positively about the developments in these areas. One should note, however, that top managers (62%) are much more positive than employees (36%).

Figure 14. Reduction of Administrative Costs by Position



Next to the overall positive evaluation of the cost developments in the public services 44% of the respondents from the old Member States and 25% of the new Member States were also of the opinion that rules and bureaucracy could be reduced. A cluster analysis shows that percentages range from almost 52% (in the Scandinavian countries) to 22% (in the Eastern European countries). In the latter countries, 31% of all respondents were of the opinion that rules and bureaucracy had even increased. Especially the respondents from the career-system countries Austria, Belgium, Germany, France, Luxemburg, Hungary, Lithuania, Poland and Slovakia were less positive whereas the position countries Denmark, Estonia, Finland and Sweden were of the opinion that rules and bureaucracy could be reduced. Thus mostly respondents from the Scandinavian tradition countries believe that bureaucracy could be reduced (see Figure 15).

Figure 15. Reduction of Bureaucracy by Public Administration Tradition and HR System



Another interesting result is the fact that women answer to this question more positively than men (see Table 12 below). These differences can also be observed as to the question whether the public services have become more customer and citizen friendly. As regards all of these questions women had a somewhat more positive attitude than men. An explanation for these differences is difficult and more research is needed to find why perceptions amongst these issues and between the sexes.

As regards the question whether rule and bureaucracy could be reduced significant differences could also be found between employees and top managers (Table 12). Overall employees are more sceptical whether these objectives could be achieved (26% are positive) than top managers who are much more optimistic (60%).

Table 12. Reduction of Bureaucracy by Sex and by Position (Frequencies in parenthesis)

		Yes, successful	Same	No, not successful	Total
Employee	Male	20,3 (13)	53,1 (34)	26,6 (17)	100,0 (64)
	Female	29,6 (34)	47,8 (55)	22,6 (26)	100,0 (115)
Middle management	Male	34,8 (16)	30,4 (14)	34,8 (16)	100,0 (46)
	Female	38,1 (24)	34,9 (22)	27,0 (17)	100,0 (63)
Top management	Male	52,6 (10)	21,1 (4)	26,3 (5)	100,0 (19)
	Female	65,2 (15)	13,0 (3)	21,7 (5)	100,0 (23)
	Total	33,9 (112)	40,0 (132)	26,1 (86)	100,0 (330)

Thus, the answers to the question as to whether rules and bureaucracy could be reduced are – although still promising – less positive than those concerning the overall cost developments and cost reduction. These mixed results can be explained by the – almost paradoxical developments in the continental career system countries – which seem to be very successful in reducing administrative (personnel?) costs. On the other hand, these countries are much less successful in reducing rules and “bureaucracy”. However, the situation is even more problematic in some Eastern European States who have also not succeeded in reducing costs. According to our replies the most positive developments have taken place in the Scandinavian countries where costs and rules/bureaucracy could be reduced.

Another important question concerned the development of customer and citizen satisfaction. In our survey we asked the question of whether the public services have become more citizen- and customer friendly. The answers to this question were also (mostly) positive. Overall 60% of all respondents to this study were of the opinion that the public services have succeeded in becoming more customer/citizen friendly. This can also be called a success since more customer- and citizen orientation ranks very high on the (political) agenda of the Member States. When analysing the figures in more detail, the positive percentages are slightly higher for the older Member States (see Figure 16). Interestingly, top managers were more positive than other public employees and women were more positive than men (see Table 13). Since these differences are considerable they require another in depth-analysis. Unfortunately, there is no space here to discuss these interesting differences.

Figure 16. Becoming More Customer/Citizen Friendly by Public Administration Tradition and HR System

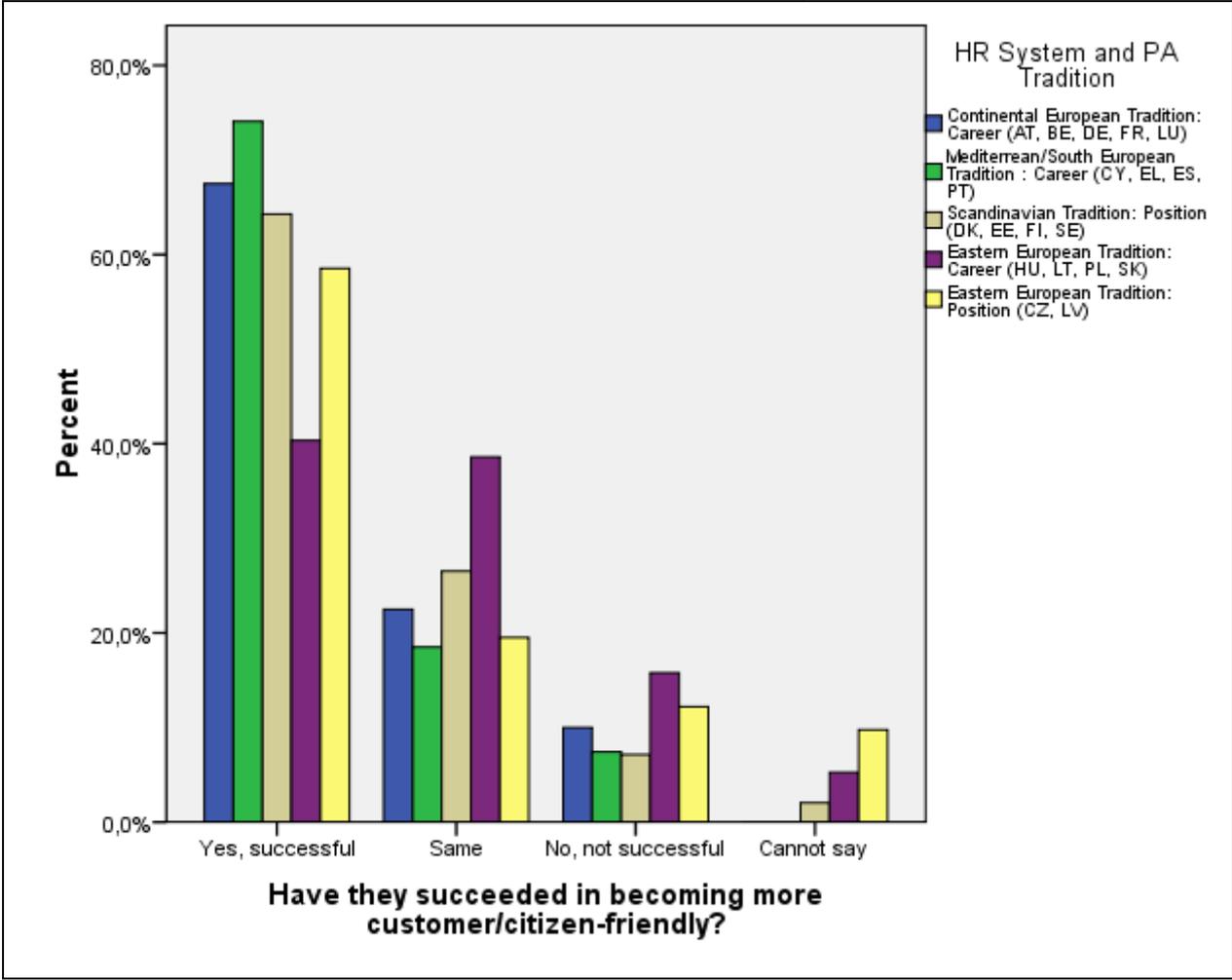


Table 13. Becoming More Customer/Citizen Friendly by Sex and by Position
(Frequencies in parenthesis)

		Yes, successful	Same	No, not successful	Total
Employee	Male	41,5 (27)	36,9 (24)	21,5 (14)	100,0 (65)
	Female	60,8 (73)	29,2 (35)	10,0 (12)	100,0 (120)
Middle management	Male	62,2 (28)	26,7 (12)	11,1 (5)	100,0 (45)
	Female	59,4 (38)	31,2 (20)	9,4 (6)	100,0 (64)
Top management	Male	78,9 (15)	10,5 (2)	10,5 (2)	100,0 (19)
	Female	82,6 (19)	17,4 (4)	0,0 (0)	100,0 (23)
	Total	59,5 (200)	28,9 (97)	11,6 (39)	100,0 (336)

The different results as to the developments in this field also indicate that different public service systems and administrative traditions produce different reform outcomes. Moreover, different categories of staff have sometimes very different perceptions of the impact and effects of HR reforms. As such, perception levels are very much linked to gender and hierarchical (or power) issues. At least as regards some issues, women are either more positive or more critical than men. On the other hand, top managers are mostly more positive than other public employees. Although these findings are not altogether surprising it would be nevertheless important (and interesting) to invest more time and resources in identifying the reasons for these differences.

4. Progress and failure in HR policies

Another objective of our study was to isolate certain HR policies and to analyse whether progress could be achieved in these HR policies (and in which fields this is less the case). In the questionnaire respondents were asked questions regarding the development of remuneration policies (better pay, fairer pay, motivational pay), job security, working time and working time flexibility, job responsibility, job autonomy, training, vacations, work-life balance, leadership, the distribution of top positions amongst men and women, diversity and anti-discrimination policies, stress etc.

Although we received answers from employees from all administrative traditions the response rate from some administrative traditions were too low to allow for final conclusions. For example, concerning pay developments we received only 14 replies from the Anglo-Saxon countries and only 9 answers from Romania and Bulgaria. Since this response rate is very low it does not allow for statistical conclusions. Therefore, the following analysis will mostly focus on the analysis of the replies from the other administrative traditions.

4.1. Positive features

4.1.1. General positive development – which policies are improving?

From a general point of view, the respondents from all Member States were of the opinion that improvements could be noted in the following HR policies:

- Job security (only in the new Member States)
- Development of qualification of civil servants,
- Flexible working time,
- (some aspects of) Pay policies
- Recruitment policies are faster and more transparent (old Member States)

- Knowledge management,
- Job responsibility,
- Job autonomy,
- Work life balance.
- Vacations,
- Top positions for women,
- Equality,
- Anti-discrimination,
- Diversity,
- Leadership,
- Training and
- Ethics.

Amongst these policies the strongest improvements could be noted in the field of flexible working time. In total 19% of all respondents reported strong improvements in this field and 55% of all respondents noted general improvements. However, the situation seems to be more positive in the older Member States. In this country cluster 66% of all respondents observe strong or some improvements compared to 45% of all respondents from the new Member States. Many respondents (46%) also observed improvements in the field of work/life balance and vacations and leave (45%). Another success story seems to be recruitment policies (“Recruitment policies are faster and more transparent”). Especially the old Member States seem to have successfully introduced selection methods with a view to achieving faster and more efficient recruitments (for example through the introduction of a “fast-track” recruitment system). The same is true as to the ability of the public services to retain staff/leaders in the public services. Also here, the older Member States are more successful than the new Member States. However, one should also note that top managers see the developments in the field of recruitment and training staff/leaders more positively than the other employees.

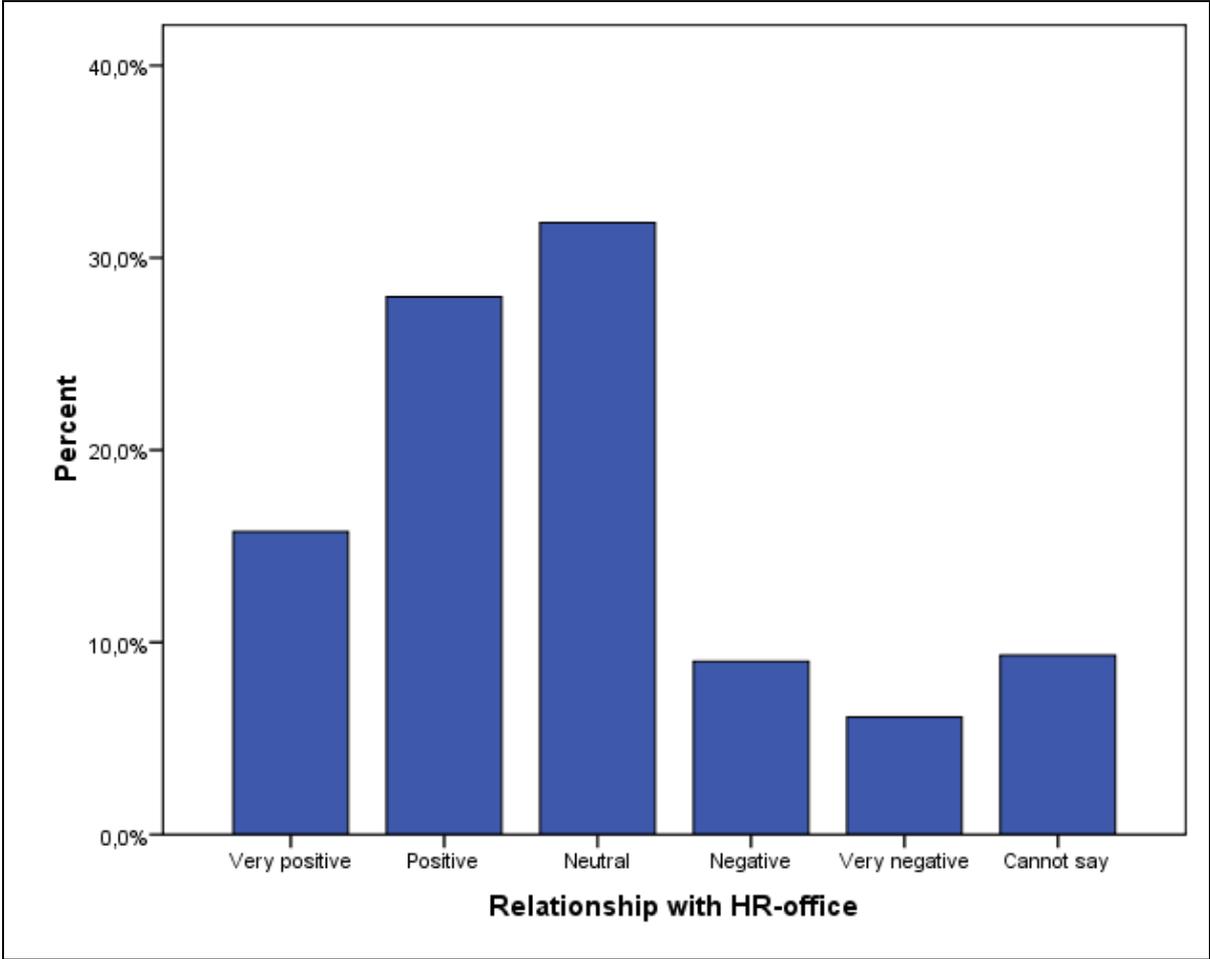
4.1.2. Decentralisation of responsibilities, job autonomy and job control

During the 1990s, new public management reformers and good governance enthusiasts claimed that the era of centralised, hierarchical, bureaucratic and rule-bound administration was over. Concepts such as ‘decentralisation’, ‘deregulation’, ‘devolution’, ‘outsourcing’, ‘delegation’, ‘public-private partnerships’, ‘networks’, ‘responsibilisation’ and ‘individualisation’ became popular. In the past decades many countries started to reform and to decentralise their public administrations as well as HRM structures and processes. Organisational structures were supposed to become ‘flatter’ and line managers were given more responsibilities and (budgetary) discretion in carrying out their duties. Highly centralised, hierarchical organisational structures became increasingly replaced by decentralised management environments. Moreover, managers and organisational units were given greater freedom in operational decisions and constraints in financial and HR management were increasingly removed. Although it seemed that within the EU no general trend in decentralising was observable, many public administrations are pursuing strategies to replace highly centralised hierarchical organisational structures by decentralised management environments. As a consequence decisions on resource allocation and service delivery were taken closer to the point of delivery. Consequently senior officials and line managers were also given more discretion and responsibility in the field of HRM.

Despite these important changes, perceptions in the media and the population about the role and tasks of the public administrations are still grounded in a centralised and unified body

clearly separated from the private sector. In addition, public services are easily held responsible for ‘governmental failures’ although responsibilities and accountabilities are increasingly complex. In reality, many public administrations look considerably different than they did some years ago and HR issues are nowadays increasingly decentralised, partly outsourced or even privatised. In addition, former centralised HR offices have been dismantled and HR responsibilities have been decentralised to HR units within individual ministries and/or agencies. More and more, public employees no longer deal anymore with central and distanced HR offices but with decentralised offices within their ministries, departments and agencies. As the results of our study show, this decentralisation of responsibilities has had positive side-effects on the relationship of public employees with their HR office (Table 17).

Figure 17. Relationship with HR-office

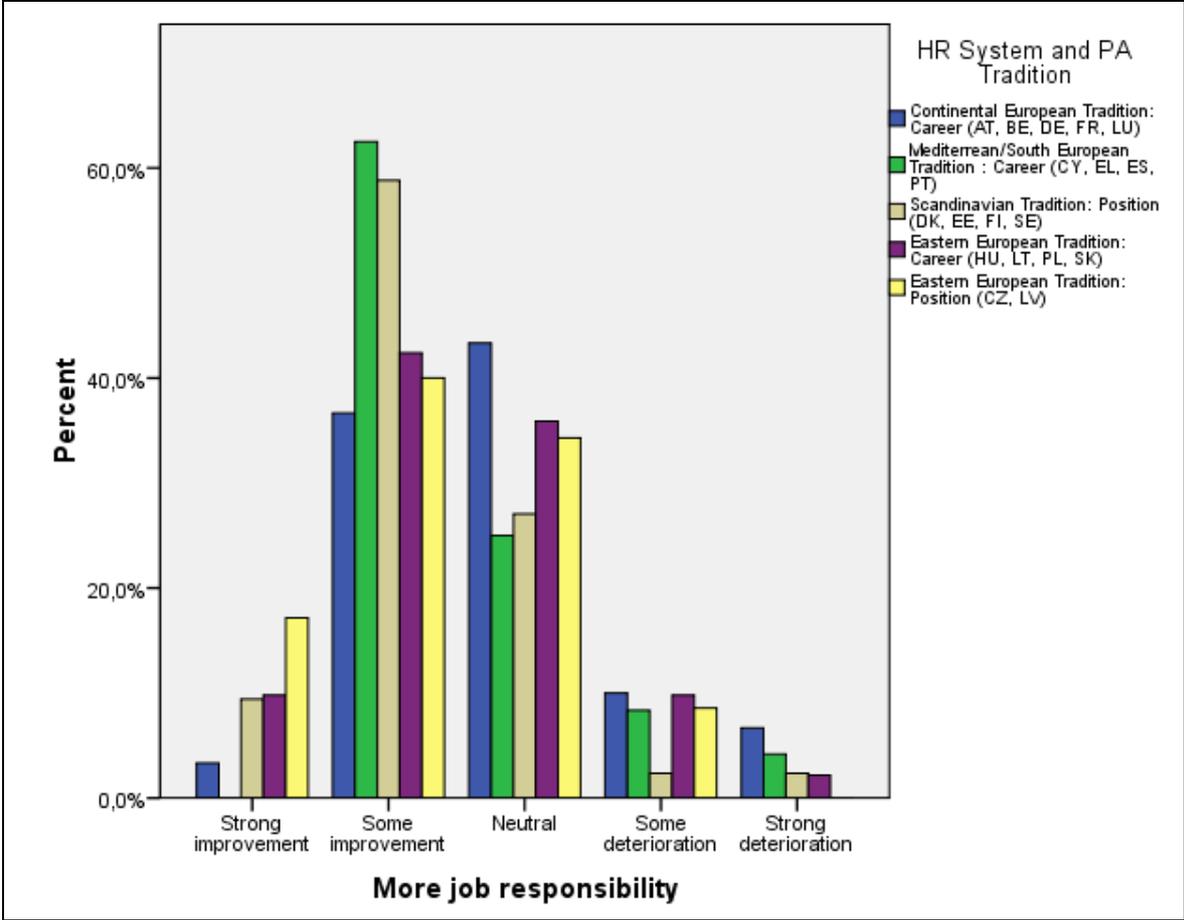


Generally, public employees see the relationship with the HR office as overall positive. However, whereas 52% of all respondents from the older Member States have a positive relationship the percentages are much lower in the new Member States, 36,4%. Also the relationship between employees and the staff representative is better in the older Member States (62% are positive vs. 40%).

The replies from the Member States also confirm an ongoing trend towards the decentralisation and delegation of HR responsibilities to line managers and public employees. As a result many employees observe strong or some improvements as regards the delegation of job responsibilities and the degree of job autonomy and job control. Thus, our statistical

evidence confirms the present trend towards the decentralisation of responsibilities to line managers and even to lower levels. Overall 59% of all respondents are of the opinion that employees were allocated more job responsibilities.

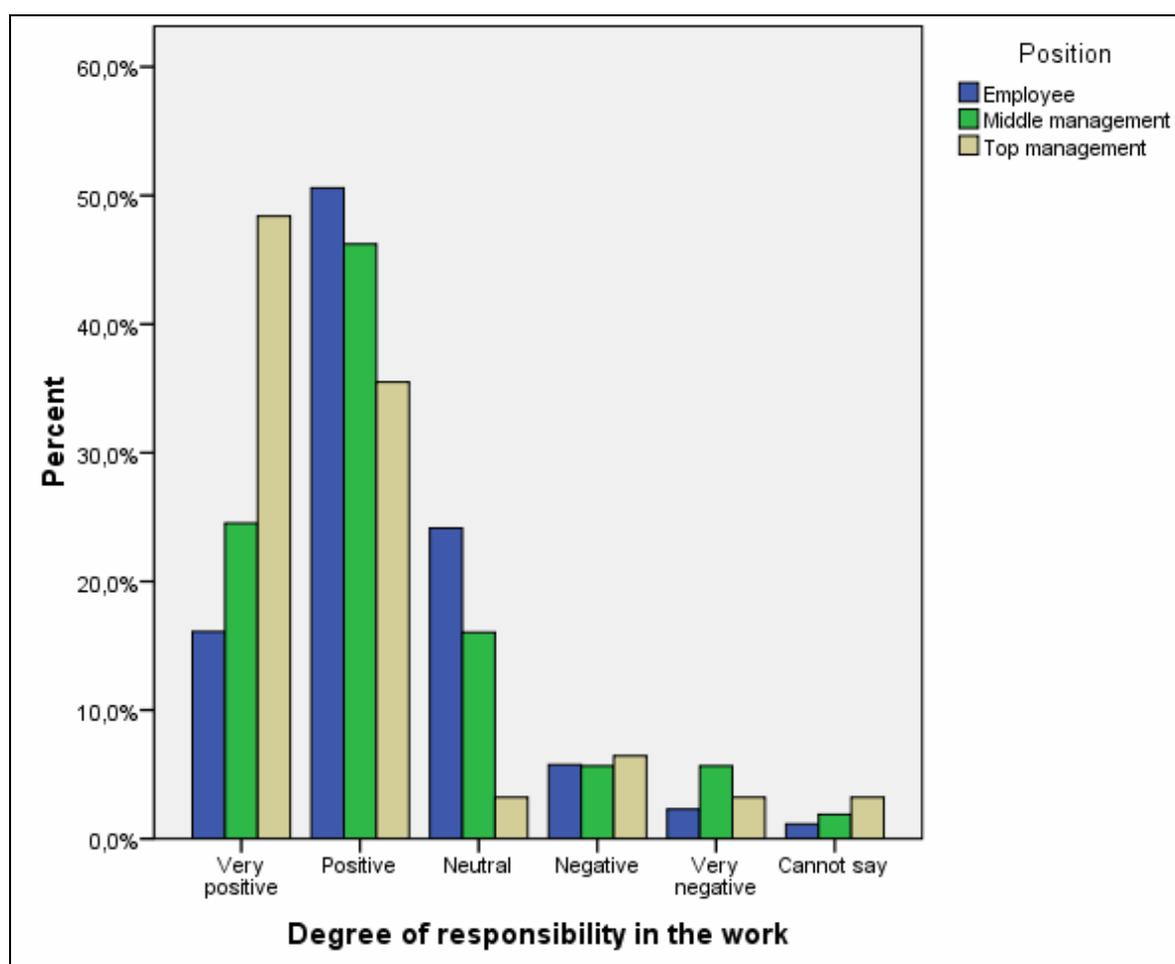
Figure 18. Development of Job Responsibility by Public Administration Tradition and HR System



Not surprisingly, employees from the Scandinavian countries are most positive about the degree of responsibilities at work. This result confirms the result of an earlier study on the decentralisation of HR responsibilities for the Austrian EU Presidency which came to the conclusion that HR responsibilities are most decentralised in the Anglo-Saxon and Scandinavian countries. However, many employees also from Spain, Portugal, Greece and Cyprus (who formerly had relatively centralised HR responsibilities) observe strong improvements towards the delegation of more responsibilities.

Moreover, public employees are – generally – very positive towards the degree of autonomy and the amount of job control. Overall, 71% of all respondents indicated that they are very positive or positive as to the degree of job responsibility and 61% with the degree of autonomy and job control. In addition, many employees observe further improvements in these areas. Not surprisingly, top managers are even more positive than other employees (Figure 19). However, overall all categories of staff evaluate the present situation as positive.

Figure 19. Degree of Responsibility in One's Own Work by Position



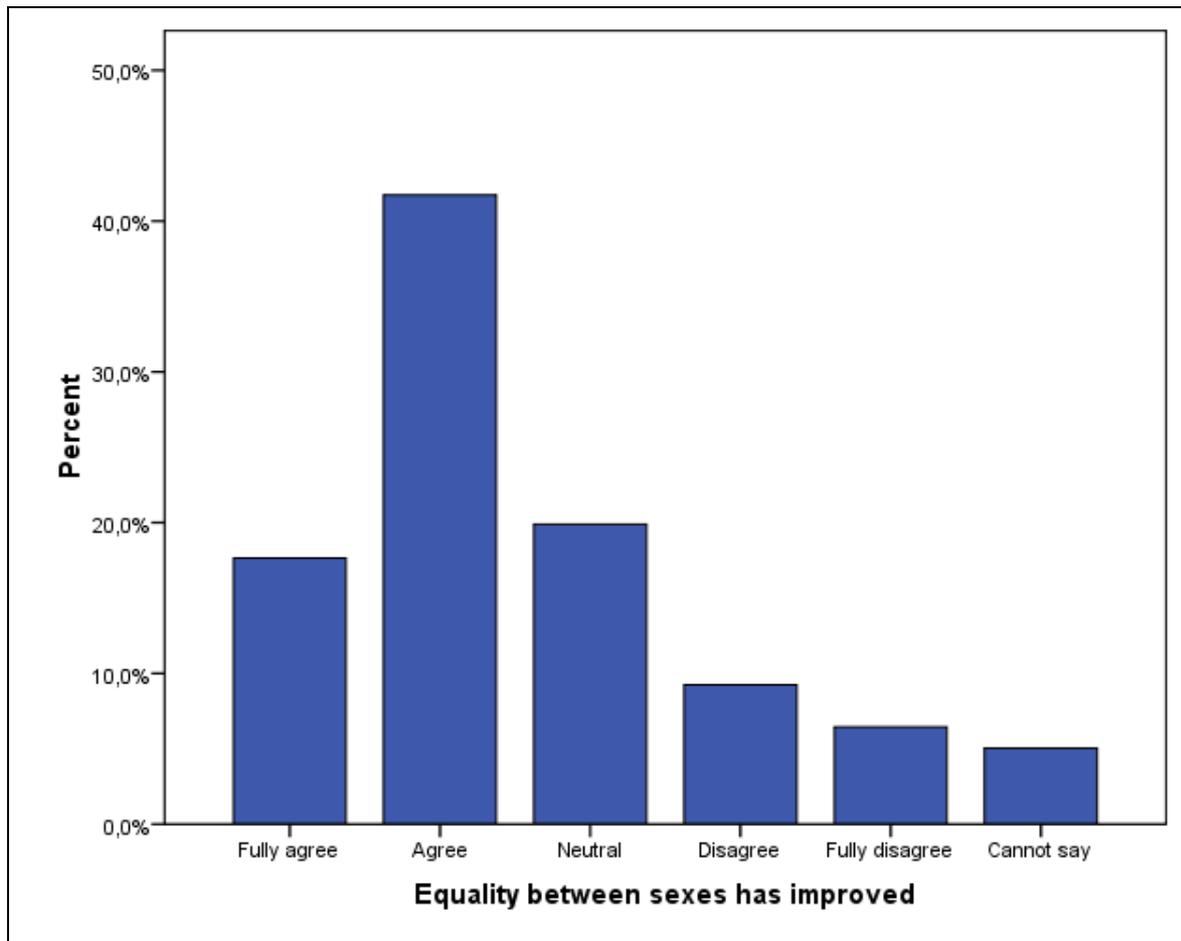
These overall positive findings contradict the widespread perception that work in the public services is hierarchical and employees have little responsibility and job control. In reality, many public employees are satisfied with the degree of decentralisation of responsibilities and the amount of job autonomy and job control.

4.1.3. Developments in the field of anti-discrimination and diversity

*“Equality between sexes has improved when speaking about employees and to some extent about middle management. Nevertheless that is not the case for the top management, where the percentage of women is still inadequate.”
(Slovenia – middle management)*

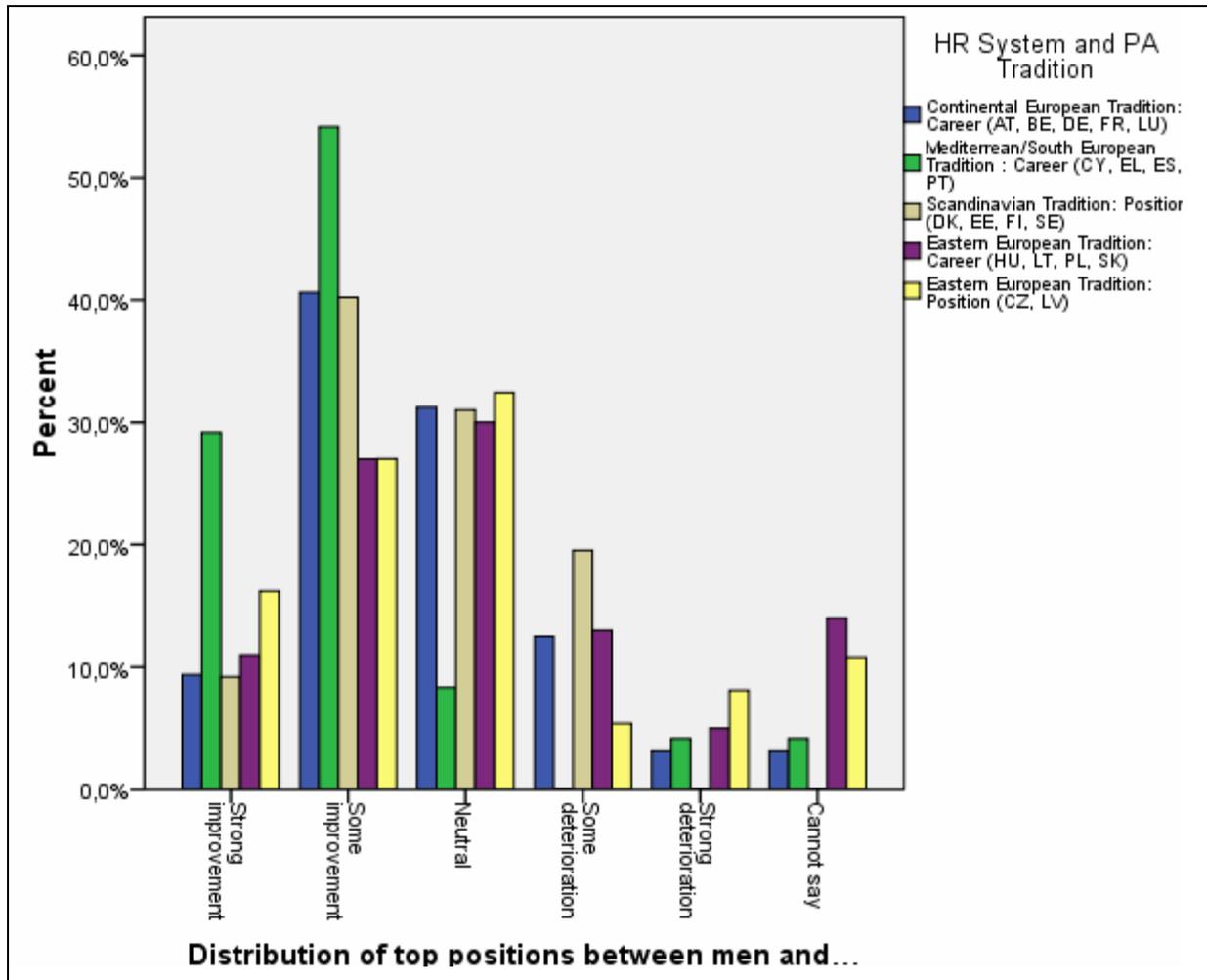
Other areas where improvements could be noted are the areas of anti-discrimination, diversity management and ethics. As Figure 20 shows, the vast majority of employees who responded to this study are of the opinion that the equality between the sexes had improved (63%).

Figure 20. Development of Equality Between Sexes



Overall, 73% of the respondents from the old Member States observe improvements, and 54% of the respondents from the new Member States are of the same opinion. Similar pattern can also be seen regarding the distribution of top positions between men and women (Figure 21). Whereas 55% of all respondents from the older Member states observed that improvements are occurring, this percentage was “only” 47% in the new Member States. Mostly the respondents from the Mediterranean countries (Cyprus, Spain, Portugal, Greece) and – to a lesser extent – from Austria, France, Germany, Belgium and Luxemburg were of the opinion that more women were recruited in top positions. From these figures one may conclude that anti-discrimination and diversity policies are more advanced in the older than the newer Member States. However, the general trend is positive in all Member States.

Figure 21. Distribution of Top Positions between Men and Women by Public Administration Tradition and HR System



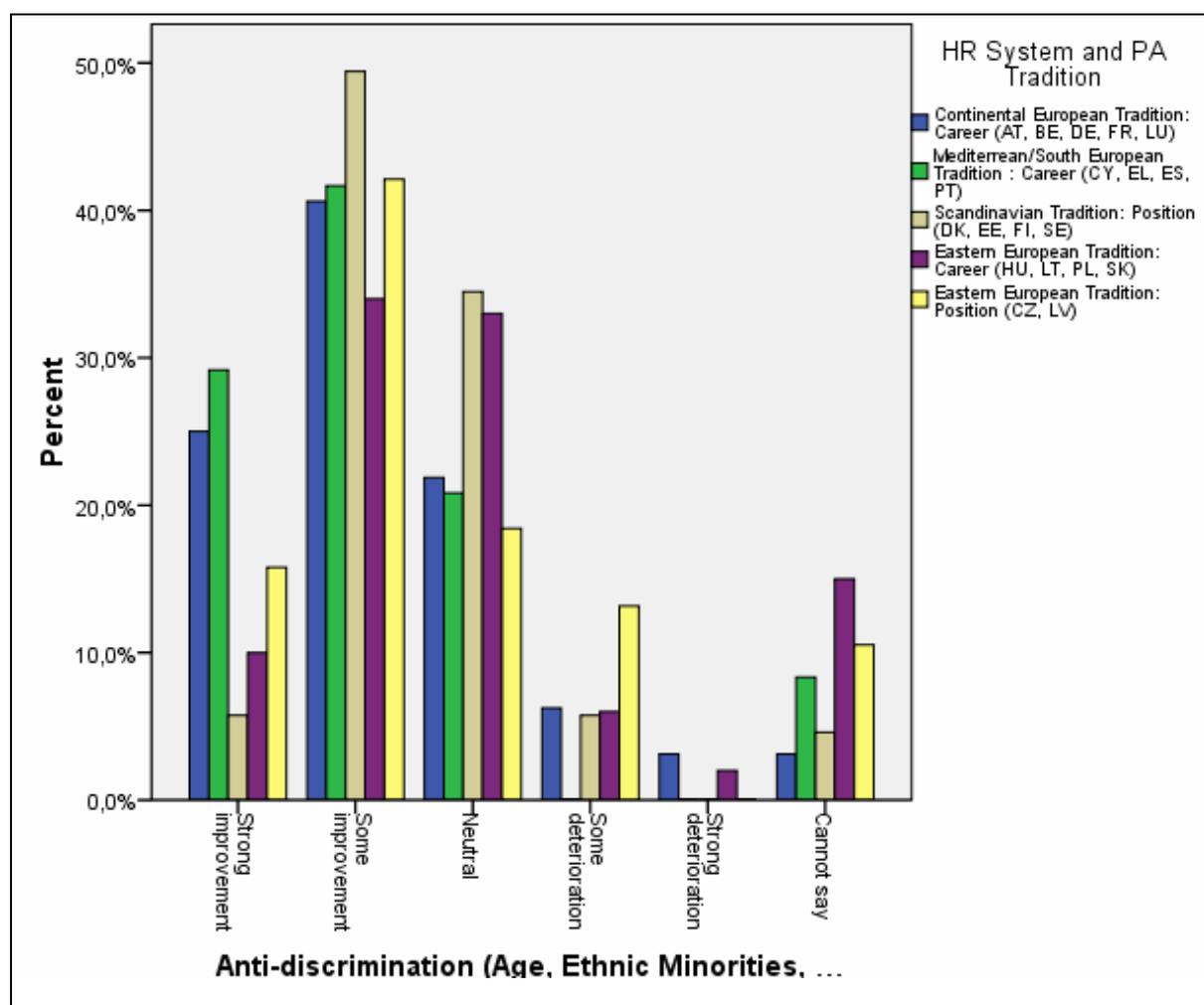
Despite this country-wide comparison, another important difference has to be noted with regard to the differences in opinion between men and women (see Table 14 below). Overall, more men than women are of the opinion that the equality between the sexes has improved. However, in all Member States, women are more critical than men as regards the question of whether improvements (in relation to the distribution of top positions between men and women) have taken place and also whether improvements have taken place in the field of diversity policies. Although the differences between men and women are not too big, they are nevertheless relevant. Almost twice as many women than men are of the opinion that the equality of sexes has not improved.

Table 14. Development of Equality Between Sexes by Sex and by Position
(Frequencies in parenthesis)

		Improved	Same	Deteriorated	Total
Employee	Male	62,1 (41)	28,8 (19)	9,1 (6)	100,0 (66)
	Female	57,3 (71)	23,4 (29)	19,4 (24)	100,0 (124)
Middle management	Male	66,0 (33)	22,0 (11)	12,0 (6)	100,0 (50)
	Female	46,3 (31)	32,8 (22)	20,9 (14)	100,0 (67)
Top management	Male	78,9 (15)	15,8 (3)	5,3 (1)	100,0 (19)
	Female	68,2 (15)	13,6 (3)	18,2 (4)	100,0 (22)
	Total	59,2 (206)	25,0 (87)	15,8 (55)	100,0 (348)

These differences can also be observed in relation to the developments in the field of diversity policies. From a general point of view 60% of all respondents noted that improvements had taken place in the area of anti-discrimination. More in detail, mostly countries like Austria, France, Germany, Belgium, Luxemburg, Portugal, Spain, Greece and Cyprus noted progress in the area.

Figure 22. Development of Anti-discrimination by Public Administration Tradition and HR System



Observations according to sex and age of respondents

Regarding issues, such as “better/fairer pay”, “motivational pay”, “job security”, “work/life balance”, “stress/time pressure”) it would seem that younger employees are slightly more positive than their older colleagues (on average 30-40% of the respondents within the youngest age group answer “strong” or “some improvement”).

Exceptions to this general pattern are the category of “job responsibility” as well as “diversity” and “anti-discrimination” issues; here the strongest approval can be found in the age group of 60 years and older (some 56% and 63% respectively).

Although, these statements have to be made with a certain precaution, since the number of responses for some questions is relatively small in individual age groups (i.e. for different issues, less than 10 persons responding were 60 years or older), figures provide some insight about general tendencies, indicating that the younger respondents are overall more positive about working conditions than their older colleagues.

Comparing the answers according to gender, the trend is that for all the issues under the heading “working conditions” female civil servants are significantly more positive about the developments, including “distribution of top positions between men and women” (63% male vs. 79% of female civil servants detect improvements in this respect.) The difference between male and female opinions amounts for around 20%, in the case of “flexible working time” and “more job responsibility” nearly 40% and 50% respectively, 51% even for the item “training quantity/quality”.

4.2. Critical developments

From a general point of view, the respondents from all administrative traditions were of the opinion that deteriorations could be noted in the following HR policies:

- Stress and time pressure
- Pay policies (fairer pay, motivational pay),
- Performance assessment,
- Rewarding staff for good performance
- Poor performers policies
- Promotion policies,
- Recruiting potential talented candidates,
- Retention policies

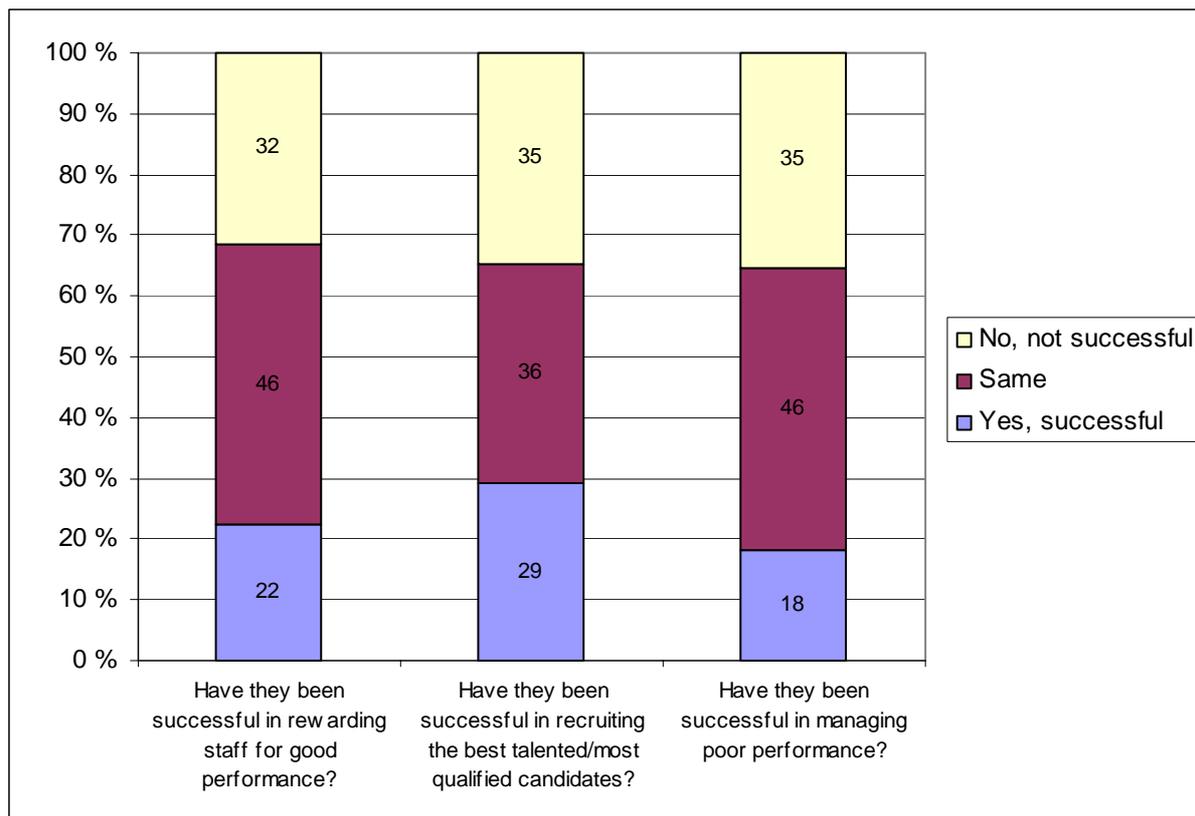
One of the most critical developments in all European public services seems to be the fact that stress levels are rising and time pressure is increasing. As can be discerned from Table 15, more than 42% of all respondents were of the opinion that stress-related developments and “time pressure” were negative and that the current developments led to deteriorations.

Table 15. Development of Stress / Time Pressure
(Frequencies in parenthesis)

	Rel. frequency
Strong improvement	8,4 (25)
Some improvement	19,1 (57)
Neutral	30,4 (91)
Some deterioration	24,4 (73)
Strong deterioration	17,7 (53)
Total	100,0 (299)

As Figure 23 shows, the respondents were also highly critical as to the current developments in the field of performance management and recruitment policies. Especially the developments in the field of poor performance policies and (to a lesser extent rewarding policies) are seen as not successful. The picture as regards recruitment policies is very mixed. A third of all respondents are of the opinion that recruitment policies are either successful or not successful.

Figure 23. Developments in Performance Management and Recruitment Policies



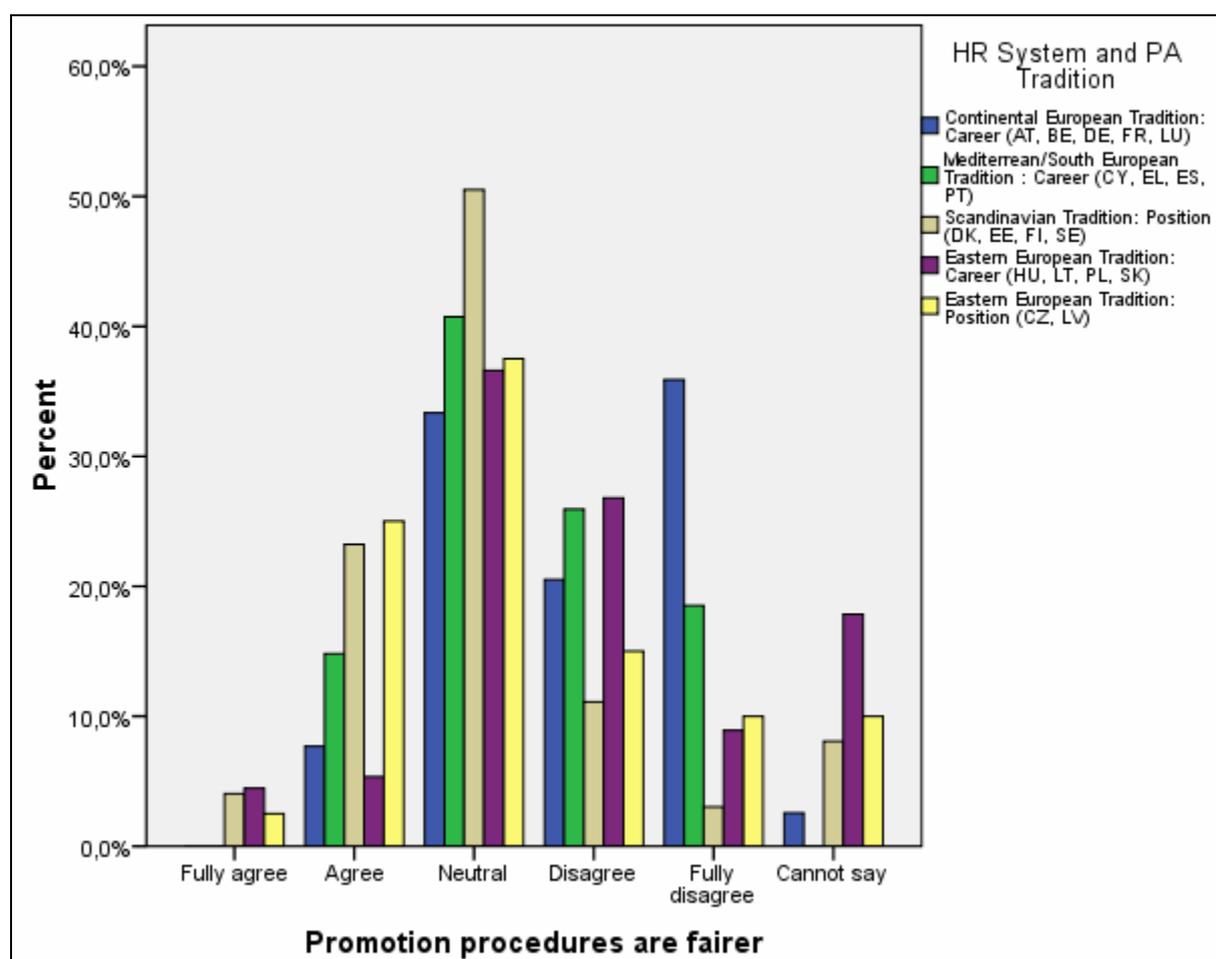
Despite these challenges, the greatest problems can be found in the field of promotion and performance assessment (Table 16). As regards both policy fields, a relatively broad majority of respondents noted that promotion policies have not become fairer and performance assessment not less subjective. As regards both issues less than 22% of all respondents were positive about the developments in these fields.

Table 16. Development of Promotion Procedures and Performance Assessment Systems
(Frequencies in parenthesis)

	Promotion procedures are fairer	Performance assessment systems are less subjective
Fully agree	4,0 (13)	3,8 (12)
Agree	17,0 (55)	18,2 (57)
Neutral	45,5 (147)	41,9 (131)
Disagree	21,1 (68)	20,4 (64)
Fully disagree	12,4 (40)	15,7 (49)
Total	100,0 (323)	100,0 (313)

As can be seen from Figure 24, the situation seems to be particularly worrying in countries like Austria, Germany, France, Belgium and Luxemburg as well as in a number of Mediterranean countries. Many respondents from these countries were **not** of the opinion that promotion procedures had become fairer. Only the respondents from the position-based systems, i.e. Scandinavian countries (DK, EE, FI, SE) and Eastern European Position System (CZ, LV) were slightly positive.

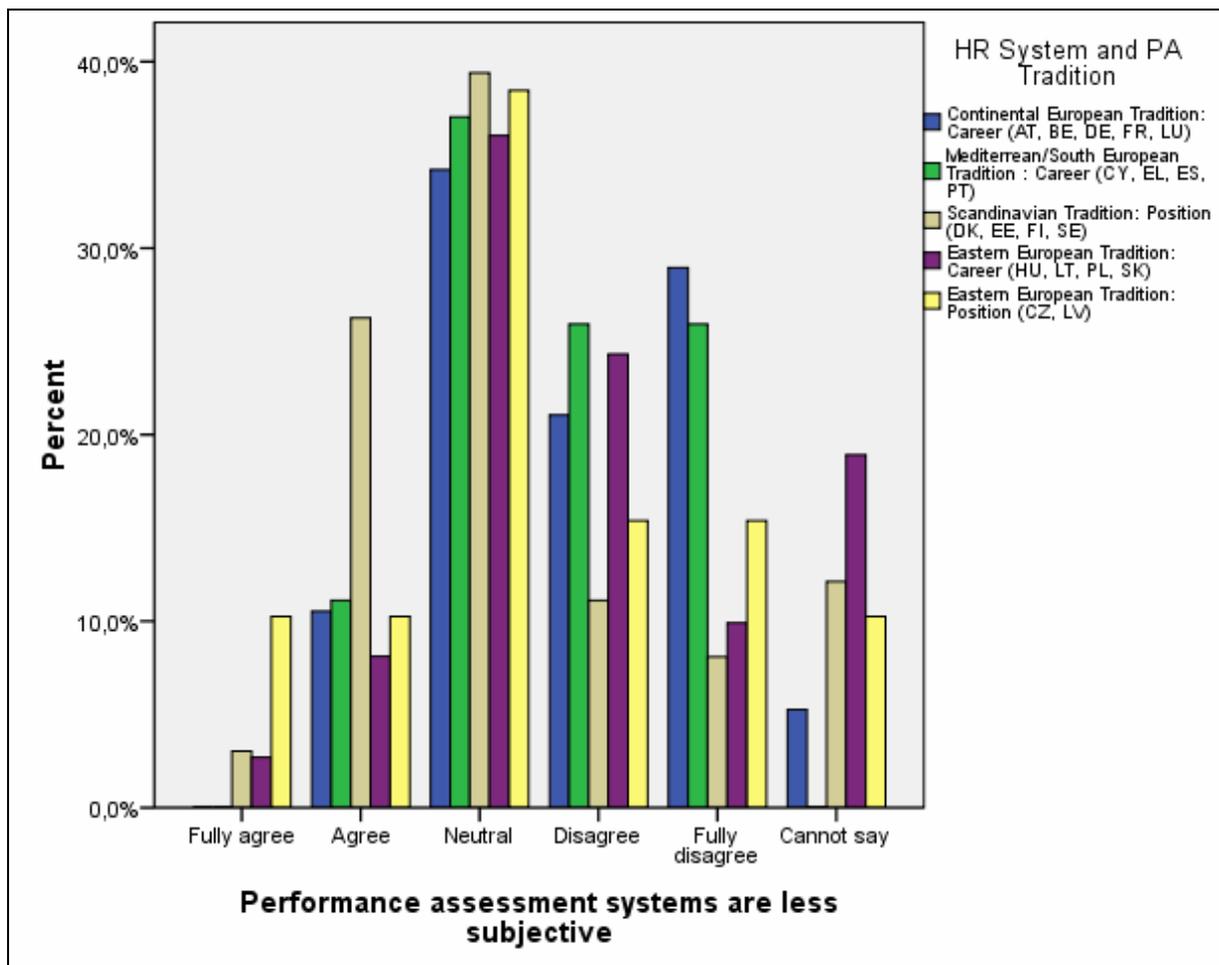
Figure 24. Development of Promotion Procedures by Public Administration Tradition and HR System



In particular, the developments in the field of performance assessment are not perceived in a positive way. In this study only 19% of all respondents agreed that performance rewards are

more transparent than before and are allocated quicker. Overall, most respondents from almost all countries do not agree that performance assessment systems have become less subjective. However, respondents from the Scandinavian countries evaluate performance assessment systems less critically than their colleagues from the Mediterranean countries and some continental career-system countries (Figure 25). In total, only 22% agreed that present performance assessment systems are less subjective.

Figure 25. Development of Performance Assessment Systems by Public Administration Tradition and HR System



Frequent studies on performance assessment systems complain that it happens too often that assessments do not have immediate material or immaterial consequence. When performance is in decline there are hardly any individual discussions on the reasons for performance decline; coaching needs to be improved. However, appropriate measures are decided upon too late. In addition, there exists only an inadequate connection between performance appraisal and career development. To sum up, there is too little alignment between the assessment and immediate consequences. Consequently, performance assessments have only limited motivational effects.

Interestingly, top managers are much more optimistic than employees as regards the question of whether the public services are successful in rewarding good performance. Whereas 40% of all top managers responded that the developments have been successful only 21% of the employees shared this opinion.

Table 17. Rewarding Staff for Good Performance by Position
(Frequencies in parenthesis)

	Yes, successful	Same	No, not successful	Total
Employee	20,8 (37)	42,7 (76)	36,5 (65)	100,0 (178)
Middle management	18,4 (21)	52,6 (60)	28,9 (33)	100,0 (114)
Top management	40,0 (16)	42,5 (17)	17,5 (7)	100,0 (40)
Total	22,3 (74)	46,1 (153)	31,6 (105)	100,0 (332)

Top managers are also much more optimistic than employees as to the successes of poor performer's policies. However, positive figures are very low. Overall, only 18% of all respondents are of the opinion that managing poor performance has been successful. From these were 26% of top managers but only 14% of employees. Especially the replies from the Mediterranean countries showed a particularly high percentage of dissatisfaction with existing poor performer's policies.

Table 18. Managing Poor Performance by Position
(Frequencies in parenthesis)

	Yes, successful	Same	No, not successful	Total
Employee	14,3 (24)	47,6 (80)	38,1 (64)	100,0 (168)
Middle management	21,9 (23)	44,8 (47)	33,3 (35)	100,0 (105)
Top management	26,3 (10)	44,7 (17)	28,9 (11)	100,0 (38)
Total	18,3 (57)	46,3 (144)	35,4 (110)	100,0 (311)

4.3. Crucial success factors and challenges

When discussing the conditions and factors having a certain influence on the effects of different reform initiatives, these elements can be divided into micro- and macro-level factors, as well as into internal and external factors. The micro-level relates to factors, having an impact on motivation of individual employees, whereas the macro-level assembles structural elements influencing performance, working conditions and efficiency of all public servants within a given organisation or institution. The second distinction between internal and external factors addresses conditions as to whether they can or cannot be altered from within an organisation. Both distinctions are made from the perspective of human resource management in public administration.

External factors at the micro-level are linked to individuals' attitudes, norms and values, their personal situation and patterns of social interaction at and beyond the workplace, trust in the capacities of individual employees (as well as their self-confidence) etc.¹²⁰ We call them external, because these elements cannot be controlled or directly influenced by the institution of HRM.

At the macro level, external factors refer to circumstantial or contextual factors, common to all employees, such as societal norms and values, image of public service, expectations of

¹²⁰ Please see the table for a more exhaustive enumeration of internal and external as well as macro- and micro level factors below. A full list of challenges and critical success factors, based on responses to our survey, can be found in the annex to this study.

citizens, the political continuity and prerogatives, HR system and tradition, degree of autonomy of public service in HRM matters, availability of resources, the constitutional or legal framework and so forth. Internal factors at the macro-level generally bear the highest level of influence for HRM policies in public administration. Elements located here have potential impact on all (groups of) employees, and can be directly modified from within the institution of public administration. Internal macro-level factors are, e.g., support from top management, existence and communication of a clear visible strategy, investment in learning and development HR, cooperation between trade unions and management, diversity policies, ethics and integrity management, target driven culture and dynamics of modernisation, or efforts to create a positive work atmosphere. As we will see, some of the factors at the macro-level can also be found at the micro-level, the difference being the range and applicability of these factors.

At the micro-level, internal factors regroup the alterable factors as they are experienced by individual employees, at the same time being a direct result of their own interaction within their organisation. Each and every employee has, to use the same example, a certain degree of influence on the work atmosphere in his or her organisation. Similarly, skills and competencies of civil servants do not only depend on training possibilities and life-long learning policies, but also on individual employees' own pre-qualifications, their particular interests as well as willingness and capacities to acquire knowledge.

On the other hand, if individual concerns (or positive examples, for that matter) are raised *vis-à-vis* and taken into account by human resource management, they might as well become a catalyst (or a model) for new approaches and reform concepts. In parallel, neither internal nor external factors exist in a vacuum, but they are mutually interdependent. The same applies to macro- and micro-level; expectations from society or media attitudes as well as the image of civil service will of course have a strong impact on the appeal of a job in the public service for an individual potential applicant.

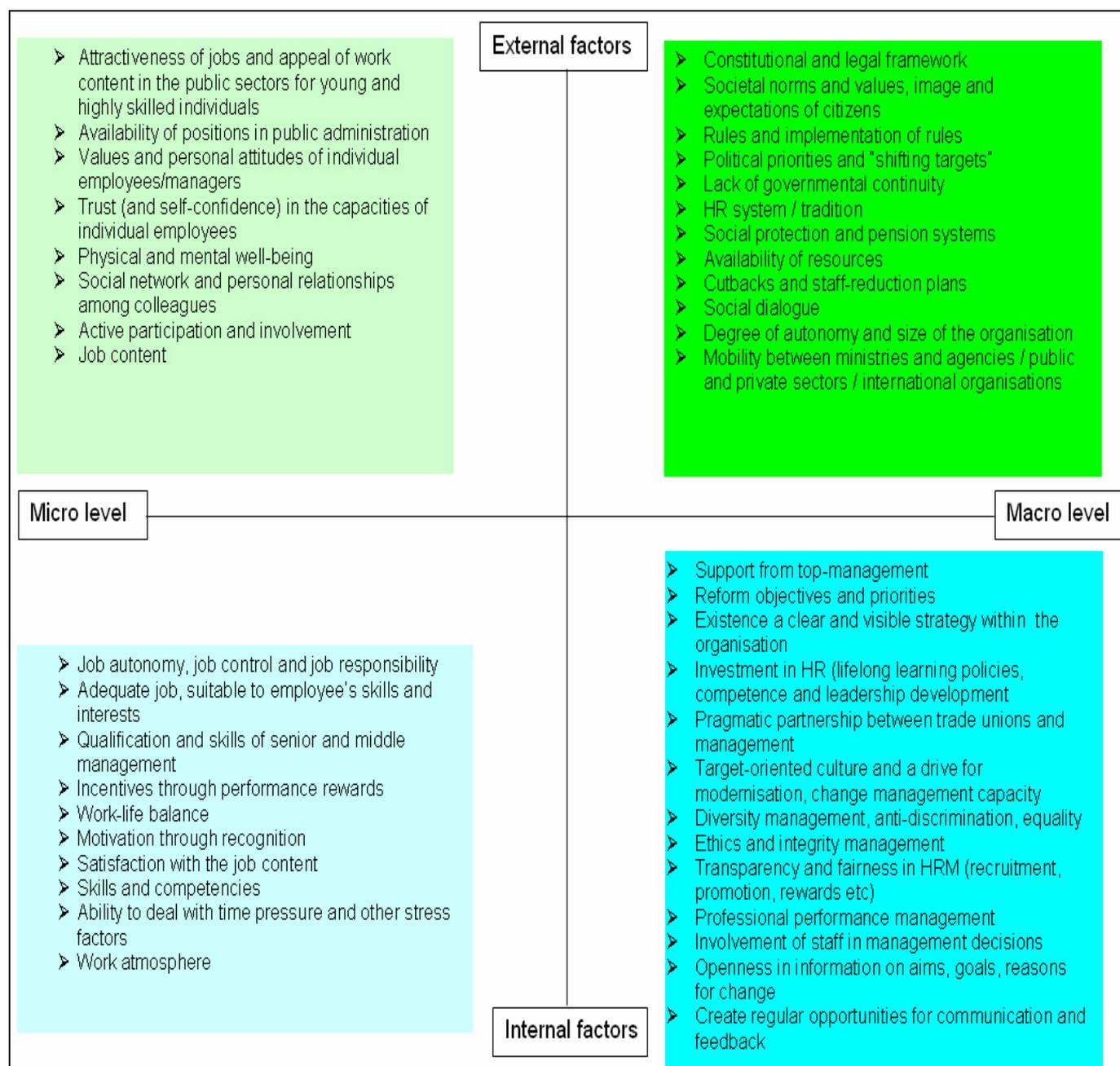
Of course, not all of these factors do apply (to the same extent) to all public administrations in the Member States. However, in many respects, the external factors set the limits to the possibility for change of internal factors. Depending on, for instance, the legal and political context, or the HR system and tradition in different Member States, determining the degree of autonomy of the institution of HRM in public administrations, external factors do or do not allow for a number of measures to be implemented by human resource management in the public services in different Member States. Therefore, the exact border between internal and external has to be determined in each particular national case.

At the same time, we note that measures taken at the macro level have a strong impact on the micro-level, by setting the scene and creating a more or less favourable context for individuals to actively participate in their organisations. Thus, to some extent, macro and micro function like a mirror, indicating the success of different reform initiatives at the organisational level in terms of effects and throughput at the individual level.

Even if not all elements are of the same importance for all administrations in the Member States, many answers to our survey converge in pointing at similar challenges and success factors for HRM. Most interesting – but also most divergent – are, of course, internal macro-level factors, since here HRM policies have the strongest effect.

A systematic comparison of these factors, taking into account the specific characteristics of country and systems looks therefore most promising, and should be worthwhile future efforts.

Figure 26. Crucial Success Factors



5. Public-Private comparisons in the field of HR Management

“Some factors that foster innovation in an organisation include the existence of leadership, trust, creativity, team-spirit, availability of resources, compensation systems that recognise and reward collaboration and innovation, alignment between the goals of the employees and the organisation, a safe environment to take risks and share ideas, etc. Many of these innovations stem from the private sector.” (Cyprus – top management)

Are HR policies in public organisations better or worse than in private sector organisations? The widespread public scepticism about public institutions¹²¹ and numerous clichés about civil servants and public organisations (<http://www.tinyvital.com/Misc/Lawsburo.htm>)¹²² imply that there are sharp differences between public and private organisations. At the same time, one has to acknowledge that public and private organisations include many different organisations. It is true that neither all public nor all private organisations are alike. At the same time one has to acknowledge that the present development leads to a “blurring” of boundaries between the public – and private sector. More and more public services are carried out by public-private partnerships or are outsourced and managed by NGOs or implemented by other forms of semi-public networks.

When studying the differences between the public and private sector, it is also important to mention the gap between the opinions of experts and the general public perception and stereotypes. Many – if not most – experts in the field have argued that there has been too little sound analysis of the real differences between public and private organisations¹²³ and point to the growing difficulties in identifying clear differences between the two sectors in times of outsourcing, public-private partnerships and consultancy. In fact, clear demarcations between public and private organisations are difficult and therefore oversimplified distinctions between public and private organisations are misleading¹²⁴.

Interestingly, the position that public organisations are different was always in striking contrast to the opinion of major public administration experts such as Herbert Simon and Max Weber who all “stressed the commonalities among organisations and have suggested that public agencies and private firms are more alike than different.”¹²⁵ For example, Weber applied his concept of bureaucracy to private organisations, too. Simon was of the opinion that it is false to assume that “public and non-profit organisations cannot, and on average do not, operate as efficiently as private business.”¹²⁶ Simon was also convinced that public employees are not distinct from private employees. In “Administrative behaviour”, Simon wrote, “I used to think that organisation was important, but now I think that it is much more a matter of personality. The important thing is the man. If he has drive, ability, imagination, he can work in almost any organisation.”¹²⁷

These findings are logical. Many people in both types of organisations virtually perform the same functions “managers, secretaries, computer programmers, auditors, personnel officers,

¹²¹ L.Halman, The European Values Survey; A Third Wave, 1999/2000, Tilburg University 2001, p. 192

¹²² S.van de Walle, Context-specific images of the archetypical bureaucrat: persistence and diffusion of the bureaucratic stereotype, public Management Institute, University of Leuven, 2003

¹²³ H. Rainey, Understanding and Managing Public Organizations, Third Edition, 2003, p. 5

¹²⁴ H.Rainey, Understanding and Managing, op. cit., p. 62

¹²⁵ H. Rainey, Understanding and Managing, op. cit, p. 48

¹²⁶ H. Rainey, Understanding and Managing, op. cit., p. 49

¹²⁷ H. Simon, Administrative Behaviour, New York, 1947, P. XV

maintenance workers” etc.¹²⁸. Or more concretely, “A government-owned hospital, for example, obviously resembles a private hospital more than it resembles a government-owned utility.”¹²⁹ On the other hand, “if they are not distinct from other organisations, such as businesses, in any important way, why do public organisations exist?”¹³⁰

In “Government is different”, Appleby noted about the differences among organisational structures within the public sector that “government administration differs from all other administrative work....”¹³¹ For example, a ministry works in a totally different work climate and under different parameters than a police station, a judicial court, an inspection body or a local authority. Ministries, in particular, have special tasks and duties which differ from those in the private sector. For example, offering services to citizens (clients) may not be one of the most important priorities of a ministry, but this is the case for most private companies. In his analysis on Public and Private Management,¹³² Allison arrived at the conclusion that private and public organisations also differ as regards the following aspects:

- time perspective;¹³³
- duration of employment of the employees;
- measurement of performance;
- personnel constraints, e.g. requirements to respect principles such as equality and discrimination;
- equity and efficiency is different;
- public scrutiny is different;
- role of press and media;
- persuasion and direction;
- legislative and judicial impact.

Allison concludes “that public and private management are at least as different as they are similar, and that the differences are more important than the similarities.”¹³⁴

In fact, some important differences can be identified:

- a) Public administrations are faced far more with legal and political constraints by the courts, legislatures and pressure groups than private organisations. These constraints result in different objectives, more control and monitoring, more red tape, less autonomy and higher levels of formalisation in public organisations. Because of these differences, public HRM managers, too, tend to have less flexibility in terms of personnel procedures and – as a consequence – at least some public organisations may be less innovative, less performance oriented, and be more averse to risk than private sector companies.
- b) In many Member States, public organisations were set up in the nineteenth century as hierarchical organisations with career systems and with clear promotion paths (according to the principle of seniority). These principles were intended to protect existing public employees from changes in government and lobbying from the private

¹²⁸ H.Rainey, *Understanding and Managing*, *op. cit.*, p.60

¹²⁹ H.Rainey, *Understanding and Managing*, *op. cit.*, p. 58

¹³⁰ H.Rainey, *Understanding and Managing*, *op. cit.*, p. 55

¹³¹ P.Appleby, *Government is different*, in: Shafritz, Jay M./Hyde Albert C., *Classics of Public Administration*, The Dorsey Press, Chicago, Illinois, 2004, p. 134

¹³² G.T. Allison, *Public and Private Management: Are they Fundamentally Alike in all unimportant respects?*, in: Shafritz, Jay M./Hyde Albert C., *Classics of Public Administration*, 2004, p. 396.

¹³³ Allison, *Public and Private Management*, *op. cit.*, p. 400/403

¹³⁴ Allinson, *op. cit.*, p. 410

sector. Traditional organisations also had very specific features such as a highly formalised decision-making structure, little mobility between the public and private sector, high levels of job security, a uniform pay system and specific pension schemes. All these principles were intended to guarantee equity, transparency and security instead of individualisation, self-interest and political influence. The overall characteristics and principles of a public organisation were stability, hierarchy and compactness.

Many of these principles and – to a lesser extent – values, are about to change. For example, stability is nowadays seen by many as an old-fashioned value which has been replaced by change, innovation and mobility. In addition, organisational values such as centralisation, hierarchy and rigidity are seen as supporting various forms of organisational and individual poor performance. Some decades ago, conventional wisdom simply assumed that stability contributes to public administrative performance whereas today, according to O’Toole, “nothing seems hotter than novelty” and consequently “stability, in contrast, rusts at the bottom of the public manager’s toolbox.”¹³⁵ This example shows that public organisations are in a process of change and increasingly resemble private organisations.

However, organisational changes also generate new dilemmas. For example, if a public organisation were to function like a company, the principles of democracy, legality, equality, fairness and non-discrimination could suffer and other values would become more important. However, this does not mean that government cannot be more entrepreneurial.¹³⁶ Pochard, the former Director-General of the French Public Service, writes about the situation in France, “The foundations and principles - linked to the fact that the public employer which due to its missions and prerogatives is not an ordinary employer – are today as in the past necessary in order to equip civil servants with a state, and to shield (protect) them from favouritism and from the arbitrary and to allow them to dedicate themselves with impartiality and autonomy to the public service.”¹³⁷ The French answer to the above questionnaire also illustrates the differences between public and private organisations (especially as regards the remuneration systems and career development opportunities) without suggesting that the one is better than the other. “The salary progression of staff is less regulated in the private than in the public sector and even less than in the case of teachers. The careers of private sector staff are not always better, but are more unpredictable. There are fewer surprises in the public sector. The infighting, which is more developed in the private sector, results in spectacular successes, but also failures. It seems that the public service guarantees salary progression. It may be slow, but it is almost always assured”.

In many countries, the belief that public and private organisations are very different and serve different objectives is also deeply rooted in the administrative culture of the various countries. In particular, the argument for a career system combined with life-long employment for a long time allowed public employers to rely on institutional knowledge and the continuity of their employees and to enhance job protection for those employees with a regulatory or enforcement function and with jobs that need to be protected against individual and political pressure. For example, in the field of environmental policy, “absent strong job protection, environmental regulators, for example, might be loath to enforce regulations when it comes to

¹³⁵ Slightly amended . See J.Williams Sylvia Blackwell Shirley Gorby Philip J. OConnell Helen Russell, *The Changing Workplace: A Survey of Employers’ Views and Experiences*, National Centre for Partnership and Performance, 2003, <http://www.ncpp.ie/inside.asp?catid=73&zoneId=3> (last checked 16 March 2004)

¹³⁶ R.Boyle, *Towards A New Public Service*, Dublin 1195, pp. 35-36

¹³⁷ M.Pochard, *The implications of free movement : more than a trivialisation, the standardisation of law in public office*, in *AJDA*, 27 October, p. 1999

a large company with close ties to a particular legislator or governor. But with the protection that comes with seniority, the same official can move with some confidence.”¹³⁸

Today, many things have changed in this respect too. Most countries have reformed their career systems and offer many forms of organisational and individual flexibility and mobility – which are obligatory in some cases – to their workers. Furthermore, many tasks of public organisations have changed, which has made them more like private organisations. However, this does not mean that public and private organisations are currently similar and no differences still exist, as some do remain and a few of them are relatively banal: public organisations have a different accountability. They do not serve a private interest but a public interest. A public administration should also serve the countries and citizens interest and not aim primarily for financial gain. As a result of their public tasks, public organisations are more “than other organisations open to certain types of environmental pressures and constraints. Public organisations tend to be subject to more directions and interventions from political actors and authorities who seek to direct and control them.”¹³⁹ Another significant aspect in this discussion is that the private sector is influenced by the economic situation, whereas the public sector is also influenced by the political situation, new legal developments and stakeholder pressure.

The results of our study show another important feature. Whereas most experts doubt that there are too many differences, the public employees themselves are convinced that there are still too many.

In this study we asked the employees whether HR policies are better or worse in the following areas:

- Salaries for employees
- Salaries for top managers
- Recruitment policies
- Communication
- Competence development
- Career development
- Performance management
- Leadership
- Compensation management
- Healthcare policies
- Safety policies
- Working time
- Involvement of staff in management decisions
- Pensions.

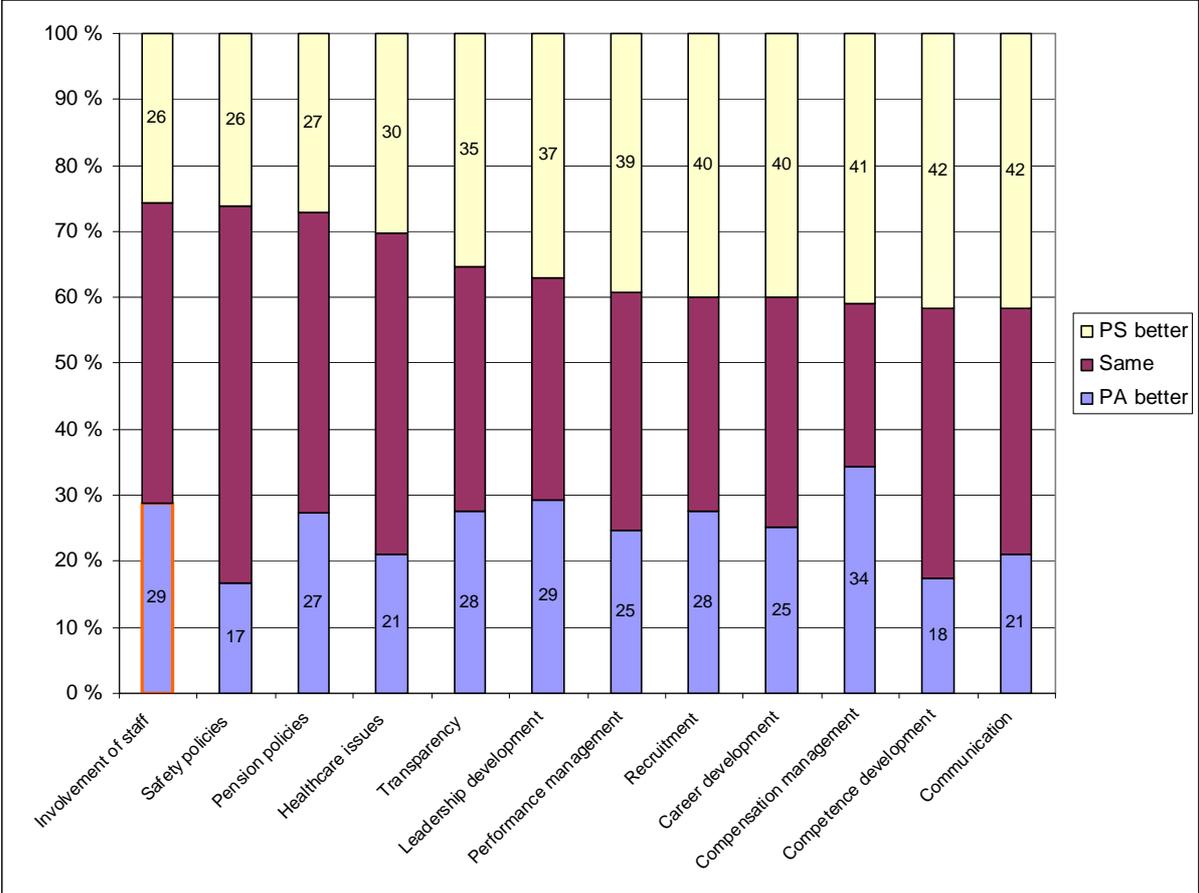
Concerning almost all HR policies, the respondents to this study have replied that they consider the working conditions in the private sector better than those in the public sector. Overall the replies were disastrous for the public services. With the exception of working time, involvement of staff in management decisions, pensions and – partly – compensation management and healthcare issues, all other policies were rated worse (or not competitive) in comparison with the private sector. The biggest differences are seen in the field of

¹³⁸ J. Walters, Life after Civil Service Reform: The Texas, Georgia, and Florida Experiences, IBM Endowment for The Business of Government, Human Capital Series, October 2002, p. 40

¹³⁹ H.Rainey, Understanding and Managing, *op. cit.*, p. 79

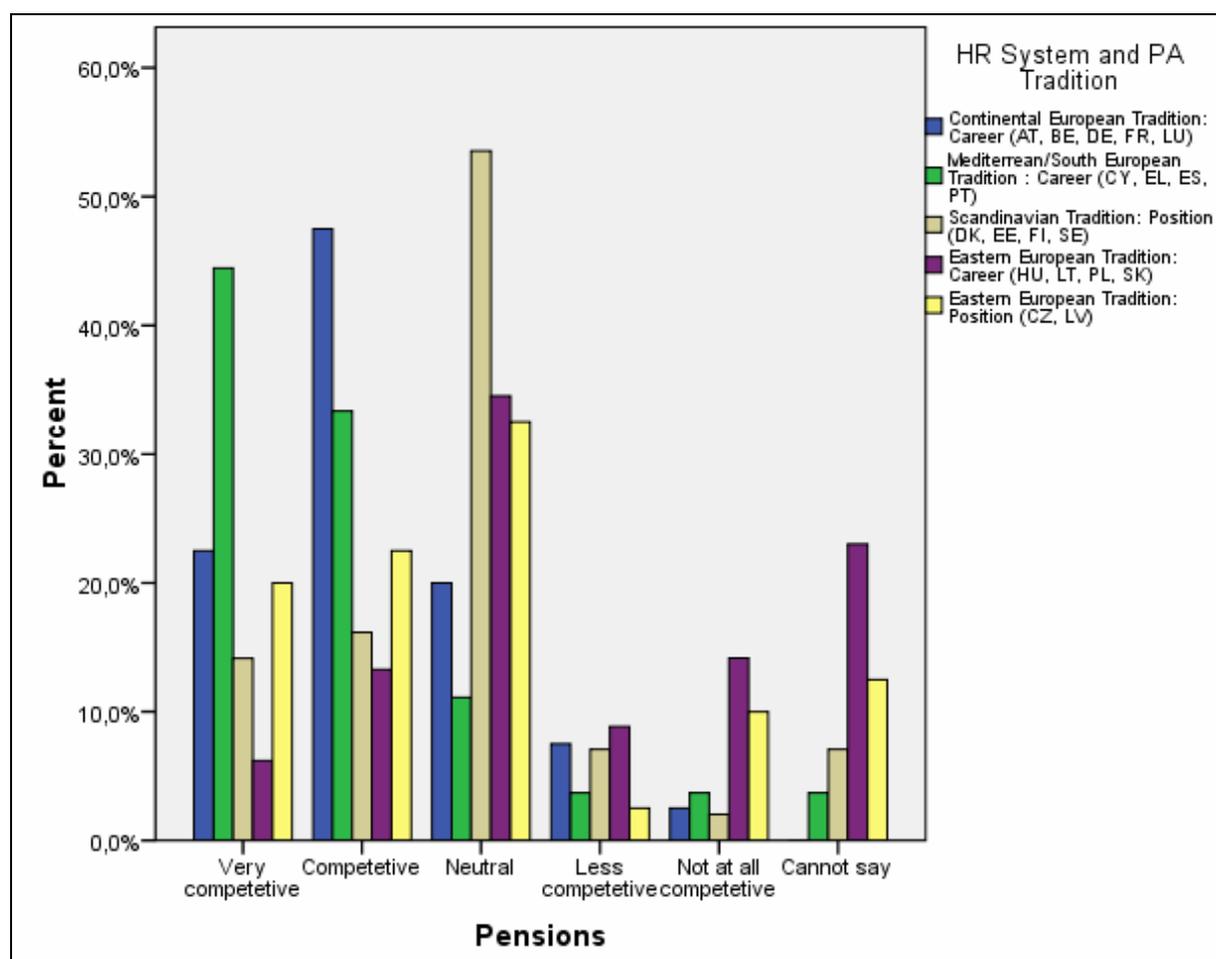
competency developments (where policies in the private sector are perceived as being better), remuneration policies, communication, career development and performance management.

Figure 27. HR Policy Performance: Private Services (PS) vs. Public Administration (PA)



Competitive advantages of the public sector are only seen in the field of working time, involvement of staff in management decisions and pension policies (and partly health policies). However, as regards the pension policies, the situation in the national public services differs enormously (see Figure 28 below). Whereas most pension systems in Cyprus, Greece, Spain and Portugal are seen as competitive with the private sector, this cannot be said for the public pension systems in Eastern Europe which are seen as partly much worse than those existing in the private sector. Here, 25% of all respondents replied to this study that the pension systems would not be competitive with those in the private sector. Compared to these figures, only 8% of all respondents from the above mentioned Mediterranean countries were of the opinion that the pension systems are not competitive. As regards the latter group, 81% of all respondents are of the opinion that the pension systems are competitive (compared to 32% in the Eastern European countries and 33% in the Scandinavian countries).

Figure 28. Public Services' Competitiveness Regarding Pensions in Relation to Private Sector by Public Administration Tradition and HR System



From an individual point of view the statistics also suggest that public pensions for top- and middle-level managers are more competitive with private sector pensions than those for employees (Table 19).

Table 19. Public Services' Competitiveness Regarding Pensions in Relation to Private Sector by Position
(Frequencies in parenthesis)

	Very competitive	Competitive	Neutral	Less competitive	Not at all competitive	Cannot say	Total
Employee	12,8 (25)	20,0 (39)	37,9 (74)	7,2 (14)	7,2 (14)	14,9 (29)	100,0 (195)
Middle management	24,6 (30)	20,5 (25)	32,0 (39)	4,9 (6)	8,2 (10)	9,8 (12)	100,0 (122)
Top management	26,2 (11)	23,8 (10)	31,0 (13)	7,1 (3)	7,1 (3)	4,8 (2)	100,0 (42)
Total	18,4 (66)	20,6 (74)	35,1 (126)	6,4 (23)	7,5 (27)	12,0 (43)	100,0 (359)

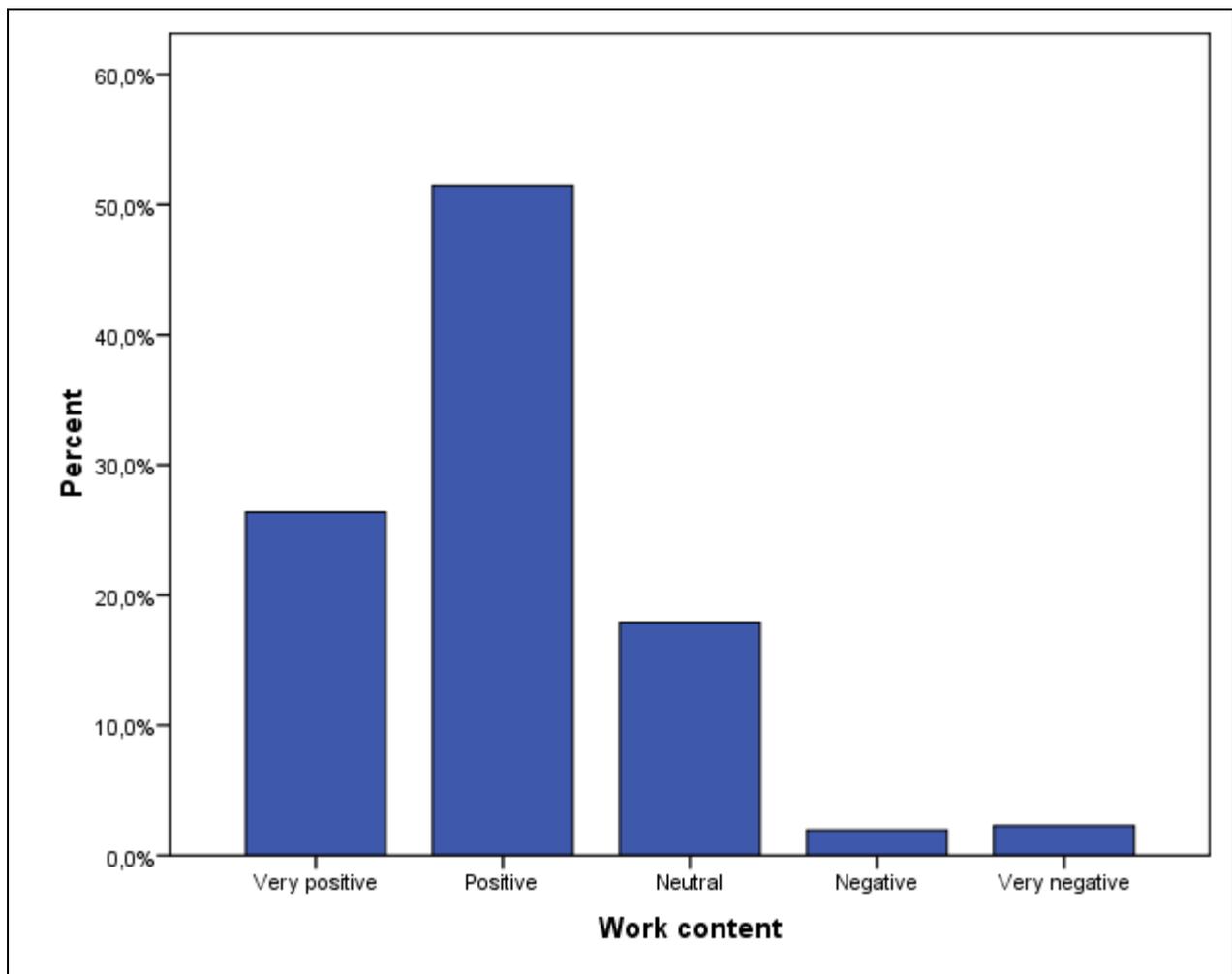
The same remarks can be made as to the quality of healthcare and safety policies. Whereas in some country clusters these policies are seen as superior to those existing in the private sector, in other countries these are seen as worse and not competitive.

5.1. Selected policies: salaries, working time and pensions

In order to make work in the public sector more attractive and to recruit qualified personnel, most reform measures adopted in the Member States deal with the remuneration systems. At the same time there is still considerable uncertainty about the effects of the reforms in this area. However, there is more evidence that governments cannot increase recruitment with higher pay. This statement needs a more careful analysis!

Most image studies and motivational studies in the public sector show that pay is without doubt important but is far less so than the actual content of the job¹⁴⁰. In addition, younger people are more motivated by (higher) salaries than older people. In particular, people who are attracted by the public sector do not necessarily expect higher salaries but interesting jobs, good social arrangements and – still – work with a public purpose. Due to this fact, higher pay will make people take a second look but it will never be enough to make them commit themselves¹⁴¹. Therefore, pay seems not to be the most important motivational factor. In most countries, the work content is by far the most important motivational factor. In our study 76% of all respondents are of the opinion that the content of their own work is very positive or positive.

Figure 29. Work Content in One's Own Work



¹⁴⁰ All the abovementioned empirical analyses contain this observation.

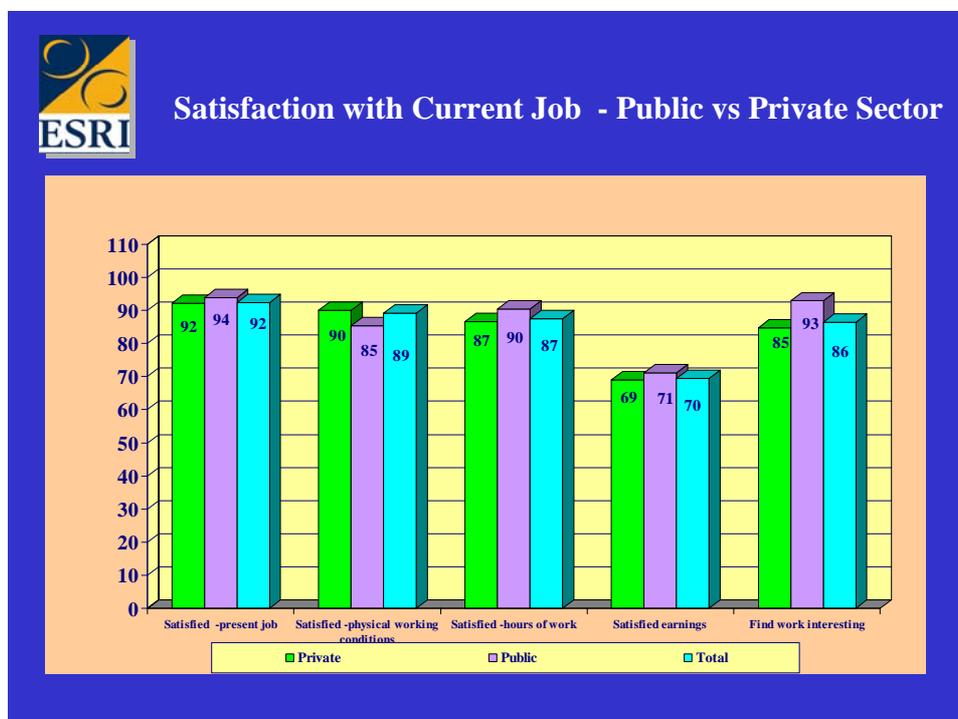
¹⁴¹ Light, loc. cit. p.129.

Another important motivational factor is “working conditions” which includes a number of sub-elements (like working time, working time flexibility, career development, job responsibility, job autonomy etc.). Also here, more than 70% of all respondents said that they have very positive or positive working conditions.

An Irish study by O’Connell, Russell, Williamsen and Blackwell on “The Changing Workplace: A Survey of Employees’ Views and Experiences” (2003) in the public and private sector shows that public employees experience:

- Higher job satisfaction than in the private sector
- High work pressure
- High organisational commitment,
- Better – although not optimal – flow of information within the organisation,
- High budget constraints as major barriers to change¹⁴²

Figure 30. Job Satisfaction: Public Sector vs. Private Sector



Source: <http://www.nccp.ie>, James Williamsen, Powerpoint presentation, Conference Proceedings from 28. June 2004 Workplace of the Future

However, public sector employees express lower work satisfaction “that refer to specific facets of work, such as promotion prospects, autonomy in the job, pay levels (...). These somewhat lower ratings of satisfaction by public-sector respondents, particularly managers, tend to be concentrated on facets of their work that appear to present particular frustrations in the public sector, such as lack of autonomy in some work settings due to rules and political interventions and frustration with promotion policies... This suggests that the consistent findings of lower satisfaction in the public sector are more indicative of particular frustrations

¹⁴² P. J. O’Connell, Helen Russell, J. Williams and S. Blackwell, The Changing Workplace: A Survey of Employees’ Views and Experiences, study requested by the Irish Government to the National Centre for Partnership and Performance, 2003.

than of a general crisis in work satisfaction.”¹⁴³ On the other hand, public sector employees place higher value than their private-sector counterparts do “on work that is beneficial to others and to society; on involvement with important public policies; and on self-sacrifice, responsibility, and integrity...” and they “...place lower value on money and high income as ultimate ends in work and life”¹⁴⁴.

A study by Wright and Davis about Work Satisfaction in the US Public Sector (2003)¹⁴⁵ came to the conclusion that job satisfaction can in most cases be explained by factors other than monetary rewards. Public service employees are motivated by a range of factors, including opportunities for skill development and indications of organisational attention to their long-term careers. On the other hand, the degree of routine in an employee’s job has a direct, adverse effect on employee job satisfaction. The more routine the tasks and responsibilities, the more they approach their jobs with negative feelings and ennui. However, the importance of job satisfaction itself may require future attention. Many scholars continue to believe that “a basic and strong correlation exists between job satisfaction and job productivity” (...), that a happy employee is a productive employee. Unfortunately, this relationship is not as simple as one might expect. In fact, considerable empirical evidence fails to support an assertion of a strong, direct relationship between job satisfaction and productivity”¹⁴⁶. Although at first glance this may seem counterintuitive, it is possible that employees can be satisfied with a job that pays well but requires them to do very little (...). This, however, does not mean that job satisfaction is completely unrelated to productivity.

However, all empirical studies also show that pay is also important, both for the motivation of civil servants and also for the chances to recruit new staff. As a result of this, it is important to analyse the competitive position of the public sector *vis-à-vis* the private sector in relation to pay issues and other so called “hard” factors (such as working time and pensions). As regards pay issues, our study does not reveal surprising “news”. As can be seen from Figure 31, the great majority of respondents to our study replied that salaries in the public services are not competitive in relation to the private sector.

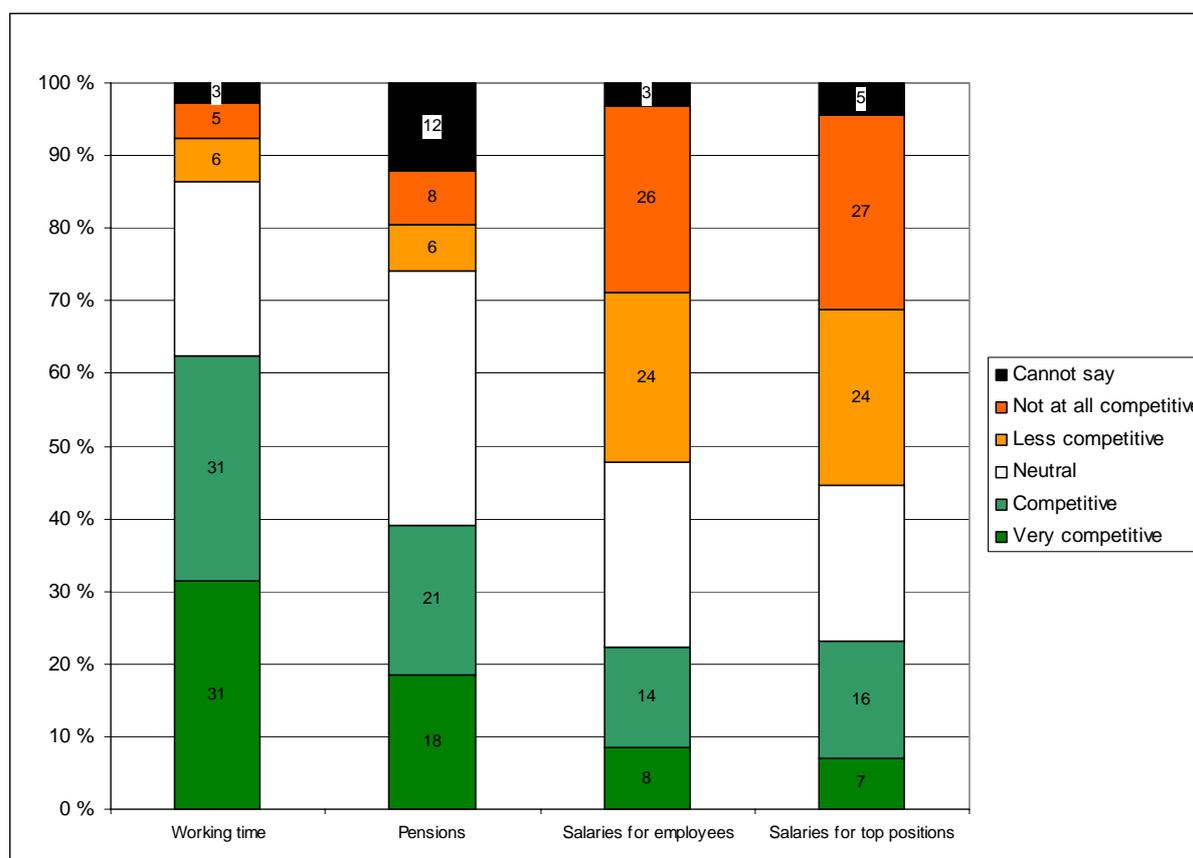
¹⁴³ Bozeman/Rainey, Comparing, Public and Private Organizations, in: Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory, Vol. 10., No.2, 2000, p.459

¹⁴⁴ Bozeman/Rainey, Comparing, op. cit., p.460

¹⁴⁵ B. E. Wright, Brian S. Davis, Work Satisfaction in the Public Sector, in: American review of Public Administration, Vol. 33 No. 1, March 2003 70-90

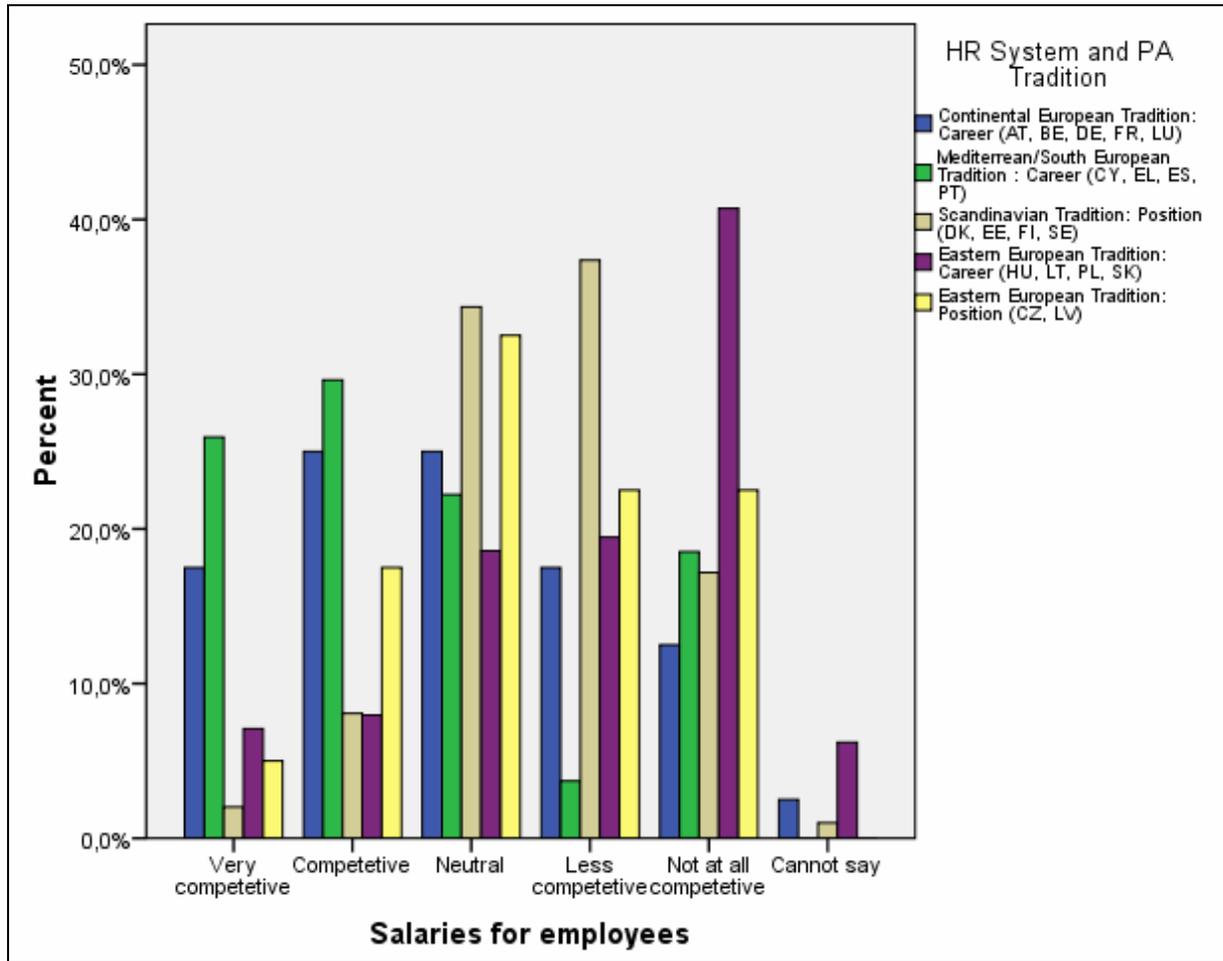
¹⁴⁶ B. E. Wright, Brian S. Davis, Work Satisfaction in the Public Sector, op. cit., p. 85

Figure 31. Public Services' Competitiveness in Relation to Private Sector



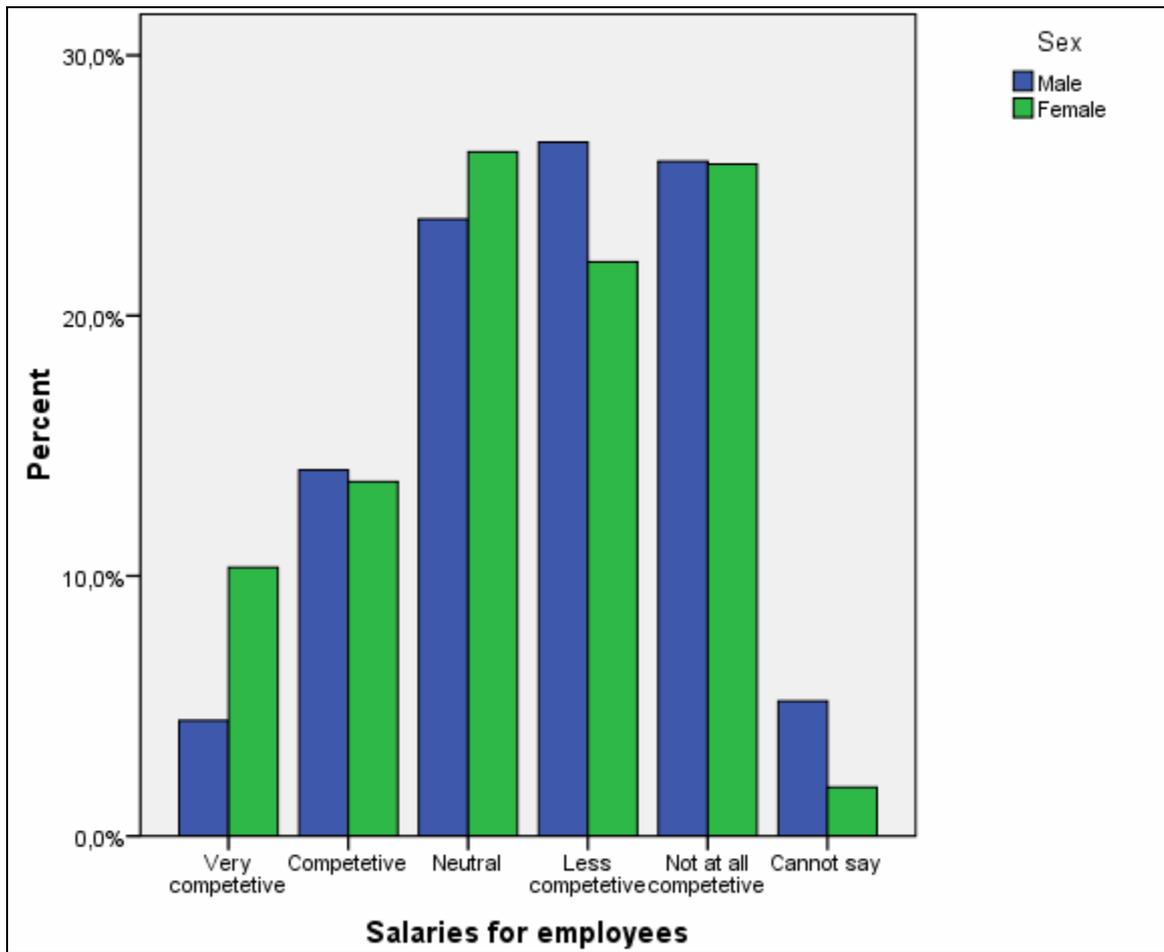
However, it is necessary to make geographical distinctions (Figure 32). 38% of all respondents from Eastern European countries are of the opinion that salaries for employees are not competitive at all. This is in striking contrast with the situation in Austria, France, Germany, Belgium and Luxemburg where only few respondents are of the opinion that the salaries of employees are not competitive.

Figure 32. Public Services' Competitiveness Regarding Salaries for Employees in Relation to Private Sector by Public Administration Tradition and HR System



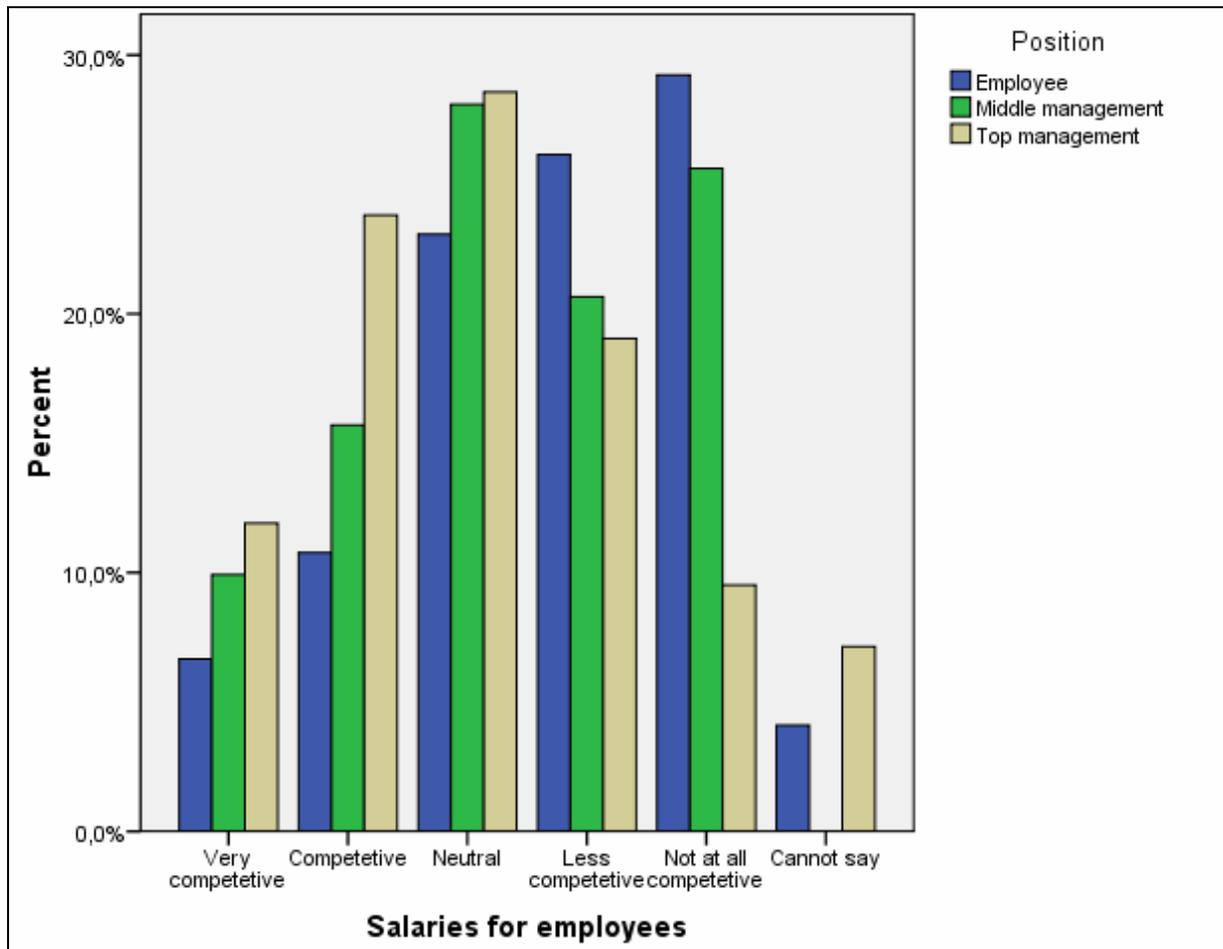
Another important difference concerns the attitude of women and men. More women than men are of the opinion that the salaries of public employees are very competitive. A possible explanation for this may be that many women fear that the salaries in the private sector would be less fair (compared to those of their male colleagues) – and even lower than in the public sector.

Figure 33. Public Services' Competitiveness Regarding Salaries for Employees in Relation to Private Sector by Sex



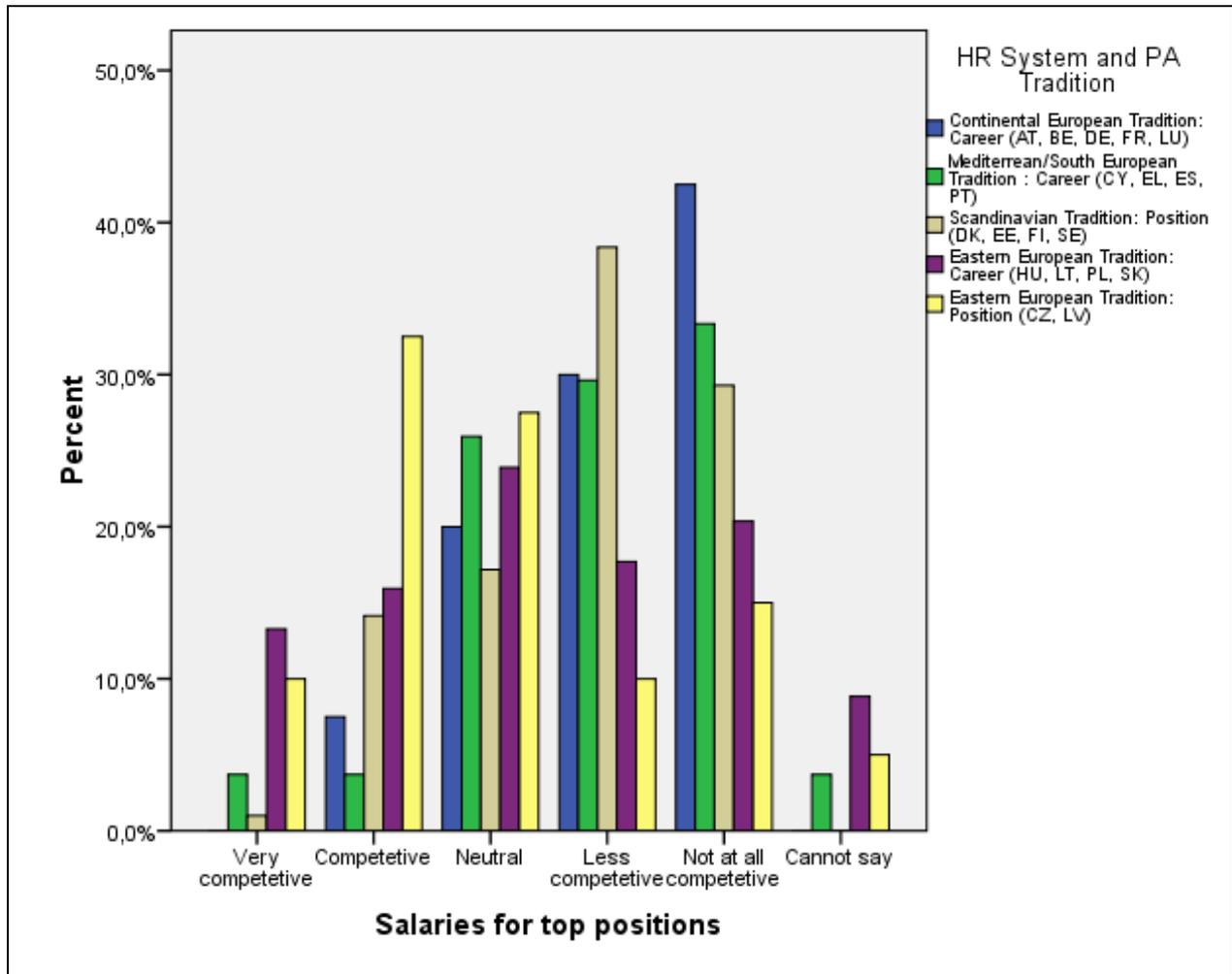
In addition, different categories of staff differ as to the perception of whether the salaries of public employees are competitive with those in the private sector. Mostly, the top management has a much more positive attitude than the public employees. Whereas only 7% of all top managers who replied to this study believe that the salaries of employees are not competitive at all, this figure is almost 30% among employees. Thus, top managers and employees differ a lot in their opinions regarding the competitive situation of public employees' salaries.

Figure 34. Public Services' Competitiveness Regarding Salaries for Employees in Relation to Private Sector by Position



The situation is slightly different as regards the salaries of top managers. Overall, only 24% were of the opinion that the salaries of top managers are competitive with the salaries in the private sector. Most respondents replied that the salaries are less competitive or not competitive at all. However, also here, important geographical distinctions must be made. From Figure 35 we can see that whereas only 8% of all respondents from the Mediterranean countries are of the opinion that the salaries of top managers are competitive, the figure is much higher for the Eastern European countries (36%). In total 73% of all respondents from the continental European countries were of the opinion that the salaries for top managers are not competitive compared to only 38% of the respondents from the Eastern European countries.

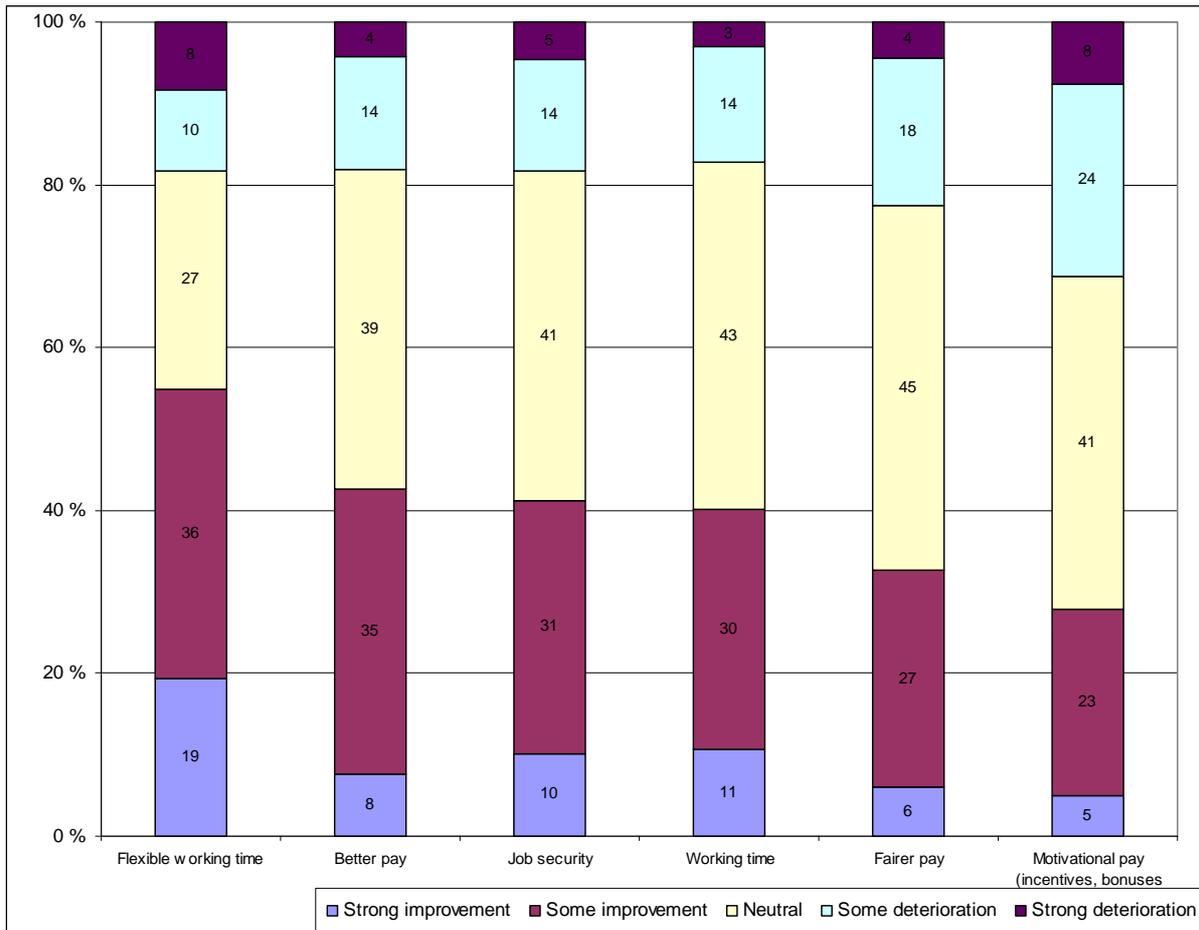
Figure 35. Public Services' Competitiveness Regarding Salaries for Top Positions in Relation to Private Sector by Public Administration Tradition and HR System



A more European-wide comparison as regards the developments in the field of pay (better pay, fairer pay, and motivational pay), job security, working time and flexible working time reveals that pay developments are slightly positive (see

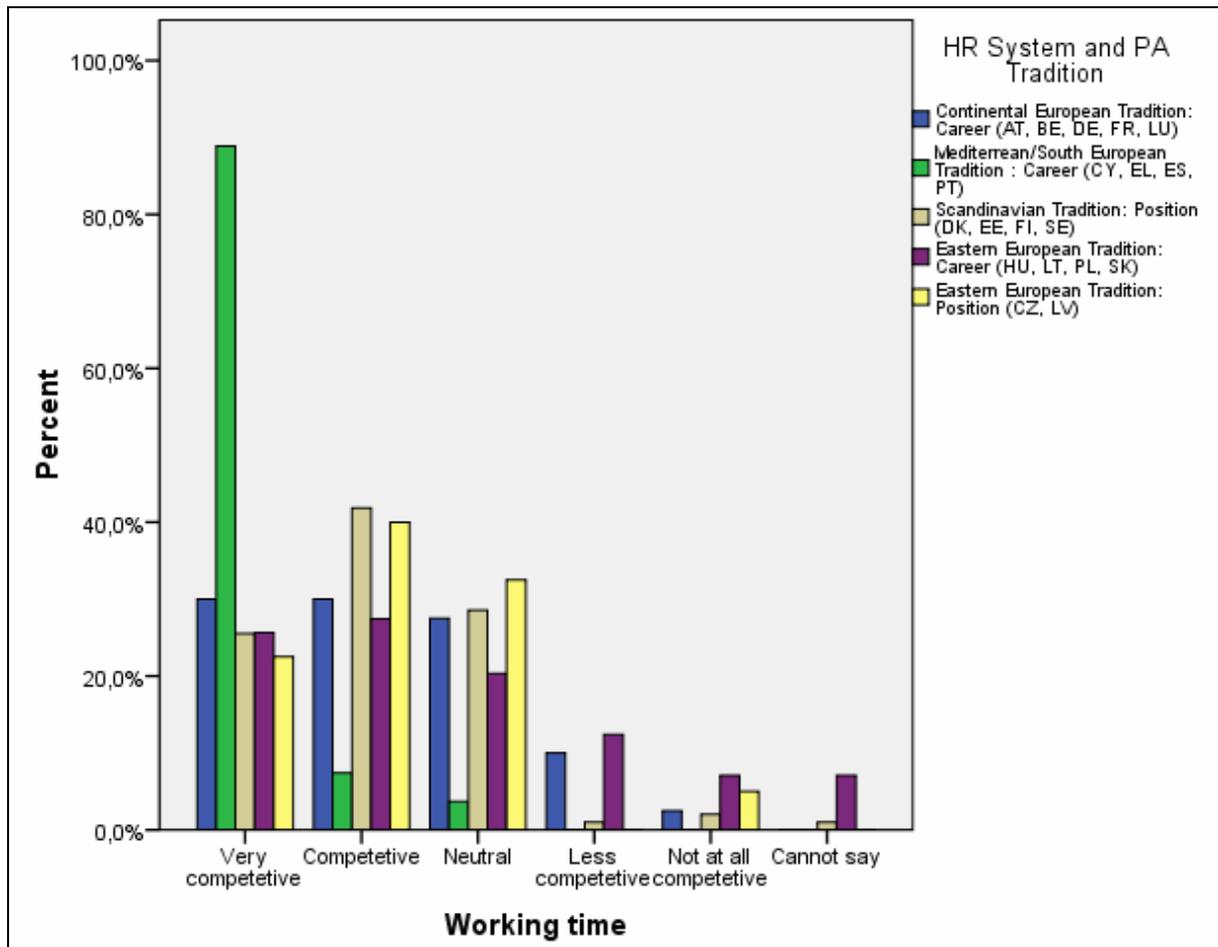
Figure 36 below). Mostly Scandinavian employees at all levels are relatively happy with the development of pay. In the continental European countries top managers are less satisfied with their pay developments. However, satisfaction levels drop when asked about the “fairness of pay” and the development of “motivational pay”.

Figure 36. Developments in the Field of Pay



The greatest contrast to the situation in the field of pay can be seen in the field of working time. Whereas pay is mostly not seen as competitive with the private sector, this is not the case as regards working time. The results of our survey show that the public services seem to be very competitive concerning working time developments and working time flexibility. Most respondents to this study were of the opinion that the working time arrangements in the public services are very competitive or competitive. According to Figure 37, the highest degree of competitiveness can be found in the Mediterranean countries with a career system (Spain, Portugal, Cyprus and Greece).

Figure 37. Public Services' Competitiveness Regarding Working Time by Public Administration Tradition and HR System



6. HR Management – bound by too many rules?

One important difference between public- and private HR management is the stronger emphasis on rules and regulations in public organisations. As Hugh Hecló wrote more than 20 years ago, the term *civil service* has come to mean cumbersome personnel rules rather than civic institutions. An abundance of research has shown that public organisations seem to have more extensive formal, written rules for employment, which reflects the stronger tendencies for such provisions in public service systems¹⁴⁷.

European-wide discussions on de-regulation, re-regulation, codification and simplification started in the eighties and have never stopped since then. One of the most common complaints by businesses, citizens and civil servants is the amount of rules, paperwork, formalism and reporting requirements. Especially the private sector complains that these administrative burdens are costly. This “red tape” would even threaten the rule of law. In response to these complaints (and also in the framework of the Lisbon process), the national public services have started to review, to simplify, codify and to deregulate “red tape”.

¹⁴⁷ R. Maranto, A Brief Against Tenure in the U.S. Civil Service, Praising Civil Service but not Bureaucracy, Review of Public Personnel Administration, Vol. 22, No. 3 Fall 2002 175-192, 2002 Sage Publications

To most people, rules and red tape have entirely negative meanings (the term 'red tape' derives from the nineteenth century British Government practice of binding official governments in red tape). Also bureaucratic rules and procedures are often criticised because they necessarily imply the image of a slow-moving bureaucracy, control and standardisation (although in many respects, the expectation of standard treatment should also be considered as a great advantage and strength). All of these are unsatisfying to individuals because "People are unique. Routine or disinterested treatment is not generally what we wish. If we have to stand in line for thirty minutes to obtain an automobile registration we find little consolation in the fact that others must stand in line for the same period"¹⁴⁸.

Yet, one may distinguish between red tape, rules and formalisation of procedures. In fact, many rules and procedures are necessary and provide benefits in terms of control, accountability, equality, public safety, security and non-discrimination. Like this, one may distinguish between rules and procedures which are necessary and beneficial, and unnecessary red tape. Experts in the area also differ between red tape (excessive and unduly expensive rules) and formalisation (important and necessary rules and procedures). Or as Bozeman does one may differ between red tape and red tape as pathology. The OECD also applies a distinction between red tape and smart tape¹⁴⁹.

According to Bozeman, "Much of the pathologies of bureaucracy are of the "too much of a good thing" sort (...). Control is useful for coordination, but over control is pathological; standardisation can be highly destructive; rules, regulations, and procedures are part and parcel of every bureaucracy, but dysfunctional ones waste considerable energy to no one's benefits. But how is one to determine differences among control and over control, standardisation and rigidity, necessary and useful rules...?.What is normal?"¹⁵⁰ It is also well known that many managers complain about the adverse effects of the complex web of controls, procedures and regulations in the field of recruitment, promotion and the determination of pay. Research on red tape also supports the view that public organisations are more strongly regulated than private organisations.

A study by the Brookings Institutions (2000) explains different performance levels in public organisations. It is not the people that are the problem but the organisations. "Government is filled with good people trapped in bad systems: budget systems, personnel systems, financial management, and information systems. People are not the problem"¹⁵¹ (...). "Bad systems may discourage the full use of the considerable talents that may be available. Or inadequate resources and outside pressures may keep quality administrators from delivering the kinds of services they and the citizenry would like"¹⁵².

Many studies have indeed shown that – not the individuals but instead - too much red tape and a too high degree of formalisation may lead to reduced workplace autonomy, the feeling of powerlessness and reduce the inherent meaningfulness of work. "Red tape (...) may inhibit self-expression and the ability to positively affect clientele (...) and suppress natural desires for self-expression, responsibility, growth, and achievement"¹⁵³. Also, "centralised decision-

¹⁴⁸ Bozeman, Red Tape and Bureaucracy, op. cit., p. 1.

¹⁴⁹ OECD Observer, Policy Brief, from Red Tape to Smart Tape: Administrative Simplification in OECD Countries, June 2003

¹⁵⁰ Bozeman, Red Tape and Bureaucracy, op. cit., p. 35.

¹⁵¹ Aberbach/Rockman, In the Web, op. cit., p.58

¹⁵² Aberbach/Rockman, In the Web, op. cit., p.86

¹⁵³ L.DeHart-Davis and Sanjay K. Pandey, Red Tape and Public Employees: Does Perceived Rule Dysfunction Alienate Managers, in: Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory, Vol. 15, 2005, p. 136.

making mechanisms, in and of themselves, reduce organisational commitment and job satisfaction”¹⁵⁴, and may lower morale of public managers.

“Most important, when surveys have asked government and business managers about the extent of red tape in their organisations, the public managers have consistently reported higher levels than the business managers”¹⁵⁵.

More concretely, higher rules in public organisations tend to concentrate on the area of personnel management. Bozeman and Rainey (1998)¹⁵⁶ report that managers in government, compared to business managers, would prefer their organisations to have fewer rules. This contradicts the view that managers in government generate excessive rules¹⁵⁷. As Rainey/Han Chung note, there is “substantial evidence of greater concerns among public managers, compared to their counterparts in business firms, about complex administrative rules and “red tape”. The public managers perceive, for example, more problems with personnel administration, such as complexities in the rules about pay and discipline”¹⁵⁸. The results show that the “attractiveness” criteria differ very little from those in the public sector, so public sector employers would have at least the same chances to compete with private sector employers as long as they can (and are willing to) show that they offer attractive jobs. Rainey (2003)¹⁵⁹ concludes that public organisations generally tend towards higher levels of internal complexity, centralisation, and formalisation – especially in such areas as personnel and purchasing – than private organisations¹⁶⁰. “Government organisations may not have more formalised and elaborate rules than private organisations of similar size, but they often have more centralised, formalised rules for functions such as personnel and procurement”¹⁶¹.

If this analysis is correct the situation in the Member states seems to be characterised by taking one step forward and one step back.

¹⁵⁴ De Hart Davis/Pandey, op. cit., p. 144.

¹⁵⁵ Rainey, Understanding and Managing, op. cit., p. 206 and p. 207

¹⁵⁶ B.Bozeman and Hal Rainey, Organizational Rules and the “Bureaucratic Personality”, in: American Journal of Political Science, Vol. 42, No 1., January 1998.

¹⁵⁷ Rainey, Understanding and Managing, op. cit., p. 208

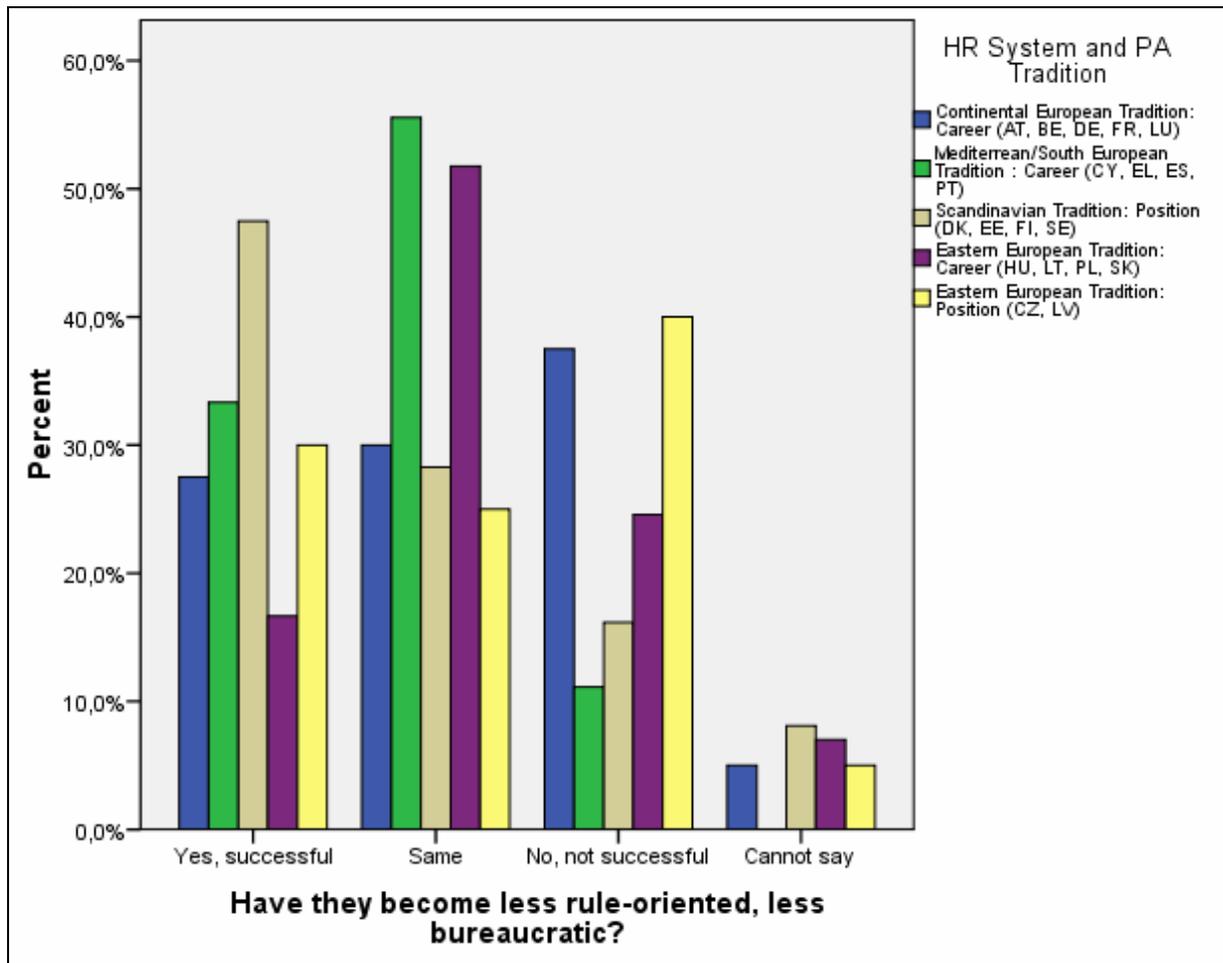
¹⁵⁸ H.Rainey/Y.Han Chung, Public and Private Management Compared, in: Handbook of Public Management, op. cit., p. p.91.

¹⁵⁹ Rainey, Understanding and Managing, op. cit., p. 210

¹⁶⁰ Ibid..

¹⁶¹ Rainey, p. 210

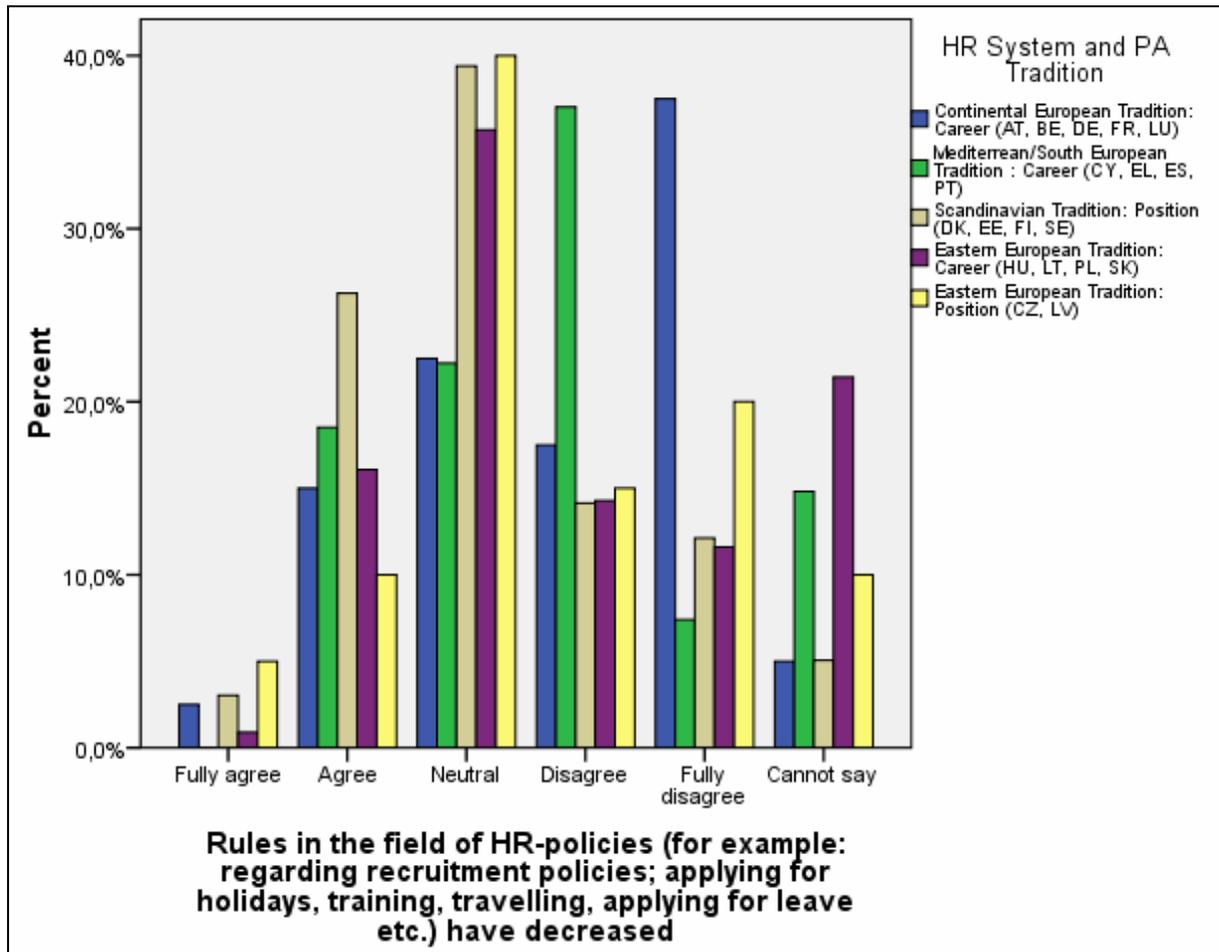
Figure 38. Becoming Less Rule-oriented by Public Administration Tradition and HR System



According to Figure 38, most respondents to this study (with the exception of some Eastern European countries) believe that the public services become less rule-oriented and less bureaucratic. They also believe that the existing rules in the field of HRM have become clearer and more transparent. However, they do not believe that the number of rules has decreased (

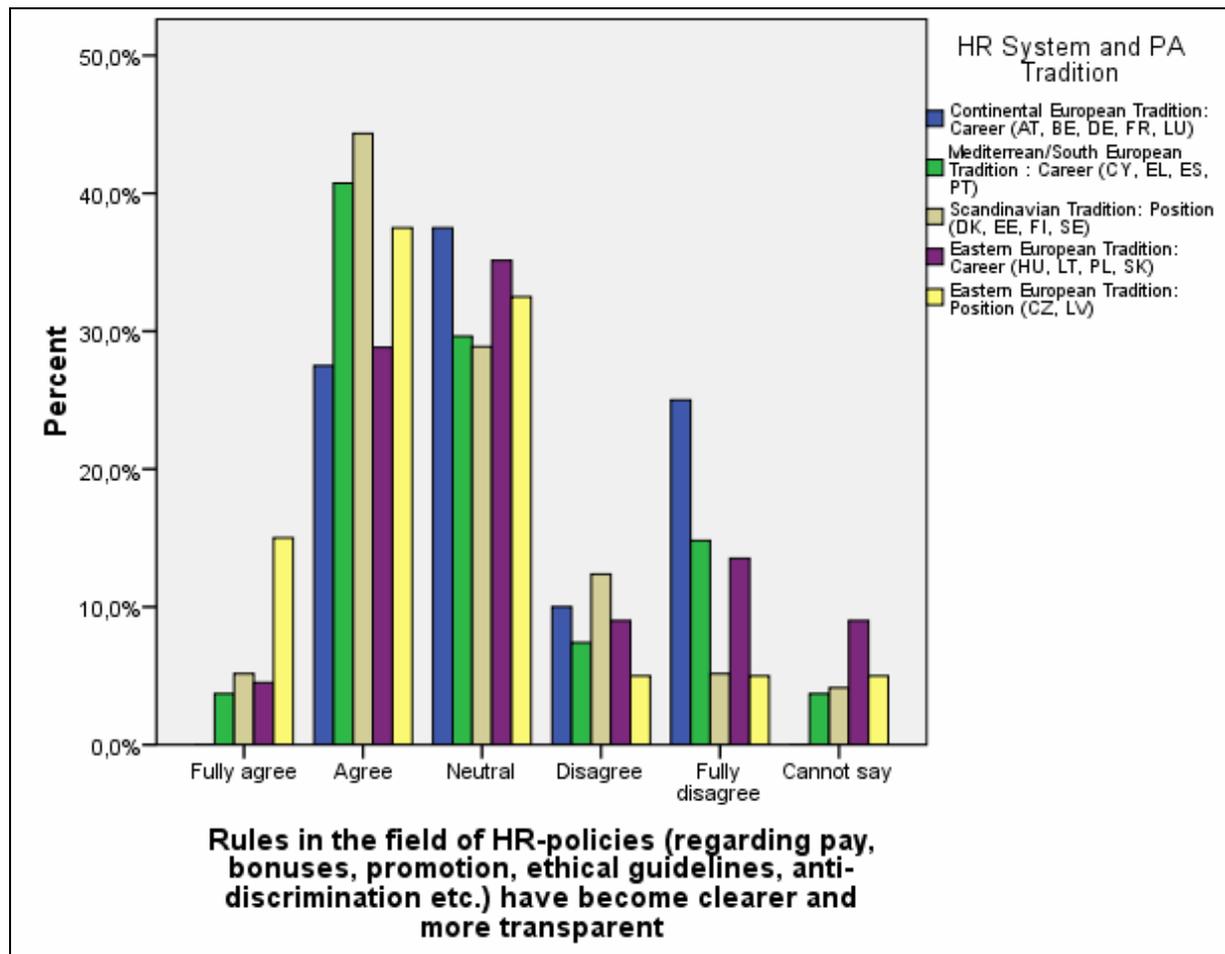
Figure 39). However, this seems to be much more of a problem for the career-system countries than for the position-system countries. Mostly respondents from Austria, France, Germany, Belgium and Luxemburg agreed that the number of rules in the field of HRM have not decreased. The situation seems to be the best in the Scandinavian countries. Here, 31% of respondents are of the opinion that HR rules have decreased (28% are of the opinion that they have increased).

Figure 39. Decreasing of HR Rules by Public Administration Tradition and HR System



However, as already mentioned, more respondents are of the opinion that the existing rules have become clearer and more transparent (Figure 40). 46% say that HR rules have become clearer and more transparent (22% cannot agree). However, the highest percentage of respondents who fully disagree stems from the continental career-system countries (with 45% of all respondents who are of the opinion that the rules have not decreased but instead, increased). Also in this field, the old Member States seem to be more successful than the new Member States.

Figure 40. Clearness and Transparency of HR Rules by Public Administration Tradition and HR System



The topic as it is remains a highly discussed and contentious issue. Still, discussions on rules consist too often of simple “denunciations of what are regarded as the inefficient and malevolent workings of government”. It is time to take the topic to a more serious level of analysis. One should also not forget that one person’s red tape is another’s due process¹⁶².

7. Perceptions of own work

7.1. Images and perceptions of public employees and hard facts

Negative criticism and images against the public services must be understood in the context of traditional criticism against state bureaucracies. Criticism of bureaucratic pathologies exists everywhere and has done for thousands of years. "A small history of the bureaucracy" by Zach (2003)¹⁶³ reveals that bureaucracies have produced public criticism since their very creation (approx. 5000 years ago) and often for good reasons. “As a form of governance, bureaucracy has had such great success in transforming the world that most citizens of industrial nations may have difficulty imagining a world without it. But just as bureaucracy

¹⁶² C. T. Goodsell, Red Tape and a Theory of Bureaucratic Rules (Review of the Book by Bozeman), in: Public Administration Review, July/August 2000, Vol. 560, No. 4, p. 373.

¹⁶³ M.Zach, “Gauener, Pinsel, Chicaneure” Eine kleine Geschichte der Bürokratie, Klöpfer und Mayer, Tübingen 2003

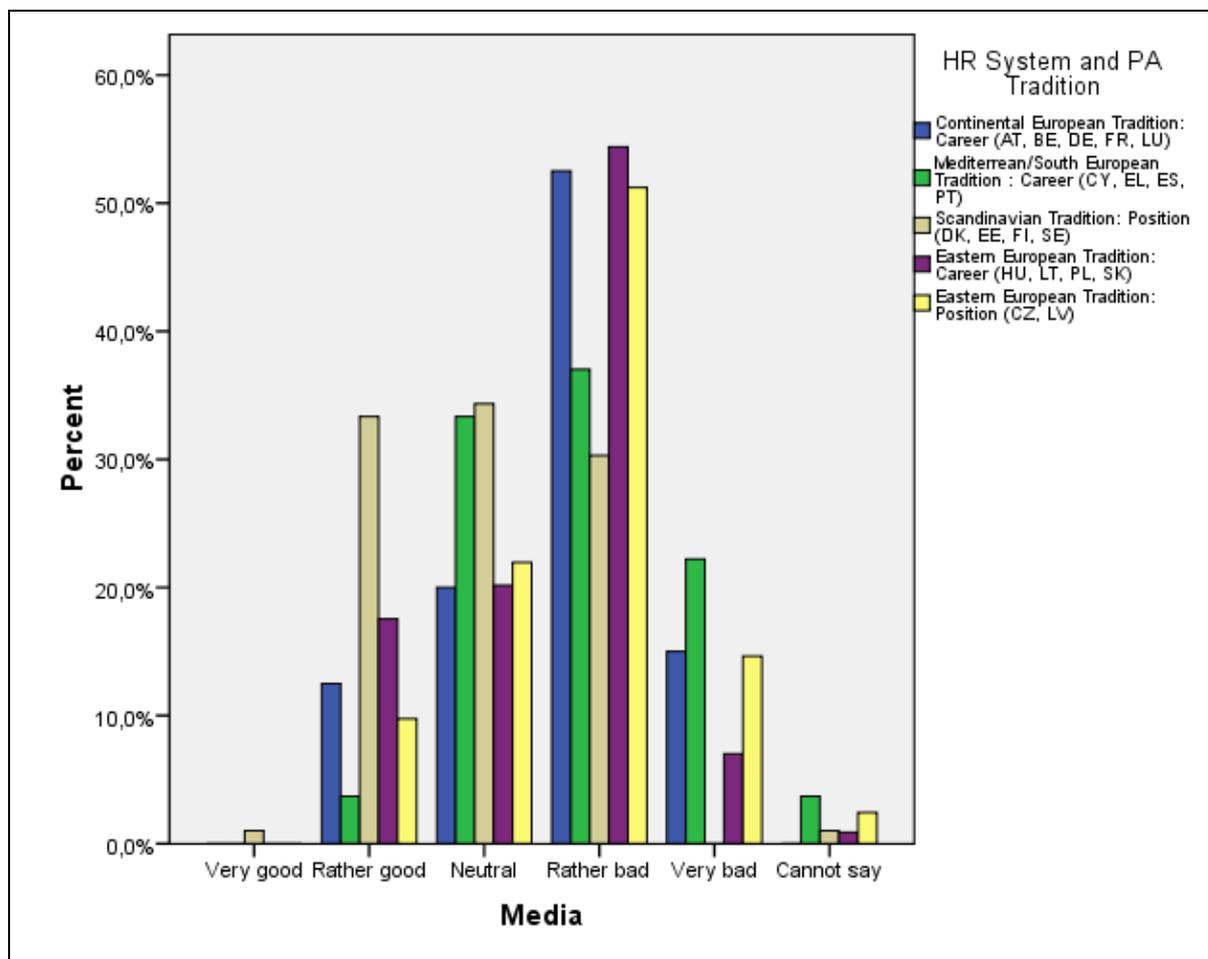
has tamed the world, the world now seeks to tame bureaucracy. Bureaucracy seems to have few friends and millions of critics.”¹⁶⁴

Today, to most people, “bureaucracy” is indeed a negative word and criticism against the public sector is the same, be it in the USA, Sweden, Japan, Great Britain or France. There is no region in the world whose nations express satisfaction with bureaucracies¹⁶⁵.

“People like to have a scapegoat and public servants are an easy target. There are phenomena like stereotyping by the media as all being bowler-hatted bureaucrats, and an unwillingness to positively promote the role of all of the Civil Service other than by the trade unions.”
(UK – middle management)

As Figure 41 suggests, negative images and perceptions are widely supported by the media (and also but less so by politicians). Thus, administrations should be more active in their communications with the media and offer them success stories as well. Agencies should also use their www-pages in a more active fashion.

Figure 41. Media Image Related to Public Employees by Public Administration Tradition and HR System



Why do people and the media dislike bureaucracy and public servants so strongly? One answer is simply: because bureaucracy is inherently controlling. “Most of us do not like being

¹⁶⁴ Bozane, Bureaucracy and Red Tape, op. cit., Preface

¹⁶⁵ D. Bok, Government Personnel Policy in Comparative Perspective, in: Donahue/Nye, op. cit., p.260

controlled, even for the collective good”¹⁶⁶. Van de Walle illustrates an important paradox. Whereas most people are satisfied with specific public services, they tend to be negative towards the public sector in general. Similarly, it seems that specific services are always perceived more favourably than general ones. For example, it is very possible that citizens combine a positive attitude towards a specific train, with a negative attitude towards the public rail company. The same perception is true as regards the term “public service” or “public administration”. Whereas many citizens have positive experiences with their local administrations, they have a negative attitude towards the general “state civil servant”.

A survey on public attitudes to public services, which was carried out in 2004 for the British Cabinet Office, showed that “Satisfaction with different public services is higher locally than it is nationally”. Thus, people may have positive attitudes and perceptions of specific public services (police, water supply, fire brigade, etc.), but negative attitudes towards public services in general. Even if people are satisfied with the motorway network, the police, the telephone service, water supply, the courts, justice or the collection of household rubbish, this does not mean that they are satisfied with the public services in general. Katz *et al.* found that even though users were satisfied with the way service agencies handled their problem and with the fair treatment, this opinion was not necessarily generalised to all agencies or government offices. However, when citizens felt they were treated badly, they generalised their experience to the public sector as a whole.

Another criticism is the “slowness” of decision-making procedures in the public services. In many cases this may be a correct observation. Decision-making in public services is inherently slow since it functions under specific procedures and processes which should guarantee accountability of the organisation (in terms of budget, fairness and due process). In addition, work procedures are often insensitive to the individual, but instead fully committed to the common good. This has been a dilemma since the beginning: at least central public services (Ministries, Agencies etc.) are tailored to the public interest and not to those who want individual treatment or individual flexibility. On the other hand, people do not want to be managed, ruled, controlled and treated in standardised ways. From the individual point of view it is understandable if people fear impersonal, anonymous organisations especially when allocations of responsibility are difficult to identify.

However, too often, public organisations invoke the image of self-serving, self-referential slow and hierarchical machinery than that of an organisation characterised by the rule of law, legal certainty, fairness, and a safeguard against corruption and favouritism. Because of this it would be important if public administrations do more and show to the public what they are actually doing and – even more so – achieving. Still, the problem is that they do little, if anything, to advertise the rewards of public service¹⁶⁷.

Other points of criticism are inherent in the organisational design of public organisations. For example, many ministries and other public institutions will never be able to compete with private-sector companies in terms of flexibility, because they are designed as a guarantee for legal certainty, standardised treatment and correctness. In fact, there is a potential contradiction between the need for (more) service delivery and the law-governed nature of the bureaucracy¹⁶⁸.

¹⁶⁶ Bozeman, Barry, *Bureaucracy and Red Tape*, op. cit., Preface

¹⁶⁷ Light, *To restore and renew: Now is the time to rebuild the Federal Public Service*, 2001, p.5
http://www.brookings.edu/articles/2001/11/governance_light.aspx (last checked on 9 April 2008)

¹⁶⁸ B. Guy Peters/Jon Pierre, *Introduction: The Role of Public Administration in Governing*, in: Peters/Pierre, op. cit., p. 5

There are more negative images concerning specific pathologies of public organisations such as the following:

- Because of its hierarchical character, civil servants at mid-career level receive too little incentive and (may) suffer from de-motivation
- Individual strengths, talents and “human behaviour” are not supported, since the organisation is supposed to be rule-oriented, impersonal and anonymous
- The organisation is rigid and inflexible instead of supporting mobility and flexibility. Careerism “inhibits overall elasticity in terms of quick changes in total manpower resources or the provision of persons with different kinds of skills and perspectives. It discourages lateral entry or the ingestion of new blood above the bottom or entering level...”¹⁶⁹
- A public organisation is rational but has no purpose. Principles such as openness, transparency and democracy are subordinated to the principle of hierarchy and efficiency

In the field of Human Resource Management a number of - presumed - shortcomings and failures are widely discussed¹⁷⁰:

- too many rules
- too much focus on procedures and too little on objectives
- too little competition within the public sector, and between it and the private sector
- too little citizen orientation
- too little mobility in personnel policy
- overlong recruitment procedures
- focus on qualification and seniority instead of competence profiles and merit
- too little focus on efficiency
- too few incentives for good individual and organisational performance
- a remuneration system which is too rigid
- bad leadership and no clear accountability of managers
- high personnel costs (e.g. pensions)
- slow decision-making procedures

For example, whereas many people still believe that civil servants are privileged and enjoy high salaries, the reality is rather the contrary. In many Member States certain categories of public employees are paid relatively poorly.

Despite these general perceptions, stereotypes also differ from situation to situation: “At one moment public employees are praised for helping the less fortunate, protecting society, or participating in grand projects designed to enhance the wellbeing of all members of society”¹⁷¹. On the other hand, public servants are accused of being lazy, corrupt and egoists and motivated by power.

However, such images would not exist if they did not contain some “truth”. Nobody will deny that typical bureaucratic problems and contradictions still exist and pose challenges.

¹⁶⁹ F.C. Mosher, *The Public service in the Temporary Society* (1971), in: Shafritz/Hyde, op. cit., p. 452/453

¹⁷⁰ An interesting homepage to the term “bureaucracy” is <http://www.users.globalnet.co.uk/~rxv/orgmgt/bureaucracy.htm>. For a more humorous presentation of the criticism against the bureaucracies see <http://www.tinyvital.com/Misc/Lawsburo.htm>

¹⁷¹ P. G. Scott and Santa Falcone, *Comparing Public and Private Organizations*, in: *Review of Public Administration*, Vol. 28, June 1998, p. 3.

A study by Lorse for the German Federal Civil Service¹⁷² concludes that there is a difference between theory and practice (e.g. between the formulation of idealised plans and programmes in the field of personnel policy and career development, and the deficits in the implementation of the objectives). Still, it is almost impossible for a talented official in the Service to attain a leading position (grade A-16 and higher) before reaching his 50th birthday¹⁷³.

Other famous shortcomings are also well known to many national administrations. For example, if a civil servant's request to attend a training course takes weeks, if not months to be carried out - because it needs to be discussed by several persons, authorities and hierarchies - something must be wrong.

In fact, the problems are not always the “rules”, but shortcomings in the implementation of the rules, for example:

- whereas promotion should be based on personal evaluations, merit and performance, in reality, it is still based on seniority
- whereas salary scales and policies look transparent, their implement is extremely complex and non-transparent
- whereas civil servants should enjoy life-long learning the reality is somewhat different
- whereas the opportunities for career development are laid down in the rules, they are not realised to the benefit of employees
- whereas civil servants are employed on a lifetime basis (tenure), Human Resource Management in the public sector operates on short-term visions.

However, besides these deficits and problems in the field of HRM, popular criticism seems to be “exaggerated” and – often – does not reflect reality. The French Conseil d’Etat points out correctly: “La critique faite à la fonction publique de ne pas suffisamment prendre en compte les exigences d’efficacité peut paraître injuste pour la très grande majorité des fonctionnaires”¹⁷⁴.

Nobody would deny that *bureaucratic pathologies* have existed throughout the course of time. However, “worst cases” have also decreased: in particular, the military-, police- and tax administrations have become more “human” and “disciplined” in the course of time thanks to the rule of law, the separation of powers and quality management approaches.

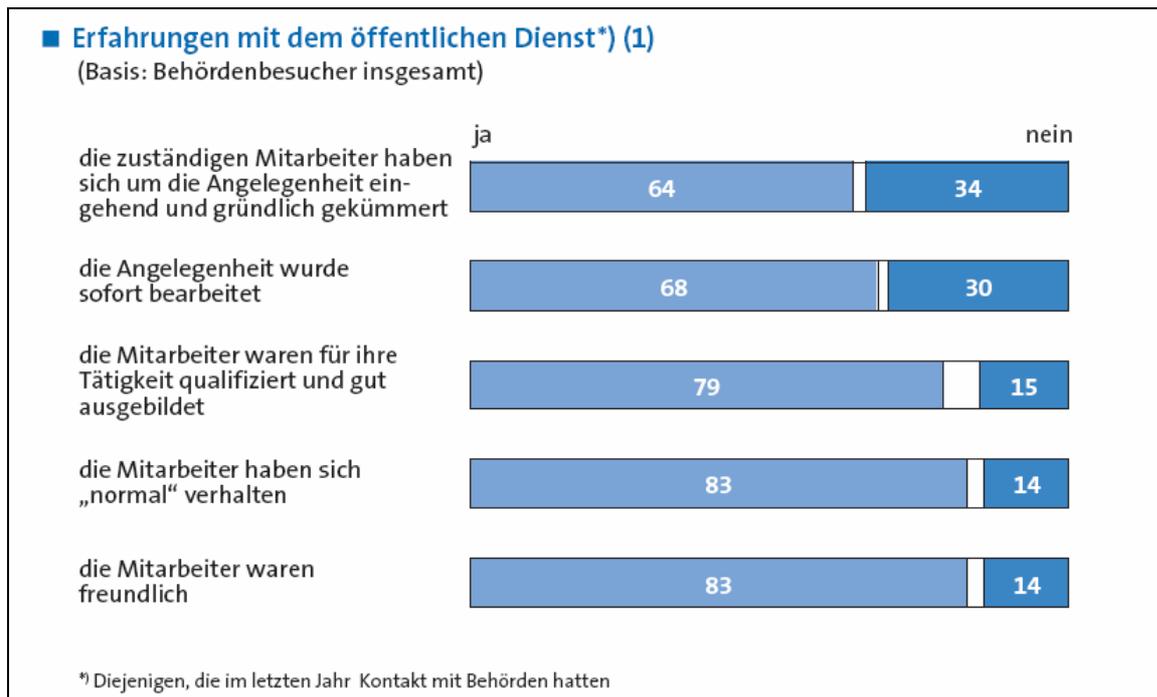
In addition, concrete encounters with other public services and officials are nowadays mostly positive (although problems remain). For example, a recent German study shows that 83% of the people who had “public service encounters” were treated in a friendly way.

¹⁷² J.Lorse, Personalmanagement im öffentlichen Dienst, Luchterhand, Neuwied 2001, p. 92

¹⁷³ Lorse, op. cit., p.176

¹⁷⁴ Conseil d’Etat, p.242

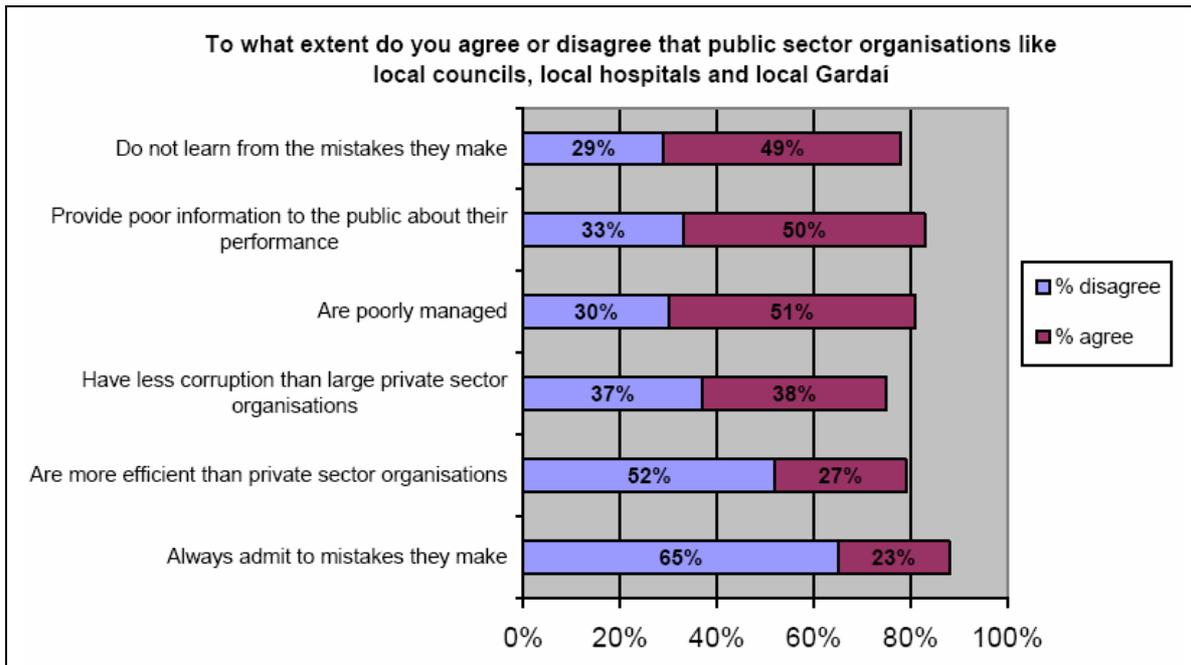
Figure 42. German Study on Public Administration's Image



An Irish Study shows that people do not believe that public organisations learn from their mistakes, admit mistakes and are more efficient than private sector organisations. However, there is nothing to suggest why public organisations should not learn from mistakes and be as efficient as private sector organisations. However, while nobody would deny the continued relevance and existence of bureaucratic features, few would reject the emergence of new forms of public organisations and “learning organisations”. Today, public organisations look more decentralised than they used to be. Also, the nature of hierarchy has changed: “not its elimination; but in its signification as a social order of rank, status and privilege...Instead, hierarchies become one means among many to coordinate and control actions across people, knowledge, time and space”¹⁷⁵. Another change is the degree of openness and degree of individual responsibility. Today, more public organisations are characterised by a steady flow of information, greater openness, transparency, individual commitment and stricter accountability rules. In many instances, modern public organisation can be seen as networks rather than as isolated hierarchical top-down structures. Organisations also differ within the public services: they are neither alike anymore nor are they purely national organisations. One should also note the emergence of virtual (often global) organisations. Thus, there are many new forms of interaction for organisation theorists to explore.

¹⁷⁵ S.Clegg/C.Hardy/W.Nord, Handbook of Organization Studies, London, Thousand Oaks, New Delhi, 1996, p.11

Figure 43. Irish Study on Public Administration's Image



As we will see later on in this study, some of the above mentioned points of criticism are still valid; however, others are not. Moreover, when talking about successes and failures it is important to note that all criticism is directed against the public services. However, in reality it becomes more and more difficult to define the term public service. In reality, public services are increasingly heterogeneous and employment within the (central) state sector is very varied, ranging from employment in the armed forces and in government, to employment in Ministries of Justice and in the Environmental Protection Agency. Although differences in the content of work may be huge – encompassing for example policy formulation, policy implementation, technical work, inspection work, health care or work in the tax department – civil servants are perceived in some countries as one homogeneous group of public officials. Finally, more and more public services are outsourced, delegated to semi-public bodies or carried out by NGOs.

Interestingly, whereas people seem to have a clear perception about “the bureaucrats” (which is mostly negative), they also have very different perceptions as regards specific categories of public employees (Figure 44). Overall, everywhere diplomats have the best reputation of all public sector employees whereas police officials have a relatively bad reputation. Apart from this, perceptions differ very much in the different country clusters and HR systems. For example, whereas the Police have a relatively good reputation in countries like Austria, Belgium, France, Germany and Luxemburg; it has a relatively bad reputation in Hungary, Latvia, Poland and Slovakia (Figure 45).

Figure 44. Image of Certain Public Servant Groups

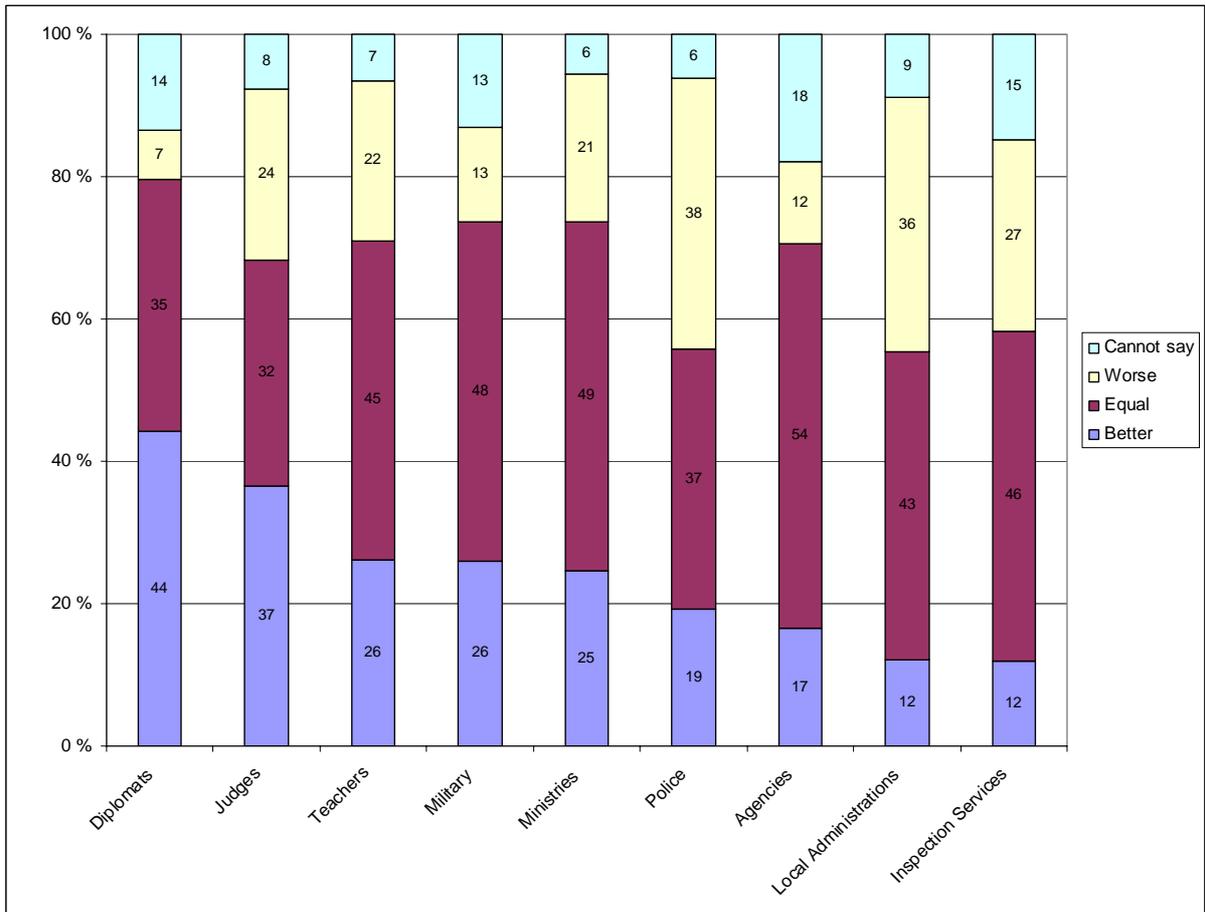
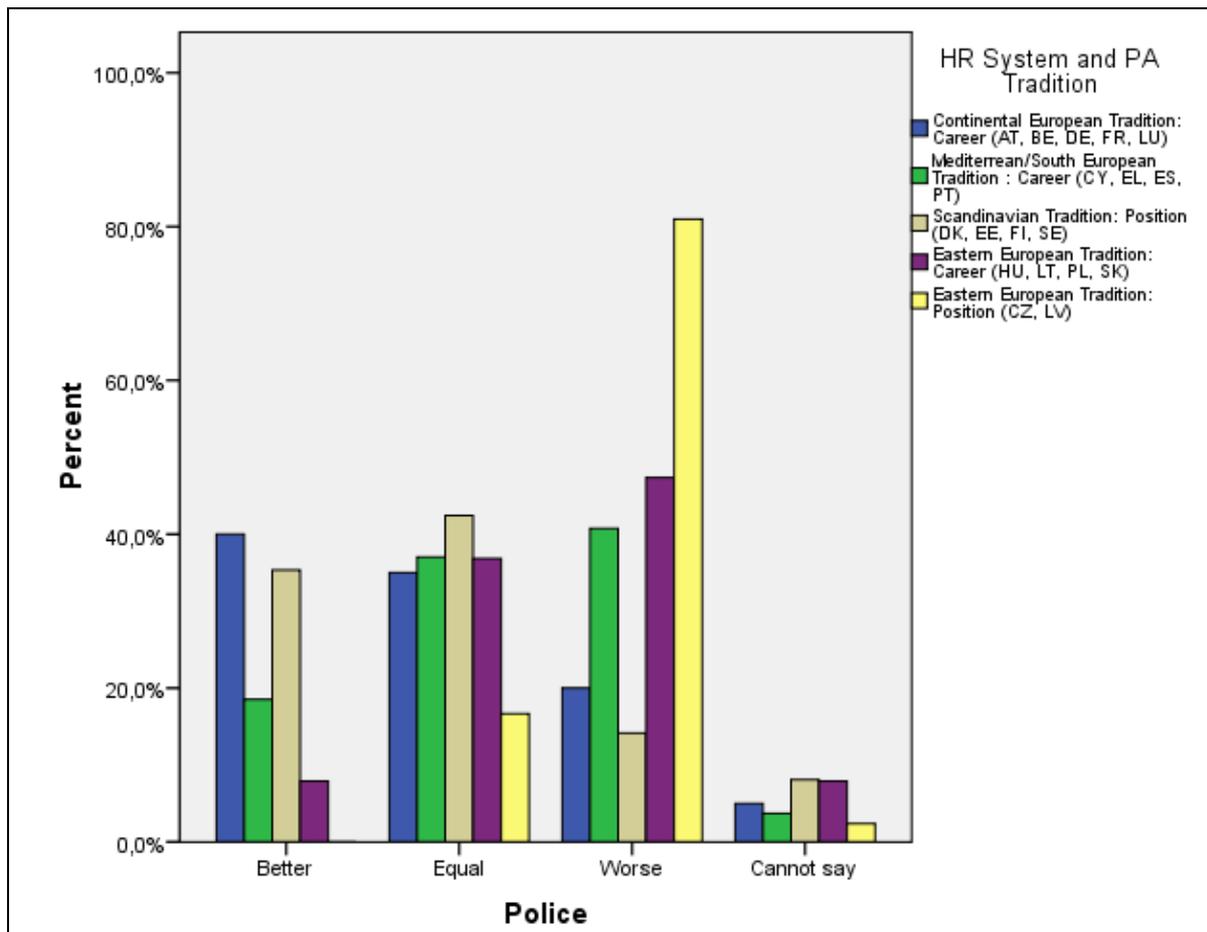
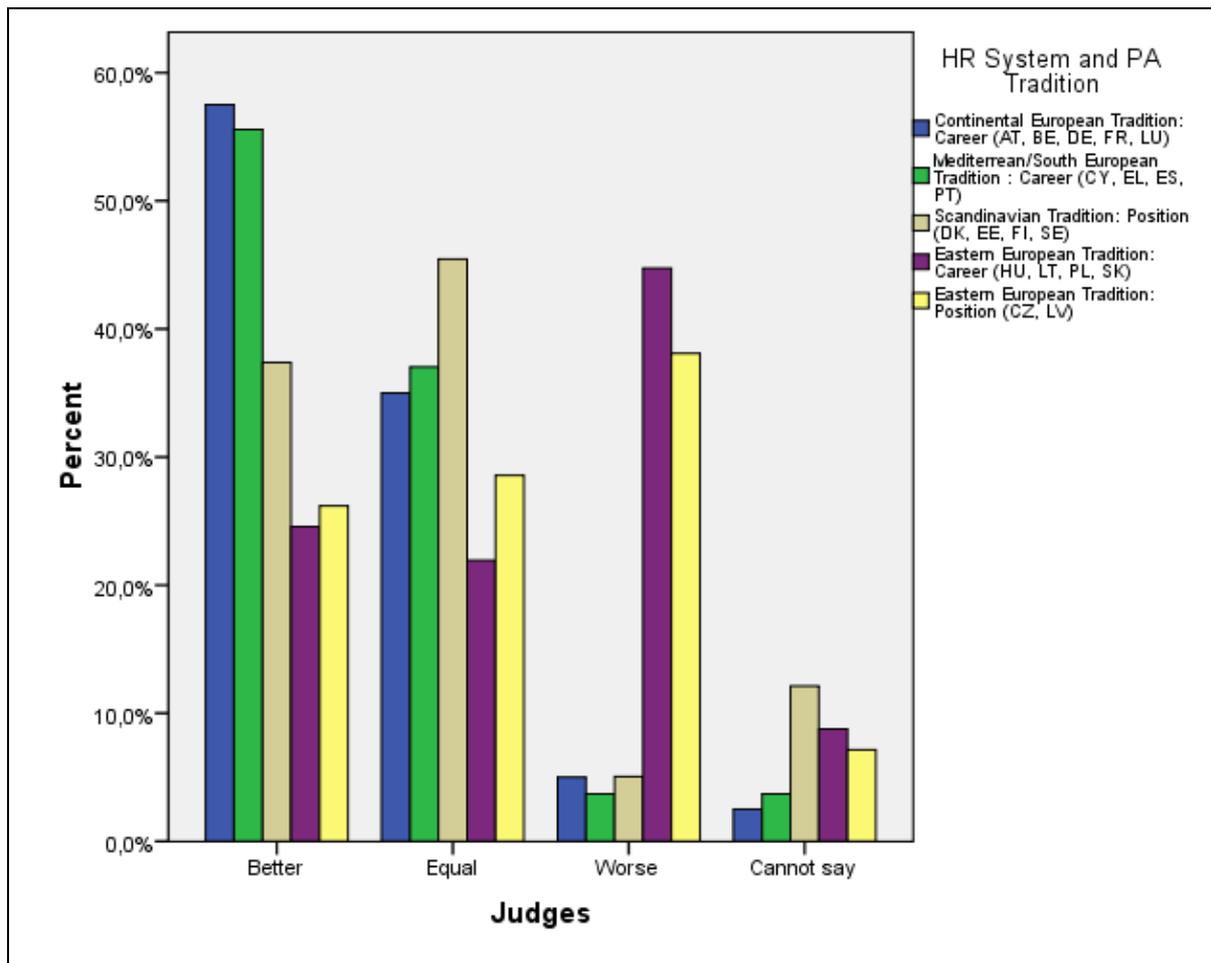


Figure 45. Image of Police by Public Administration Tradition and HR System



Other important geographical and cultural patterns can be observed as regards Judges. As can be discerned from Figure 46, whereas Judges enjoy a very high reputation in many Mediterranean and continental European countries they have a much worse reputation in many Eastern European countries.

Figure 46. Image of Judges by Public Administration Tradition and HR System



These comparative observations may not fully reflect the situation in each Member State on the national level. For example in Germany, fire workers, doctors, health care personnel, judges and police officials enjoy a relatively high reputation. Yet strangely enough, the term “civil servant” has a relatively bad reputation. This is a paradox since most of the above mentioned professions may be employed as civil servants in Germany¹⁷⁶.

¹⁷⁶ Deutscher Beamtenbund, Bürgerbefragung Öffentlicher Dienst, Düsseldorf, 2007

Table 20. Image of Certain Public Servant Groups in Germany

■ Das Ansehen der Berufsgruppen

	hohes Ansehen		geringes Ansehen	
öffentliche Dienstleistungen:	Feuerwehrmann	90 %	Steuerinspektor	28 %
	Polizist	78 %	Beamter	27 %
	Richter	77 %		
	Müllmann	63 %		
	Lehrer	63 %		
	Studienrat	53 %		
privatisierte Dienstleistungen:	Briefträger	52 %	Schaffner	36 %
			Telekom-Mitarbeiter	17 %
private Dienstleistungen:	Arzt	86 %	Bankangestellter	38 %
	Unternehmer	61 %	Manager	37 %
	Dachdecker	58 %	Sparkassenmitarbeiter	33 %
	Anwalt	58 %	Mitarbeiter einer	
	Steuerberater	47 %	Werbeagentur	18 %
			Versicherungsvertreter	11 %
Medien/Politik:	Journalist	47 %	Gewerkschaftsfunktionär	23 %
			Politiker	20 %

Other paradoxes concern perceptions about the size of public employment. Very often, people have a false impression about the existing number of public employees. Mostly, they believe that public services are too big and call for the reduction of public employment. On the other hand, especially in times of crisis, people call for more state interventions. For example, in Germany, citizens believe that the state bureaucracy is too big and bigger than most public services in the Member States of the EU¹⁷⁷. However, statistics show that - compared with other EU countries – Germany has a relatively small public service.

Another example of differences between perceptions and reality concerns recruitment policies in the UK. Whereas a survey in the United Kingdom shows that people believe that recruitment procedures have become unfair, other statistics show “favouritism” and seniority have been reduced and replaced by much more transparent and fairer merit policies. In addition, highly complex and time-consuming recruitment procedures have been modernised.

In the Netherlands, the *Arbeidsmarktmonitor Rijksdienst* has carried out a number of detailed analyses on the image of public sector employment and the competitive position of a number of sectors and groups (managers, economists, ICT, secretaries, etc.) in relation to the private sector. In particular for the group of managers, a survey revealed that the motivational and attractiveness criteria are not that different in the public and private sector. In both sectors,

¹⁷⁷ Deutscher Beamtenbund, Bürgerbefragung Öffentlicher Dienst, Düsseldorf, 2007

managers rate the content of the work, the social atmosphere and responsibility as very high. The problem, however, is that the image of public sector managers is worse than the image of private sector managers. Because of this, the competitive situation of the private sector is better as regards recruitment policies for senior managers¹⁷⁸.

However, a Dutch Study shows that the image of public managers is much worse than the real working situation and the perception of public managers of their own work. For example, whereas only 27% of external managers believe that the work content is stimulating in the public service, 81,7% of public managers experience stimulating work content. Moreover, whereas 63,8% of external managers believe that the work pressure is not too high in the public sector, only 2,6% of the public managers are of the opinion that there is a positive work stress.

Table 21. Image of Public Managers in the Netherlands

Tabel 2. Vergelijking van imagoscores en de ervaringscores voor de kenmerken van de arbeidssituatie (in percentages; N=697).

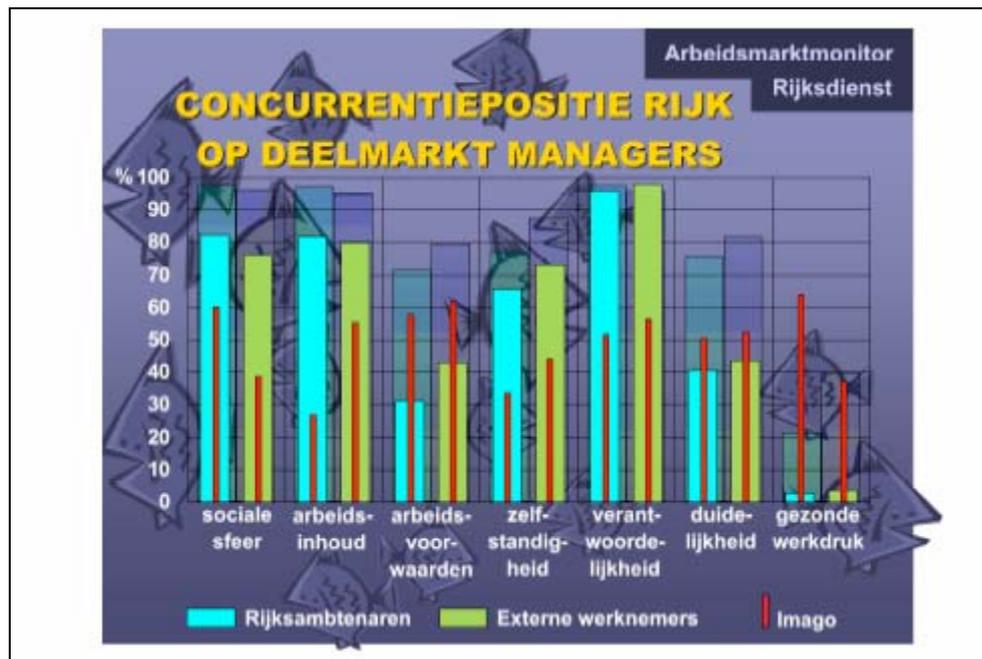
	Imago van de arbeidssituatie bij het Rijk volgens managers van concurrerende werkgevers	De eigen arbeidssituatie volgens managers bij het Rijk	Imago van de arbeidssituatie bij concurrerende werkgevers volgens Rijksmanagers*	De eigen arbeidssituatie volgens managers bij concurrerende werkgevers
Stimulerende arbeidsinhoud	27,0	81,7	55,4	79,9
Goede werksfeer	60,1	82,3	38,8	76,2
Zelfstandigheid in het werk	33,6	65,6	44,2	73,2
Duidelijke aansturing en feedback	50,6	40,7	52,5	43,6
Verantwoordelijkheid in het werk	51,7	95,8	56,4	97,9
Goede arbeidsvoorwaarden	57,9	31,2	61,7	43,0
Gezonde werkdruk	63,8	2,6	37,0	3,4

On the other hand, public managers also have a distorted perception of the work situation in the private sector. In this way, there is a misfit of perceptions of the work situation amongst managers in the public and in the private sector. In reality, managers in the public service have a comparable work situation than managers in the private sector. However, the perceptions (images) of external managers as regards issues such as work content, responsibility and autonomy in the public service are less positive than what public managers actually experience in daily life¹⁷⁹.

¹⁷⁸ P. Van der Parre, Ministry of the Interior and Kingdom Relations, *Arbeidsmarktmonitor Rijksdienst*, The Hague, 2002.

¹⁷⁹ P. van der Parre, *Het hebben en houden van managers*, <http://publishing.eur.nl/ir/repub/asset/1113/vanderParre.pdf> (last checked on 5 March 2008), p.99. *Arbeidsmarktmonitor Rijksdienst 2003, Arbeidsmarktonderzoek Managers*, Den Haag 2003

Figure 47. Image of Public Managers in the Netherlands



This Dutch case shows that another question is still relevant when developing recruitment strategies and strengthening the competitive situation of the public sector: should the public sector introduce measures to compensate for its disadvantages (for example in the field of pay for senior positions), or should it concentrate on its advantages (generally more contractual security and better social provisions than in the private sector, often a higher degree of (ethical) commitment than in the private sector, more flexibility in working time, and greater possibilities for combining private with professional interests)?

In Finland the Office for the Government as Employer has commissioned several studies on the state's employer image. Published in 2002, the latest study¹⁸⁰ argues that both civil servants and citizens value three issues above all when they consider job opportunities. These issues were job content, job security and work atmosphere¹⁸¹. When asked about the state employer's image, these issues were not considered to be the strengths of the state employer. Only job security was doing well, as 74% of respondents gave it a very good (21%) or fairly good (53%) remark. Only 34% of respondents considered job content interesting, and 32% anticipated that work atmosphere would be good. Instead, citizens believed that state's particular strengths were vacation benefits (76%), personnel's expertise (67%) and general work conditions and equipment (53%). Only 21% of respondents considered that the personnel has adequate influence over their own work, and just 14% believed that the state is able to reward good performance. Despite the fact of whether these perceptions are true or false, they have to be taken seriously because they affect state's general image and state's ability to attract new personnel.

When the citizens were asked to compare the state employer to the private sector employer, the state employer was considered to outperform the private sector employer in only three

¹⁸⁰ Kiljunen, Pentti & Pehkonen, Juhani: State's Employer Image 2002 (Valtion työnantajakuva 2002 – in Finnish only). Suomen Gallup Oy, 2002.

¹⁸¹ The differences between civil servants and citizens were marginal. Regarding job content, 93% of civil servants considered it important (56% very important, 37% fairly important), whereas for citizens the figures were 54% + 37%. Also with respect to job security (58% + 32% vs. 63% + 26%) and work atmosphere (56% + 33% vs. 62% + 27%) the priorities were very similar.

areas: job security (state 59%, private 4%), possibility to influence society's development (30% vs. 8%) and equality between sexes (24% vs. 12%). However, the latter two areas were considered to be rather insignificant in job selection. State was considered to be much weaker in job content (2% vs. 44%), wage level and development (5% vs. 64%), management and leadership (9% vs. 32%), motivation (3% vs. 54%) and flexible working time (14% vs. 42%). Civil servants themselves saw that state was stronger in job security (68% vs. 3%), balancing work and private life (37% vs. 17%), possibility to influence on society's development (36% vs. 10%), flexible working time (33% vs. 18%) and equality between sexes (32% vs. 11%). However, regarding the service and quality of work (4% vs. 35%), management and leadership (4% vs. 47%), motivation (1% vs. 56%) and wage level and development (1% vs. 94%) the private employer was found to be superior.

The above mentioned study on the state's employer policy in Finland¹⁸² argued that the general employer image has a rather limited impact in job seeking. According to the evaluation, there were significant differences among government agencies caused by variations in their communications, organisational culture and practices, which are also reflected in different service experiences. The authors conclude that the most efficient way to improve the employer image is through the development of agency practices rather than centralised image-building. Furthermore, they compare the employer image against the real life situation and give suggestions as to where and how to improve the employer communications (see Figure 48 below).

Figure 48. Strategic Choices in Employer Communication

		Employer image	
		Bad	Good
Reality	Good	"Invest" - job content - flexible work time - job autonomy - internationality - versatility	"Maintain and develop" - self-actualisation - work conditions - job security
	Bad	"Give up" - wages	"Preserve" - employee benefits

In fact, most empirical studies show that nowadays things are not so bleak in the public bureaucracy. On the contrary, many changes have taken place, which no longer correspond to classical perceptions.

- While one might expect civil servants “to place less value on money and more on public service, the dominant tendency in civil service reform and personnel reforms have emphasised precisely the opposite priorities...”¹⁸³ and has focused very much on the introduction of material and financial incentives

¹⁸² Virtanen/Wennberg (2005), op. cit.

¹⁸³ H.Rainey/B.Bozeman, Comparing Public and Private Organizations, op. cit, p.462

- A popular argument is that bureaucrats are less flexible and work precisely from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. The reality seems to be otherwise: civil servants often work overtime, although working time arrangements are generally very favourable.
- Also, the image that bureaucrats are not very effective in their work is incorrect. In fact, public sector employees often score high on measures of workforce quality than many of their colleagues in private sector organisations¹⁸⁴.
- Whereas many people believe that public servants are de-motivated and frustrated, most existing surveys reveal that the public sector is composed of (mainly) satisfied, motivated and highly qualified people.
- Whilst many reports blame the existence of too high a number of poor performers in the public services, most studies come to the conclusion that the people are “not the problem” and that the number of poor performers is not higher than in the private sector¹⁸⁵.
- In addition, the perception that civil servants are highly formalised and prefer rules instead of objectives is more a “cliché” than a reality. “The issue is surprisingly controversial, as it turns out”¹⁸⁶. In fact, the problem of over-regulation emerged precisely because of the complex structure of our societies, the development of the welfare state, the rule of law and the protection of citizens. Regulations were put in place largely to protect the traditional values that underlie democratic governance. “Can we have equal employment opportunity without fair procedures for resolving complaints of discrimination? Can we really go back to the unregulated, closed, not transparent rule making of the 1930s?”¹⁸⁷
- Also, most findings in empirical studies reveal that the public service has a similar level of formalisation to the private sector. As Bozeman and Rainey show: “public sector “bureaucrats” do not prefer rules more than private sector counterparts (...). In light of these findings, those who would advance academic assertions and popular stereotypes about rule-craving bureaucratic personalities in government have a good bit of explaining to do”¹⁸⁸

These findings conflict sharply, not just with general stereotypes about processes, behaviour, rules and red tape in government¹⁸⁹. The only difference is personnel policies: “Public and private organisations differ more strongly on formalisation of personnel procedures...”¹⁹⁰ (especially as regards recruitment). In this area, public personnel policies seem to be more formalised, rigid and slower than in the private sector.

7.2. Changing attitudes towards leaders and leadership

Fashionable discourses surrounding participation, communication, feedback, performance agreements and performance contracts frequently do not take into account that work processes in most European administrations (still) function according to hierarchic structures, and that cooperative structures do not represent the common picture. Thus, it can be seen that in several EU Member States the relationship is still the classic one of superordinate and

¹⁸⁴ B. Bozeman/H. Rainey, Organizational Rules and the “Bureaucratic Personality” in: American Journal of Political Science, Vol. 42, No. 1, 1998., p.185

¹⁸⁵ Paul Light, op. cit., p.7

¹⁸⁶ Bozeman/Rainey, Comparing, op. cit., p.453

¹⁸⁷ D.Rosenbloom, History Lessons for Reinvention, in: Public Administration Review, March/April 2001, Vol. 61, p. 163

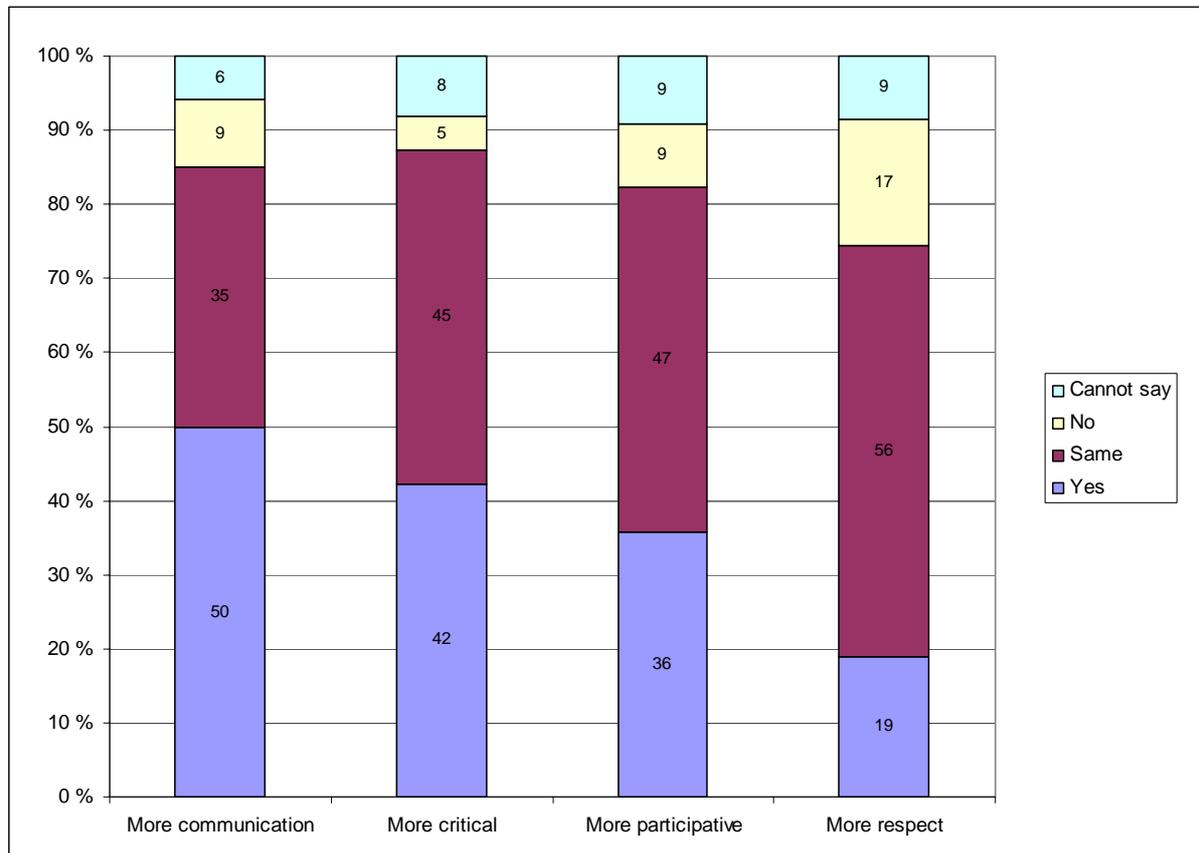
¹⁸⁸ B.Bozeman/Hal Rainey, Organizational Rules and the “Bureaucratic Personality”, op. cit., p. 184

¹⁸⁹ Bozeman/Rainey, Comparing, op. cit., p.454

¹⁹⁰ Bozeman/Rainey, Comparing, op. cit., p.455

subordinate. The idea of participative management – often suggested as a central solution for improving the effectiveness of HR management – clearly has its limitations, especially in traditionally highly hierarchical contexts. However, as the results in our survey show, cooperative and communicative styles of management are increasingly en vogue and gaining ground in the public administrations in Europe.

Figure 49. Attitudes Toward Leaders



However, this should not be interpreted in the sense of ‘the more participation the better’ since participation also has implications with regard to cost, time and power (e.g. Frey/Fischer 2007). Terms like ‘staff participation’ or ‘staff involvement’ and “staff communication” come with different meanings in different administrative cultures. For example, whereas ‘staff participation’ - especially in countries with a tradition of co-determination such as Austria and Germany - can be understood as a legal and formal concept, in other countries it is understood in the sense of ‘staff consultation’. However, in most cases participation is different to consultation which normally implies that lower-level staff are simply asked to provide data, knowledge, information etc.

Thus, participation, staff involvement and communication cannot be implemented through European-wide top-down approaches. Superiors have to believe in the benefits of participation and ‘live’ it on a daily basis. In addition, they must be convinced that taking into account opinions from the staff will have positive effects. At the same time employees must show trust in their superiors’ willingness to involve their subordinates – and not only because of formal obligations.

A study from Szabo (2007) indicates that participative forms of management differ across cultures. According to this comparative study, Sweden has the highest degree of management

participation followed by Germany, Austria and The Netherlands. On the individual level, it seems that older managers tend to be more participative than younger ones, and female managers more than male (although as regards to the latter, evidence is less clear). However, the degree of allowing participative forms of leadership also depends on the question of how far managers want to avoid feelings of insecurity. The more the managers want to control things in order to avoid such feelings the more they will restrict staff involvement, communication and staff participation in setting and revising targets.

The results of this study indicate that a value change in the relationship between superiors and employees is taking place. There seems to be wide agreement that participation, communication and staff involvement are essential ingredients of an effective and successful performance assessment system. At the same time the value “respect” is also losing importance.

Despite such positive evidence, the ‘the devil is in the details’. While everybody seems to agree on the need for more and better communication, staff involvement and participation, the practical implementation of these concepts in daily administrative life may be quite different. In fact, participation, involvement of staff and feedback in many cases seem to be more preached than practiced. In 1970 Levinson already pointed out in his publication “Management by whose objectives?¹⁹¹” that “top management typically assumes that it alone has the prerogative to a) set the objectives, b) provide the rewards and targets, and c) drive anyone who works for the organisation”. In fact, it seems that top managers still prefer top-down approaches instead of participative approaches.

Another problem is also obvious: particularly in times of financial constraints, downsizing and political turbulence, many employees regard developments towards more cooperative management styles and motivation management as rather cynical instruments.

In addition, a great problem lies in the fact that employees are (often) dissatisfied with their superiors. Insufficient communication and credibility are two crucial elements probably responsible for what results in the moderate interpenetration of managerial information on change. The reality shows that relationship networks between superiors and employees are multi-layered and influenced by all kinds of perceptions and mistrust: the performance of an effective staff review and interview presumes that both superiors and employees are clearly aware of their "relationship". However, this contains one of the greatest challenges. The results of our study also show that employees are increasingly critical to the behaviour of their superiors.

All these difficulties and challenges clearly do not mean that attempts to introduce more communication, feedback and staff should not be pursued. The critical experiences should only illustrate however, that reality occasionally looks different. Popular ideas of a consensual and supportive superior-employee relationship have to be freed first of all from normative and all too naïve expectations. Administrative reform should be aware of trendy management advisers who often spin an unrealistic yarn about administration by giving the impression that hierarchic and bureaucratic administrative structures have long since ceased to exist. In reality, all European administrative models continue to be based on the principle of ‘hierarchy’ and bureaucracy while introducing – at the same time – more participative modes of management. This trend reflects an important value-change process in the field of HRM. One the other hand, the more difficult the successful introduction of more cooperative leader-

¹⁹¹ H.Levinson, Management by Whose Objectives, Harvard Business Review, 1970, p.16.

employee management styles, the more hierarchic and formal one's own administrative culture will be.

7.3. How public employees perceive their work

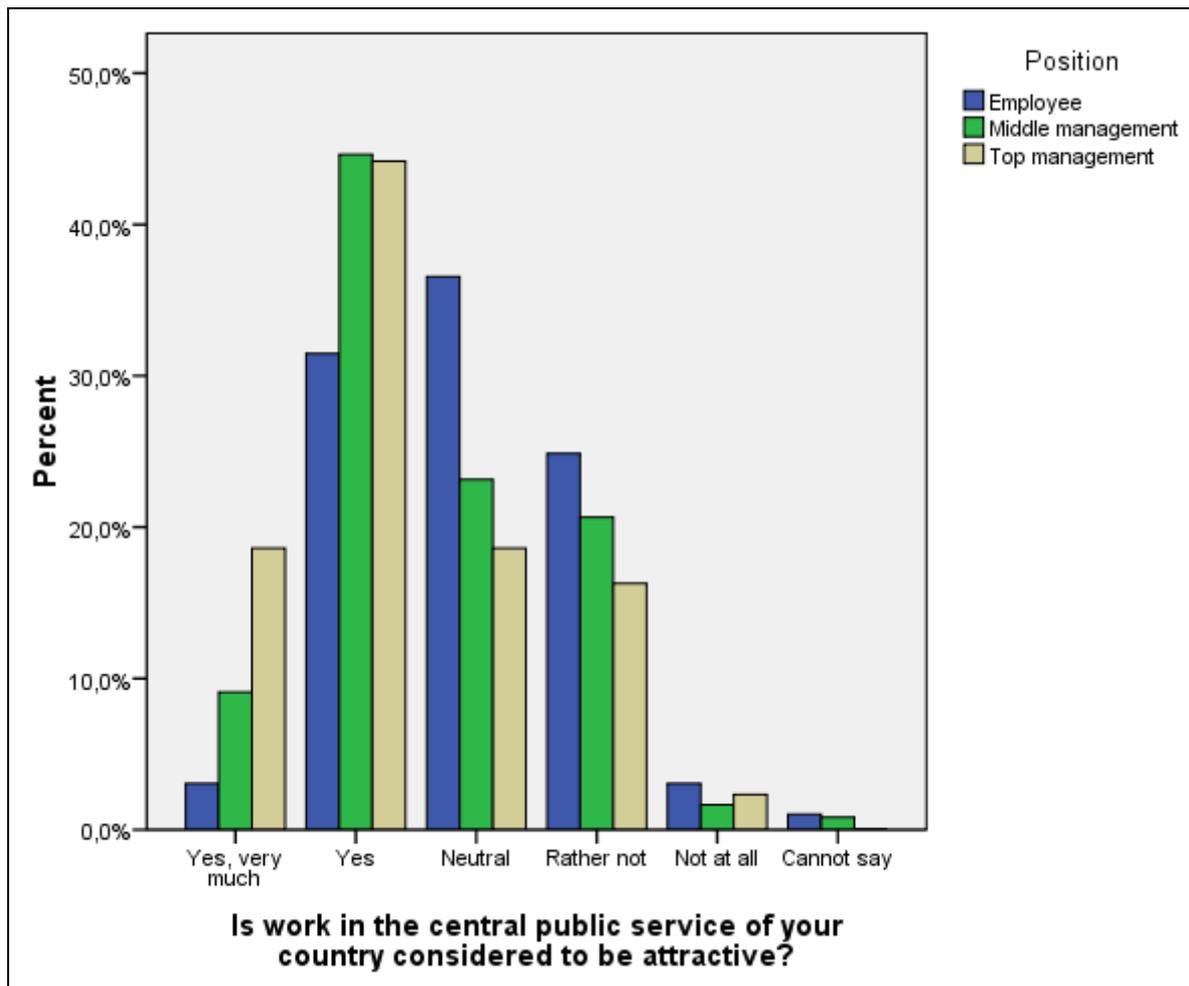
As we have seen the image of public sector employment is not the same as the attractiveness of public sector employment. Having a bad image may only constitute a problem if it has a strong influence on the attractiveness of public sector employment, recruitment and retention policies. However, at times of demographic change and greater competition between the public and private sectors, the public sector must introduce measures to improve the image of public sector employment. Member States have a retention problem in some sectors where the competition with the private sector is very strong and better salaries are paid in the private sector. Generally, people working in the public sector like their jobs. Moreover, employment in the public sector is appealing as many people are attracted by the job stability and good working conditions. Moreover, a large number of people are attracted by jobs as opposed to private motivations. For people working in the public sector, the content of the job is the most important aspect. It has also become clear that employees in the public sector wish to have more responsibilities in their job.

In this study, our analysis reveals that almost half of all respondents to this study consider public employment as attractive or even very attractive (Table 22).

Table 22. Attractiveness of Public Service Work
(Frequencies in parenthesis)

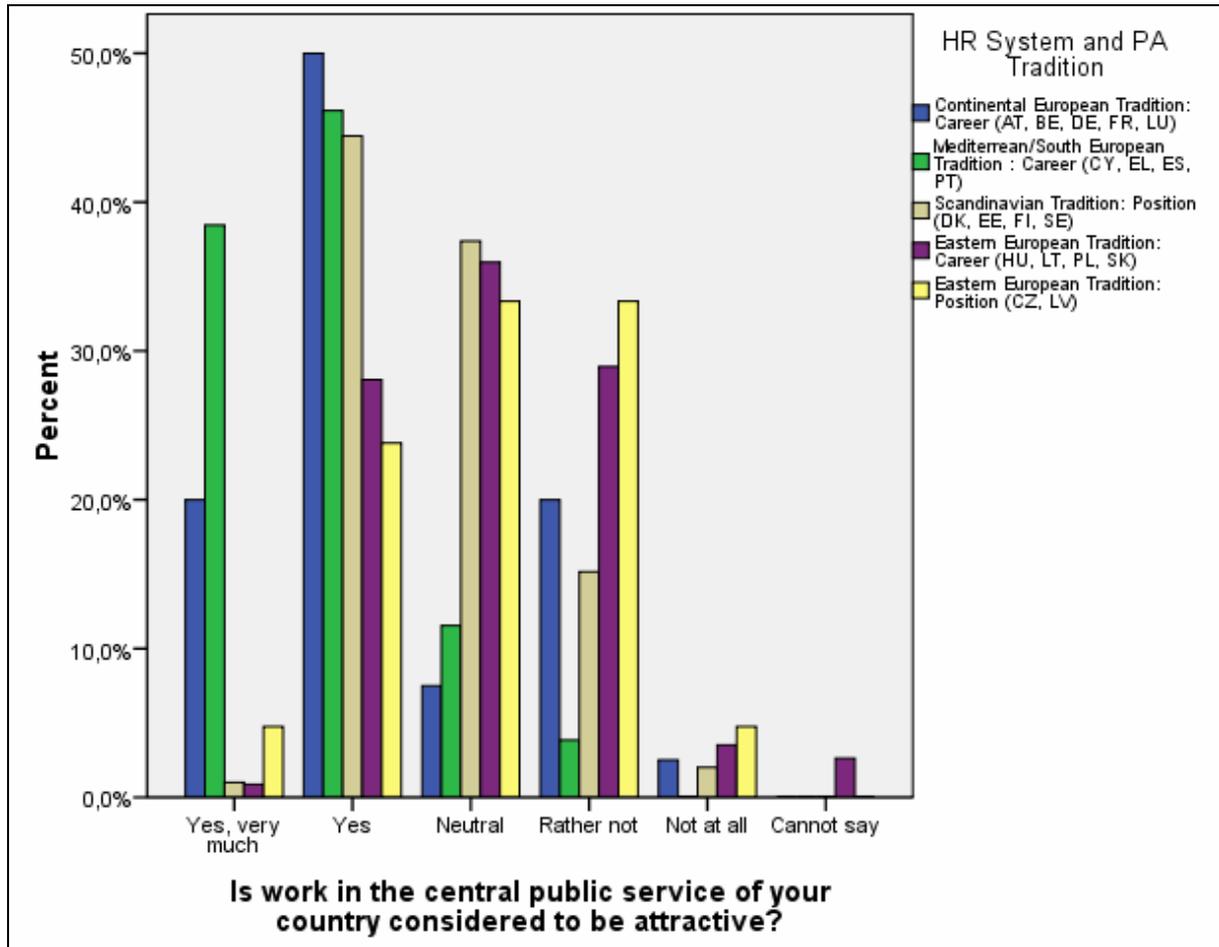
	Rel. frequency
Yes, very much	7,0 (25)
Yes	37,7 (135)
Neutral	30,2 (108)
Rather not	22,6 (81)
Not at all	2,5 (9)
Total	100,0 (358)

Figure 50. Attractiveness of Public Service Work by Position



However there are some important geographical variations (Figure 51). Generally, people in the Mediterranean career system countries consider public employment as most attractive. At the same time respondents from all Eastern European countries are less positive about the attractiveness of the public service in their countries.

Figure 51. Attractiveness of Public Service Work by Public Administration Tradition and HR System



Interestingly, 62% of all respondents to the study replied that they would recommend working in the public sector to their friends and family. Since this figure is higher than that regarding the attractiveness of public sector employment (45% were positive), it is an indication that those in public employment are – generally – satisfied with their work. Moreover, the percentage shows that the “work experience” of public employees is better than the attraction to work in the public sector. Thus, there seems to be a difference between “reality” and “perception of the reality”.

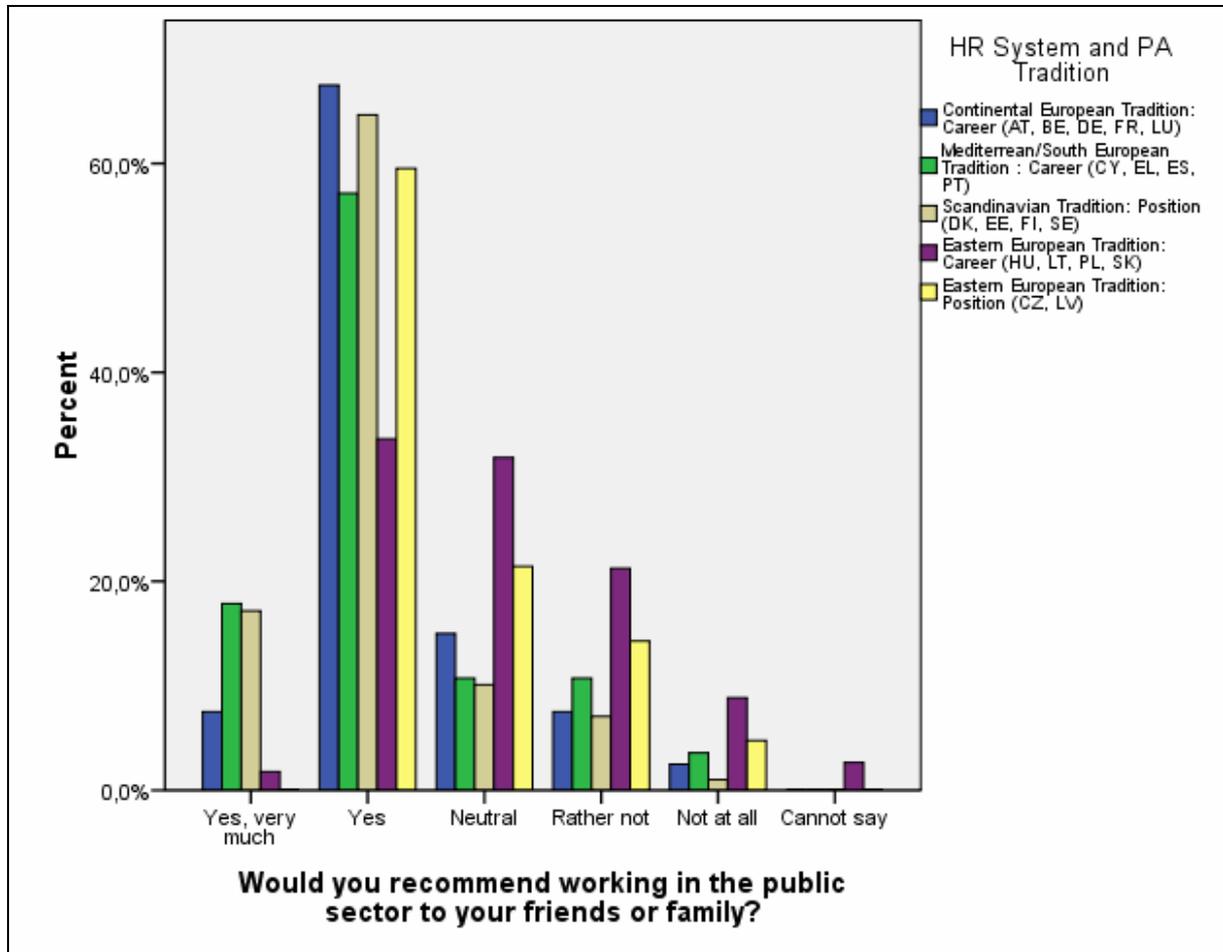
Table 23. Would you Recommend Public Service Work to Friends or Family?
(Frequencies in parenthesis)

	Rel. frequency
Yes, very much	10,0 (36)
Yes	51,5 (185)
Neutral	20,3 (73)
Rather not	13,9 (50)
Not at all	4,2 (15)
Total	100,0 (359)

However, important geographical differences can also be noted here (Figure 52). In particular, employees from the Eastern European countries are much less inclined to recommend work in the public services than their colleagues from the other administrative traditions. Thus, it

seems that work in the public sector in these countries is indeed less satisfying and less attractive.

Figure 52. Would you Recommend Public Service Work to Friends or Family by Public Administration Tradition and HR System



7.4. Evidence about work content, atmosphere and job satisfaction

Today, the public's perception of work in the public sector is that working procedures in public organisations are more formalised, employees have less job autonomy in decision-making and the work content is less challenging than in comparable positions in the private sector. Consequently, many expect civil servants to be less satisfied than their colleagues in the private sector.

However in reality, public-sector employees in almost all countries actually report high levels of general work satisfaction. On questions about general work satisfaction such as, "Do you like your job?" public-sector respondents have consistently shown higher levels of satisfaction, levels comparable to private-sector respondents¹⁹². In this study 76% of all respondents to this study are of the opinion that the work atmosphere is good or very good. Only 7% find the atmosphere negative or very negative.

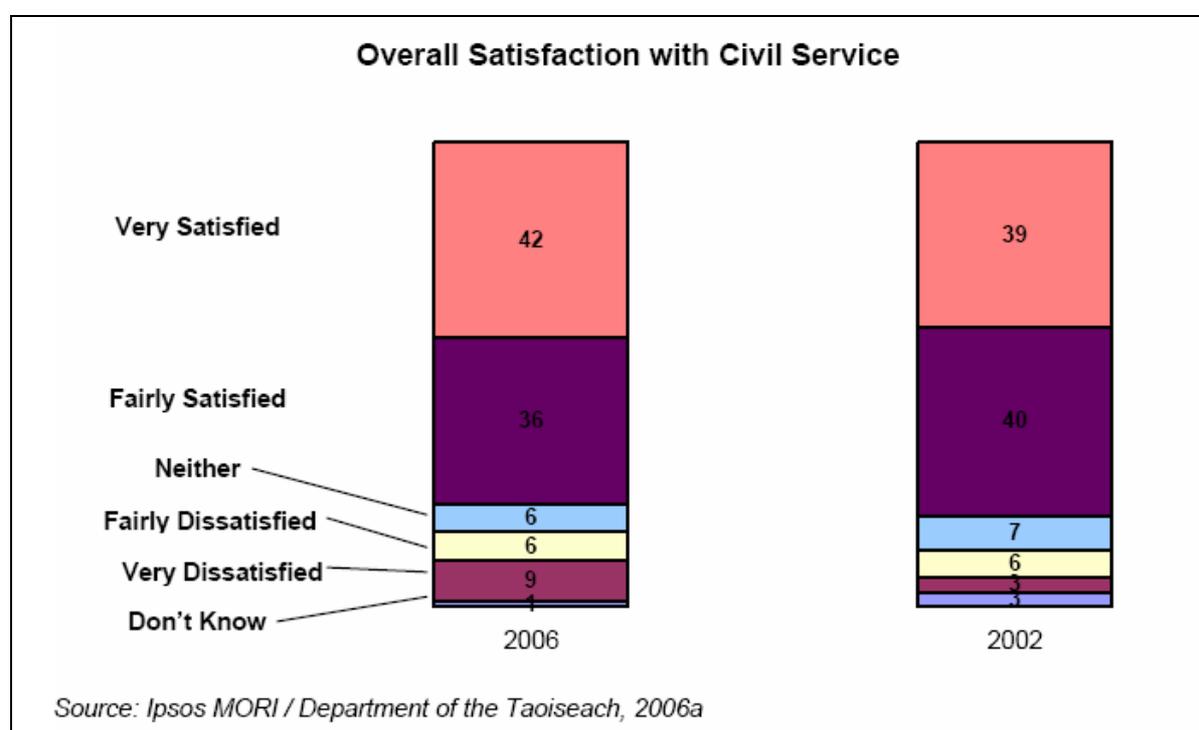
¹⁹² Bozeman/Rainey, Comparing, op. cit., p.459

Table 24. Working Atmosphere in One's Own Work
(Frequencies in parenthesis)

	Rel. frequency
Very positive	25,7 (79)
Positive	49,8 (153)
Neutral	17,6 (54)
Negative	4,2 (13)
Very negative	2,6 (8)
Total	100,0 (307)

These figures seem to be representative for most countries. An Irish study shows that 78% of all (interviewed) Irish civil servants are very or fairly satisfied with the Civil Service¹⁹³.

Figure 53. Satisfaction with Civil Service in Ireland



These high levels of expressed job satisfaction are a common feature of employment research and are not altogether unsurprising. Firstly, one would expect that those who are relatively dissatisfied with their job will seek to change it (within the constraints of available job opportunities), whilst those who are satisfied will remain longer in that job. Secondly, there may be some response bias, since admitting to tolerating high dissatisfaction levels may appear irrational or humiliating.

Furthermore, job autonomy increases the higher the individual qualification and the higher the individual position. Job security also has a positive relationship to job satisfaction (which is consistent with the arguments that those who are more satisfied are more likely to stay in the job and perhaps those who cannot move adjust their expectations).

¹⁹³ Institute of Public Administration, Survey Research on Public Perceptions and Attitudes Towards Public Services, Public Service 2022 Project Working Paper no. 2 Draft November 2006

However, there are also reasons to be concerned. A survey on career development (in the sense of development opportunities in the field of promotion, demonstrating skills, training, gaining experience, study leave, working on interesting projects, acting in higher positions, secondments etc. undertaken in the Irish civil service in 1999¹⁹⁴) showed that lack of career development is still a central factor influencing resignations from the civil service. In particular, the survey discovered that the top six employment-related issues for civil servants were:

- Earnings and career progression
- Task responsibility
- Reward and recognition
- Job security
- Progressive work arrangements and
- Training/development

The authors of the study concluded that there is an increasing gap between individuals' aspirations and what the civil service is perceived as delivering¹⁹⁵. Another interesting finding of this research was that in Ireland, for instance:

- barriers to promotion;
- limited opportunities for development and advancement; and
- the mundane nature of some work

are cited as the reasons why young ambitious civil servants are unlikely to remain in the civil service.

As we have seen in this study, the situation in the field of career development (especially as regards promotion policies) is not very favourable. In addition, most people are of the opinion that the private sector is better than the public sector. When asked whether career development policies are better or worse in the private sector, most respondents to this study said that the private sector would be better.

Table 25. Career Development: Private Services vs. Public Administration
(Frequencies in parenthesis)

Position	Rel. frequency
Better	39,9 (135)
Same	34,9 (118)
Worse	25,1 (85)
Total	100,0 (338)

Some more recent research suggests that performance may influence satisfaction rather than satisfaction influencing performance. In this respect, employees are more satisfied when they perform well. Alternatively, job satisfaction may also have an important indirect influence on organisational productivity by reducing costs associated with employee absenteeism and turnover. Such costs may often be hard to quantify but are, nonetheless, real.

¹⁹⁴ J. O'Riordan and Peter C. Humphreys, Career Progression in the Irish Civil Service, CPMR Discussion Paper 20, Dublin 2002, http://www.ipa.ie/research_detail.asp?pubid=526

¹⁹⁵ G.Fitzgerald, Staff Retention Survey, on behalf of the Office of the Civil Service and Local Appointments Commission, in Joanna O'Riordan, Peter C. Humphreys, Career Progression in the Irish Civil Service, op. cit., p. 11.

In The Netherlands, Steijns¹⁹⁶ published in 2003 a more careful analysis of the term “work satisfaction”. He came to the conclusion that work satisfaction of employees differs according to the employer. For example in The Netherlands, satisfaction is highest in the judicial authorities and lowest in the defence sector. Overall, satisfaction in the public sector of The Netherlands is neither low nor very high.

In his study, Steijns further differentiates between the influences on satisfaction of:

- Individual characteristics (such as sex, age and education),
- Job elements (such as management positions, salaries, satisfaction with working conditions, satisfaction with the work, job autonomy and job responsibility, career development opportunities etc).
- Organisational structures and elements (such as satisfaction with the management and with the working atmosphere).

Steijns concludes that individual characteristics matter little as regards to the degree of satisfaction. Much more relevant are job and organisational elements, such as the content of the work (including the degree of responsibility and autonomy) followed by working atmosphere and career development possibilities. Due to these findings, Steijns concludes that investments in HRM policies and in career development also lead to more satisfaction with the management. This latter point seems especially relevant since a high number of public employees are not satisfied with management. Even more so, dissatisfaction with management is one of the most important reasons for leaving a job. Elements such as pay and general working conditions also have an important – though lesser – effect on the degree of satisfaction. Steijns also concludes that HRM in general has an impact on work satisfaction. However, other factors such as social dialogue (participation and communication of employers) would also play an important role. Interestingly, the results of Steijns are also broadly in line with the findings of Herzberg in *Work and the Nature of Man* (1966).

A Danish Motivation Survey (2006) concludes that there “is not much difference in satisfaction between state sector and private sector employees”¹⁹⁷. In total, satisfaction levels range from 38% for pay to 74% for job content. A Dutch survey concludes that 70% of public employees are satisfied or very satisfied with the content of their work.¹⁹⁸ A survey in Austria¹⁹⁹ about the attitude of Austrian officials in the federal public sector towards their work, workplace and work in the public sector (in general), found high to very high satisfaction levels. However, satisfaction levels are also different according to different HR aspects. For example, whereas almost 80% of all persons interviewed are satisfied with their work, only approx. 40% are satisfied with their income. Similar satisfaction levels could be found concerning other issues (satisfaction with information flow, feedback, recognition for work, openness of superiors for criticism etc.).

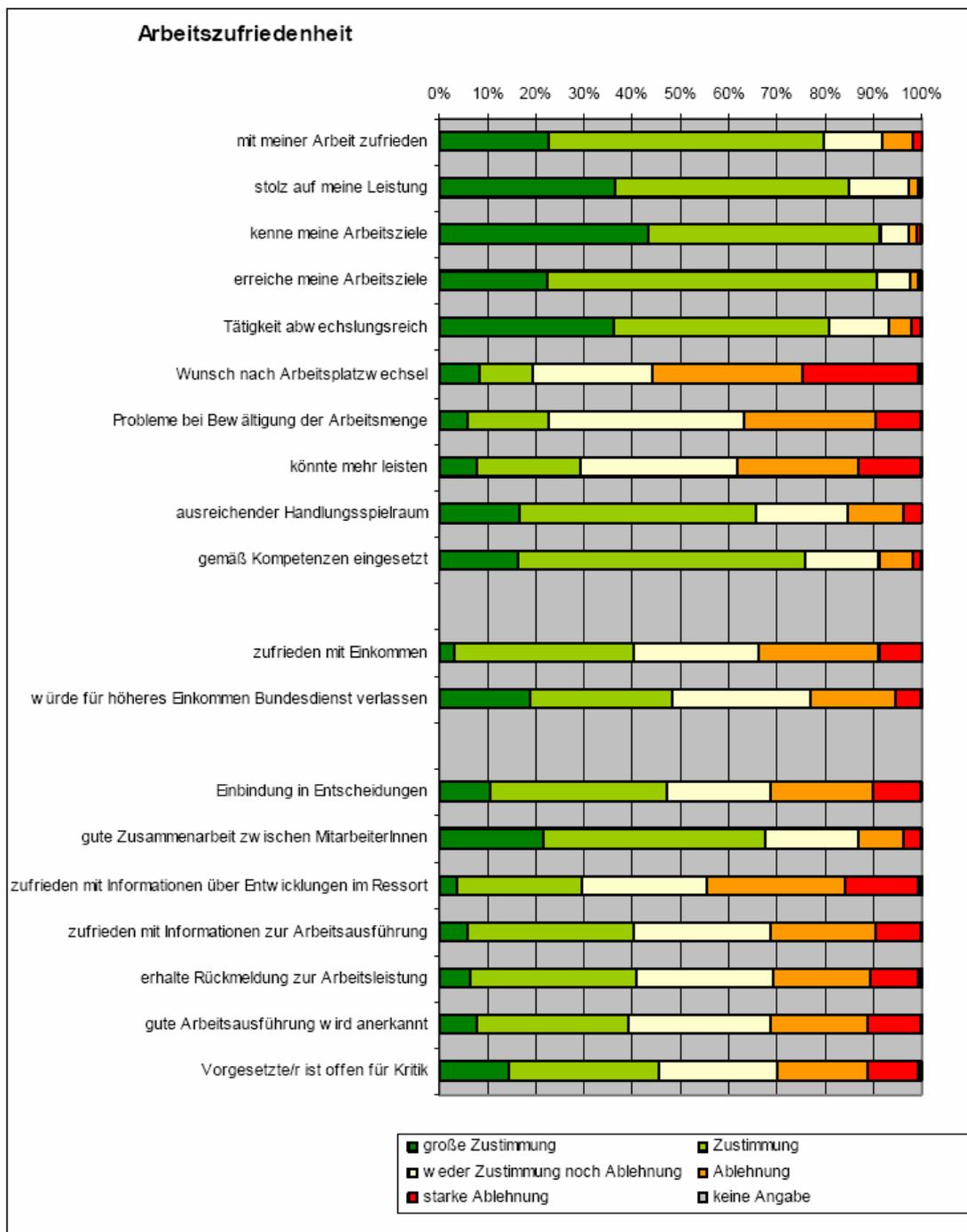
¹⁹⁶ B.Steijns, HRM, Arbeidssatisfactie en de publieke sector, in: Bestuurswetenschappen, No 4 2003.

¹⁹⁷ Danish Ministry of Finance, Motivation Survey 2006, Copenhagen, June 2007, p.6

¹⁹⁸ Ministry of the Interior and Kingdom Relations, De Arbeidsmarkt in de collectieve sector: verleden, heden en toekomst, 22 May 2002, p. 14.

¹⁹⁹ Austrian Federal Ministry of the Public Service and Sports, Results of the 2007 employee survey, Vienna.

Figure 54. Civil Servants' Attitudes Towards Work in Austria



Interestingly, more than 47% are satisfied or very satisfied with their involvement in internal decision-making procedures (roughly 30% are dissatisfied or very dissatisfied). These figures contradict the classical perception that public organisations are very hierarchical structures and communication suffers because of this.

Thus, public servants are mostly satisfied with their jobs. However, public servants in many countries are dissatisfied with too many rules and slow decision-making procedures; the lack of personnel resources and the time pressure; restricted career opportunities; slow advancement in the hierarchies, (sometimes) with seniority rather than merit being taken into account; low pay; limited possibilities for independent decision-making and the perception of

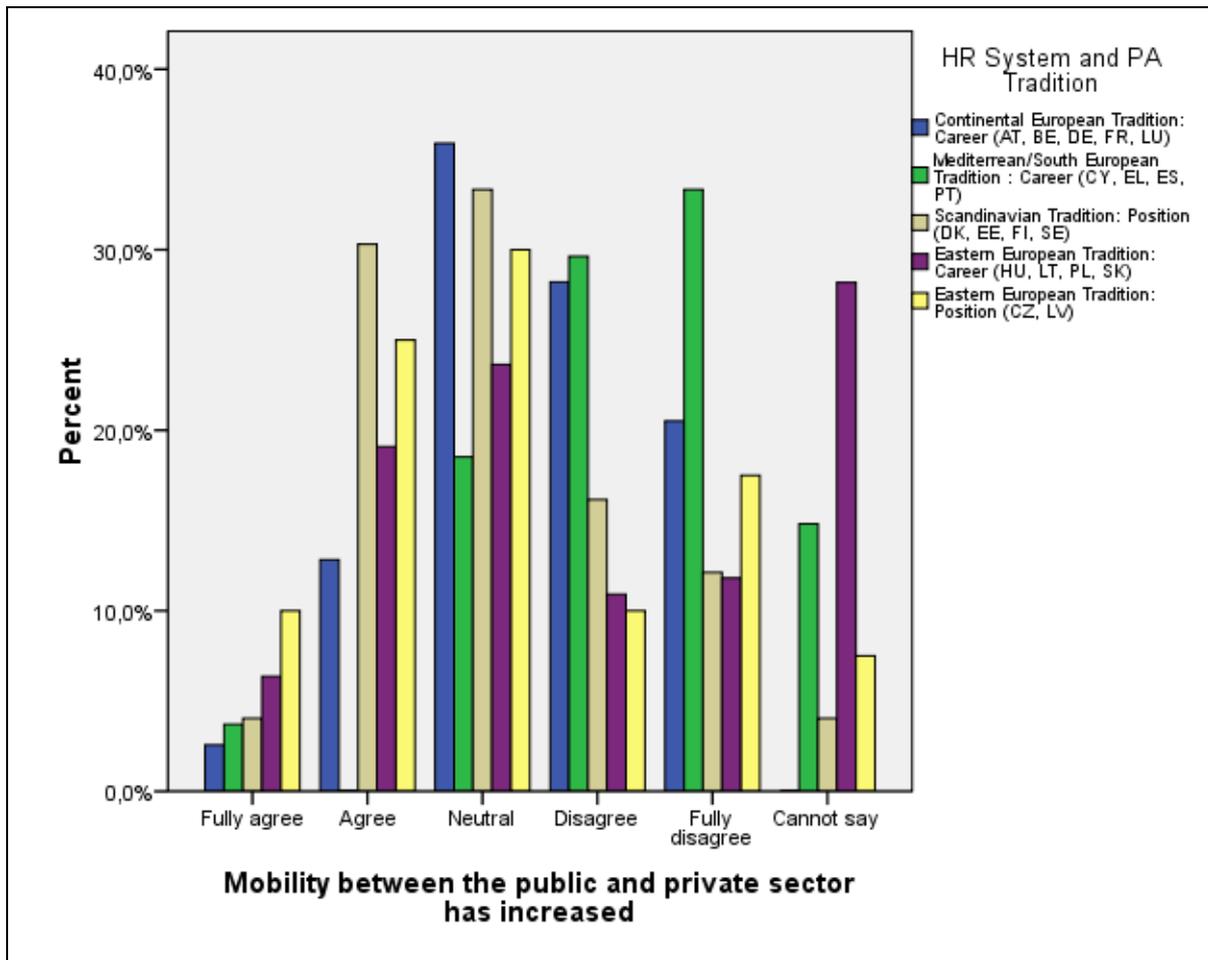
working in a big, non-transparent hierarchical organisation. Nevertheless, these problems only have a limited impact on the degree of happiness. Here, problems such as working relationships with colleagues, duplication of work, too much bureaucracy, no guidance and – if it happens – bullying in the workplace and bad leadership also rank very highly.

8. Functional, interministerial and geographical mobility – a success story?

In the past years, most Member States introduced new measures and enhance efforts in order to increase the mobility between the public and the private sector. Moreover, most Member States introduced new instruments and incentives in order to enhance interministerial and international mobility. In our study we tried to find out whether these measures were successful and – consequently – led to an increase in the different forms of mobility. However, the responses to our study show that most Member States are not very successful in the field of public-private and transboundary mobility. Whereas intra-ministerial mobility seems to have increased, to a certain extent this cannot be said with regard to mobility amongst the EU administration and mobility between the public and private sector.

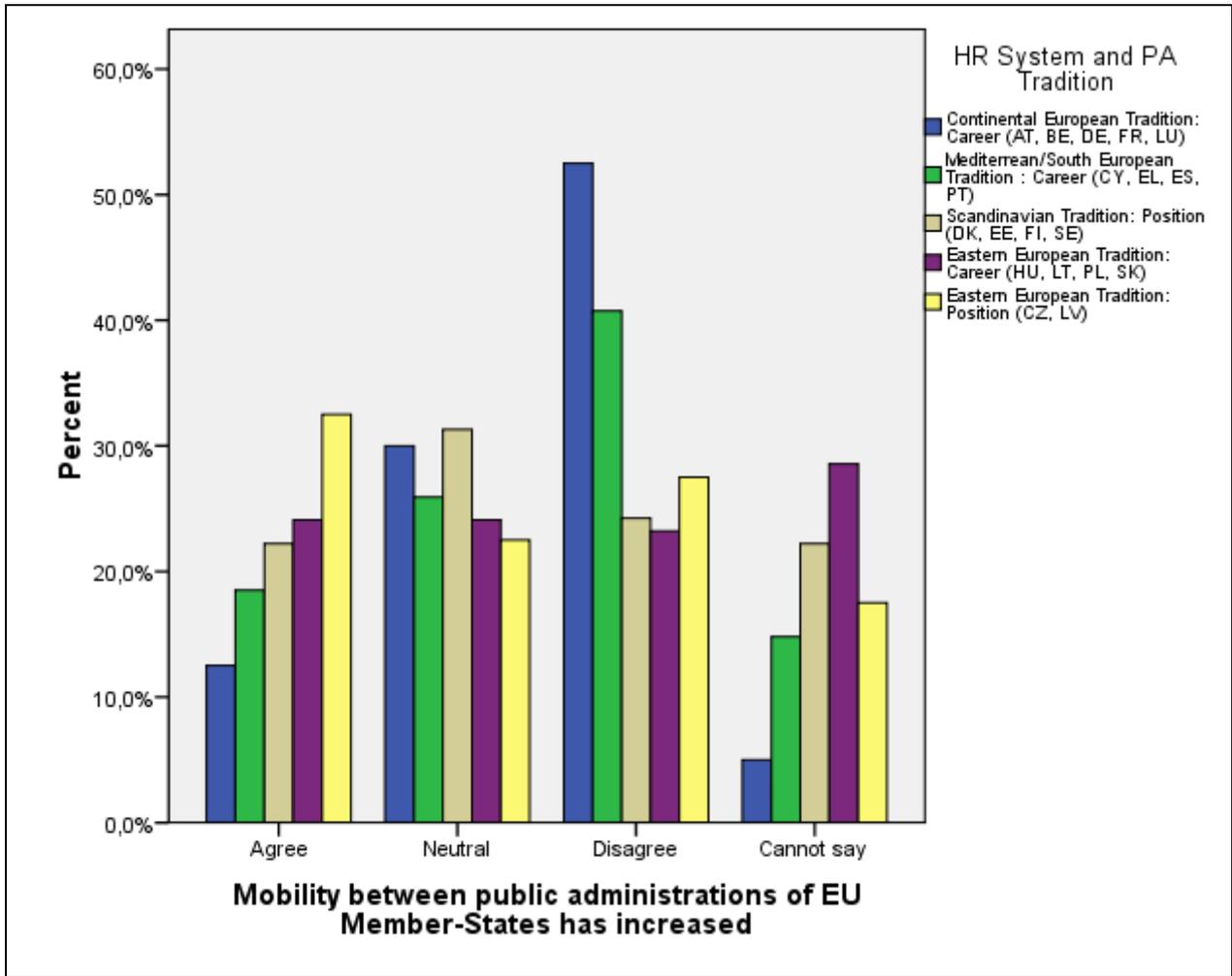
Only 4% from all respondents from the Mediterranean countries agreed that mobility between the two sectors has increased (Figure 55). In total, 74% from the respondents from the Mediterranean countries and 49% from the Continental European career tradition countries replied that mobility did not increase. On the other hand, 36% from the respondents from the Scandinavian countries and the 36% from the Eastern European countries answered that mobility between public and private sector has increased.

Figure 55. Mobility Between Public and Private Sector by Public Administration Tradition and HR System



As to international mobility (Figure 56), only 30% of all respondents answered that mobility between the EU administrations had increased; while 36% said that mobility did not increase. In particular, the respondents from the Continental European countries (49%) and from the Mediterranean countries (48%) are of the opinion that mobility did not increase.

Figure 56. Mobility Between Public Administrations of EU Member States by Public Administration Tradition and HR System



When looking at these figures it can be concluded that all efforts that aim to increase intra-ministerial mobility are relatively successful. However, this cannot be said for public-private mobility and international mobility. Thus, the (mostly) academic discussions about potential conflicts of interests and conflicting values in the private and the public sector (and value changes due to the trend towards more mobility between the two sectors) seem to be rather theoretical as long as the Member States are not very successful in increasing mobility between the different sectors and the public administrations of the EU Member States.

V. Conclusions: What are public services good at? Pathways of HR Management in the 21st century

The ongoing reforms in the national public services promote the change, deconstruction and the decentralisation of the civil services on all fronts. In addition, public policies nowadays are administered through increasingly complex networks, decentralised governance structures, public-private partnerships and cooperative ventures between NGOs, consultants and Government. As a consequence, the traditional concept of the public service as a single, unified employer is slowly disappearing. At the same time, HR management is also becoming more flexible and decentralised. Moreover, the public employees and their values are changing too.

Accusations that public services are not innovative, not ready to reform and suffering from reform inertia are clearly wrong. Contrary to this, HR reforms have led to many changes. Unfortunately, there is still too little evidence on the effects of these reforms. Furthermore this study can only shed some light on the effects of these reforms in the different Member States. In the future, more research (and a higher sample of respondents) is needed to reach more accurate and more representative conclusions.

Today, the changing role of the “State” requires a changing conception of the public services and the civil servants. Despite the many changes that are taking place in many countries, the public perception is still that civil servants work in an environment, which is clearly separated from the private sector. In some countries the civil servant is seen as a protected person, set apart from the outside world. In reality, customer and citizen orientation, as well as transparency, have increased and many working conditions have been aligned to those in the private sector. Nowadays the differences between public and private employees in status, working time, pay, pensions, holidays, recruitment and competency requirements are less significant than they were previously.

Without a doubt, the future will see the emergence of a growing paradox. On the one hand, various pressures (e.g. growing financial and demographic pressures as well as value changes) will continue to put pressure on the public services to continue with radical HR reforms. On the other hand there will be more discussions on the “identity” of public services and the need to maintain some specific features that are different to the private sector.

Overall, this study confirms the high relevance of public administrative traditions, geographical and cultural differences, as well as the importance of different public service structures (career- vs. position-based systems) on the implementation and the effects of public service and HR reforms. In a way this gives a fascinating insight into the differences and similarities of the HR systems in Europe. Whereas in some areas similar trends and effects can be observed, in other fields differences are prevailing or – even increasing. Still, continental- and Eastern European, Scandinavian, Anglo-Saxon, South-Eastern and Mediterranean countries have their own strengths and own weaknesses. However, as this study shows, many Eastern European countries face challenges that do not exist in the former “old” Member States.

Our study reveals that “civil servants” are satisfied with their work. They are well educated and ready to take over new responsibilities. They enjoy more job autonomy and job control. In this respect, the traditional image of the public executor who receives orders and executes them definitely belongs to the past.

Table 26. HR policies in the new civil service in the 21st century

Civil service principles and procedures	General developments
Categories with a public law status	Yes, but restricted to a few categories (e.g. judges, police, military), nomination and oath only for these categories
Private law status	Large majority of employees in the public service, further alignment of working conditions and status with private sector
Administrative principles and ethical standards	Ongoing trend towards more rights, rules, controls and accountability mechanisms, more bureaucracy
Trends in public employment	Generally further slight reduction of employment, need for additional recruitment in certain sectors and in some countries, downsizing “fashion” stopped in many countries
Job security	Importance of job security recognised while reduction of “lifetime tenure” critical
Career and position system	No trend towards a “best-practice” model, move away from “pure forms” and more diversity of different career and position systems
Principle of hierarchy	Remain important, however also trend towards more communication, participation and new organisational structures
Decentralisation of responsibilities	Still trend towards more decentralisation, growing awareness for the need for more consistency and coherence in standards, working conditions and HR policies
Mobility between the public and private sector	Yes, difficult in some countries because of difficult competitive situation of the public sector; need to ensure ethical standards
Leadership	Due to ongoing trends towards decentralisation of responsibilities and the changing nature of work Leadership will further increase in importance. However, growing gap between leadership expectations and the leadership “reality”
Career development	More focus on individual development plans, competency management, promotion policies remain a challenge
Cross-border mobility	Ongoing challenges and low cross-border mobility, slow lifting of obstacles (pensions, social security)
Anti-discrimination and diversity	Ongoing focus: more efforts in those countries that have neglected these issues in the past
Recruitment procedures, selection of top officials	Need for further reform: move away from recruitment to entry level as principle, more flexible recruitment (also at mid-

	career), open competitions for top managers
Pay according to performance	Ongoing popularity of PRP despite criticism, more differentiation and decentralisation in pay
Performance management and personnel appraisal	Ongoing challenges, focus on communication and trust, need for better leadership
Working conditions	Pressure on pay systems in some countries, need to combine private with professional working life, in some countries deterioration of working conditions; need to improve attractiveness in some Eastern European countries
Working time	Flexible working times, in some countries increase of weekly working time
Social dialogue and distribution of competence in HRM	Further decentralisation and fragmentation, local differentiation
HRM and role of Personnel Department	Decentralisation of HRM Department, need for more coherence in HR management
Training	Ongoing trend towards more investments, lifelong learning, more focus on training for older officials
Specific pension system	Further alignment with private sector, increase of retirement age, early retirement more difficult, calculation not on basis of last salary, more old age poverty

This study shows that many reforms have positive effects whereas some do not. However, all presented figures (and studies) mentioned above reveal an interesting paradox: civil servants are generally very satisfied with their work but are not happy with career development policies, performance assessment, performance management issues, pay policies and – to a lesser extent - their leaders. Moreover, top managers have slightly different views than the lower ranking employees. Mostly, top officials are more optimistic about the effects of the reforms. Women may also have different perceptions than men. However, more research is also needed here to understand why women have - at least in certain fields – more positive attitudes than men.

In the end, the question therefore arises as to whether the reform of working conditions will increase the positive aspects of work in order to maintain the high degree of performance and satisfaction, and improve those aspects which create dissatisfaction. So far, the reality seems to be highly ambivalent. Whereas some improvements can be noted (e.g. in the field of anti-discrimination, job responsibility, work-life balance, flexibilisation of working time, job content, ethics and diversity) other areas are not improving (poor performers policies, performance management, reward management etc.). Most reforms seem to have little effects on the development of public trust. However, the development of trust depends very much on the media attitudes and the right “marketing” of the public services. Generally the public services must do better and show the “real world” of the public services. Many features are positive. However, the positive features are less known than the critical developments. In particular, the media focus on the critical developments, scandals and failures.

As we have seen in this study, it is difficult to judge whether career-system countries face more or less challenges than position-system countries. At least one interesting result is that continental career-system countries seem to be successful in reducing administrative costs. On the other hand, career-system countries face more challenges with (a too high number of) rules in the field of HRM.

Overall the older Member States are more successful in fields such as anti-discrimination, equality and diversity policies. Many career-system countries also have more competitive pension systems. However, overall the Scandinavian countries are seen as more successful with regard to a number of individual HR policies. Generally, Eastern European States and the two new Member States face more challenges than the older Member States. Moreover, public employees in some of these countries are less satisfied and observe fewer improvements. At the same time - despite some important exceptions – many developments in these countries are also positive.

In all Member States, public servants seem to be very or relatively satisfied with their jobs and the job content and – increasingly – assume more of their own responsibilities. Thus, public service work is much less “dull and boring” than is commonly acknowledged. On the other hand, the public services still have some work to do in the field of “perception” management. Most public officials believe that HR policies are not competitive with those in the private sector. A totally different question is whether this is also the case in reality. At least public services are better than the perception.

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VII. ANNEXES

ANNEX 1:

Success cases and their context in the Member States

Member State	Examples of successful innovative practices	Context/circumstances of these success cases	Critical success factors having impact on innovation	Main HRM challenges for the future as seen by MS	Communication of success cases to the public
AT	More than 50% of unit heads exercise the annual appraisal talk	Legal advice in the context of a salary reform	Chance for more autonomy	Demographic change; challenges of migration	
AT	Job fair; the leadership model (annual strategic process in some ministries)	Top management initiative	Transparency	How to deal with the effects of an ageing society	Periodic newsletter informing on these issues
AT	Promotion of women for top jobs; creation of a code of conduct for civil servants (project finished in June 2008); promotion of internal and external mobility, more exchange programmes, promotion of EU-jobs; new competence development programmes for executives in several ministries; enhanced management by objectives; more focused and better training of civil servants; fairer pension system for civil servants and contractual staff as well as harmonization with private sector; better health care programmes (in the context of the ageing workforce); possibility of using a'sabbatical' year for all civil servants (new)	Promotion of women for top jobs: political initiative; code of conduct: political initiative; mobility: political initiative and economical reasons; establishment of competence development programmes for executives : top management initiative and political support; MbO: top management initiative and political support and political support; better training: top management initiative and political support; pensions: political initiative; health care programmes: top management initiative and political support; sabbatical: political initiative	Political aims; economic reasons (better controlling, more efficiency), NPM, good governance, exchange of experiences at the European level	Demographic change: ageing workforce - health care issues; customers get older - new services are needed, knowledge management; economic situation: we need better personnel planning, better controlling, we need to know how to do more with less; outcome orientation; performance: personnel managers are no longer administrators, they are key factors in the change processes - they need to be fit for this challenge; all executives need more training to develop leadership and to be able to guide their staff through changes; more transparent public service: values and ethical guidelines are needed	Information on the homepage

Member State	Examples of successful innovative practices	Context/circumstances of these success cases	Critical success factors having impact on innovation	Main HRM challenges for the future as seen by MS	Communication of success cases to the public
AT			Participation/communication/information of employees; political pressure sometimes; public opinion	Despite the obligation to reduce the costs recruit excellent staff	Workshops for children; guided tours; website suitable for handicapped people; folders; newsletters; open-house days for the public; book presentations; seminars; conferences
AT	MbO, 360° feedback	Top management initiative	Above all: motivated and dedicated/committed leaders, who are able to be a model and a guide	To work in general longer and to retire later, and all the topics in connection with this: health care, work-life balance, job enrichment a.s.o.	
AT			More possibilities to take own responsibilities; more financial incentives	Establishment of clear ethical rules; securing ethical behaviour; fight against corruption	Nothing; on the contrary, there is too little identification and no solidarity of the head of the organisation with its staff.
AT	Improvement of communication between co-workers/colleagues; more leadership	Economic pressures; political decisions		Motivation, flexibility; education; support for leaders	Not enough - press releases are concentrated on the leading politician and not so much on the administration

Member State	Examples of successful innovative practices	Context/circumstances of these success cases	Critical success factors having impact on innovation	Main HRM challenges for the future as seen by MS	Communication of success cases to the public
AT	<p>1) Staff appraisal: since 1998 there is a mandatory staff appraisal in the federal public administration that must be carried out annually and involves all superiors and each of their staff members. Only teachers and Judges are exempted and under no obligation to carry out these appraisals. Staff appraisals provide an occasion for setting objectives and are part of management by objectives. The realisation and implementation of staff appraisals depend to a high degree on the acceptance of the instrument by top executive levels. It is not yet taken advantage of its full potential. 2) There are several programmes for enhancing the mobility of federal employees: * bilateral exchange schemes: programmes for the exchange of federal employees between Austria and several other European States have been drawn up. * exchange with private enterprises: Federal employees have the possibility of getting to know work in the private sector within this program. * Exchange with employees from the administration of the federal states (Bundesländer). 3) Reform of the payment system in the</p>		<p>In Austria recent efforts of modernisation and reform have been made especially in the framework of the Administrative Quality Offensive (Verwaltungsqualitätsoffensive). The Council of Ministers resolved on March 14, 2007 to initiate this program as a continuation of the administrative reform efforts of the past few years. It seeks to attain further quality improvement and to stagger spending cuts. Each Federal Ministry was asked to hand in projects aiming at these goals. The main focus points are e-government (e.g. electronic service of documents), reorganisation (e.g. creation of more operatively active budget units with budgetary flexibility), debureaucratisation (lowering administrative costs for private companies) and quality management. Target agreements between the Federal Chancellery, the Ministry of Finance and the respective ministry are the basis for further steps of reform.</p>	<p>The main challenges will be handling demographic change, non discrimination and diversity in the public service and the establishment of guidelines for professional ethics. Currently work on a Code of Conduct for public employees is in progress and will be completed in the course of 2008.</p>	<p>The webpages of the resorts provide information on the work of the different Federal Ministries and of their organisational structure (e.g. organigrams).</p>
BE	<p>Introduction of mandatory functions for top management in federal public service</p>	<p>Political changes and depolitisation of public service; objectif: increasing effectiveness and mobility between managers of the public and private sector</p>	<p>Communication and involvement of the floor</p>	<p>Management of ageing and the demographic evolution in federal public service</p>	

Member State	Examples of successful innovative practices	Context/circumstances of these success cases	Critical success factors having impact on innovation	Main HRM challenges for the future as seen by MS	Communication of success cases to the public
BG	1. web-based testing for centralised recruitment for junior experts; 2. in the near future - a centralized HR software will be used by every administration in the country; it will allow quick gathering of data that is needed for analysis	Political decision, good technological environment; willingness to participate	Leadership; delegation of tasks	Update the competency framework; retention of talented employees; improving the image of the civil servant; propose an adequate bonus scheme	Organise press conferences when needed; publish information on new initiatives on the organisation's website; have QandA section for questions in the HR area on the web-site; once a year organise an HR conference
BG	Initiative of the Ministry of Social Policy about employment of newly-graduated young people for a certain period to gain experience, with the possibility for an institution to keep them as regular employee		Friendly working atmosphere	Lack of qualified HR managers	
CY			Employee empowerment, change management	Performance management	
CY			Communication; teamwork; leadership; motivation	Introduction of a performance management system and target setting; performance-related pay or, in general, rewards policies; promotion policies and criteria	

Member State	Examples of successful innovative practices	Context/circumstances of these success cases	Critical success factors having impact on innovation	Main HRM challenges for the future as seen by MS	Communication of success cases to the public
CY	Special law for filling first entry posts; this law sets specific criteria and weights for evaluation of candidates, based on which special weight is given to the criterion of the written exam, for objectivity and transparency purposes. The written exam is common for a group of companies with similar required qualifications and it has a competitive character. Separate exams are conducted only for specific posts that demand special qualifications (i.e. engineering qualifications)	The measure was taken as an attempt to accelerate the recruitment procedures and set more objective criteria for evaluating candidates; political commitment by the President of the Republic of CY.	The procedure for accession of CY to the European Union and the final accession create positive environment for making changes in the public service without major reactions or resistance. The opportunity to compare HR policies or best practices of other European countries has a positive impact, too.	To introduce a new performance appraisal system (the current one is neutral and does not contribute to the development and promotion of the best employees) that will be more effective	Our HR department contributes in issuing citizens rights booklets for different departments/services in order to inform the citizens about necessary procedures and what to expect from the specific department. In addition, public announcements are made for something new or facts of general interest.
CY			Less rules, the right people holding management positions, more training, especially for civil servants holding management positions, a spirit of competitiveness similar to the private sector or other organisations	Getting people to perform up to standards, something which is very difficult to achieve especially if the performance management system in place is not effective; changing civil servants' attitudes	Some communication on behalf of central government about recently implemented measures for improving the quality of services offered to the public, mainly through press conferences, through the distribution of informative leaflets via newspapers, through the preparation and distribution of Citizens' Charters etc
CY			Training and culture	To adopt a new assessment scheme, so to improve employee performance and if possible relate performance with pay	eGovernment (some applications available online), all info available on website, issuing publications, one-stop shops etc.

Member State	Examples of successful innovative practices	Context/circumstances of these success cases	Critical success factors having impact on innovation	Main HRM challenges for the future as seen by MS	Communication of success cases to the public
CY	Improving recruitment and promotion procedures; prepare a plan for learning activities, implement and evaluate the learning activities on an annual basis	Modernisation and innovation in the public service are always a priority for all political parties and a lot of importance is placed on making the necessary reforms so that public service becomes more customer-friendly, citizen-oriented, more efficient and effective	Leadership; creativity; team-spirit; trust; alignment between the goals of the employees and the organisation; share ideas	Improving performance assessment; motivating employees; strengthening leadership/management skills	Promoting Citizens Charters and citizens guides for all departments encourage and assist citizens in exercising their rights and improve the Department's performance by setting specific service standards.
CY	Promotion of learning in the public service with the development of decentralized capacity for managing learning on a systematic basis, through the establishment, training, support and electronic connection of Learning Units within public service departments. These units will conduct a learning needs analysis, prepare a plan for learning activities, implement and evaluate the learning activities in annual cycles; promoting quality management via the Introduction of CAF on a pilot-basis, in order to improve the effectiveness of public administration and the quality of services provided to the citizen; improving recruitment procedures	Accession of CY to the European Union has further enhanced the need for modernisation and innovation in the public service. These issues are always a priority in the agenda of every presidential campaign and a lot of importance is placed on making the necessary reforms so that public service becomes more citizen-oriented, customer-friendly, more efficient and effective.	Some factors that foster innovation in an organisation include the existence of leadership, trust, creativity, team-spirit, availability of resources, compensation systems that recognize and reward collaboration and innovation, alignment between the goals of the employees and the organisation, a safe environment to take risks and share ideas, etc.		Rendering services to the citizen so as to enhance transparency, enable citizens to exercise their rights and improve the department's performance by setting specific service standards; facilitating the access of citizens to a series of government information and services from one point of contact/location; deployment of ICT (i.e. eGovernment) in order to increase internal efficiency and offer quality services to the citizens who make use of new and improved technologies at a decentralized level with minimum bureaucracy (e.g. online services, webpages, etc.)
CZ	Strategy of HRM	Political situation	IT; training; pressure from the top	Education, training, communication; more flexible working time	

Member State	Examples of successful innovative practices	Context/circumstances of these success cases	Critical success factors having impact on innovation	Main HRM challenges for the future as seen by MS	Communication of success cases to the public
CZ	We try to use a functional job analysis and implement EFQM model at the ministry in 2008 (Czech police has it already thanks to our pilote project)	Interest and support by the leaders	Motivated staff; qualified managers	Decrease fluctuation; motivate younger people to work for the public sector, and, especially motivate them to stay here and possibly become the new managers	Currently our department prepares an EFQM project (satisfaction issue is there too)
DE	Regular indoor and outdoor meetings of whole department helps to improve the comunacation within colleagues from different sector. Quite a large possibiloiy of workshops and seminars.	Management initiative.	Flexibility; education and training courses		
DE	Mentoring programmes	Modernisation of public services	Shortage of staff	Health care issues due to demographic change; government priorities; creating a future-oriented public administration by innovation	
DE	Remarkable steps have been done decades ago, e.g. centralisation and intensivation of inservice training, elaboration of staff development plans, introduction of new HR-instruments, e.g. methods of MbO. The continuous reduction of staff with its pressure on HRM has paralyzed many of these achievements. Today we have to be satisfied with small steps, e.g. team bonusses in the framework of performance pay.	Political situation including understanding/appreciation of the relevance of public administration for society welfare combined with good economic background.	First: Clear anlysis of effective reform needs avoiding the ups and downs of reform fashions, elaboration of an overall concept. Second: initiative and full support by management (minister/president/director); full transparency; step-by-step implementation without pressure and hurry; trust-building preparation including open discussion with staff (win them for ideas and plans!); if needed: Test run in selected units if and where impacts are not fully foreseeeable	Enhance mobility in all regards thinkable: On national level (between ministries, Bund-Länder, public and private sector, to universities etc.) as well as on European level (amongst Member States, between MS and EU-institutions): Its the most effective way to break up structures, to discover new perspectives, to understand work structures and constraints of other sectors/fields, and in the end: to improve the attractiveness of public administration	In the Federal Ministry of the Interior its not the task of HRM but of a specific PR unit (Öffentlichkeitsarbeit) which uses different instruments: brochures, website, informaton for newspapers etc.. however, impacts are limited. An additional recipee should be: mobility, mobility ...
DE			The pressure of foreseeeable demographic challenges; public administration has to become more competitive on the labour market; this consideration has been able to trigger some improvements.		

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DE			E.g. offering family services for employees by the ministry	Better communication with each single civil servant for a better personnel development	They organise once a year an open house day (sunday) where the public is invited to visit the ministry and where all civil servants are at their offices to answer questions asked from the visitors; our ministry has a very good and actual website.
DE			Open-mindedness; not many levels of hierarchy; team-oriented decisions	Demographic change	Many PR-activities; responsiveness to the citizen; internet
DE	Team-training in the federal border police to support understanding, collaboration and effectiveness among the civil servants, employees and policemen	Top management decision to implant a quality strategy in the organisation that has consequences for all members of the organisation	Top management activities; transparency and communication flows	Balance life and work and reward family activities of fathers and mothers in an adequate way	
DE				Increase the attractiveness of public service in spite of a decreasing number of jobs	
DK			Model role of superiors in case of a top-down implementation of measures		Continuous enhancement of PR work, i.a. by a new website
DK			The demographical challenge; the reduction of public sector budgets	We cannot compete with the private sector in terms of pay.	

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DK	A Job Fair for the recruitment of ethnic minorities (March 2007)	The job fair was jointly organised by the social partners in the state, municipal and financial sectors in cooperation with the Ministry of Refugee, Immigration and Integration Affairs and other relevant partners. The job fair shall be seen in the light of the demographic changes and diminishing workforce, plus the target set by the Danish Government that ethnic minorities should constitute 4 pct. of all state employees. A detailed description of the job fair can be found in the publication Diversity through Equality which was published in connection with the Copenhagen conference in October 2007.	The demographic changes and a limited workforce in the future is a strongly motivational factor for innovation and adaptation to changes, e.g. new forms of work.	What may be the outcome of the ongoing collective bargaining in the public sector (at present unknown). Implementation of the governments' quality reform and specific initiatives concerning e.g. recruitment, training, education, working conditions, agreed by the government and the social partners in the public sector.	E.g. electronic newsletters on specific HR issues (agreements with trade unions, various HR initiatives, ethical guidelines etc.). Information on ongoing activities, including collective bargaining 2008, available on the website of the State Employers Authority. Active communication strategy, including contact with media/press.
DK	Talent and career development; career planning	The competition for employees	Leadership and trust	To maintain (retain) employees and keep them satisfied;	It is not so important in my sector
DK			Realise changes and not be afraid of trying something new.	Find ways so the employees maintains in the organisation	

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EE	MindLab: a unit for strategic innovation in the public sector; MindLab is a trans-organisational unit for user-centered innovation, which was established on January 1st 2007 by the Ministry of Economic and Business Affairs (www.oem.dk), the Ministry of Taxation (www.skm.dk), and the Ministry of Employment (www.bm.dk) in DK.	Top management initiatives		Recruitment	
EE	Flexible working hours, working via Internet	HR department initiative		Knowledge management	Inform about salary system
EE	Analytical job assessment with the help of a unified methodology, which helps to build up a fairer salary system within an individual organisation and the whole public service	Inadmissible salary system where there was no transparency and logic any more.	Willingness for change which comes from the top management and openness for new and innovative ideas from the personnel	Talent management (how to find, develop and hold top specialists); developing and integrating a competency management system including recruitment, development, appraisal and pay of personnel in one organisation; work-life balance	In our organisation there is not very much specific initiatives towards public but our department - Department of Public Service at the State Chancellery (responsible for EEn public service development) together with other institutions who are also responsible for public service (Ministry of Justice, Ministry of Finance) have initiated a new website www.avalikteenistus.ee where the public can find all job vacancies in different State and local government agencies, and read about the principles of recruitment, development and remuneration in the public service etc

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EE				To have a political commitment to renew Public Service Act and to have good implementation mechanisms (incl. HRM policies) to do that. The hope is that it will clarify core values, expectations, rights and duties of public servants.	Articles in newspapers, participation in events etc.
EE	Job evaluation; mentoring; survey among employees on parental leave; teleworking	Top management and HR management initiatives	Top management skills and attitudes	In a small country (with decreasing population up until now) it is difficult to find qualified specialists	We expect to have a professional PR department whose role is to communicate to the public
EE	Position-evaluation project	Differences between public and privat sector remuneration system	New leaders in management		
EE	For example the initiative of promoting ethics and integrity in the Estonian public service through initiating case study/dilemma training programme (see also EEn case presented at HRWG seminar in Ljubljana). It has helped to raise awareness of the issue as a first step. See also the case for central training policy implementation	Please see the case study presentation made at HRWG seminar.	Open-mindedness, willingness to change and to do things differently, openness to different views and opinions, also certain risk-mindedness; leadership vision and capacity, professionalism of people in organisations	Retaining talent in the public service organisations, providing development opportunities, organising rotation schemes to broaden experiences instead of letting people leave the public sector for private companies; demographic change, shortage of staff	Our department of public service is responsible for several initiatives: organising annual conference of public servants (to promote good image and common values of public servants, discuss topical issues of concern); publication of an annual Public Service Yearbook (including topical articles about innovative practices, new developments, positive stories about public servants, official statistics); trying to publish positive news and articles in media about positive aspects of life and work of public servants/services and what we do for the public; going to employment fairs for graduates to promote work in public service;

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EL	Job evaluation (centrally coordinated and implemented in many public service organisations)	Lack of overall reforms and the need to bring some changes to public service salary system	Leadership, resources available for implementing change, motivation and commitment of those involved; Investments in leadership development (training and development programmes for top officials)	How to retain good employees in the current economic situation (mobility has increased, there are plenty of opportunities outside public sector and outside the country)	Provide adequate information, involve in decision-making processes, advertise our jobs to wider public.
EL			The basic factor is motivation to accept changes, motives can be financial or other		
ES	The Information Society S.A., a state-owned company, has managed to recruit very well qualified staff	The status of the Information Society S.A. made it possible to overpass time consuming procedures for recruitment in civil service and to offer incentives to well qualified scientists and managers to work there.	Strengthen the sense of ownership for each innovation among civil servants who are called to run it; Leadership: the leader usually gives the pace. If he is receptive to innovative ideas, it is possible that a more participatory administration will be achieved. In the Greek civil administrations hierarchy, from the rank of the Director General upwards, partisan criteria are used to fill in the leadership posts. This leads to self-censoring when it comes to innovative ideas that may influence the status quo.	To connect the job descriptions with mobility policy	Some advertising to the press regarding the citizens service centers (KEP)

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ES	<p>The Spanish General Directorate of the Civil Service has just developed a new online job request application service. It's designed for those Civil Servants who has just become part of the Civil Service after succeeding in a recruitment process, and then have to face their very first job inside the Administration. Results of the first experience show a very positive impact because of its simplicity and the quick job assignation. New civil servants are compelled to request the job they want by electronic means and the assignation process becomes fully automatized from that moment on.</p>	<p>The context was and still is the will of improving public service through new technologies. International organisations such as O.E.C.D. and E.U. are working in this area and encourage their member states to do so. At national level, the 11/2007 Law of Electronic Access to Public Services gives a deadline to all the three level administration to establish the means for all the citizens to access the public services by electronic channels such as the Internet or Text Messages.</p>	<p>There are several factors with a positive impact on innovation. One of them is interpersonal relationships. Motivation is another factor to take into account regarding innovation. Motivation can be managed with economic means (increasing salaries, creating complementary wages to enhance performance) and also with professional means (by promoting the best performers inside the organisation), and with non economic means such as recruitment and training. The Institutional Relations Unit has been attending over the past few years a series of meetings with the General Directorates of the Civil Service from all the regions in Spain, each one in a different region. The aim of these meetings is to share experiences in human resources management, to work together in the development of the basis of the new Statute of the Public Employee and to cast a light on the new Civil Service techniques. Some of the meetings are for general issues and others for special issues that need to be shared with every region. Moreover, the Labour Relations Unit holds every year a special training course.</p>	<p>At this moment, the implementation of the Basic Statute of the Public Employee is meant to be the main challenge in Human Resources and employer policies. The impact of the new regulation affects the whole range of Human Resources policies. The development of this new law by passing seventeen new regional Civil Service laws and one new State Civil Service law is a challenge itself.</p>	<p>The 060 Network is a multimedia platform designed to give an answer to the citizens' demands of having a number of channels to connect with the administration (in person, on line and by phone). It works by three means: the first one is a phone number that centralises all the phone numbers in the Administration. Dialing this number (060, very easy to remember) citizens can get a quick answer to simple and common questions or get connected to any other number they need. The second one is the Internet. The www.060.website contains all the services the Central State provides altogether and is also the front door to all the services of the other administrations (regional and local). The last one is the in person channel. It is based on a series of offices from all the three level administration to assist the citizens. Thanks to new technologies these offices are connected and integrated in a public service network. The project also plans to work by other means like text messages on cellular phones and Digital Terrestrial Television.</p>

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ES	Nowadays Spain is living a process of transformation related to HR-policies. The law applicable to public employees has recently changed and introduces new management techniques that must be implemented in all public administrations. However, the development of that law has not been fixed yet. The effectiveness is not therefore proved.	The main reason for the change that is in process is the will to get a public administration more oriented to the citizens needs. Citizens start to be considered as consumers of public services and, therefore, able to receive a quality and fast service.	The main factor that has a positive impact on innovation is the arrival of younger employees, who are more prepared to face the changes.	To get a real and fair performance assessment and to involve employees in the achievement of public goals.	
ES	There is, for example, a programme to reconcile personal and professional life		Political initiative	To be competitive towards the private sector in terms of salary, for example; to improve productivity	e.g. communication via internet
ES			Among other things, the application of technologies in every field in which it could be possible.	The main one consists of achieving a real link between civil servants' training and the effective accomplishment of tasks in practice	They have been developing explanatory documents called "cartas de servicios"
ES	Gender diversity policies, programme for conciliation between personal and professional lives	The above policies responded to employee demands	Better coordination with private sector in the development of new initiatives and ideas	Personnel motivation and improvement of productivity/efficiency	Use of new technologies (internet) to communicate with the public

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FI	The recruitment of disabled people by the central administration has been very successful in the late years. The percentage of disabled people recruited in relation with the rest of people has increased. In some of the most important civil servants general corps this percentage has increased from 3% to 8 or 9%. The Agencia Tributaria (the Spanish tax agency) has had successful HR policies in the last twenty years, they have implemented performance policies, they recruit workers very efficiently and generally people that work there, are very satisfied.		Planification, performance management, and adaptation to the new knowledge society	Adaptation to the information society	Marketing policies (for example, unification of all telephone numbers in one, 060, or communication with citizen by SMS)
FI			Open discussion with leaders and employees in every step of the change.	Keep employees in public sector, when the big pension wave starts	
FI				To get more possibilities to develop the careers, education, less loaded time schedules; open access to all administrative jobs	For instance too many meetings just to please the top management (without any bottom-up results).
FI				Better leadership; integrating employees in decision-making	
FI				Take care of all the changes we have going on	They inform as much as they can
FI				The new Finnish Innovation University is a big challenge.	

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FI			Motivated personnel; competent leaders; new ways of thinking; respect for others; security; high education; good spirit	Many people are retiring, there are not enough young people to do all the work; HR-bureaus never can pay as high wages as private employers Nowadays it is not sexy to help other people, to get a big income is much more important; as the taxes always only seem to go down, the public services do not get enough money	
FI			inspiration=you believe in the goals set and believe that the organisation can reach them	Stress, fatigue, the working population is getting older	
FI	Best practices; quality management projects	Management initiative	Transparency, co-operation, respect and confidence on all levels	Retirements, shortage of manpower	Information policy and more transparency, however difficult to fulfill
FI			Good leadership, openness and participation of all the staff members	a) Neoliberal economical theories will destroy public services b) adequate number of qualified staff and other resources	Recruitment is more public and job descriptions are much better and realistic. Web based recruitment system is, however difficult to the jobseekers, because there is a little possibilities to make difference related to the other job candidates
FI			To be able to attract young, competent people - and to keep them motivated.	How to keep the ageing personnel in work and good health; how to deal with staff cuts and increase of workload	
FI	Stronger advertising and web-based recruitment		Usually younger people adapt better	Not just to get the best people but also to keep them	Taking part in fairs, collaborate with interest groups, modernise web sites,
FI				Conflicting demands (national governments, EU, enterprises etc.); requirement of efficiency in the public sector too	
FI	Improvement of the salary systems	Political decisions	Training and information	To get well educated professionals in service	Making better recruiting announcements and increasing information on organisations internet sites

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FI			Supervision of work-life changes by external consultant	To increase the cooperation.	I think the communication to the public is good in my HR department. The ministries should improve the communication.
FR	Performance-related-pay systems in use in 100% of state operating units. Five shared-service centres for all state financial and HR management.	All those mentioned.	Most often it is an outward pressure for change, be it shortage of resources, political decision making or the like. Sometimes, but not that frequently, it is the for-sightedness of the management.	Main challenges arise from an aging population demanding for more services and an aging and retiring personnel, which makes it more difficult to take care of those services. This applies also to other sectors of the society. This in turn implies difficulties in recruiting and retaining personnel, for the other sectors also competing for the same labour force.	We are active in disseminating information to the great public, media, students etc. on what it is like to work in the state sector. The fora are numerous, such as recruitment fairs, road shows, cooperation with universities and other educational institutions' career services. A special website www.valtiolle.fi was launched (50 000 visits per month).
FR				Enhance diversity; demographic change (ageing)	
HU	Things will change with new legislation - but for the moment great difficulties to set up innovative policies in the field of public administration		Dialogue with people; empower them	Better recruitment, mobility; fair assessment	
IE					Promotion of jobs in public administration at job seeking events.
LU	It is mandatory in all civil service offices to have an annual assessment of performance for each member of staff. At the start of each year tasks, goals and timeframes are agreed between the employee and manager. At the end of each year they are revisited and the employee is assessed. A reviewer is available (if agreement cannot be agreed)	Top management		Managing family friendly/work-life balance issues	Information on Website, availability of information via our press office, briefings with media

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LU	The setting up of a HRM network in which all HR managers of ministerial departments and administrations participate				Constant website update; systematic publication of all vacancies, for internal and external recruitment on the website; communication of developments in HR policies initiated by the Ministry of Public Service
LU			Willingness to change, leadership, involvement of all concerned parties	Goal-oriented planning, performance oriented measurement	Website
LU	Implementation of CAF; implementation of talks for individual and personal development; implementation of job descriptions; assessment project; working together	Political and top management initiatives		Strengthen the leadership; lifelong learning; improving working conditions and technology; enhance internal mobility	Our quality managers have launched a satisfaction survey, and we are using the results to make improvements improve.
LV			Budget constraints; a clear will and vision to innovate	-	Information and communication sessions about the different projects in the field of HRM reform
LV					We implement e-government in our county, inter alia e-signature. Public services mostly accept our ideas, because they see real advantage of this.
LV			Increase of competition in labour market	Lack of employees; how to attract more qualified workers to civil service	
LV				Keep the best employees; start a proper appraisal and finally to implement education audit	

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MT	At the moment the State Chancellery is working on the improvement of the performance assessment system and develops the electronic tool to make the system easier to use, less bureaucratic and also more objective.	The main reason is a need to improve the HR management system in LV public administration, to adopt new tendencies and the best practices of other countries in this field.	Factors are top management initiative, need to improve performance results of institution or improve the services delivered to customers; problems with HR issues within the institution (for example, big turnover of staff, problems to find new employees with suitable applicants for vacant position competencies, etc.)	The State Chancellery has developed new policy planning document Public Administration HR Development Statement 2008 - 2013. This document is based on competency development measures to be implemented. During the next years it is planned to work on development and implementation of the IT system, mobility issues, as well as talent and knowledge management issues.	HR Development Policy Unit of The State Chancellery regularly organises meetings for HR managers of Ministries, to discuss HR development issues, problems, share information about best practices in other ministries, etc.
MT					Publication of achievements on a yearly basis
MT	Shift towards customer-oriented public service	Top management initiative	sometimes changes within the public sector take time due to cultural issues	Flexicurity will soon be a challenge to both employee and employer	We are improving our e-services
MT	The fact that we are having more distance learning opportunities for civil servants	Economics	The fact that the public service is a job for life, sometimes it is difficult to change hearts and minds	Introduction of more balancing efforts such as teleworking and flexibility	Trying to adopt a strong HR IT system to be used as a management tool for more efficiency and effectiveness; and at the same time production of highly qualified staff for the future
MT	The setting up of a Human Resource forum to discuss HR issues	Top management initiative	Less bureaucracy, good leadership	Recruitment of qualified staff, introduction of teleworking	Using the media and internet to inform the public
NL	The public service is the best employer regarding Conditions of Work: We have a multitude of Family Friendly Measures such as work on Reduced Hours, various forms of Family-Related Leave, Teleworking....	Top management initiatives and an approach towards the share of female employees and towards a better work-family (work-life) balance		The coming into force of the Public Administration Act.	Our department is not responsible for such issues. However, whenever new policies and measures put in place, circulars are adequately issued and, when relevant, the press is informed.
NL	Flexibilisation in the organisation of labour(time); life-time cycle management, integrated with pension policies etc.	Economics and demographics	Leadership, leaders trained in trusting middle management instead of frustrating them; competency management	Demographics; downsizing; diversity, and how to reconcile them	PR campaigns for recruitment on TV improving the image, while recruiting youngsters.

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NL		Top management initiative better quality of HRM employees centralization			Innovation of internet services
NL	Two HR best practise contests (2005-2007); a complex and innovative program to implement employee self service; several best practises like pre-employment educational programmes and employee satisfaction enquiries	The three of them in my opinion	Political pressure	To get enough qualified people to do the work	PR program
NL	Creating a management-developmentprogramma voor topmanagement in public affair.		Responsibility at workforce level; a clear statement by the management about organisational goals and how one can contribute; autonomy;	Keeping good people (highly qualified) on board and regulating work stress (work/life balance)	Making sure that management takes responsibility in training and developing their employees in
PL	Cooperation between organisations improved; more ICT-instruments	Economic pressure; top management initiatives; inspiration; availability of money to realise plans	Inspiration and money	To be taken serious as professionals and HR experts	
PL	Using modern means of motivation; investing in people; taking advantage of total quality management - using CAF model, ISO etc	Top management initiative	Integration to the EU, new people, open-minded, younger civil servants	Improving rewards schemes, increasing salaries; finishing the process of job position evaluation; the sharing of salary-administration between organisations	Some PR/information activities like open door initiative
PL		A number of EU funded projects have contributed to improving public services	1) Coherent innovation-oriented training and development policy 2) stability of management team 3) management commitment to innovation 4) proper (HR, financial, etc.) resources for tackling an adaptiveness challenge 5) inclusion of change management into organisational policy	1) How to guarantee attractiveness of the public service as an employer 2) efficiency of such tools as performance assessment 3) reform of the remuneration system in the public service 4) how to ensure an open and competitive recruitment	Given the legal framework, public services policy remains highly decentralized. There are a number of government institutions which are responsible for running HR policy toward specific segments/groups of public servants

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PT	Annual management-staff assessment by employees providing a good opportunity to say what works/ doesn't work in the organisation. This assessment has real impact, e.g. one manager has been removed from his position after a negative assessment. Employees take it seriously.	Top-management attitude (HRM-oriented)	Right attitude, financial resources, good organisation, time and will; investments in training	Changing the remuneration system (those who work more, have more responsibility - get more), keeping best employees (nowadays we invest a lot in them and within a couple of years they go to the private sector); introducing new motivational measures, competence management, performance assessment systems	HR department is rather inside communication-oriented
PT			Employees' capacities and strong leadership		Implementation of CAF measures (intranet, organisational website, publications, improvement of the public relations services, external training)
PT	Announce offers of employment in www.bep.gov.pt.; application of CAF	Top management initiative and the political situation	Access to information, good IT infrastructure; create web sites where the citizens can obtain information	A radical transformation by a modern model of contractualisation	Need to transmit a positive image of our work to the people who need our service; communication with the public is also a political matter
PT	The concentration of all the services involved for citizens when starting a new business; only one document that concentrates characteristics and owner's data	Political leadership, orientated towards reform and change	Top management initiatives	Better work conditions, more mobility, less bureaucracy	Services through internet
RO				To motivate the employees in the field of HR and employer policies in the near?	
RO	On the NACS website people can test their abilities and basic knowledge, necessary for becoming a civil servant; the test is for free and encourages people to apply for jobs in public administration; it also increases transparency and fairness	Improved infrastructure with the help of PHARE projects, best practice exchange and guidance	Flexibility to new ideas, openness; lifelong learning	Too low salaries for public servants, leading to a drain towards private sector business	Use of new IT facilities and communication technologies

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SE	Nothing exceptional at the national level, but some initiatives in HR departments of central public administrations	Top and middle management initiative (sometimes National Agency of Civil Servants or Ministry of Interior and Administrative Reform)	Good communication and strong leadership	A new unitary pay system for civil servants/public employees; flexibilisation of work in public administration	
SE	All agencies are reporting their short-term and long-term goals for HRM in the financial annual report. VERVA is then using that to evaluate all agencies in SE regarding competence, training and so on. It gives a message that this is an important area and that some criteria will be followed and analysed. Good examples from agencies are highlighted.	It was a task from the top management.	A crisis, because it makes it easy for everybody to understand that we have to change. Understanding brings motivation and facilitates change. Top management is very important and that they take the lead and are keeping track of a process over a long period. It is essential that the management is open and communicates a lot. Getting a critical mass to support the changes also has a positive impact.	Diversity. Doing more with less people. On older population and its consequences.	We cooperate with the internal information-unit regarding the profile of our homepages where we present current job openings. We want to present the agency as an attractive employer and spread positive information, e.g. pictures and interviews with different employees
SE			Communication	Attracting the best	Participate in job-information events at different universities
SE			Management that is willing to take initiatives and make changes		Web pages
SE			Involvement and participation	Interesting jobs; possibility to grow; salary	Our internet-site and a paper for the customers; visits to universities and schools
SE	A policy about involvement is a very good start for creating the infrastructure for changes; communication policy is also important		Involvement of staff in management decisions; sense of involvement in general: if you know what is going on and you have a chance to make your voice heard (not only through the unions) the climate for changes will improve strongly	In SE one of the biggest challenges is how to recruit new public servants when all people born in the 1940-ies are retiring.	Websites, PR-materials
SE			Delegation of responsibilities; clear rules and procedures without unnecessary details	Costs	Web-communication
SE			the employees sense of coherence and meaning in their work.	Good leadership with sense for the needs of the employees.	participating in public discussions in media.

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SE			Openness, information, communication and transparency	To remain an attractive employer in a highly competitive market	We communicate mainly through our official website
SE	We build alliances with other public and private companies in order to systematically have more impact on the labour market, and to achieve a more attractive picture of working within the railway and construction area. There are a couple of cases where we successfully have connected marketing, selection, education and finally recruitment (of young unemployed people), into one package under cooperation among private and public organisations.	We have shared so much information among the involved companies, that we also share the overall picture on coming challenges. As a public organisation we have a rather good capacity in sampling information and conducting analyses. Due to the process of sharing information there has also grown mutual trust among the companies	Openness in information on aims and goals; reasons for change; opportunities for communication; visible and communicated strategy from management; trust in the capacity of the individual employees; change in organisational principles of HR administration, simultaneously lead to a clear line between managers' responsibility and HR professionals role. The entire HR field is now looked upon and used in a much more professional and efficient way.	1. Analysing the future need and supply of educated employees, in different fields (i.e. technology and administration). 2. Finding activities that make us more attractive as a potential employer among young people and students. 3. Transferring education and training activities from the employer in to the public educational system - in order to create a levelled playing field for us and our private competitors. 4. Maintain and develop an attractive and creative work-climate.	We have a communication plan with a wide range of different activities and channels involved. Please contact me if there is a special interest in these activities.
SE				Leadership, equality, working environment issues	Very much information on web
SE			A good working environment creates flexible employees.	To keep the really good employees	
SE	In our organisation we have performed some projects, which have resulted into an increase of best practice, better transparency and effectiveness	Economic pressure and complaints from the customers	Transparency; involvement of staff in management decisions; competence development; leadership development; positive attitude from top leaders	In our field it is to have EU-laws and rules modified so that they become more in line with what customers feel is reasonable	Putting more weight on the importance of information

Member State	Examples of successful innovative practices	Context/circumstances of these success cases	Critical success factors having impact on innovation	Main HRM challenges for the future as seen by MS	Communication of success cases to the public
SE	<p>* Swedish National Taxboard uses ICT-support in their business as a solution to demands caused by the generational change. * The importance of international collaboration in The Swedish Nuclear Inspectorate (SKI) when striving for increased ethnic and cultural diversity in the organisation. * Swedish Prison and Probation Service's striving for an equal gender distribution with the help of adapted work chores during pregnancy. * The Swedish Financial Supervisory Authority who strive to retain good competence by stimulating to internal, developing mobility to satisfy the need for development in employment. * Collaboration between nine major Swedish agencies, the Centro-agencies, to develop Key-measures to follow how un-health diminishes or increases. Six common key-measures have been developed together with a proposal about how these measures can be used. * The Swedish Met Office has introduced non-regulated working time for all employees and also succeeded in promoting the notion of employees taking personal responsibility for business.</p>	<p>Even if it in all cases have not been a question of top management initiative, the support from that managerial level always is of the utmost importance. Economic pressure is also directly or indirectly an important aspect of nearly all cases. Supply of competencies and worry for less good conditions is another important aspect. * One of the major factors of success is the delegated employer responsibility, meaning that each part of central government may take their own steps in order to increase efficiency and effectiveness of HRM</p>	<p>* Inclusive organisation with a lot of mutual trust and co-determination. * High level of, and broad competencies. * Understanding of surrounding world and future.</p>	<p>* To combine development of e-government with ongoing transformation from a bureaucratic to a postbureaucratic administration. * To master the demographic challenge.</p>	

Member State	Examples of successful innovative practices	Context/circumstances of these success cases	Critical success factors having impact on innovation	Main HRM challenges for the future as seen by MS	Communication of success cases to the public
SI				Improvement of top management performance (competences, skills, independence from politics); enhanced mobility between public and private sector and within public administration	Communication of what the public services are doing is rather a PR task than a task of HR department; main communication tools are the official web site, booklets, publications etc.
SK			Necessity to adapt to a new circumstantial pressure (presidency of the Council of the EU).	Reaching higher efficiency, expertise and transparency; career development; flexibility of civil servants; facilitate mobility inside the public administration as well as with international organisations and back	Educate customer friendly civil servants and give the relevant information to the public through webpages or through media.
SK	Application of the CAF model	Top management initiative			
SK	System of total quality management within our organisation, based on the implementation of the CAF model - Common Assessment Framework 2006; HR management is object of criteria No. 2 of the CAF model with a strong interconnection to other criteria, e.g. leadership, strategy of planning, partnership and sources, process management, interacting and contributing to the total level of quality of our organisation	Top management initiative	Top management initiative	eGovernment	eCommunication

Member State	Examples of successful innovative practices	Context/circumstances of these success cases	Critical success factors having impact on innovation	Main HRM challenges for the future as seen by MS	Communication of success cases to the public
SK	Common Assessment Framework – CAF and Human Capital Technical Assistance Project (co-financed by the World Bank) are applied in our ministry; occasional projects co-financed from European social fund for HR development of state administration	Political situation - EU accession together with initiatives by European institutions for better service delivery to the people (pressure for more transparency, efficiency, professionalism)	Change management is poor - e.g. there is a need to increase administrative capacities to cope with European standards - this is still problematic (due to both lack of political will and lack of qualified personnel)	To keep the best people within an organisation	
SK			Open-minded and fresh approaches exploring new ways to do the same things; being less concerned much about formalities and/or too rigid procedures	To place right person on the right position; to motivate employees for lifelong learning (strengthening their abilities and developing new skills and qualifications)	
SK	Improved IT management - more online services for administrative purposes	Top management initiative and political situation	Innovative leadership; learning and development; exchange best practices and improve peer learning	Higher salaries, social benefits	Publishing papers and magazines, websites, use of regional agencies and offices to spread information
SK					Our department is providing solutions, based on new technologies to maximise the benefit for customers
SK				Emphasis on adequate training, development of communicative skills, adequate financial remuneration etc.	
SK			Efforts to overcome the behavioral models and patterns from previous period	The main challenge will be to convince the public sector organisations that by employing innovative HR practices they will be more effective	There is poor or almost no communication between HR department and employees.
SK	EFQM implementation	Top management initiative	Motivated leaders, satisfying working conditions	Implement more effective HR management; improve working conditions; increase involvement of employees in management decisions	Information through internet and the new media
SK	HRM department increased its flexibility		Strictly organised and regulated by legislative measures		we have quite good communication with HR department
SK		Political initiatives	Political situation and new challenges to public services	the change of working atmosphere, less stress ...	informations on the web site of our ministry

Member State	Examples of successful innovative practices	Context/circumstances of these success cases	Critical success factors having impact on innovation	Main HRM challenges for the future as seen by MS	Communication of success cases to the public
SK			Training providing the opportunity to share problems with colleagues and give/receive feedback		Well organised PR department, which should inform people in SK properly
SK			The will to improve	Frequent changes of legislation related to the public sector	Questionnaire/surveys on customer satisfaction
SK			Leadership, managerial skills, good management	adoption and application world trend	standard services
SK	A lot possibilities how to improve your qualification, many interesting courses a studying programmes	Top management initiative	Public service has to rely on the younger generation and the possibility to use EU funds for building capacities	to attract more young people for working in the field of public service and to build better image of public servants	
SK			Every-day communication between employer (or representative of employer) and employees	Invest in education; higher salaries for graduates and performance oriented reward system	This is job of media/communication department
SK	Motivate staff by evaluating and appreciating their work, in order to increase effectiveness of work to	Top management initiative	Better communication; increase motivation	E.g. in order to stabilise the whole team, more communication, appreciation, involve staff in solving problems, delegate responsibilities; contribute to creating a better image of public servants	Transparency on activities of public servants (e.g. internet, forum)
SK	Flexible working time, involvement in decision-making; peer-mediation, spirit of competitiveness	Management initiative; infrastructure, know-how and shared experiences	Adaptiveness of an organisation	Flexibility, creativity	Create opportunities to meet and communicate with the public
UK			Change management, good top-down communication of goals, and a clear strategy within organisation	HR investments (further education, retention of skilled and qualified employees)	
UK	Tackling major staff reductions without recourse to compulsory redundancy Achieving major civil service pension reform	Pragmatic partnership between unions, management and ministers together with the unions ability to deliver agreements.	Political continuity	Changed role of HR and cutbacks generally; lack of ministerial continuity	Not perceived as being the role of HR other than in VFM context.

Member State	Examples of successful innovative practices	Context/circumstances of these success cases	Critical success factors having impact on innovation	Main HRM challenges for the future as seen by MS	Communication of success cases to the public
UK	Investors in People is a very popular UK programme in both the public and private sector, which my employee actively participates in. This involves all sorts of surveys, random staff interviews, 360 degree appraisal systems etc. I have experienced very helpful 360 degree appraisal systems in the past.	Smaller organisational unit in my case. More highly qualified staff with HRM training. HR improvement programmes such as Investors in People.	Degree of autonomy; size of an organisation; qualifications/skills of senior and middle management	Resructuring and retention (particularly over a period of agency merger)	Not their direct responsibility - this is more the activity role of policy and communications teams.

ANNEX 2: Questionnaire (basis for the web survey)

»What are Public Services Good at?«

Success of Public Services in the Field of Human Resource Management

Survey

Member State:

Please indicate your position within your organisation

Position

Top management

Middle management

Employee

Members of the
EUPAN HRWG

1. General questions

1.1

Yes,
very
much

Yes

Neutral

Rather
not

Not at
all

Cannot
say

Is work in the central public
service of your country
considered to be attractive?

Would you recommend
working in the public sector to
your friends or family?

1.2	Strongly agree	Rather agree	Neutral	Rather disagree	Strongly disagree	Cannot say
How have public services evolved over the last few years?						
They have succeeded in becoming more transparent	<input type="checkbox"/>					
They have succeeded in becoming more customer/citizen friendly	<input type="checkbox"/>					
Replies to citizens' complaints and requests are quicker	<input type="checkbox"/>					
Civil Servants are friendlier and more flexible than before	<input type="checkbox"/>					

1.3 How would you characterise the image of public service in your country?

1.4	Very good	Rather Good	Neutral	Rather bad	Very bad	Cannot say
What kind of image / message related to public employees do the following agents convey in your country?						
Media	<input type="checkbox"/>					
Politicians	<input type="checkbox"/>					
Other opinion leaders	<input type="checkbox"/>					

1.5	Better	Equal	Worse	Cannot say
Are there differences in the public perception between public servants in general and specific categories of public servants?				
If so, which group enjoys better/worse perceptions?				
Employees in Central Administrations/Ministries	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Employees in Agencies	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Employees in Local Administrations	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Judges	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Police	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Teachers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Military	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Diplomats	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Inspection Services	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
others:	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

1.6 Why is it so difficult to improve classical and traditional images and perceptions?
(security minded bureaucrats, rule minded, inflexible, lazy, privileged etc.)

2. Attitudes towards HR-Management and HR-Policies

2.1	Improved	Same	Worsened	Cannot say
Generally speaking, would you consider that HR-Policies have improved within the last 15 years?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

2.2	Yes, successful	Same	No, not successful	Cannot say
Have they succeeded in reducing administrative costs/becoming more efficient?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Have they become less rule-oriented, less bureaucratic?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Have they been successful in recruiting the best talented/most qualified candidates?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Have they been successful in retaining staff/leaders in the public sector?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Have they succeeded in becoming more customer/citizen-friendly?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Have they been successful in rewarding staff for good performance?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Have they been successful in managing poor performance?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Working conditions	<input type="checkbox"/>					
Degree of responsibility in the work	<input type="checkbox"/>					
Autonomy and job control	<input type="checkbox"/>					
Feedback and communication from colleagues	<input type="checkbox"/>					
Work pressure	<input type="checkbox"/>					
Relationship with HR-office	<input type="checkbox"/>					
Relationship with Staff Representatives	<input type="checkbox"/>					

3.3 In which ways do these perceptions of work differ in the private sector?

3.4

In what ways has the attitude towards leaders changed within recent years?

	Yes, more ...	Same	No, less ...	Cannot say
More critical	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
More participative	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
More communication	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
More respect	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
others:	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

4. Management issues

4.1 Do you have examples of innovative practices which are contributing to a successful HRM policy in central HR-policies?

(Open question)

- Please mention case studies/model cases of success stories in the HRM of public services (regarding their degree of innovation, effectiveness, significance, and best practice).

- **What were the context and the conditions that made them possible (political situation, economic pressures, top management initiative)?**

4.2 Organisational challenges

- **What are the factors that have a positive impact on innovation or a given organisation's capacity to adapt to changes (adaptive-ness)?**
- **Do you have examples of trend setting by taking initiatives and making investments (e.g. for basic infrastructure) in HR-policies?**
- **What are the main challenges in the field of HR and employer policies in the near future?**
- **What is your HR department doing in order to better communicate to the public what the public services/public servants are doing?**

Comments

5. Questions on the respondent

5.1 Please select your age group

Age group

- | | |
|----------------|--------------------------|
| < 30 | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 31 – 40 | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 41 – 50 | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 51 – 60 | <input type="checkbox"/> |

> 60

5.2 Please indicate your gender

Gender

Female

Male

5.3 Contact information (optional)

Respondent:	
Title:	
Organisation:	
<u>Contact details</u>	
Address:	
Phone:	Mobile:
E-mail:	Fax:

Thank you very much for completing the questionnaire!

In case you use the download option, please return the completed questionnaire along with possible additional material to the Slovene Presidency (c/o Judita.Bagon@gov.si) or directly to Prof. Dr. Christoph Demmke (c.demmke@eipa-nl.com).