



European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions

Quality of working life in the Czech Republic

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Appendix: Methodology

This report is available in electronic format only.

Based on results of the survey 'Measuring the quality of working life', this report describes the nature and organisation of work for Czech employees. It also analyses work performance, motivation, job satisfaction and internal communication.

Among the findings of a Czech survey on quality of working life are:

- a considerable proportion of Czech employees report a lack of autonomy in their work (one-third of employees), having monotonous jobs (one-third of employees), while 50% assess their job as tiring and tedious;
- good basic pay remains the most important motivator and source of loyalty to the employer;
- communication with direct supervisors was assessed more positively than overall communication within the company;
- the most satisfied employees are those working in higher positions.

Survey objectives

The survey was carried out in October 2004, as part of the 'Measuring the quality of working life' project funded by the [Czech Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs](#) (MOLSA) under the programme 'Modern society and its transformations'. The main survey coordinator is the [Research Institute for Labour and Social Affairs](#) (RILSA), which has also been responsible for analysis of the survey data.

Good quality of work relationships, as defined throughout this project, are viewed as a significant element of corporate social responsibility. The project has two primary objectives. The first is to create an instrument that can be used by Czech enterprises during certification processes under ISO (International Organisation for Standardisation) and EFQM (European Foundation for Quality Management) standards, as well as for monitoring purposes, and policymaking in human resources management. The second objective is to monitor working conditions at company level.

One of the main motivations of the project was the assumption that company management will be more willing to pay attention to working conditions surveys if they are offered a measuring instrument for certification processes. This investigative tool, which is intended to help employers assess and improve working conditions in their enterprise, will be constructed in two phases, based on the results of the following:

- survey of employed population;
- surveys in four companies.

The results and conclusions presented in this report are drawn from a survey of the employed population, which was designed with the experience of [MERCER Human Resource Consulting](#). Their [Human Capital Strategy Model](#) was used to establish six areas of interest from the employees' perspective. It is possible to predict likely productivity through an awareness of these factors:

- people (capabilities, experience, training/education, etc);
- work processes (work flows, division of labour, unit (inter)dependencies, etc);
- managerial structure (roles and responsibilities, goal specification, job design, etc);
- information and knowledge (communication mechanism and flows, information exchange, intellectual capital use/creation, etc);
- decision-making (accountability, participation, decentralisation, etc);
- rewards (monetary/non-monetary, long/short-term, career progression, etc).

(See Appendix for further details of the survey's methodology.)

The following sections provide a brief summary of the main results of the survey under four thematic headings:

- work organisation;
- key drivers of commitment and motivation;
- communication and consultation;
- job satisfaction.

Work organisation

Nature of work

About one-third of the 2,000 employees surveyed (see Appendix) described their job as monotonous. One half of them believe that their work is tedious and tiring. Just under two-thirds reported that their employment called for creative thinking, while 50% said that their work involved a high degree of expertise. The nature of the work varied largely with respect to individual position and type of activity performed; some differences were identified by gender. A greater percentage of women than men performed monotonous work, and relatively few women reported that their employment required creative thinking. Women are also less likely to be in jobs requiring a high degree of expertise.

Table 1 Nature of the work, by gender (%)

| | Monotonous work | | | Creative thinking required | |
|----------|-------------------------|-------|-------|--|-------|
| | Men | Women | Total | Men | Women |
| Agree | 28.8 | 35.1 | 31.7 | 61.6 | 58.3 |
| Neutral | 15.8 | 14.7 | 15.3 | 24.8 | 22.0 |
| Disagree | 55.4 | 50.2 | 53.0 | 13.6 | 19.7 |
| | Tedious and tiring work | | | Work requires high degree of expertise | |
| | Men | Women | Total | Men | Women |
| Agree | 55.6 | 44.9 | 50.6 | 59.4 | 50.6 |
| Neutral | 23.5 | 28.1 | 25.7 | 23.0 | 24.8 |
| Disagree | 20.9 | 26.9 | 23.7 | 17.6 | 24.6 |

Note: '% Agree/Disagree' = Strongly agree/disagree + Fairly agree/disagree

Autonomy in work

The analysis revealed that approximately 50% of Czech employees consider that they enjoy autonomy in terms of ability to influence the order of tasks, work methods, and speed or rate of work. No significant gender distinctions were observed.

Figure 1 Proportion of respondents reporting a lack of autonomy (%)

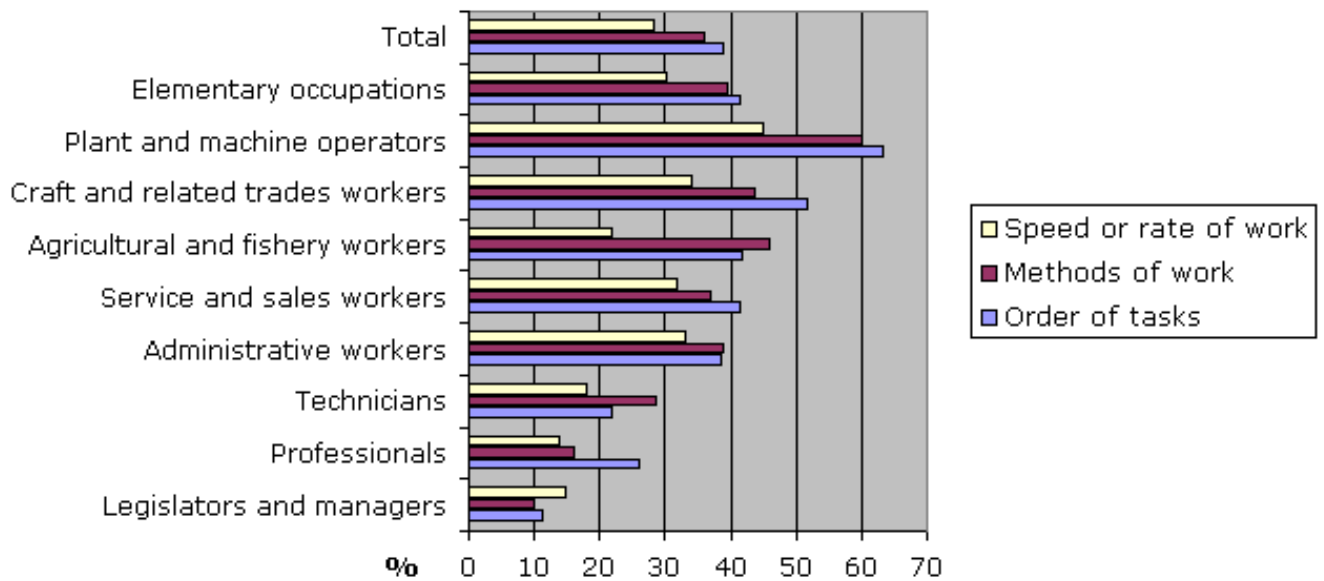


Table 2 Autonomy at work, by gender (%)

| Possible to choose or change: | Order of tasks | | | Methods of work | | | Speed or rate of work | |
|-------------------------------|----------------|-------|-------|-----------------|-------|-------|-----------------------|-------|
| | Men | Women | Total | Men | Women | Total | Men | Women |
| Agree | 45.8 | 49.7 | 47.6 | 47.7 | 45.8 | 46.8 | 49.4 | 51.7 |
| Neutral | 13.7 | 14.1 | 13.9 | 17.6 | 17.0 | 17.3 | 22.4 | 20.4 |
| Disagree | 40.5 | 36.2 | 38.5 | 34.7 | 37.3 | 35.9 | 28.2 | 27.9 |

Note: '% Agree/Disagree' = Strongly agree/disagree + Fairly agree/disagree

A clear and significant correlation emerged between work autonomy and the level of the individual's job. Employees in higher-ranking jobs enjoy the greatest autonomy, while lack of autonomy is a characteristic of blue-collar professions, particularly among plant and machine operators. The study also indicated that employees in blue-collar professions who are most affected by a lack of autonomy are restricted more by work methods and by a predetermined order of tasks than they are by speed or rate of work (see Figure 1).

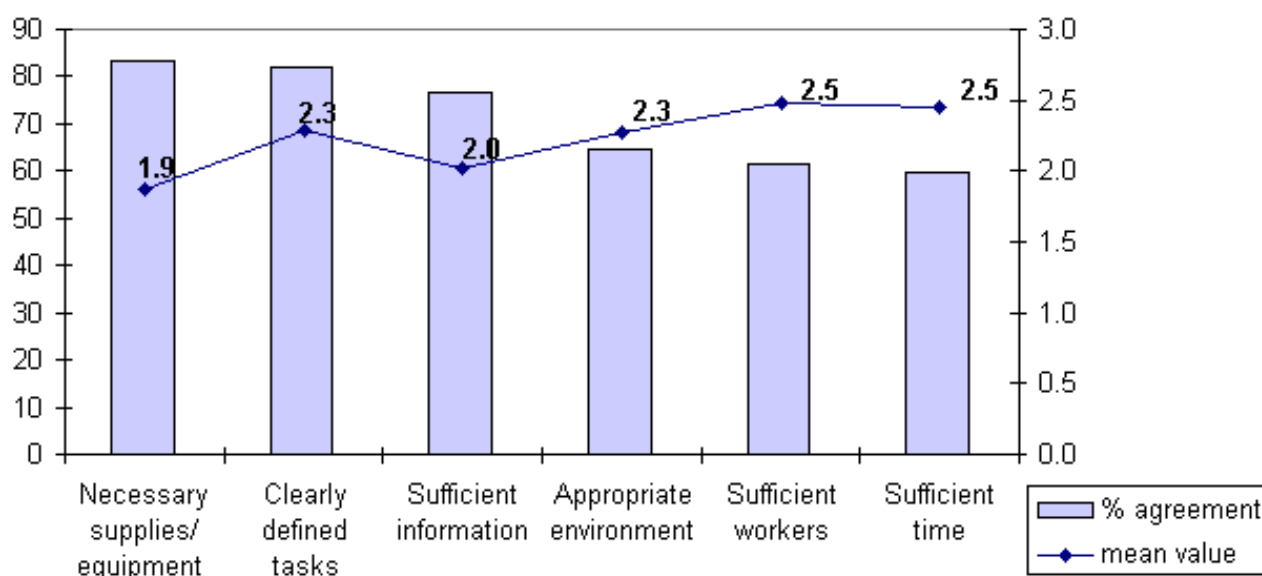
Work quality and organisation

Many factors influence the quality of job performance, one of the most important of which is the organisation of work, which directly affects the ability to perform. This, in turn, has a critical impact on employees' job performance.

The respondents were asked to react to statements describing the relationship between the quality of work performed and its organisation. The following elements were tracked as organisational factors impacting on the quality and proper performance of work: sufficient workers to handle the workload, clear definitions of the work to be performed, sufficient time allowed to perform the assignment well, provision of adequate information, access to

necessary equipment and facilities, and an overall working environment which does not obstruct work performance. These conditions were assessed on a five-point scale of agreement/disagreement.

Figure 2 Intensity measured for various organisational factors required for high quality employee work performance



Notes: The mean value was calculated from the agreement scale results: ‘Do you have the following necessary factors to do your work properly?’ Strongly agree = 1pt and Strongly disagree = 5pts, ‘% Agreement’ = Strongly agree + Fairly agree

Figure 2 shows that time pressures are the greatest obstacle to the efficient performance of work. Only 60% of the respondents agreed with the statements, ‘In our department, there are sufficient employees to handle the workload’ and ‘I have sufficient time to perform my work well’. Workers in lower level administrative positions (see Figure 3) perceive time as a greater problem.

The lack of sufficient workers to enable tasks to be carried out well is particularly felt among skilled labourers in the agriculture and forestry sector, and in administrative positions. Employees of foreign-owned companies were most likely (22.1%) to report a lack of time needed to perform their work well, while public sector employees apparently suffer least from this problem (12.7%).

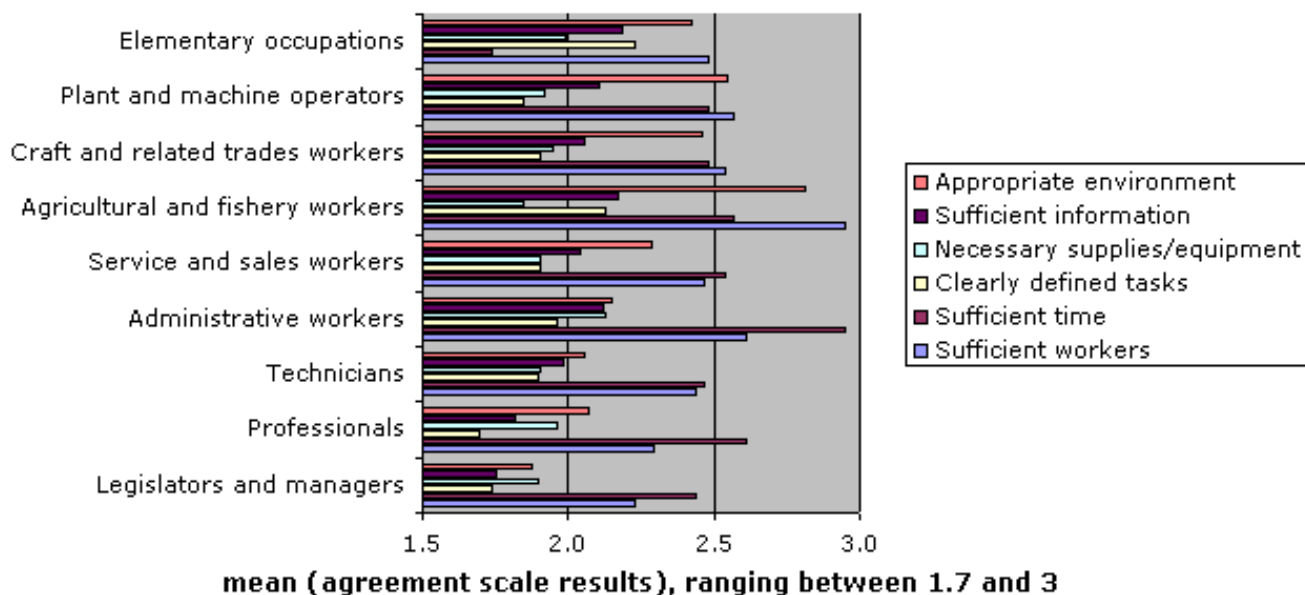
Employees reported least concern with lack of work supplies and equipment and, perhaps surprisingly, with lack of clarity in the definition of work activities. This latter factor is extremely relevant to the quality of work. More than 80% of employees agreed that they knew what was expected of them and that their activities were clearly defined. Lack of clarity in work assignments was reported most often by auxiliary and unskilled labourers, while scientific and specialist workers were least likely to mention this.

Employment contracts

The opportunity to perform high-quality work was also discussed in the context of atypical forms of employment, i.e. employees not working in full-time jobs with a regular work schedule and open-ended contract. With one exception, no significant differences were identified between employees engaged in part-time employment (working 30-hours a week or less) and those employed full-time, with respect to degree of agreement/disagreement with the given statements characterising the work environment. The exception was that, compared with full-time workers, relatively few part-time employees expressed agreement with the statement that their job activities and objectives were clearly defined.

A different situation came to light when employees on fixed-term contracts were compared to those with open-ended contracts. As a group, employees with fixed-term employment contracts assess their opportunity to perform less positively than employees with open-ended contracts (see Table 3). This more negative assessment extends over all of the organisational characteristics investigated, the most prominent difference (12 percentage points) being recorded in the area of adequacy of information.

Figure 3 Mean values measured for various organisational factors required for high quality employee performance, by occupation



Note: The higher the average, the more negative the perception of conditions in the given area.

Table 3 Incidence of various organisational factors associated with high quality employee performance (by contract type)

| % Agreement | Necessary supplies and equipment | Clearly defined tasks | Sufficient information | Appropriate environment | Sufficient workers |
|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|-----------------------|------------------------|-------------------------|--------------------|
| Employees on open-ended contract | 84.2 | 84.1 | 79.0 | 66.9 | 62.6 |
| Employees on fixed-term contract | 77.6 | 74.7 | 67.4 | 56.3 | 55.6 |

Organisational size did not emerge as a significant factor affecting the measured assessments of the working environment and treatment of employees. Only employees in small companies (50 or fewer employees) perceived a significant shortage of materials or equipment available for their work.

Key drivers of commitment and motivation

With some variations, several theories identify the main factors affecting the motivation of an individual to work. Among the fundamental reasons for worker performance are: pay, job security, interesting work, flexible working

arrangements, opportunity for promotion and personal growth within the organisation, and good working conditions.

Although the majority of theories of motivation attempt to say that money is not the primary motivational factor, ranking it below the so-called higher needs (e.g. Alderfer’s ERG Theory or Herzberg’s Motivator-Hygiene Theory), numerous empirical studies, including this one, have shown the opposite to be true (see Berger, 1980; ‘Competency pay brings better skills’, 1998; or Markowich, 1994).

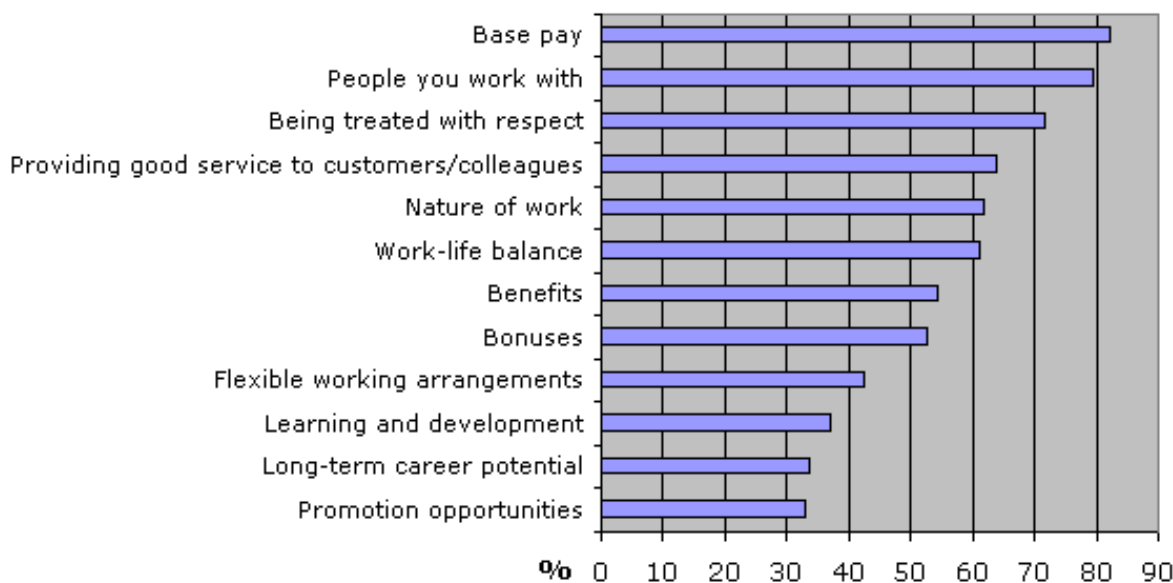
The survey addressed the issue of which factors have the greatest influence on employee motivation and identification with the employer. Employees were asked to assess individual aspects according to their importance.

For Czech employees, a good basic pay remains the most important motivator and source of loyalty to the employer. They ranked good interpersonal relations in the workplace in second place, followed by respectful treatment from the employer. Employees also rate a non-confrontational environment and good compensation as more important than either the nature of the work being performed or career advancement.

Somewhat surprisingly, the respondents assessed the possibility of advancement, the prospects of long-term career growth, and the possibility of continuing education and development as less important sources of motivation. Only one-third of employees consider these factors to be extremely or very important.

Figure 4 shows the proportion of respondents who reported that a given factor was extremely or very important in motivating work performance and loyalty to the employer.

Figure 4 Key drivers of motivation and commitment (%)



The importance of individual motivating factors varies by occupation, age and gender. Table 4 looks at different occupational responses.

Table 4 Rating key drivers of motivation and commitment, by occupation

| % (Extremely or very important) | Legislators and managers | Professionals | Technicians | Clerks | Service and sales workers | Agricultural and fishery workers | Craft and related trades workers | Plant and machine operators |
|---------------------------------|--------------------------|---------------|-------------|--------|---------------------------|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| | | | | | | | | |

| | | | | | | | | |
|--|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| The quality of the people you work with | 89.8 (1) | 87.6 (1) | 77.7 (2) | 76.5 (2) | 82.0 (2) | 81.8 (1) | 78.2 (2) | 78.7 (2) |
| Providing good service to customers/colleagues | 88.4 (2) | 78.0 (4) | 65.0 (5) | 60.3 (6) | 73.1 (3) | 50.0 (5) | 61.9 (4) | 58.5 (7) |
| Base pay | 81.6 (3) | 84.3 (2) | 82.5 (1) | 79.8 (1) | 83.8 (1) | 69.6 (2) | 86.3 (1) | 84.0 (1) |
| Nature of work | 80.9 (4) | 78.0 (4) | 69.8 (4) | 62.8 (4) | 59.9 (6) | 47.8 (6) | 59.5 (7) | 55.5 (8) |
| Being treated with respect | 79.1 (5) | 82.0 (3) | 72.5 (3) | 71.4 (3) | 71.9 (4) | 65.2 (3) | 70.3 (3) | 69.3 (3) |
| Work-life balance | 68.2 (6) | 68.5 (6) | 60.2 (6) | 61.7 (5) | 64.3 (5) | 52.2 (4) | 56.6 (8) | 63.3 (4:) |
| Learning and development | 63.4 (7) | 63.8 (7) | 51.3 (9) | 44.3 (9) | 29.7 (12) | 15.8 (11) | 27.9 (12) | 27.6 (10) |
| Long-term career potential | 58.0 (8) | 51.0 (9) | 42.0 (12) | 41.2 (10) | 32.5 (10) | 16.7 (10) | 30.7 (10) | 27.0 (11) |
| Bonuses | 56.6 (9) | 52.0 (8) | 57.4 (8) | 55.5 (8) | 49.3 (8) | 40.9 (7) | 60.4 (5) | 61.5 (6) |
| Flexible working arrangements | 55.7 (10) | 46.3 (11) | 46.6 (10) | 41.0 (11) | 42.5 (9) | 33.3 (9) | 44.5 (9) | 43.6 (9) |
| Promotion opportunities | 51.9 (11) | 47.8 (10) | 42.2 (11) | 36.7 (12) | 31.4 (11) | 15.0 (12) | 29.9 (11) | 26.7 (12) |
| Benefits | 50.6 (12) | 46.2 (12) | 58.2 (7) | 56.2 (7) | 53.9 (7) | 39.1(8) | 59.6 (6) | 63.3 (4) |

Compared with the population as a whole, employees in higher-level positions place a higher value on opportunities for career advancement and personal development. This difference emerges most clearly in the area of continuing education, where two-thirds of the managers and professionals surveyed (compared with 37.1% of employees overall) reported that opportunities for further education and personal growth were extremely or very important motivational factors for them. Similarly, the feeling of being useful to customers or colleagues is perceived as an important motivating factor in employment positions of a higher level. In blue-collar professions, tangible employment benefits are valued higher.

The survey also identified age-related differences. Younger employees were more likely to agree that personal growth, education opportunities and career advancement were important for good work performance and loyalty to the employer. The role of interpersonal relationships is just as important for employees in younger age groups as it is for older employees.

The balance between work and family life was rated as most important in the 25-39 year age group, i.e. those more likely to have young children.

From the perspective of gender differences, men place a higher value than women on the so-called instrumental values (basic salary and bonuses) as motivational factors in their work performance and commitment. Women, on the other hand, place more importance on interpersonal relationships in the workplace, respectful treatment from the employer, and the possibility to balance work and family responsibilities.

Communication and consultation

Assessment of the level of communication with supervisors varied, with a more positive assessment being given for one's direct supervisor than within the entire company.

Table 5 Assessment of selected aspects of internal communication (%)

| | Strongly agree 1 | Fairly agree 2 | Total 1+2 | Neutral 3 | Fairly disagree 4 | Strongly disagree 5 |
|---|------------------|----------------|-----------|-----------|-------------------|---------------------|
| I have sufficient information to perform my work well | 27.5 | 48.1 | 75.6 | 17.7 | 4.4 | 1.0 |
| I can turn to my supervisor at any time if I need something | 24.8 | 44.6 | 69.4 | 19.9 | 6.2 | 2.4 |
| I regularly receive feedback about the quality of my work | 19.3 | 40.2 | 59.4 | 24.4 | 9.9 | 3.2 |
| My supervisor supports open communication with staff | 20.7 | 38.5 | 59.2 | 25.1 | 8.7 | 3.3 |
| Employees are kept well informed about events that concern them | 15.8 | 42.0 | 57.8 | 25.5 | 10.4 | 3.0 |
| If I bring in new ideas, I receive | 12.1 | 30.6 | 42.7 | 32.3 | 10.7 | 5.3 |

| | | | | | | |
|--|------|------|------|------|------|-----|
| support | | | | | | |
| Differences of opinion are welcome and openly discussed in our department | 10.3 | 28.2 | 38.5 | 35.3 | 14.5 | 5.6 |
| There is sufficient contact between managers and employees in our company | 9.8 | 28.6 | 38.4 | 28.0 | 16.9 | 6.1 |
| Managers in our company understand the problems that employees face on the job | 9.6 | 27.5 | 37.1 | 29.1 | 16.3 | 8.3 |

Note: Responses in the category ‘Don’t know, does not apply’ brought the figures up to 100%

The majority of employees agreed that they had sufficient information to perform their own work well, with three-quarters of those surveyed convinced of this. However, obtaining sufficient information is not a passive process: the employee must also be proactive. Therefore, the extent to which one is well-informed is also related to the structure of occupation. A higher degree of agreement (87.7% and 86.0%) was recorded among highly trained specialists, i.e. in the first and second major groups of the ISCO classification.

The feeling of being kept well-informed varies with respect to the type of information at issue. When employees were asked to respond to a general question on how well, on average, they were kept informed about events concerning them, only 57.8% of those surveyed reported being well-informed. Among specialists in the ISCO first and second occupational categories, this overall perception of being informed was significantly higher (72.6% and 74.1% of the respective respondent groups felt well-informed).

How well one is kept informed in an organisation is undoubtedly related to the quality of the relationship with one’s immediate supervisor. Of the surveyed employees, 69.4% reported being able to turn to their supervisor when necessary.

Feedback on the assessment of work performance is an extremely important form of internal company communication. A 59.4% share of those surveyed reported getting regular feedback on the quality of work performance. The share of professionals (71%) and craftsmen (66%) in the second and seventh ISCO major groups who reported receiving such feedback was significantly higher than the overall rate.

Fewer than 60% of respondents reported that their superiors keep open lines of communication with their staff. This suggests that there is a degree of openness to different opinions within the framework of internal company communication. In practical terms, however, openness was assessed as relatively poor. A 42.7% share of those surveyed reported meeting with support for new ideas, while 38.5% reported that opposing opinions are welcomed

and discussed. These figures probably indicate that ‘top-down’ lines of communication dominate, i.e. management is based on issuing orders. This conclusion is also supported by the low number of employees (37.1%) who agreed that managers understand problems employees confront on the job.

Job satisfaction

More than two-thirds of employees are satisfied on the whole. Among selected groups of employees, job satisfaction varies with respect to sector, occupation and type of employment contract. No significant differences were observed with respect to age, gender, employment rate (full or part-time), or company size.

Table 6 Overall employee satisfaction, by sector and occupation

| % | Agriculture and Forestry | Manufacturing | Construction | Transport and communication | Sales and services | Financial and insurance | State and local government | Health and social welfare |
|------------------|--------------------------|---------------|--------------|-----------------------------|---------------------------|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Very satisfied | 11.2 | 11.7 | 16.5 | 9.7 | 13.8 | 30.2 | 25.0 | 20.9 |
| Fairly satisfied | 51.0 | 50.0 | 45.3 | 59.7 | 52.2 | 60.4 | 56.5 | 53.9 |
| Total | 62.2 | 61.7 | 61.8 | 69.4 | 66.0 | 90.6 | 81.5 | 74.8 |
| % | Legislators and managers | Professionals | Technicians | Clerks | Service and sales workers | Agricultural and fishery workers | Craft and related trades workers | Plant and machine operators |
| Very satisfied | 22.5 | 28.2 | 20.9 | 14.2 | 13.3 | 0* | 12.7 | 10.7 |
| Fairly satisfied | 63.8 | 56.4 | 59.6 | 50.3 | 52.2 | 40.9 | 47.8 | 50.3 |
| Total | 86.3 | 84.7 | 80.5 | 64.5 | 65.5 | 40.9* | 60.4 | 61.0 |

Note: The values for agricultural workers may be distorted due to the low representation of respondents in this category (only 24 employees surveyed).

It is clear from Table 6 that those best satisfied with their employment in the Czech Republic are people working in the finance and insurance sector (90.6%), the public sector (81.5%), or in education, science, research and culture (80.6%). The lowest degree of satisfaction was reported in the sectors of construction (61.8%), manufacturing (61.7%), and, agriculture and forestry, (62.2%).

The degree of satisfaction with work more or less corresponds to the occupational classification, where the employees in the highest positions expressed the most satisfaction, while unskilled labourers expressed the least.

An analysis based on the type of employment contract reveals that employees with fixed-term employment contracts are, on the whole, less satisfied with their work (50.7% satisfied) than employees with open-ended contracts (70.5% satisfied).

Table 7 Aspects of job satisfaction among employees (%)

| | Very satisfied 1 | Fairly satisfied 2 | Total 1+2 | Neutral 3 | Fairly dissatisfied 4 | Very dissatisfied 5 |
|--|------------------|--------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------------------|---------------------|
| | | | | | | |

| | | | | | | |
|---|------|------|------|------|------|------|
| Organisation of work day | 14.3 | 52.7 | 67.1 | 21.3 | 9.7 | 2.0 |
| Length of working time | 13.0 | 51.4 | 64.3 | 21.4 | 11.6 | 2.7 |
| Working conditions (light, heat, noise) | 18.7 | 44.2 | 62.9 | 19.1 | 14.2 | 3.8 |
| Interest of the work | 20.5 | 41.7 | 62.1 | 24.6 | 9.8 | 3.5 |
| Relations with direct supervisor | 14.8 | 43.2 | 57.9 | 29.7 | 8.7 | 3.7 |
| Trust between management and employees | 12.0 | 43.4 | 55.5 | 29.2 | 12.0 | 3.3 |
| Managerial competency | 11.7 | 39.4 | 51.1 | 35.7 | 10.4 | 2.7 |
| Workload | 6.8 | 43.5 | 50.4 | 29.5 | 16.7 | 3.4 |
| Same opportunities for men and women | 14.6 | 30.2 | 44.8 | 36.8 | 13.7 | 4.6 |
| Job security | 11.4 | 32.5 | 43.9 | 33.7 | 15.6 | 6.9 |
| Salaries and wages | 7.0 | 33.0 | 40.0 | 27.5 | 22.7 | 9.7 |
| Business information provided by management | 9.2 | 29.8 | 39.0 | 39.8 | 14.3 | 6.9 |
| Social welfare, benefits | 8.0 | 30.3 | 38.3 | 34.6 | 16.6 | 10.5 |
| Training and re-qualification | 9.4 | 28.3 | 37.7 | 37.3 | 17.4 | 7.6 |
| Opportunity for advancement | 5.4 | 18.6 | 24.0 | 44.8 | 21.4 | 9.8 |

Rating the individual elements along a scale of satisfaction level, Czech employees are most satisfied with the organisation of the work day and its length (67.1% and 64.3% respectively). The physical working environment and interest of the work come next. In the middle of the scale are elements corresponding to interpersonal relations

in the workplace. Only 40% of employees are satisfied with their salary compensation and only one-third explicitly reported being satisfied with their wages.

Ranking lowest on the satisfaction scale are elements such as training, re-qualification and opportunity of advancement. However, as was seen earlier, these are not among the major motivational factors in terms of good work performance and loyalty to the employer. Although this may appear contradictory, the explanation can be found in further data analysis. For those employees whose employer provides good opportunities for further training, learning and development are considered an extremely or very important motivating factor. On the other hand, for those employees who reported poorer training opportunities or even no training at all, learning possibilities were considered as a much less significant motivating factor for job performance (see Table 8).

Other relevant data exist regarding the incidence of further vocational training among Czech companies. According to the [Continuing Vocational Training Survey 2000 \(CVTS\)](#), 67% of enterprises provided their employees with further vocational training, one of the highest levels reported from the new Member States. Thus, the problem may be seen rather in the quality or usefulness of the courses offered.

Table 8 Relation between further education as a motivator for job performance and training opportunities

| Employees with: | Importance of learning and development as a motivator for job performance (%) | | |
|--|---|-----------|--|
| | Extremely or very important | Important | Not very important or not at all important |
| Good opportunities to receive further training | 54.3 | 35.4 | 10.3 |
| Poor or no opportunities to receive further training | 26.4 | 41.4 | 31.7 |

Commentary

It is difficult to say whether working conditions in the Czech Republic have improved in recent years, as there are no other surveys available for trend comparison. However, the quality of working life survey has identified some issues that should be of interest and concern to researchers, policymakers, and employee and employer representatives.

There are still a considerable number of employees working in positions where the nature of the work increases the risk of psychosocial stress. Most people work more than 40 hours a week, with one quarter of employees working 45 hours a week or more. One-third of employees assessed their job as monotonous and, for one in every two employees, work is associated with fatigue and tedium.

In recent years, Czech employees have come under pressure as a result of job insecurity resulting from restructuring changes. Since the end of the 1990s, companies have been forced to reduce their labour costs and there are efforts to increase productivity without growth of jobs ('jobless growth'). However, an effort to compress labour costs, together with ineffective work organisation, may result in employee overload. The survey shows that the greatest obstacles to efficient work performance are a lack of time and insufficient number of employees to handle the workload.

For the Czech employee, a good base pay remains the most important motivator and source of loyalty to the employer. However, only 40% of employees assessed their salary as satisfactory.

Czech employees are not very satisfied with the quality and extent of further vocational training. Although there is evidence (CVTS, 2000) that 67% of employers provided their employees with further training, the quality of this training may be a moot question, since learning was not assessed by employees as a significant motivator for good

job performance.

Research review

The research and documentation available on working conditions in the Czech Republic is not extensive. Regular monitoring is carried out only with respect to certain aspects of work in the context of the quarterly labour force survey, conducted by the [Czech Statistical Office](#) . In addition, analyses are performed by the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs , in collaboration with the firm [Trexima](#) , on collective bargaining agreements for sectors or industries.

The sources informing an awareness of the state and development of working conditions in the Czech Republic are mainly surveys of a variable nature with the primary objective of describing social phenomena other than working conditions as such. For instance, there are surveys focusing on gender inequalities in the labour market or on the attitude towards union organisation.

The only survey that has attempted to cover most of the issues associated with working conditions and working life was carried out in 2000 by the Research Institute for Labour and Social Affairs , using the methodology and questionnaire of the [European working conditions surveys](#) . In addition to the standard questions, the survey contained a number of questions concerning the organisation of the work day and atypical forms of employment: desired working hours, possibility of job sharing, working overtime, etc.

In parallel with this investigation of workers, the behaviour and attitude of employers towards certain issues associated with working time and atypical forms of work was also studied. The survey of employers monitored the use of atypical forms of employment and attempted to uncover, at least partly, the motivation behind the introduction of flexible forms of work within companies. The study included 441 organisations with a total of 90,000 employees. Reports based on the results from these surveys are available on [RILSA's website](#) .

No regular monitoring of working conditions at a national level is planned for the foreseeable future, largely due to financial constraints.

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Appendix: Methodology

[MERCER Human Resource Consulting](#) provided the methodology and experience for preparing the population survey questionnaire. This company specialises in human resource development and is a partner in the overall project. The well-known [Mercer's Human Capital Strategy Model](#) was used to establish the individual areas of interest, focusing on the situation for employees with regard to six factors of working life. An awareness of these factors is, according to MERCER, important as a significant predictor of productivity:

- people (capabilities, experience, training / education, etc);
- work processes (work flows, division of labour, unit (inter)dependencies, etc);

- managerial structure (roles and responsibilities, goal specification, job design, etc);
- information and knowledge (communication mechanism and flows, information exchange, intellectual capital use/creation etc);
- decision-making (accountability, participation, decentralisation, etc);
- rewards (monetary/non-monetary, long/short-term, career progression, etc).

The majority of questions in the survey ask respondents for subjective assessments of their working conditions. Methodologically, the questionnaire's structure is simple: individual items are nearly all assessed using a Likert five-point scale of agreement and disagreement, or some other five-point scale ranking degree of satisfaction or importance. Thus, the questionnaire is easily understood by all parties involved (respondent/interviewer).

The marketing research agency [STEM/MARK](#) collected the data, using trained interviewers conducting face-to-face interviews in respondents' homes. Data collection in the field was carried out during September 2004. The survey population consisted of persons aged 15 to 69 who were employed and had worked for their current employer for a minimum of three months. The three-month requirement was introduced because the nature of the questions required familiarity with working environments. The survey sample did not include self-employed persons.

Quota sampling was used, to ensure that the survey sample was representative of the population with respect to gender, age, education, region, and size of place of residence. A total of 2,007 complete interviews were conducted, comprising 172 questions. The interviews lasted approximately 30 minutes.

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