Work Values in Portuguese Society and in Europe

Eduardo Jorge Duque[*]

Abstract

Work represents a significant part of a person's life. At working age, people spend much of their time divided between family, leisure and work, and the way a person relates to work conditions family, social and economic relationships.

With the proliferation and diversification of occupations – a characteristic of modern societies – the world of work became a personal challenge, as it is no longer seen exclusively from the perspective of existential necessity – concerned about the needs for security and livelihood – but to be now understood as a social phenomenon, with an exchange value through which market's goods and services can be reached.

Thus, in contemporary society, work is perceived as something that is not determined, but a reality that involves the whole person and develops throughout life.

Therefore, when considering how individuals relate to and value work, we identify the values underlying the mentality that shapes a society. Based on this principle, and according to the *European Values Study,* the present study intends to analyze the value of work in Portugal in the last three decades and place the results against the national average for the European Union.

Keywords: Work values, materialistic and post-materialist values, change of values.

Introduction

Several empirical studies on values and attitudes of work have shown that it has different sizes and valuations and, therefore, it cannot be understood from a reductionist or simplistic perspective, but it has to be framed in a broader perspective, as a social phenomenon, so that by understanding it, we are contributing to a better understanding of individuals and society.

For the vast majority of people having a job is the satisfaction of basic needs that allow solving day-to-day problems, while for others work is understood in the context

---

[*] Research at the Center for Research in Social Sciences; E-mail:eduardoduque@ics.uminho.pt

of personal self-fulfillment, giving more importance to its quality than to the economic benefits it can provide.

It is common to hear expressions such as "I love what I do", "I work with will", "if not working, life is meaningless." These and many other expressions are ways to reveal the degree of identification of individuals with their work and enable us to conclude to what extent this is central to the identity of the subject.

Regardless of how everyone stands before the work, what is assumed here is that it is somehow a key factor in one's life. Therefore, the importance it occupies (its centrality) is variable from person to person and may even be different depending on the life stage of the individual.

This article has three objectives. First, we intend to evaluate how has the relative weight of work values evolved in Portugal between 1990, 1999 and 2008, and as far as the latter year is concerned, we will compare the Portuguese values with the average values of the European Union. This objective will lead us to understand which aspects of Portuguese society are the most valued at work. Secondly, from this latest survey, we intend to see how work values come together and associate with each other and what type of individuals defend them. With this mapping of values, crossed with different variables, it becomes easier to get the x-ray of Portuguese society in relation to work values. Thirdly, we will try to realize the significance of these dimensions of work from different theories that conceptualize and study the change of values.

For this work, the series of data from the *European Values Survey* have been a valuable resource that, in the case of Portugal, has only the three editions referenced above.

Theoretical and methodological discussion

Throughout history, the approach to work has been done in an interdisciplinary way, where different sizes and valuations stand out from specific areas. If, on the one hand, this procedure reveals that the boundaries of social sciences in social research are becoming increasingly permeable, on the other hand, the phenomenon being studied is becoming increasingly enriched, as it includes different angles and perspectives of analysis, thus facilitating the understanding of their causal relationships.

From the sociological point of view, the phenomenon that is studied here was approached by the great classical sociologists, described as being in the three vertices of the triangle: Durkheim, Marx and Weber.

From Durkheim's study, two ideas stand out: the social is to be explained by the social and social facts should be studied externally, since individuals are subject to imperceptible structures that constrain them. Durkheim argued that *social development* is explained by the increased differentiation of roles (division of labour), as well as by the moral transformation needed to integrate a heterogeneous society. Thus, in terms of work, the conduct arising from employment relationships gain relief. So, it would relevant to find the independent variables that influence these behaviours. If this type of analysis is useful in analytical terms, it could be considered not very relevant since it does not completely identify the root causes of the phenomenon under study.

According to Marxist ideology, labour is understood as the ultimate cause of all alienation. To justify it, Marx puts forward four reasons: the alienation of the worker in relation to the *results of his work*, i.e., work not only becomes the object (a strange reality to the worker), but also a hostile force to the subject; alienation of the worker from the *work he performs*, to the extent that the subject ceases to have control over his work, since it is a strange element to the worker; the alienation of the worker toward the *species*, since the worker, when developing his business, is instrumentalizing the human species, as far as it concerns the individual satisfaction of basic needs; finally, the alienation of man *toward man*, since the exploration of the worker and the class domination happens in the workplace (Marx, 1993: 158-162).

Having said this, it is possible to infer that the analysis Marx put forward about work is nothing more than the identification of historical processes of exploitation to which workers were subjected. In this sense, the approach chased by Marx aimed for a highly practical purpose, which was nothing more than to find strategies to eliminate the alienation at work.

A significantly different position from those presented so far is that of Max Weber, who focuses on the social action of individuals, suggesting that the individual is a member of a constellation of social networks, outside of which he cannot be understood. With this comprehensive approach, we start from the principle that actions are caused by social motives, purposes and meanings that individuals share. Therefore, to realize the circumstances under which they were produced, we need to understand

how a social action works and how it is articulated, in order to get a fuller explanation and understanding of the phenomenon in question.

Despite these three traditional theoretical and methodological positions in relation to work, there are other approaches that should be taken into account when attempting to study the work values. We refer to the dimensions that organize the various values in a society. In general, "a value is an explicit or implicit conception that is specific of an individual or characteristic of a group, about what is desirable, which influences the selection of ways, means and ends of action available" (Kluckhohn, 1968: 443). Note here the importance attached to the process of interaction, i.e., it is through interaction that social value is constituted, which, in turn, gains predicates of significance for the group.

Dimensions of work value

Work has been recognized as a central value in a large majority of societies. In this regard, we have studies of Zanders, 1994; Harding and Hikspoors, 1995; *World Values Survey*, 1995-1997; Offe and Deken, 2000, featuring work, together with family and friendship, as an important value. For this attribute has certainly contributed the theory of *productivism*, which aimed to put work in the center of life, as he alone can help to achieve personal success and social welfare (Goodin, 2001: 13-39). However, *productivism* did not predict the consequences of the new organization of work, since the problem of production was solved with the development of technology and machines but not the problem of the final product flow. In modern society (forged in *productivism*), individuals are simultaneously workers (producers) and consumers, which implies the need of money and free time. According to several authors, the decline of productivity as a model of development happens in this context (Inglehart, 1991, Ester, Halman and Moor, 1994).

Having said all this, the *inherent* values of work in modern societies gave way to *instrumental* values, a change that implies a simple reasoning: we do not live to work, but work to live. Thus, according to this value orientation, it should be expectable that the poorest countries would give more value to work than the richest countries, which is a thesis that wins consistency in several studies and shows that with increasing the Gross National Product *per capita* the percentage of individuals who attach great

importance to work decreases (Vieira Vieira, 1998: 26; Veira Veira J. L. and Muñoz Goy, C., 2004: 53).

The thesis presented here achieves greater consistency as it is possible to observe the cultural convergence among the advanced industrial societies, where there is an increasing prominence of the *post-materialist* values (Inglehart, 1977, 1991, 1997). According to the theory of R. Inglehart, which is based on the model of Maslow (1954), it is expected that individuals socialized in an environment of economic, physical and material scarcity, give more value to economic growth, social cohesion, material and physical security (*materialistic values*). In contrast to these, it is expected that individuals socialized in an environment of greater freedom, peace and economic comfort, because they have already acquired those values (*materialistic*), give greater importance to the needs of self-realization, participation of citizens in making decisions and worry about issues related to the quality of life (*post-materialistic values*) (Inglehart, 1977: 248-250).

Inglehart (1977) assumes that the modernization of societies is based on the passage of traditional authority to the authority of the state, supported by the importance of the family unit, the Church and the State, being this understood as the stabilizer of social dynamics and struggles.

This thesis has achieved important evidence internationally (Inglehart, 1971-1997; Rohrschneider, 1993; Knutsen and Scarbrough, 1995), and also in Portugal, where it was tested in different studies: Ditch and Viegas (1990); Vala (1993), who shows data from the Portuguese population from the EVS of 1990; Freire (2003), who examines the post-materialism and political behaviour for the Portuguese case in a comparative perspective; among others. The idea that in Portugal there is a predominance of individuals with *mixed values priority* cuts across these studies, which means that the Portuguese share simultaneously materialistic and post-materialist values.

As part of work values, Inglehart points out that existential security raises the importance of subjective well-being and concern for quality of life. For many people, these goals are more important than economic growth. The central goals of modernization, growth and the achievement of economic goals are still valued in a positive way but its relative importance is decreasing. There is also a gradual change in the reasons that motivate individuals to work: from maximizing the income and job

stability/certainty, to greater insistence on interesting and meaningful work (Inglehart 1997: 54-60).

The same idea had already been shared by Weiss (1991: 32) which states that "people work for rewards. They may not be tangible, as money. They may be intangible, such as letting an employee to be the leader of a group."

It is important to remember that the transformation of priority values, such as giving greater relative importance to the well-being than to money or giving greater importance to quality of life than to material priorities, results from the economic and social development of societies. This phenomenon, although common to a large part of societies, does not imply a commonality of values; on the contrary, in the words of Zanders (1994: 144), the major differences between the labour markets of each nation and the various individual work situations, as well as the different preferences, results on a *convergence among plurality*.

In addition to the taxonomy proposed by Inglehart that we have been mentioning, other authors – scholars that have been studying the motivations of work as Herzberg *et al.* (1959), Cheung and Scherling (1999), Vala (2000) – rather speak of work's *intrinsic* and *extrinsic* aspects. The intrinsic aspects are those that relate to the activity itself, such as work being interesting, providing challenges, and encouraging independent learning; in turn, the *extrinsic* aspects are the ones that surround work as such, as holidays, a good work schedule, be well paid, to have opportunities for promotion and a pleasant human environment.

In turn, Rokeach (1973) and Halman (1996), among others, started to identify as *instrumental* the *extrinsic* values, which would be oriented toward work that provides good holidays, stability and good salary, and as *expressive* the *intrinsic* values, which would be those who aim at self-realization at work.

After relating the Rokeach's model to Inglehart's model, and if the post-materialism hypothesis is correct, we would expect a positive correlation between *materialistic values* (in the first place, physical and economic security) and *extrinsic values* and, likewise, between the *post-materialistic values* (which give more importance to quality of life) and *intrinsic values*. This correspondence between the different taxonomies is also shared by Vala (1993 and 2000), Freire (2003) and Caetano *et al.* (2003), who represent the idea that only developed countries and developed social

strata, with greater salience of post-materialistic values, will assign greater value to the intrinsic value of work.

This thesis finds empirical evidence in the study of Jesuino (1993) about work, which states that the more socially advantaged a group is, it tends to value the intrinsic factors of work, while the most disadvantaged groups give higher priority to extrinsic factors. Similar conclusions are found in studies by Harding *et al.* (1986) and Riffault (1995) that, despite undertaking analysis at different times, concluded that *remuneration, after having a good working environment, an interesting work, job stability and a work where you can use your skills,* are the factors that Europeans value the most at work. From the EVS of 1999, Caetano *et al.* (2003) found that, despite the fact *remuneration* in the hierarchy of salience has been the first priority for many EU countries, which includes Portugal, the economically richer and more socially developed countries, such as Denmark, Sweden and Finland, put remuneration in the middle, giving more importance to a *pleasant environment* and *interesting work.*

To conclude, and if we intend to draw correspondences between theoretical models, we would identify, on the one hand, the *most basic needs* (Maslow, 1954) with the *extrinsic* and *materialistic* aspects, and on the other hand, the *highest values* (Halman, 1996) with *intrinsic* and *post-materialist* aspects, i.e., we can only ascends to *higher values* when the primary needs are met.

Having said this, and since Portugal has a predominance of *mixed values*, a significant salience is not expected from a single evaluative dimension, either from *intrinsic* or *extrinsic values*. Specifically, we assume that there is no relationship between the value priorities of work and the Portuguese socio-demographic characteristics.

Notwithstanding the identity characteristics of each country, Portugal appears to be among the average of the 27 European Union countries with regard to the priorities assigned to work values.

Results

So that we can understand the Portuguese positioning towards work in the past three decades, we analyzed the following question: *the following are some aspects that people consider important at work. Please, describe what aspects do you consider to be*

important at work[1]: be well paid; have a good working environment with colleagues; not being too much pressed; have a secure/stable job; have a good schedule; the possibility taking the initiative; a work useful to society; good holiday periods; the possibility to contact with people; a work where you feel you can accomplish something; work responsability(ies); interesting work where you can use your skills[2].

Observing the values that the Portuguese prioritize at work between the years 1990 and 2008, we verified that they considered as priorities at work the fact of *being well paid, to have a good working environment* and *to have a secure and stable job*. This order was different in 1990, as the Portuguese considered more important *to have a good working environment* and only then *being well paid* and *to have a secure and stable job*. From the fourth priority this order differs between the three years.

From our point, it is possible to analyze the values implicit in the options envisaged and to understand that in nearly three decades, the Portuguese continue to value aspects that are the *essential conditions of work*, namely, *financial security* and *stability in work*, as well as having the *ideal conditions* for its realization. Having thus highlighted the priorities – and following the model of Rokeach (1973) and Halman (1996) – it is possible to deduce that the Portuguese hold more on *instrumental* than in *expressive* values.

This emphasis may lead us to question the reality that characterizes modern societies. In a society that increasingly values the level of education, the academic and professional performance, it would be expectable that the Portuguese would value at work aspects related to personal achievement and professional performance.

In fact, these aspects are valued in a second plan, especially in 1999 and 2008, but even so, by observing the set of 13 priorities that are part of our analysis, they become more relevant since they come in 4th, 5th and 6th place: in 1999, and in order of relevance, the Portuguese valued a *work useful to society*, *a work where you feel it is possible to accomplish something* and *a job where you can use your skills*; and in 2008, they valued an *interesting work, a work where you can use your skill*s and *a work where you feel it is possible to accomplish something*.

In contrast to these, values such as *not being pressed, to have good holiday periods, to have a work that allows contact with people* are things that the Portuguese

---

[1] Responses to each indicator range from 0 (not mentioned) to 1 (mentioned).
[2] The choice of these indicators took into account the three waves of data held in 1990, 1999 and 2008.

do not expressively value at work. In 1990, the values less referred were: *to have an interesting job, have good holiday periods* and *not being pressed*; in 1999, *a work that allows contact with people, a work where they can take the initiative* and *not being pressed*; while in 2008, the priorities less cited were: *a work that allows contact with people, to have good holidays periods* and *not being pressed*.

This analysis stems from what Rokeach (1973) advocated: the most important in how individuals organize (structure) values is not the difference between the values adopted, but the relative priority assigned to them, i.e., the hierarchy.

Table 1. Work values in Portugal, 1990, 1999 and 2008

Work values	1990 (N=1185)	Ordination	1999 (N=1000)	Ordination	2008 (N=1553)	Ordination
Good pay	79,2	*2*	80,2	*1*	88,6	*1*
Pleasant people	79,6	*1*	66,7	*2*	87,8	*2*
Not too much pressure	41,1	*13*	24,4	*13*	58,2	*13*
Job security	73	*3*	64,4	*3*	87,6	*3*
Good hours	61,7	*5*	43,9	*8*	67,7	*7*
Use initiative	54,6	*8*	35,4	*12*	61,4	*10*
Useful for society	60,3	*6*	51,5	*4*	66,9	*8*
Generous holidays	47,4	*12*	37,3	*10*	59,6	*12*
Meeting people	53,4	*10*	35,9	*11*	60,2	*11*
Achieving something	67,4	*4*	48,1	*5*	75,3	*6*
Responsible job	54,2	*9*	42,3	*9*	63	*9*
Interesting job	53	*11*	45	*7*	80,2	*4*
Meeting abilities	57,3	*7*	46,5	*6*	75,4	*5*

Source: European Values Survey, 1990, 1999, 2008.

After the longitudinal analysis of values that the Portuguese prioritize at work over the past three decades, we now focus our study on how work values are grouped, and how can we characterize the individuals who prefer them. We will do it from the analysis of survey data of the 2008 EVS.

To this end, we submitted the work values referenced above to a *non-parametric multidimensional scaling, using the specific algorithm for binary data* and also a *Cluster analysis* for dichotomous data, with the aim of analyzing their structure and their similarities. The results showed that values are organized into four groups distributed in two dimensions. Before we define them, we must highlight the fact that the Stress Test, which assesses the fit of the model, i.e., the degree of adjustment of variables to the dimensions reached, allowed to continue its construction, since the result obtained was a coefficient of 0,09 and a RSQ of 0,96.

Having said this, a first group, which consists of the variables *to be well paid, to have a good working environment* and *a secure/stable job*, highlights the importance that the Portuguese attribute to basic work conditions and which we call *Basic Conditions of Employment*; a second group, consisting of the variables *a work useful for society, where you can take the initiative, which allows contact with people* and *not being pressed*, to which we call *Responsibility at Work,* groups the values that highlight the work as a service to society; a third group associates the variables *an interesting work, where you can use your skills* and *feel that you have accomplished something*, calling it *Self-effectiveness*, since they highlight the values that qualify work as a means of personal fulfillment and creativity and, finally, a fourth group, called *Leisure at work*, which combines the variables *to have a good schedule* and *good holiday periods*, emphasizing thus the importance that the Portuguese attach to leisure time provided by work.

All these four groups were tested using Cronbach's Alpha for dichotomous data and showed adequate reliability coefficients for all of them: Basic Conditions (α = 0,49); Responsibility at work (α = 0,86); Self-effectiveness (α = 0,74) and Leisure at work (α = 0,73).

In a subsequent analysis on how these axiological groups relate to each other, we found that there is a positive correlation between them, implying that values that share the same universe do not have conflictive relations. In the case under study: *Basic Conditions* versus *Responsibility at work* (r = 0,42); *Basic Conditions* versus *Self-effectiveness* (r = 0,48); *Basic Conditions* versus *Leisure at work* (r = 0,45); *Responsibility at work* versus *Self-effectiveness* (r = 0,71); *Responsibility at work* versus *Leisure at work* (r = 0,66); *Self-effectiveness* versus *Leisure at work* (r = 0,57).

Figure 1. Graphical representation of the results of *Hierarchical Cluster Analysis* and *Multidimensional Scaling* applied to the scores of work values
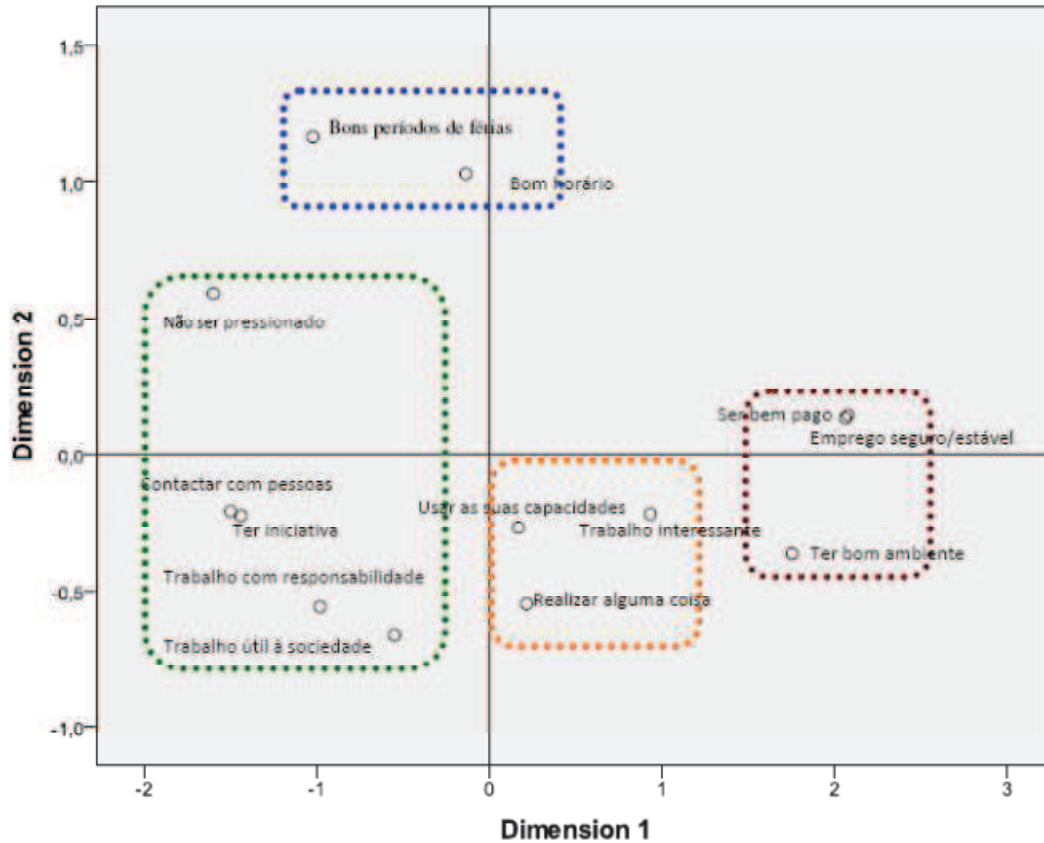
Source: European Values Survey, 2008.

Among the four groups mentioned, the Portuguese value in the first place the *Basic Conditions of Employment* (average = 0,88), followed by values of *Self-effectiveness* (0,77), *Leisure* (0,64), and, finally, *Responsibility at Work* (0,62). The way the Portuguese prioritize these four dimensions shows that modern societies, contrary to what the theory of development would promise, continues to value *extrinsic* aspects of work, although not depreciating the *intrinsic* values, since the *Self-effectiveness* scale, that meets the values of professional achievement, is presented as the second most referenced.

According to Inglehart , it would be expectable that a developed society had higher rates of post-materialism, however, the correlations observed (near zero) between the rate of post-materialism and the four dimensions of work values show that the Portuguese are looking more for financial and structural developments in their

professional life than for their active role in civic society, which is an idea supported by the priority they give to the values of work with selfless and civic dimension, which are expressed in the dimension of *Responsibility at work*[3].

In order to understand which part of the Portuguese society identifies itself with these evaluative dimensions, we shall proceed to its comparison with some socio-demographic indicators: gender, age, educational level and professional status.

From the analysis of the *Basic Conditions of Employment*, we can see no significant differences regarding sex[4], age[5], education[6] and professional status[7]. The same cannot be said about the dimension of *Responsibility at work*, since there are differences between individuals with different levels of education[8] and in different professional situations[9], that is, the greater the level of education, the greater the importance attached to the implicit values in this dimension. On the other hand, the students are the ones who have greater salience of these values, which is an understandable situation given the fact that they are in a pre-employment position and thus they have expectations towards their professional future[10].

In relation to the values of *Self-effectiveness*, it was possible to verify that there are differences between individuals with different levels of education[11]. It is also evident in this dimension that a higher level of education corresponds to greater appreciation of creativity and self-realization. This difference is understandable since the investment made in personal education is not simply confined to the financial value of that course, but most likely will aim to give priority to professional achievement.

Finally, analyzing the dimension *Leisure at work*, it was observed that there are no significant differences in the way the Portuguese stand in relation to these values[12],

---

[3] $F_{Condições\ base}(2, 1393) = 7,486$; $p<0,001$, $\eta^2=0,011$; $F_{Responsabilidade}(2, 1392) = 3,970$; $p<0,005$, $\eta^2=0,006$; $F_{Auto-eficácia}(2, 1390) = 3,986$; $p<0,005$, $\eta^2=0,006$; $F_{Ócio}(2, 1380) = 3,132$; $p<0,05$, $\eta^2=0,005$.

[4] $F(1, 1549) = 0,051$, *ns*.

[5] It is important to note that there are differences in age, although not significant, $F (2, 1549) = 3.482$; $p <0.05$, being the group aged 30-49 years the one which distinguishes more from other ages by giving more importance to *Basic Conditions of Employment*. We used the method Sheffé which is a conservative method that allows the control of the error rate for all comparisons.

[6] $F(3, 1544) = 1,158$, *ns*.

[7] $F(5, 1539) = 0,987$, *ns*.

[8] $F(3, 1543) = 4,245$; $p<0,005$, $\eta^2=0,008$.

[9] $F(5, 1538) = 4,070$; $p<0,001$, $\eta^2=0,013$.

[10] Students are the only group different from other groups: $F(5, 1537) = 4,067$; $p<0,001$, $\eta^2=0,013$.

[11] $F(3, 1540) = 9,263$; $p<0,001$, $\eta^2=0,018$.

[12] $F_{Sexo}(1, 1535) = 0,633$, *ns*; $F_{Idade}(2, 1535) = 1,457$, *ns*; $F_{Escolaridade}(3, 1530) = 1,039$, *ns*.

and the only slight difference to note is the *professional status*, where students once again stand out by attributing more importance to this dimension[13].

This analysis follows the idea that the Portuguese, in general, do not differentiate among them on how they stand in relation to work values. Therefore, it would be expectable that the younger generation, with more schooling and more access to the new tools provided by a developed society, stood out on the *intrinsic* values of work; however, taking into account the Portuguese socio-economic context in recent years – where there is high unemployment among young graduates – it is understood that values such as *remuneration* and *job stability* are more valued than others which, in favorable socioeconomic circumstances, would be more appreciated.

Work values in Portugal and in European Union

Having analyzed the way Portugal is positioned in relation to work values, it is important now to understand how it fits in all 27 European Union countries.

Addressing the prioritization of the work values in the European Union, we have found, by examining the first six priorities, a scenario very similar to that of Portugal. Let us have a look: Europeans state as priority at work the fact of *being well paid*, *have good working environment, interesting work, a secure/stable job*, *a job where you can use your skills* and *where you can accomplish something* (cf. Table 2). This ordering of values leads us to realize that the Portuguese have similar needs than other members of the EU countries, albeit with slight differences in their prioritization, i.e., if earlier in this study we pointed out that the Portuguese give priority to *financial and professional security*, as well as *self-realization and creativity at work*, it appears that citizens of EU countries express the same priorities in the world of work. This fact is consolidated by the *Spearman* correlation ($p = 0.94$, *p* <0.001) which shows that the prioritization of values by the Portuguese is similar to that of Europe, since both prioritize values in a similar way.

This value proximity can lead us to think that the EU countries, in general, including Portugal, are going through a period characterized by some instability in the world of work, especially related to the basic needs of its citizens to ensure a reliable means for financial survival.

---

[13] To obtain this difference it was used the Duncan test: $F_{\text{Professional status}}(5, 1523) = 2,438$; *p*$<0,05$.

Table 2. Work values: EU and Portugal, 2008

Work values	European Union (N=40308)	Ordination	Portugal (N=1553)	Ordination	χ2	Sif (fisher)
Good pay	80,8	*1*	88,6	*1*	*58,739*	*,000*
Pleasant people	72,9	*2*	87,8	*2*	*168,91*	*,000*
Not too much pressure	39,7	*12*	58,2	*13*	*208,917*	*,000*
Job security	66,2	*4*	87,6	*3*	*304,063*	*,000*
Good hours	52,6	*7*	67,7	*7*	*136,267*	*,000*
Use initiative	47,3	*8*	61,4	*10*	*115,822*	*,000*
Useful for society	39,8	*11*	66,9	*8*	*451,755*	*,000*
Generous holidays	30,3	*13*	59,6	*12*	*585,436*	*,000*
Meeting people	47,3	*9*	60,2	*11*	*98,113*	*,000*
Achieving something	58,1	*6*	75,3	*6*	*179,814*	*,000*
Responsible job	47	*10*	63	*9*	*150,982*	*,000*
Interesting job	68,1	*3*	80,2	*4*	*100,659*	*,000*
Meeting abilities	59	*5*	75,4	*5*	*165,936*	*,000*

Source: European Values Survey, 2008.

Discussion

The results of the analysis allowed us to identify that, in the last three decades, the Portuguese emphasized the same work values, highlighting the continuing need for *financial and work stability*. A similar conclusion was reached by Caetano *et al.* (2003), although their study, drawn from 15 work values – and not from 13, as presented here –, only contemplates the analysis of two decades (1990 and 1999).

The 2008 analysis led us to understand the importance that these values have in the Portuguese's life. Four distinct evaluative dimensions of work were created, from which two stand out: the first, the *Basic Conditions of Employment*, brought together aspects that approach to the *extrinsic* values, such as *remuneration, good environment* and *stability*; the second, called *Self-effectiveness*, focused on the *intrinsic* work values, enhancing personal skills and professional achievement[14].

This insistence on the fundamental values of work sets out issues related to the structural matters of modern societies. In the words of Alice Ramos (2000) and A.

---

[14] Despite this two-dimensional differentiation, it is important to note that there was no type of conflict between values, since all dimensions are positively correlated.

Neves (2000), work occupies a crucial place in human life, not only because it is a source of reward, embodied in the remuneration received, but also for the social reward implied, especially the contact with colleagues and social recognition, as well as the contribution that these factors may bring to the psycho-emotional balance of the individual.

Until recently, work was understood as something stable, lasting for life, implying a range of social benefits such as holidays, benefits, subsidies, etc. Currently, this model is reconfigured, assuming all the insecurity, instability and versatility.

In fact, the phenomenon of economic globalization and the growing dominance of technique led to an increase of competitiveness and, consequently, there is also the need for more flexible structures and systems.

In this regard, Edwards (1997) argued that this flexibility generates two different behaviors: on the one hand, competitiveness and economic growth requires, from the worker, flexibility and skills; on the other hand, and as a consequence of this flexibility, there is instability and uncertainty at work.

In this sense it is possible to infer that the Portuguese continue to have work values that reflect some uncertainty and fear of change, since Portugal is a country where most people have low levels of education, and more than half the population has not completed the current compulsory education of nine years[15]. Thus, the analysis of the vulnerability of these individuals when facing an increasingly demanding, selective and uneven labour market is perfectly understandable, and that is why the Portuguese value, in a more salient way, the *Basic Conditions of Employment*.

Therefore, unemployment appears as the culmination of all the instability that now prevails in the labour market (Freire, 2001). We know well, then, that this is one of the central problems of modern society, which gradually affects a larger number of subjects, both older and younger, being the former the most affected group. Against this scenario, it is understood that both the Portuguese and all citizens of EU countries continue to prioritize *extrinsic* work values.

It would be important now to reflect on the theory of human development, advocated by R. Inglehart, which postulates that advanced societies show self-

---

[15] According to data published by the OCDE in the report *Education at a Glance 2010*, 1998, 82% of its population aged 25-64 years had not gone beyond the ninth grade; in 2008 this result decreased 10% (72%).

expression, freedom and quality of life over the concerns of physical and economic stability.

Although there are many indicators that Portugal is a socially developed country, the fact is that in 2008 it had mostly *mixed* concerns (53%), and only about 5% presented *post-materialistic* values. This leads us to conclude that social conditions affect the desirability of *post-materialist* and *intrinsic values*.

References

CAETANO, A. *et al.* (2003), "Valores do trabalho em Portugal e na União Europeia", in VALA, J., CABRAL, M. V., & RAMOS, A. (Orgs.), *Valores Sociais: Mudanças e Contrastes em Portugal e na Europa,* Lisboa, Imprensa de Ciências Sociais, pp. 430-457.

CHEUNG, C. & SCHERLING, S. A. (1999), "Job satisfaction, work values and sex differences in Taiwan's organizations", *Journal of Psychology*, 133 (5), pp. 563-575.

DURKHEIM, E. (1893 [1977]), *A divisão do trabalho social*, Lisboa, Editorial Presença.

EDWARDS, R. (1997), *Chaging places? Flexibility, lifelong learning and learning society*, London, Routledge.

ESTER, P. HALMAN, L. and de MOOR, R. (eds.) (1994), *The Individualizing Society. Value Change in Europe and North America*, Tilburg, Tilburg University Press.

FREIRE, A. (2003), "Pós-materialismo e comportamentos políticos: o caso português em perspectiva comparativa", in VALA, J., CABRAL, M. V., RAMOS, A. (orgs.), *Valores Sociais: Mudanças e Contrastes em Portugal e na Europa*, Lisboa, Imprensa de Ciências Sociais.

FREIRE, J. (2001), *Sociologia do Trabalho: uma introdução*, Porto, Afrontamento.

GOODIN, R. E. (2001), "Work and Welfare: Towards a Post-productivist Welfare Regime", *British Journal of Political Science*, 31, pp. 13-39.

HALMAN, L. (1996), "Individualization and the fragmentation of work values – evidence from the European Values Study", in De MOOR, M. (ed.), *Values in Western Societies*, Tilburg, Tilburg University Press.

HARDING, S. D. & HIKSPOORS, F. J. (1995), "New work values: in theory and practice", *International Social Science Journal*, 145, pp. 441-455.

HARDING, S., PHILLIPS, D. & FOCARTY, M. (1986), *Contrasting Values in Western Europe*, Unity, Diversity and Change, Londres, MacMillan.

HERZBERG, F., MAUSNER, B., SNYDERMAN, B. B., (1959), *The Motivation to Work*, New York, John Wiley and Sons.

INGLEHART, R. (1971), "The Silent Revolution in Europe: Intergenerational change in postindustrial societies", *American Political Sciences Review*, 65, pp. 991-1017.

INGLEHART, R. (1977), *The Silent Revolution: Changing Values and Political Styles among Western Publics*, Princeton, Princeton University Press.

INGLEHART, R. (1991), *El cambio cultural en las sociedades industriales avanzadas*, Madrid, CIS.

INGLEHART, R. (1997), *Modernization and Pos Modernization. Value Change in 43 Societies,* Princeton, Princeton University Press.

JESUINO, J. C. (1993), "O Trabalho", in FRANÇA, L. (org.), *Portugal, Valores Europeus, Identidade Cultural*, Lisboa, IED.

KLUCKHOHN, C. K. M. (1951), "Values and value orientation in the theory of action", in PARSONS, T., SHILDS, E. (eds.), *Toward a general theory of action*, Cambridge, MA, Harvard University Press, pp. 388-433.

KNUTSEN, O. & SCARBROUGH, E. (1995 [1998]), "Cleavage politics", in VAN DETH, J. W. & SCARBROUGH, E. (orgs.) (1995), "Introduction. The impact of values", in VAN DETH J. W. & SCARBROUGH, E. (eds.), *The impact of values*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, pp. 160-197.

MARX, Karl (1844/1993), *O Trabalho Alienado*, in Manuscritos Económico-Filosóficos, Lisboa, Ed. 70.

MASLOW, A. H. (1954), *Motivation and Personality*, Nova Yorque, Harper and Row.

NEVES, A. O. & GRAÇA, S. (2000*), Inserção no mercado de trabalho de populações com especiais dificuldades*, Lisboa, Direcção-Geral do Emprego e Formação Profissional.

OFFE, C. & DEKEN, J. (2000), "Trabajo, ocio y participacion social", in MACHADO, M. *et al.* (eds.) (2000), *Las estructuras del bienestar en Europa*, Madrid, Civitas.

PEREIRA, C., TORRES, A. R., BARROS, T. (2004), *Sistemas de Valores e Atitudes Democráticas de Estudantes Universitários,* in *Psicologia, Teoria e Pesquisa*, 20, 1, pp. 1-10.

RAMOS, A. (2002), *O significado das diferenças: Uma Análise Comparativa dos Valores do Trabalho em Cinco Países Europeus*, Tese de Mestrado, ICS-UL.

RAMOS, A. (2000), "Centralidade do trabalho", in CABRAL, M. V. *et al.* (org.) *Trabalho e cidadania*, Lisboa, ICS.

RIFFAULT, H. (1995), *"Les européens et la valeur du travail"*, in *Futuribles*, 200, pp. 25-46.

RODRIGUES, M. L. (1995), "Atitudes da população portuguesa perante o trabalho", *Organizações e Trabalho*, 14, pp. 33-63.

ROHRSCHNEIDER, R. (1993 [1998]), "New party versus old left realignments, environmental attitudes, party policies and partisan affiliations in four western countries", in NORRIS, P. (org) (1998), *Elections and Voting Behaviour*, New Challenges, New Perspectives, Dartmouth, Ashgate.

ROKEACH, M. (1973), *The Nature of Human Values*, New York, The Free Press.

VALA, J. (1993), "Valores sócio-políticos", in FRANÇA, L. (org.), *Portugal, Valores Europeus, Identidade Cultural*, Lisboa, IED.

IDEM (2000), "Mudanças nos valores associados ao trabalho e satisfação com o trabalho", in CABRAL, M. V., VALA, J. & FREIRE, J. (orgs.), *Trabalho e Cidadania*, Lisboa, Imprensa de Ciências Sociais.

VAN DETH, J. W. (1995), "Introduction. The impact of values", in J. W. Van Deth e E. Scarbrough (eds.), *The impact of values*, Oxford, Oxford University Press.

VEIRA VEIRA J. L. & MUÑOZ GOY, C. (2004), "Valores y actitudes del trabajo en Europa Occidental" in *RES* nº 4, pp. 51-66.

VEIRA VEIRA, J. L. (1998), "La cultura del trabajo y el cambio de valores", in *Sociológica*, Universidade da Coruña, 3, pp. 23-38.

WEBER, M. (1978), *Ensayos sobre metodología sociológica*, Buenos Aires, Amorrortu.

WEISS, D. (1991), *Motivação e resultado – Como obter o melhor de sua equipe*, São Paulo, Nobel, 1991.

WORLD VALUES SURVEY, 1990, 1990, 2008.

ZANDERS, H. (1994), "Changing Work Values", in ESTER, P. HALMAN, L. and de MOOR, R. (eds.), *The Individualizing Society. Value Change in Europe and North America*, Tilburg, Tilburg University Press, pp. 129-153.