

Public Employee Motivation in EU Central and Federal Public Administrations

An Exploratory Approach



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Reference list

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June, 2021

Acknowledgements

The study on public employee's motivation in EU central and federal public administrations conducted by the EUPAN Portuguese Presidency results from collaborative work between various stakeholders, within and outside EUPAN.

Moreover, because without their contributions, part of the research would have been jeopardised, we would like to acknowledge and thank them for their active and, in some cases, indirect collaboration.

Within the framework of EUPAN members, we would like to thank Sabine Piska-Schmidt (Austria); Jacques Druart (Belgium); Josip Osmani (Croatia); Niovi Georgiade (Cyprus); Michal Czudek (Czech Republic); Michael Elkjær Pedersen and Anders Ohrt (Denmark); Johanna Nurmi (Finland); Jean-Marc Chneider and Pauline Martin (France); *Christos Kokkalas* (Greece) Konstance Pīlēna (Latvia) Katalin Badacsonyi-Horvath (Hungary); Lorella Mastroianni (Italy); Danielle Bossaert (Luxembourg); Nicole Donkers (Netherlands); Cristina Paladeanu (Romania); Adrian Jenco (Slovakia); Ina Patrinos (Germany), Klaudija Koražija and Anja Majer (Slovenia); Iciar Perez Baroja (Spain) Cristina Morariu and Marta Silva Mendes (European Commission) Asgeir Fløtre (Norway) for the efforts made in their respective administrations to collect the largest number of answers.

We also thank Prof. Christoph Demmke, from Vaasa University, for his guidance, advice and comments that helped us structure and refine the research project. An ever-present guide along this path, whose words of encouragement motivated us to do better, not neglecting the demands that accompany research work.

Our thanks also go to Prof. Eduardo Oliveira, from the University of Porto, who, by chance, we were lucky enough to meet, and who was always available to support us by commenting and guiding us in the field of his specialisation, the older workers.

It would be unfair on our part not to mention EIPA, which organised a cycle of workshops, led by Prof. Beatrix Bering, considering the topics of the EUPAN Portuguese Presidency, which proved to be very useful for the motivation study broadening the analysis perspective of it.

This study is an inclusive one, in which everyone participated within his/her activity or expertise area.

Many thanks to all of you!

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1

Introduction



1 | Introduction

We can begin the introduction to this study on motivation with a question: why motivation matters? Motivation really matters because employees are the building blocks of an organization and work motivation plays a decisive role in both core outcomes of sustainable work, work engagement and keeping workers in the labour market as long as possible (van Dam et al., 2017). Motivation underlies all human action, with decisive impacts on organisational productivity and the work environment as well as on employee well-being. Motivated employees show lower levels of absenteeism and turnover, are less stressed, have a greater enjoyment of work, they don't need to be told how to get work done, they take initiatives, are eager to take up additional responsibilities, are innovative and go-getters and, as a result, are physically and mentally healthier. Additionally, motivated employees are more committed and less conflictual. On the other hand, their greater creativity, innovation, and responsiveness to customers contribute to the long-term success of the organisation (Re'em, 2011).

To gain an understanding of public employees' motivational factors is therefore of paramount importance. The main argument for the conduction of this study is that high motivation levels positively impact both organisations and their employees. Empirical evidence confirms that a motivated workforce means better corporate performance (Nohria and al., 2008). Such high levels of motivation are thus not only beneficial in terms of work-life balance but also have – specifically when operating in the context of public administrations – some positive externalities in terms of the public good. Thus, employee motivation/engagement is a management imperative for leaders at all levels, that should measure it not just once a year by taking a look in the rear-view mirror (Deloitte, 2016).

Indeed, motivational factors are also essential for understanding the decision-making towards transiting from work to retirement (Pohrt & Hasselhorn, 2015). Labour market participation in general and staying in it until or beyond reaching eligibility for pension require some degree of individual motivation (Eiffe, 2018).

Due to its impact on both organisations and employees, the shortage of studies in this field directed at central/federal EU Member States public administrations and the absence of a comparative analysis in terms of age, gender and position (the variables selected), the Portuguese Presidency decided to address this issue under the third domain of the EUPAN Strategy Paper 2019-2022 - future-oriented strategic, efficient and effective HRM.

The aim of this study is an attempt to identify the factors that may contribute to employees keep working with the same enthusiasm and commitment, while maintaining a high level of performance, being motivation essential to achieve it. It is a fact, that when asked, few people claim to feel satisfied at work. Daily pressures such as unrealistic delivery deadlines, workloads out of step with existing resources, restructuring, various challenges or the quality of vertical and horizontal interpersonal relationships are permanent tests of our emotions with a motivational impact.

The outbreak of the pandemic crisis in early 2020 introduced a new variable in the motivation's analysis, never before studied, which therefore acted as an incentive to deepen this theme. The dual perspective of motivation aims at a more holistic understanding of the factors that influence public employees' motivation, both in normal and crisis work situations.

Four questions guided the research, namely: what factors motivate public administration employees? what are age, gender, and hierarchical position's impact on motivation? what effects do perceptions of digitalisation and artificial intelligence (AI) have on motivation? and what is the pandemic's effect on motivation?

Several authors have argued that public administration and third-sector employees have a specific variety of motivation – public service motivation (PSM) – in which intrinsic and altruistic motives become more critical than in the context of the private sector. This and other related propositions will be analysed in a chapter of this study dedicated to sorting out the main factors of public employees' work motivation.

A considerable literature has been dedicated to exploring the putative relation between belonging to a specific generation – like the so-called millennials – and a particular outlook towards work and motivational needs. It will be explored the ins and outs of this body of work and look into some new data resulting from the 2020 EUPAN survey in two subchapters, one dedicated to millennials and the other one to older public employees. Gender and hierarchical position, in turn, will be treated as cross-sectional throughout the study.

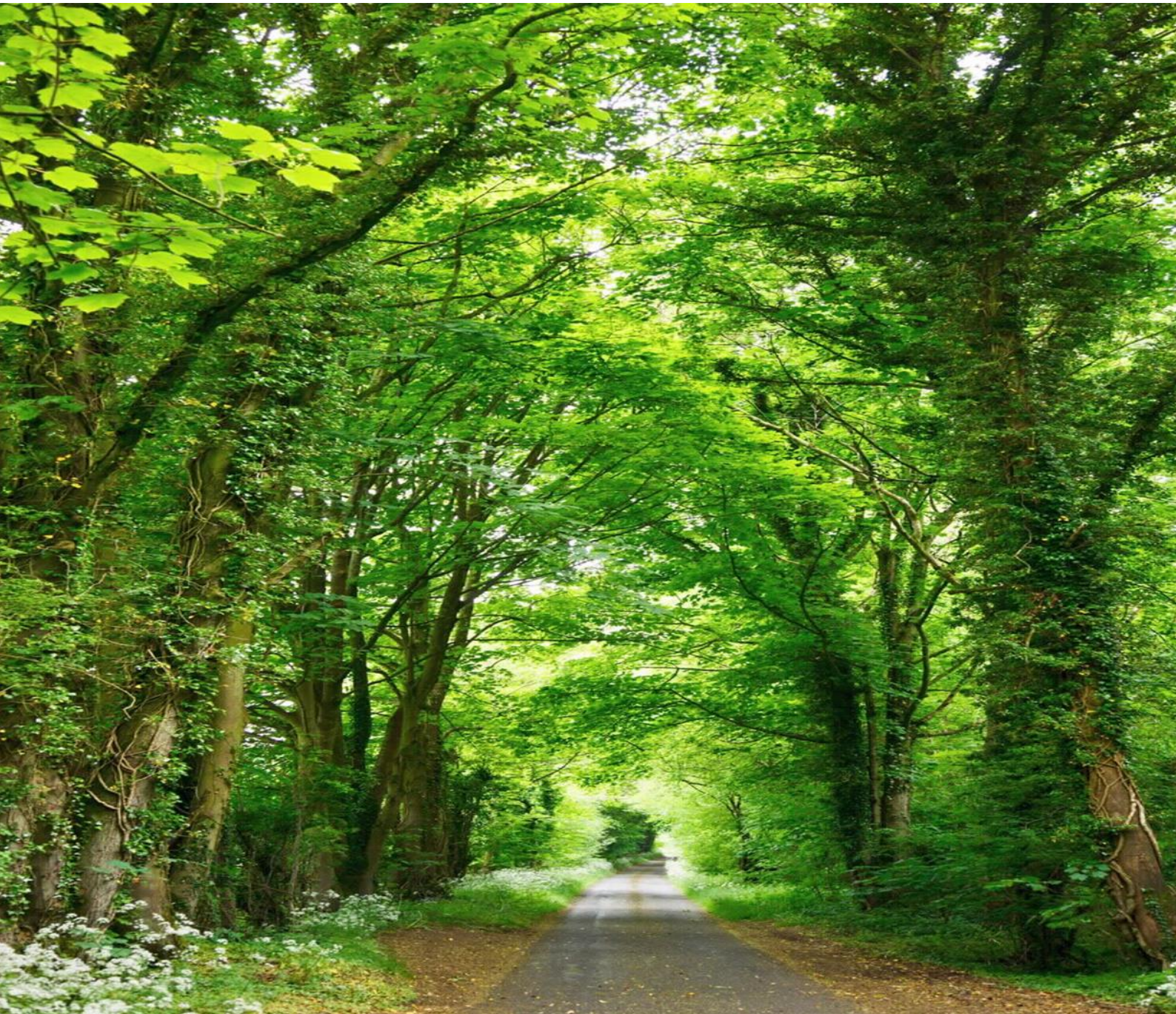
Having in mind more and more the challenges that digitalization and artificial intelligence (as one of the main enablers of digital transformation), pose to societies and organisations, where public administrations are no exception, the perception of public employees about its impact on motivation will also be taken into consideration in this study.

Last but not least, the particularly demanding moment we are all currently experiencing could not be overlooked, considering the huge impact of COVID-19 pandemic has on public sector as well as in other sectors. As such, a second objective was set to find out the effects of the biggest global health crisis of our time on employees' motivation during the first wave of it (March – September 2020). We strived to expand this perspective by exploring how the different variables considered throughout the research might relate to motivation and help us understand how it has evolved during the pandemic.

Once the study's roadmap was outlined, it is time to say: enjoy reading it!

2

Methodological Note



2 | Methodological Note

As stated in the introduction, the overall purpose of this study is to find out the main motivational factors of EUPAN central and federal public administration staff in their daily work.

The empirical research, based on the results of two surveys on public employees and line managers' motivation in a daily context and during the first pandemic lockdown, was complemented by desk research (literature, reports and other documents) and consulting EUPAN countries' websites. Some EUPAN members also contributed by providing the results and findings of national surveys and studies carried out on the subject matter in question, in their public administrations.

The online survey, launched between August and September 2020, had as target audience EUPAN Members States (MS), Observer Countries and European Commission (EC). Hereafter these surveys will be referred to as 2020 EUPAN survey(s).

Given it has not been possible of having a representative sample of the study universe, a minimum of twelve responses per country including different age groups, gender and hierarchical position (snowball sampling) were collected within EUPAN. In some MS this number was higher, since there was no maximum number of responses. Faced with this constraint of the lack of representativeness of the sample we can only speak of perceptions. However, it fulfils the intent and function of icebreaker and food for thought to spark discussion on the motivation topic in the public sector.

Study scope and respondent characterisation

The participants scope defined consisted of 27 Member States, the European Commission and 7 countries with observer status. We have received replies from 20 Member States and the European Commission. Of the 240 responses expected from these participants, we collected 159 answers for the survey on motivation in general and 164 for the COVID-19 impact on motivation one.

Motivation survey respondents' characterisation

Most respondents (48%) were between 31 and 45 years old, 26% were between 46 and 55 years old, 15% were at most thirty years old, and 12% were from fifty-six to sixty-five years old. No respondent claimed to be older than 65.

As regards gender, 69% self-identified as female, 31% as male, and 1 person as non-binary. Furthermore, among our respondents, age is not associated with gender ($p \geq 0.05$).

In what concerns hierarchical position, 84% of respondents positioned themselves as employees and the remaining 16% said they were managers. The low number of managers ($n=25$) among our respondents will hinder the detection of statistically significant ($p < 0.05$) associations of hierarchical standing with other variables.

Unlike gender hierarchical standing is associated with age ($p < 0.05$). Adjusted residuals show that there are more managers between 46 and 55 years old, and more employees below thirty years old than would be expected if there was no relation between the two variables.

We also investigated whether respondents' gender was associated with their hierarchical standing and found that this relationship has no statistical significance ($p \geq 0.05$).

COVID-19 impact on motivation survey respondents' characterisation

The majority of survey respondents (48%) were between 31 and 45 years old, 29% were between 46 and 55 years old, 12% were at most thirty years old, and 10% were from fifty-six to sixty-five years old. Only one respondent was older than 65.

Concerning gender, 71% self-identified as female, 28% as male, and 1 person as non-binary. Furthermore, among our respondents, age is independent of gender ($p \geq 0.05$).

In what regards hierarchical position, 79% of respondents positioned themselves as employees and the remaining 21% as managers. The low number of managers ($n=33$) among our respondents will hinder the detection of statistically significant ($p < 0.05$) associations of hierarchical standing with other variables.

Like gender, the hierarchical position is, among our respondents, unrelated with age ($p \geq 0.05$). The same ($p \geq 0.05$) applies to our exploration of a putative relation between gender and hierarchical position. However, visual examination suggests this might be just a methodological artefact. To be precise, this may be a case of the sample size being too small to enable the statistical analysis to affirm that the greater percentage of men in managing positions (+14 pp.) cannot be accounted for by random fluctuation.

Collective or institutional responses regarding personal data were not taken into consideration.

Data processing

The surveys had a combination of open and closed questions, using a Likert scale to allow the expression of the respondents' opinion to a battery of questions.

For the treatment and analysis of the data received, a database was created in Excel and later exported to SPSS. The absolute frequencies and percentages corresponding to each type of response were calculated for each variable.

The results are, as a rule, presented in whole numbers. Consequently, there will be rounding error, and the percentages reported may add up to more than 100%.

3

Theoretical framework



3 | Theoretical framework

Motivation can be defined in several ways. From a psychological point of view, according to the American Psychological Association's (APA) *Dictionary of Psychology*, motivation is "the impetus that gives purpose or direction to behaviour and operates in humans at a conscious or unconscious level" (APA, n.d.). The four commonly measured workplace indicators of it are engagement, satisfaction, commitment and intention to quit (Nohria and al., 2008), also seen as the best proxy for employee turnover.

Motivation theories have been developed since the first half of the twentieth century trying to explain what makes people tick. These early theories were either content or process theories.

Content or need-based theories describe motivated behaviour as individuals' efforts to meet their needs. More specifically, early researchers thought that employees try hard and demonstrate goal-driven behaviour to satisfy their needs.

Abraham Maslow based his needs theory (1943) on a simple premise: human beings have a hierarchy of needs that are ranked, in ascending order, from physiological (basic needs), to safety, social, esteem, and, finally, self-actualisation needs. Under this theory, when a lower-level need is satisfied it no longer serves as a motivator. Clayton Alderfer eventually evolved his own Existence, Relatedness and Growth (ERG) theory from Maslow's basic tenets (Alderfer, 1969). He bundled the five tiers of needs into just three: *existence*, which corresponds to Maslow's physiological and safety needs; *relatedness*, equalling social needs; and *growth*, matching with Maslow's esteem and self-actualisation.

Furthermore, Alderfer's theory does not consider needs mutually exclusive in any given context and does not rank them in any particular order. David McClelland's acquired-needs theory (1961) argues that regardless of their gender, all humans feel the needs for achievement, affiliation, and power. The combination thereof drives all kind of behaviour, including employee behaviour.

Herzberg's two-factor theory (Herzberg, Mausner & Snyderman, 1959; Herzberg, 1965) differentiates between factors that make people dissatisfied on the job and factors that truly motivate employees. The former, dubbed hygiene factors refer to job context aspects such as company policies, supervision, working conditions, salary, safety, and security. The latter, designated motivators are inherent to the job itself and comprise a sense of achievement, recognition, meaningful work and room for growth in terms of both status and subjective worth.

In Herzberg's research, motivators are conditions that encourage employees to try harder. Nevertheless, organisations have to manage hygiene factors as their absence causes dissatisfaction.

Finally, the proponents of the job's characteristics model theory base it on the idea that the task itself is the most critical aspect of employee motivation. Thus, a tedious and monotonous job stifles motivation to perform well, whereas a challenging job enhances motivation. Furthermore, it identifies five core job characteristics (skill

variety, task identity, task significance, autonomy, and feedback) that will have an impact on three critical employees' psychological states (meaningfulness of work; responsibility and knowledge of outcomes). Such an effect will, in turn, influence work outcomes (job satisfaction, absenteeism, work motivation, etc.).

A separate stream of research gained momentum from the mid-1960s onwards. It views motivation as a rational process and tries to explain why individuals initiate any given behaviour. These process-based theories use the mental processes of employees as the key to understanding employee motivation.

According to John Stacey Adams' equity theory (1965), the comparisons employees make between their inputs (e.g., education, experience, effort, energy) and outcomes (perceived rewards), via-a-vis a referent's inputs and outcomes, shape their perceptions of fairness. In this context, it demotivates them to see reward distribution as unfair.

Victor Vroom's expectancy theory (1964) underlying rationale is that motivation stems from the belief that decisions will have their desired outcomes. Three factors determine the motivation to engage in an activity. The first one is expectancy, which the author defines as belief in the effort capacity to bring about success (e.g., an employee's belief that their effort will lead to high performance). The second is instrumentality, seen as the belief in a connection between activity and goal (e.g., excellent performance will get an employee a reward); and the third one is valence, the degree to which one values a reward.

The reinforcement theory evolved from Skinner's operant conditioning theory (Skinner, 1953) and postulates that behaviour results, in a feedback loop, from its consequences. Leaders can induce desired behaviours by rewarding them, by eliminating rewards of undesired behaviours, and by actively punishing the latter.

Finally, Edwin A. Locke's goal-setting theory (1978) emphasises that setting specific, challenging performance goals and the commitment to these goals are vital determinants of motivation. Objectives describe a desired future, and these established goals can drive behaviour. Achieving the goals will further motivate individuals to perform better.

Bearing in mind our research scope, we must highlight Public Service Motivation (PSM) theory. The PSM theory emerged at the beginning of the 1980s in reaction to the spread of the New Public Management (NPM) movement. NPM minimised the differences between the public and private sectors and called for the introduction of market-type mechanisms like performance-related pay into the public sphere. This theory, first formulated by Perry and Wise in 1990, argues that public employees differ from their private counterparts as intrinsic and altruistic motives are their main drives. These authors constructed a scale to measure PSM, which includes the following dimensions: attraction to public policy-making, commitment to the public interest, self-sacrifice and compassion (Perry & Wise, 1990). These refer to needs and values (public sector ethos), although this is less evident in the case of attraction to policy making.

Public employees differ from the private ones, as intrinsic and altruistic motives are their main drivers.

More recently, Perry and Hondeghem (2008) presented a more straightforward definition. According to its terms, PSM focuses on motives and action in the public domain that are animated by good intentions towards others and towards shaping societal wellbeing. These strategies incorporate public service values across all levels of the organisation's management system. According to these authors, PSM supports the use of training, feedback, meaningful work, goal setting, participation, interpersonal relationships, relatedness, and rewarding as motivational factors (Re'em, 2011).

However, the debate over whether there are similarities or differences between employee motivation in the private and the public sector was and remains controversial.

At the beginning of the twenty-first century, research on work motivation has shifted its focus. Latham and Pinder conclude that "behaviourism and expectancy theory have been overwhelmed by goal-setting and social cognitive theories, while equity theory has given way to conceptualisations of organisational justice" (Latham & Pinder, 2005). They argue that motivation scholars increasingly recognise emotions and behaviour as highly relevant. Furthermore, such scholars also show a growing concern for the motivational roles played by context and cognition (Eiffe, 2018).

Self-determination theory (SDT) and organisational justice theory (OJT) illustrate this change. According to the Center for Self-Determination Theory, this is:

...a formal theory that defines intrinsic and varied extrinsic sources of motivation and a description of the respective roles of intrinsic and types of extrinsic motivation in cognitive and social development and individual differences. (...). SDT propositions also focus on how social and cultural factors facilitate or undermine people's sense of volition and initiative, in addition to their wellbeing and the quality of their performance. Conditions supporting the individual's experience of autonomy, competence, and relatedness are argued to foster the most volitional and high-quality forms of motivation and engagement for activities, including enhanced performance, persistence, and creativity (Center for Self-Determination Theory, n.d., par. 2).

In turn, organisational justice theory builds upon equity theory. Its concern is with how employees perceive fairness in the workplace, identifying four types of justice: distributive, procedural, informational, and interactional.

Distributive justice reflects perceptions regarding fairness of outcomes, while procedural justice reflects perceptions of processes that lead to these outcomes. A third type of justice, informational justice, relates to the accounts provided for justice-related events. Finally, interpersonal justice reflects perceptions of interpersonal interactions and treatment. (...) recent theories consider employees' reactions to the treatment of others (Rupp & Thornton-Lugo, 2015).

More recently, Chatillon and Richard (2015) structure motivation at work around four words: meaning, connection, activity, and comfort. The work meaning relates to the

values it represents. Connection refers to the bond with colleagues and superiors (work environment); activity is the ability to act, take responsibility and cooperate, and, finally, comfort refers to employment conditions, from the workspace itself to the balance between professional and private life.

Work motivation

As far as the main motivation theories are concerned, we observe that their authors have identified many different motivational factors, which can influence each person differently, even when they share the same organisational space. Moreover, we may conclude that, despite this plurality of theories, the final objective seems to be similar, that is, to make employees feel satisfied and engaged in their workplace, and to enable them to make a definite contribution to the organisation.

Work motivation has been commonly defined as a “set of energetic forces that originate both within as well as beyond an individual’s being, to initiate work-related behaviour, and to determine its form, direction, intensity, and duration” (Pinder, 2008).

The definition states that there is a set of energetic forces, implying the multiplicity of needs, drivers and external factors considered over the years regarding human behaviour, without necessarily accepting the primary importance of any of these sources. The idea of force suggests that motivation will manifest itself through effort (Pinder, 2008). Additionally, employees orient such efforts towards achieving specific outcomes or goals.

Scholars have traditionally distinguished two types of motivation: intrinsic and extrinsic. Intrinsic motivation emerges from personal interests, the enjoyment or fulfilment of (basic) needs. Furthermore, it “energises and sustains activities through the spontaneous satisfactions inherent in effective volitional action”. The motivating force of extrinsic motivation seeks external goals, such as reward or money (Eiffe, 2018).

Given that motivation is a contingent phenomenon, influenced by each unique social and family environment, work motivation will necessarily result from a mix of subjectively balanced intrinsic and extrinsic factors. As such, two employees within the same working environment, subject to the same conditions, may experience different motivation levels. Even intrinsic and extrinsic factors can take on a different weight throughout working life, depending on each individual's circumstances, to paraphrase the philosopher Ortega y Gasset (1883-1955).

Despite the subjectivity of motivational factors and their varying impact on each individual, scholars typically relate the following aspects to motivation in the setting of work: leadership style, reward system, organisational climate, work structure (characteristics), and working conditions (Tracy, 2013).

Work motivation results from a mix of subjectively balanced intrinsic and extrinsic factors

Leadership style

Leadership is a crucial factor in determining employee motivation, overall company culture by promoting and valuing teamwork, collaboration, friendship and openness, organisational climate, and performance.

The appropriateness of any given leadership style is contingent on organisational mission, vision, goals, the people within it and the external environment. Often, to meet the organisation and employees' individual needs, managers are required to resort to different leadership types in different circumstances, such as the different stages of working life. Adopting an age-management approach, sensitive to needs and events that occur at different life stages, helps managers to select adequate practices and styles to better address employee motivation and performance throughout their professional life.

To foster trust and promote employee motivation, leaders must demonstrate an ethical conduct, upholding the highest standards of integrity. One cannot demand from other attitudes, behaviours, enthusiasm, satisfaction, dedication to work, organisational involvement when the leader himself does not demonstrate it in his daily management, in the most diverse areas. The well-worn expression of leading by example never loses its relevance.

To foster trust and promote employee motivation, leaders must demonstrate an ethical conduct, upholding the highest standards of integrity.

The main principles of ethical leadership are commonly assumed to be promoting mutual respect, autonomy, and transparent communication; showing concern for the interests of others, empowering them, and promoting their welfare; treating others with justice, fairness, and equity; adopting an honest, truthful, and correct behaviour, and prioritising community building. The internalisation and demonstration of ethical principles in the leaders' actions encourages and reinforces employees' motivation.

Reward system

Reward systems are a feature of every work environment, and motivation theorists typically place rewards at the centre of their systems. Herzberg's two-factor theory (Herzberg, Mausner & Snyderman, 1959; Herzberg, 1965), for instance, highlights advancement and growth opportunities as factors that truly motivate employees. At the same time, Adams (1965) ground his equity concept on the perception of fair reward. On the other hand, Vroom's expectancy model (1964) emphasises the person's belief of achieving a reward as a result of good performance. We still have the reinforcement theory advanced by Skinner (1953) that advocates the idea of rewarding positive behaviour as a way of encouraging its repetition.

As regards the central and federal public administrations, the reward system is formally embodied in the performance appraisal systems and their outcomes, as well as in any other career or professional advancement schemes that may be in place.

However, performance appraisal systems can be demotivating if their positive effects are considered by employees to be very difficult or almost impossible to achieve

(because they are unrealistic) or that it has little impact on career or professional advancement.

The very specificity of Public Service Motivation (PSM), a topic that will be discussed in some detail in chapter three, may lead governments into a false sense of security. Neglecting reward systems – which are, after all, hygiene factors in Herzberg’s theorisation – may hamper public organisations’ capacity to retain the right talent. This risk is an inherent feature of PSM that can be tracked to Perry and Wise’s seminal paper.

Thus, public organizations that attract employees with high levels of public service motivation will not have to construct incentive systems that are predominantly utilitarian to energize and direct member behaviour (Perry & Wise, 1990).

Organisational climate

The organisational climate is composed of ascertainable aspects of the working environment perceived directly or indirectly by employees and influence their motivation and behaviour (Chiavenato, 2014). This definition conveys the idea of a multidimensional reality. Elements such as organisational structure, leadership style, work design features, health management, individual development opportunities, knowledge management, and ethical principles, values and behaviours contribute to creating each organisation’s specific climate.

A positive organisational climate, which allows recognition as a “good place to work”, should favour social and environmental responsibility, a diversity orientation and be people-centred, allowing for employees’ autonomy, creativity, and development of full potential at all working life stages. According to theory Y of management the promotion of commitment, satisfaction and motivation of the workers is more about greater job autonomy and freedom and less supervision and control (Carson, 2005; Kopelman, Prottas & Davis, 2008). An age-friendly organisational climate takes into consideration that employee’ individual needs, capacities and priorities change throughout the lifespan due to individual life courses and aging processes. Therefore, to adapt organisational practices to the age-context, promoting equality of opportunities and a positive image of age, is of paramount importance.

In the public sector, most organisations still hold a hierarchical structure that fosters a patronising management approach in which the employee is coerced, rather than persuaded or motivated to work, thus hindering a positive work environment (Re’em, 2011).

Work structure

The work structure consists of the job itself, characterised by a specific profile that describes the specific tasks the employee must perform, the corresponding skills, experience, abilities, as well as the personality traits a person would need to complete it. Moreover, it also refers to workplace structure or the place inside the organisation it occupies and the relations with other posts (jobs).

Job content corresponds to Herzberg's motivators or factors that are intrinsic to the job and make it an exciting job, as opposed to the hygiene or material factors. Job content is also the core element of Hackman and Oldham's (1980) job's characteristics model theory, according to which five factors have a vital impact on employees' psychological state determining their performance at work. The elements this model account for is skill variety, task identity, task significance, autonomy, and feedback.

Working conditions

The European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions (Eurofound) defines *working conditions* as signifying:

...the working environment and aspects of an employee's terms and conditions of employment. This covers such matters as the organisation of work and work activities; training, skills, and employability; health, safety, and wellbeing; and working time, and work-life balance. (Eurofound, 2011)

In short, working conditions refers to the context within which a job must be developed, and over which employees have little or no control, thus considered as extrinsic factors. Working conditions were part of Herzberg's hygiene factors, the absence of which causes dissatisfaction.

Working conditions are, as a rule, mostly determined by labour market framing laws. Furthermore, regarding EU Member States central and federal public administrations, specific general labour or statutory laws apply to employees and intend to consider public administration work specificities. One critical element of central and federal public administrations is job security and stability that is still recognised to be higher than in the private sector.

The main difference between the motivation of public sector employees and their private counterparts is traditionally based on the strong sense of service to the community and orientation towards promoting the public interest manifested by the former. Researchers advocate that public service motivation is essentially the presence of certain public service values within a person (Vandenabeele *et al.*, 2004).

This argument is at the heart of the Public Service Motivation (PSM) theory that identifies intrinsic and altruistic motives as public employees' main drives. Reinforcing this idea, research conducted on this topic has consistently found that direct economic benefits are less important for public sector employees than for those in the private sector (Newstrom, Reif & Monczka, 1976; Frank & Lewis, 2004).

The *Conseil d' Orientation des Politiques de Ressources Humaines* of the French Ministry of Action and Public Accounts (COPRH-MACP) presented in 2017 a report based on literature review and empirical data from the French electoral survey. The *Centre de Recherches Politiques de Sciences Po* (CEVIPOF) that analyses the different factors influencing public employees' motivation (COPRH-MACP, 2017) conducted this survey.

The report begins by addressing the possible difference between motivation in the public and private sectors, relying on the Public Service Motivation (PSM) theory. However, grounded on the surveys' results, it concludes that public and private employees' motivation sources have a shared basis, although specific determinants such as the search for meaning, the logic of general interest and solidarity seem to be more marked in the public sector.

A study presented in 2014 by the *UNDP Global Centre for Public Service Excellence* (UNDP GCPSE) offers a similar line of argument. It concludes that “the amount of effort that workers exert at work depends on factors such as personality traits and the different types of intrinsic and extrinsic rewards that those personality traits are attracted to. (...) An individual's PSM level influences their job choice and work performance: those with greater PSM are drawn to government service. (...) However, it is wise not to assume that all public service employees are motivated by the greater good. In fact, public sector employees are motivated by both extrinsic and intrinsic factors” (UNDP GCPSE, 2014).

The above-mentioned French public administration report identifies leadership, individual professional development, compensation, and work organisation as the central employee motivation drivers, although with different relevance. However, compensation is not the primary determinant of public employee motivation, similarly to other professional circles. In addition, it can be a significant demotivating factor if not perceived as fair or appropriate to the employee commitment or level of responsibility, which is in line with Adams' equity theory.

New forms of work organisation (e.g., creation of co-working areas, teleworking, work-life balance), career path predictability and some more subjective factors (such as wellbeing at work) seem to be more critical levers.

Under the scope of professional skills, development throughout an employee's working life, there is some marginal concern with the motivation of older employees. The construction of career paths aiming to provide different responses according to career length is decisive for employees' motivation in all working life stages.

4

Public employees' motivational factors



4 | Public employees' motivational factors

Studies carried out over time by authors such as Houston (2000), Jurkiewicz, Massey, and Brown (1998), among others, concluded that public sector employees tend to be more motivated by job content, self-development, recognition, autonomy, interesting and challenging work and the chance to learn new things, as well as by the possibility to conciliate work and family life.

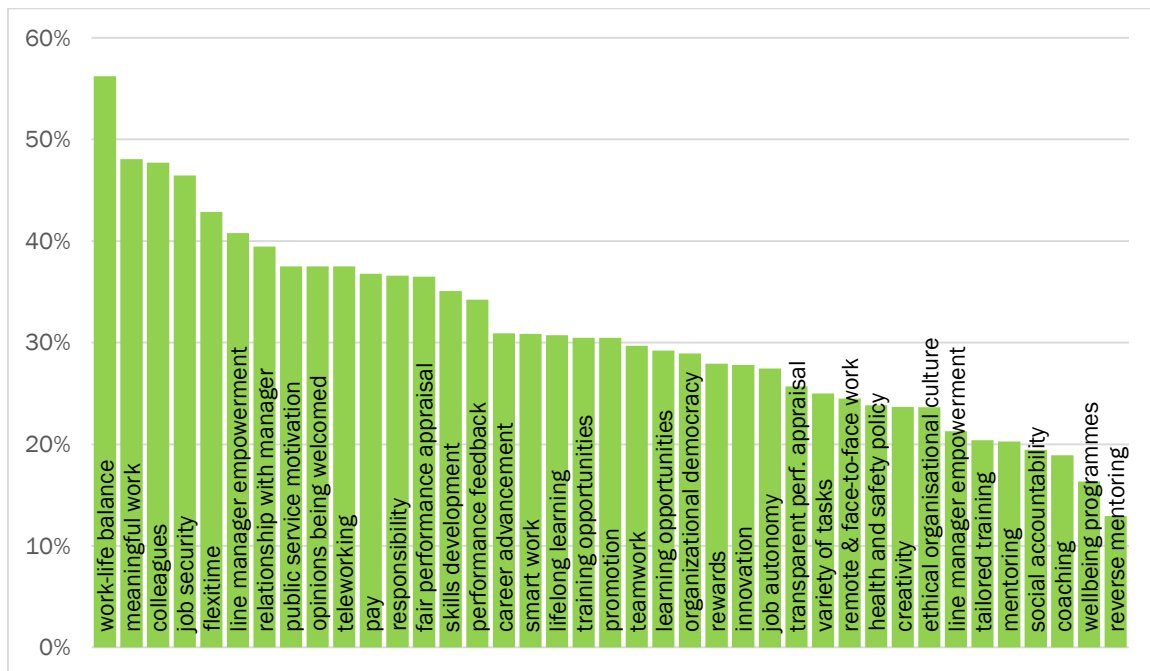
In fact, with regard to the last mentioned factor, Buelens and Van den Broeck (2007) conducted a study focusing on the choice of lower levels of work-family life conflict, which implies fewer working hours as a motivating factor in both the private and public sectors. The results showed that public employees expressed a higher degree of motivation with reconciling the spheres of work and family.

About the job content factor, also defined as job characteristics, it encompasses dimensions such as the meaning of work, responsibility for the work outcomes and knowledge of the results, within the scope of the model developed by Hackman and Oldham (1980). These dimensions or “psychological states”, when present, positively influence public employees' motivation. Furthermore, meaningfulness of work would occur whenever a task demands a variety of skills, has a certain coherent identity and is significant to others as it has an impact on their work or lives. The state of responsibility depends on the degree of autonomy and employee experiences. Knowledge of the result is related to the feedback one receives (Vandenabeele et al., 2004).

The results of the 2020 EUPAN survey on EU Member States central and federal public administrations employees' motivational factors confirms the insights found in the literature concerning public sector motivational factors. This survey asked respondents about their perceptions of the significance of several motivational factors, which were operationalised via a battery of thirty-nine statements with which respondents could: either strongly disagree, disagree, be neutral, agree, strongly agree, or say they did not know.

Work-life balance contributes for public employees' higher degree of motivation

Figure 1 | Strong agreement that PA employees are significantly motivated by...



Source: 2020 EUPAN survey on central/federal public administration employees' motivation.

An absolute majority of respondents (56%) strongly agrees that public administration employees are significantly motivated by work-life balance. Meaningful work (when perceived as worthwhile, valuable, and useful) and a good relationship with colleagues take second place *ex aequo*, albeit at a considerable distance. The social support resulting from the relationship with colleagues and managers is often the primary driver for satisfaction, motivation and even retention. Almost every second



respondent (48%) strongly agrees that these factors significantly motivate public administration employees. Job security comes fourth (46%). Still, what this statement does not score in strong agreement it makes up in straight agreement (42%). So much so that if the figure was to depict the sum of those who strongly agree and those that simply agree, job security would come second, right after work-life balance. No other statements score in the high forties of strong agreement.

Flexitime (43%) comes next. It is then followed in close succession by the delegation of responsibilities to line managers (41%), a good relationship with line managers (39%), public service motivation (work for the common good) (38%), the welcoming of their opinions/contributions (38%), and teleworking (38%).

The statement that central and federal public administration employees are significantly motivated by pay, scores an undistinguished 37% of respondents strongly agreeing with it. On its coattails, we find statements regarding: responsibility (37%); fair performance appraisal (36%); skills development (35%); performance feedback (34%); flexibility in career advancement (31%); smart work (work anywhere and anytime) (31%); lifelong learning (31%); training opportunities (30%); promotion (30%); teamwork (30%); learning opportunities (29%); co-participation and co-decision in organisational processes (shortened to “organizational democracy” in the chart) (29%); rewards (material and immaterial) (28%); innovation (28%); job autonomy (27%); transparent performance appraisal (26%); task variety (25%); reconciling remote work with face-to-face work (24%); health and safety policy at work (24%); promotion of employees’ creativity (24%); ethical organisational culture (24%); delegation of responsibilities to line managers (shortened to “line manager empowerment” in the chart) (21%); tailored training (20%); mentoring (20%); social accountability (19%); coaching (19%); programmes for mental wellbeing (e.g., sport, yoga, reiki, healthy eating) (shortened to “wellbeing programmes”) (16%), and, finally, reverse mentoring (13%).

According to the results of a survey launched across Europe (2019) by Michael Page, the reasons that weigh most heavily when considering a change of company are recognition of the work done (98.1%), relationships with colleagues and bosses (97.8%) and work-life balance (97.3%). The least valued motivational factor is salary increase (86.3%), which is in line with the results of the EUPAN survey.

If we compare the EUPAN survey results with another survey conducted by the Dutch public sector, we see that despite the time gap between them (2020 and 2007) the work-life balance issue continues to be prioritised by employees.

This survey aimed at identifying work-related motives was carried out in April 2007 by the Dutch public sector. Four thousand one hundred forty-six employees selected, from six different work motives (Figure 2), the one they considered as the most important. Data from 3,294 governments (national and local), and education sectors employees identified job content and work-family balance as the vital motivational factors (Leisink & Steijn, 2008).

Figure 2 | Most critical work motive for government and educational employees

	Governmental employees %	Educational employees %
Salary	10	8
Career opportunities	5	4
Work-family balance	12	11
Job content	51	53
To want to help people	7	14
To want to contribute to solving social problems	9	7

Source: Leisink & Steijn (2008), p. 124.

The Estonian Ministry of Finance and Estonian Applied Research Centre join forces triennially to carry a Staff Commitment and Job Satisfaction in Public Service survey¹. As far as civil servants' motivational factors are concerned, the report emphasizes work environment, sense of community and meaning and overpay.

In Finland and from 2004 onwards, the State Personnel Survey enables state organizations to assess annually employee satisfaction, among other variables, and to add further questions. Although each organization has its report, the app also tallies national results. The study includes police and defence forces. In 2018², eight topics were covered by it: leadership; work content and participation; salary; vocational training and lifelong learning; organizational culture; working environment; interaction and communication; and employer image and values. This research only approaches motivation as a factor that may lead to job satisfaction.

A public service barometer based on representative samples of both the general population (n=1.030) and civil servants (n=1.000) showed that French citizens in general regard employment safety as, by far (70%), the prime reason to join the public service. Vacations and days off show up in a distant second place (35%). On the other hand, civil servants themselves also highly mention employment safety (66%) but are more likely to point towards defending the common good (35%), or vocation (32%) than citizens in general do. A general overview shows that civil servants are happier at work than their colleagues in the private sector are. The correlation between job satisfaction and salary is feeble, as well as with educational attainment. The research confirmed the role of positive feedback from leaders, work-life balance, and career prospects as actual determinants of job satisfaction (ODOXA, 2018).

According to the results of the 2020³ Civil Service Employee Engagement Survey, launched by the Ireland Department of Public Expenditure and Reform, the Top-5 key drivers of employee engagement are competence (79%); well-being (76%); citizen impact (73%); coping with change (72%) and social support (71%). As challenging key messages from this survey, it was pointed out that civil servants continue to feel that the involvement climate in the Civil Service could be strengthened; the public does not value their contribution; a certain frustration with the promotion process and also feel unhappy with how performance is managed. The five most challenging results are related to involvement climate, public perception, civil service renewal awareness, pay, and performance standards.

A large sample (n=6.848) online survey commissioned by the Luxembourgian authorities to TNS Ilres showed four out of five (80%) respondents to be proud of their work, either frequently (18%), very frequently (35%), or everyday (27%). Regarding the factors that bring about their motivation, respondents pointed to autonomy

¹ The 2018 report was based on an achieved sample of 4.375 public servants, which for the first time included defence forces. The method seems to have been an optional answer online referendum.

² In 2018, given the roster of organizations that opted to use this tool, 70% of the universe of public employees was potentially covered. However, the actual response rate among those potentially covered was 71%. Respondent anonymity was assured. The methodology establishes a statistical confidentiality threshold at a minimum of five observations per organisation.

³ This survey was carried out by the Ireland Central Statistics Office and based on an online survey in which 21.365 civil servants took part. The report was published in 2018 and a new edition of it was published in December 2020.

(82%), and work content (78%). A good (social) working environment (67%) and pay (65%) showed up in third and fourth place. Work-life balance, which in other surveys scored into the top position, in this study was placed fifth (61%) and public service motivation appeared in ninth place (57%) (TNS Ilres, 2017).

Every four years, Statistics Austria, the Austrian National statistics service, surveys federal public employees. Regarding motivational factors, the statement in terms of highest average agreement were “I feel motivated in my daily work by having a secure job” (82.0%), followed closely by “I feel motivated in my daily work by the feeling of doing a good job” (81.4%). A second peloton of statement included “I feel motivated by tasks in my daily work” (73.6%), and “I feel motivated in my daily work by flexible working hours” (72.3%). Remuneration only showed up in a distant fifth place (60.6%) (Statistics Austria, 2015).

Portugal launched a questionnaire in 2015 on the central government administration public employees’ motivational factors. The responses to it evidenced that the highest ranking (in terms of being rated “important” or “very important” in a five-point Likert scale) motivational factors were: self-satisfaction (98.6%), pay (98.4%), stimulating work and professional improvement (both close to 98%), transparency in performance assessment (96.9%), working for the common good (96.6%), and professional autonomy (95,2%) (Madureira & Rodrigues, 2015).

In Romania it was also conducted a motivation survey on a sample of 120 civil servants. It was found out that the factors that influence their workplace motivation are mostly work environment and task richness related (Ciobanu & Androniceanu, 2015). The survey does not probe into the specific role of work-life balance.

In 2018, the Slovak Civil Service Council carried out an online survey⁴ that focused, among other subjects, on motivation. The main motivational factors to emerge from the analysis is stable income and employment (Rada pre štátnu službu, 2019).

In the Municipality of Kamnik, a local autonomous community of fifty employees in Slovenia, a survey was carried out in March 2012, with a participation rate of 90%. The main conclusion of it is that leadership can positively affect motivation and, through it, performance (Vidmar, 2012).

Conducting staff satisfaction surveys in the Belgian federal administration is also a standard practice. For example, the survey conducted by the Federal Public Finance Service (FPS Finance) in 2016, which considered variables such as overall satisfaction, trust, job content, recognition, career, responsibility; interpersonal relations, leadership, and team, allowed a number of key areas to be identified where employees would like to see improvements. Thus, better vertical, and horizontal communication, more involvement in the internal changes of services, more transparency and support in career development and simplified administrative procedures contribute to greater employee satisfaction.

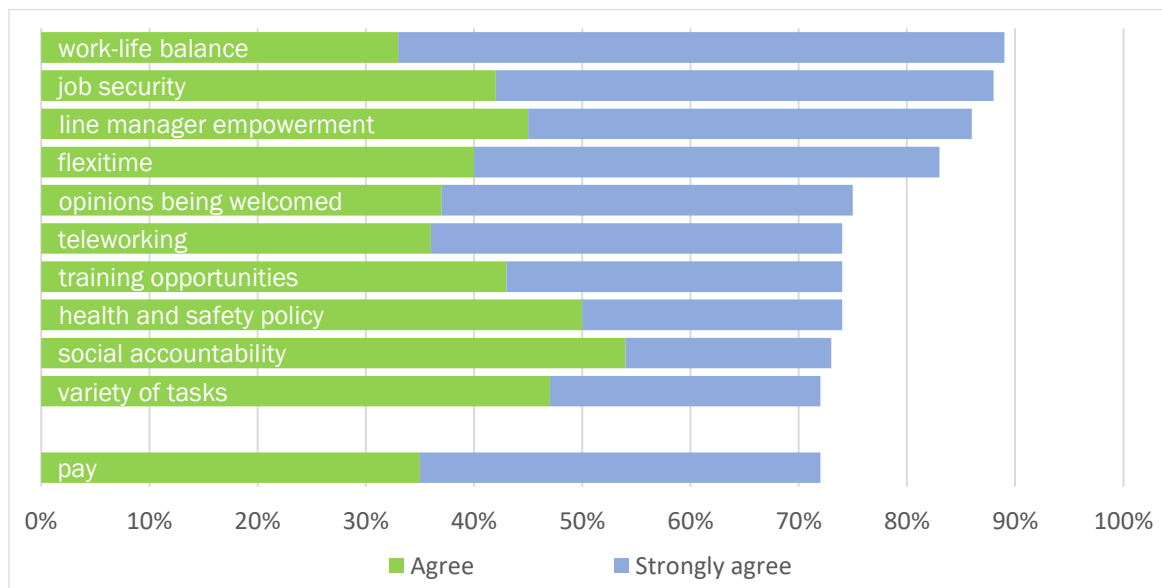
⁴ Participation on the survey was optional both for organizations (80% of which responded) and individuals. The total achieved sample was composed of 6.218 respondents, thus representing 16% of all civil servants in the Slovak Republic.

Denmark is another MS where surveys are applied to identify the motivational factors of employees in the central government, regions, and municipalities.

In the Danish National Research Centre for Welfare's publication on "Management and Motivation in the Public Sector" (Ledelse og Motivation I den Offentlige Sektor), the most relevant motivational factors for employees within each administration level are listed on the basis of surveys results. At the level of central government employees, the most relevant motivational factors are functional content; work organisation; salary; working environment; development and training opportunities; corporate culture; management; special remuneration, employment conditions and image. Of all these, the one that comes first is functional content. The justification is based on the fact that employees believe that their tasks are important because they serve a useful purpose for society.

Let us see what kind of incentives, as stimulus to greater action, are more powerful to motivate public employees, making them more efficient and happier. Do monetary incentives or the job promotion and job security still play an important role or have given way to other motivational incentives such as job satisfaction, job enrichment (associated with increased responsibilities, the content and nature of work), pride, recognition for accomplishment, providing a spur or zeal for better performance?

Figure 3 | Top 10 motivational factors



Source: 2020 EUPAN survey on central/federal public administration employees' motivation.

An absolute majority of respondents (56%) strongly agreed that public administration employees are significantly motivated by work-life balance. Meaningful work and a good relationship with colleagues take second place *ex aequo*, albeit at a considerable distance. Almost every second respondent (48%) strongly agreed that these features significantly motivate public administration employees. Job security comes fourth (46%). Job security is indeed an incentive that provides great motivation to employees. It encourages loyalty to the organisation and avoids mental tension of

instability regarding their work future. The deterioration in budget deficits caused by the COVID-19 pandemic certainly sounded the alarm bells for the situation experienced at the time of the 2007-2008 financial crisis, which led to the dismissal of public employees in some Member States' administrations as well. This ghost of the past feeds the feeling of fear of further job cuts. This is why job security is more highly valued, especially in contexts of high uncertainty.

No other statements score in the high forties of strong agreement. Flexitime (43%) comes next. To offer flexible working wherever possible is advisable, to accommodate employees' different lifestyles and personal and familiar commitments.

Within flexible work arrangements is remote work and under this one is included smart working and different types of teleworking (telework, hybrid telework, occasional teleworking), which due to the pandemic crisis have seen massive implementation in both the private and public administration sectors.

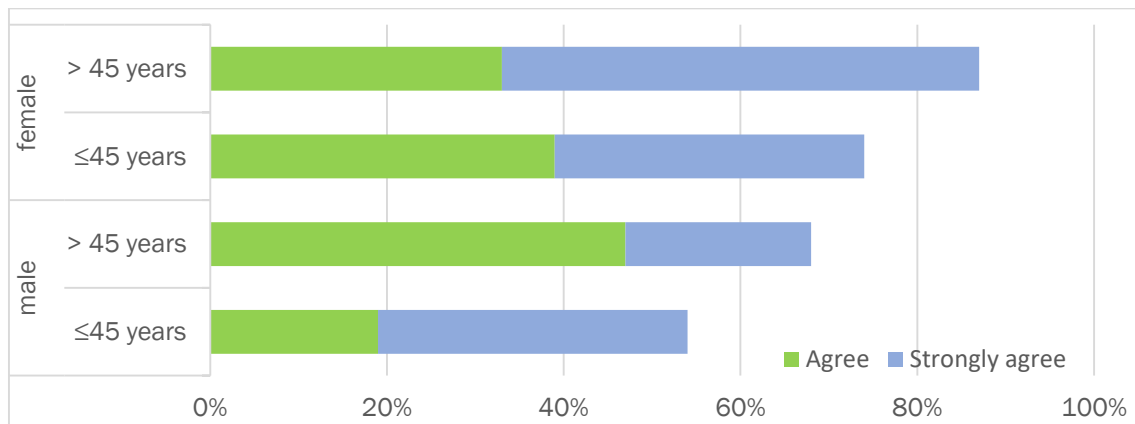
Crossing the gender and age group variables, we verify that women aged over 45 years feel more motivated by teleworking. Only men aged 45 and under show a higher level of motivation for this type of remote work.



The labour market research has moved beyond regarding men or women as homogenous groups. The differences within each group can be explained by other variables, like education and skill level, career, position, culture, location, and the specificities of the situations in which particular professional groups find themselves. However, in a generalist approach to the data from the EUPAN survey we can find the answer to the higher valuation of telework by women in the age group in question, most likely in the family situation. Most of them are married and have children, making teleworking an instrument to reconcile family and professional life. It is not by

chance that teleworking has a greater weight in the motivation of women, regardless of their age group.

Figure 4 | Employees significantly motivated by teleworking by gender and age group



Source: 2020 EUPAN survey on central/federal public administration employees' motivation

Back to our statements score, flexitime is followed in close succession by the delegation of responsibilities to line managers (41%), a good relationship with line managers (39%), public service motivation (work for the common good) (38%), the welcoming of their opinions/contributions (38%), and teleworking (38%). Pay, which some take to be the *nec plus ultra* of extrinsic factors, does not make the cut into the Top 10, and gathers only 37% of strong agreement and 35% of agree. Pay is helpful to satisfy security and social psychological needs having led to the implementation of various pay plans and bonus schemes in public administrations to motivate and stimulate staff.

The meta-analysis carried out by Tim Judge and colleagues, which synthesized the findings from 92 quantitative studies, showed that the association between salary and job satisfaction is very weak. The reported correlation ($r = .14$) indicates that there is less than 2% overlap between pay and job satisfaction levels. Furthermore, the correlation between pay and pay satisfaction was only marginally higher ($r = .22$ or 4.8% overlap), indicating that people's satisfaction with their salary is mostly independent of their actual salary.

A cross-cultural comparison revealed that the relationship of pay with both job and pay satisfaction does not show significant differences between countries and continents. The USA, India, Australia, Great Britain, and Taiwan were given as examples.

A similar pattern of results emerged when considering group-level comparisons. The researchers concluded that, and we quote: "Employees earning salaries in the top half of our data range reported similar levels of job satisfaction to those employees' earning salaries in the bottom-half of our data range". This finding is consistent with Gallup's engagement research (covering 1.4 million employees from 192 organizations across 49 industries and 34 nations), which reports no significant difference in employee engagement by pay level (T. A. Judge et al., 2010).

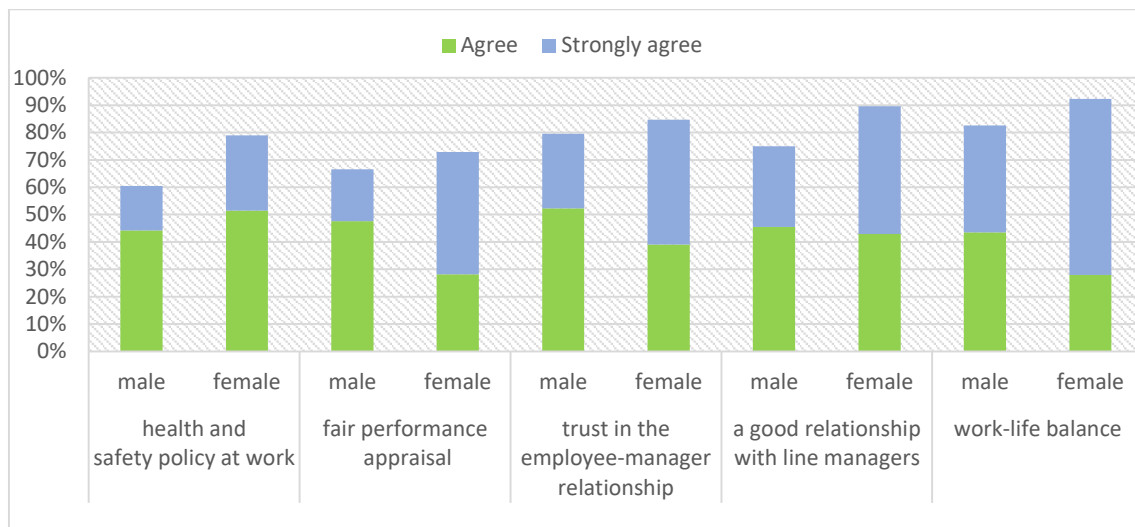
Compensation is not the determining factor of public employee motivation

Other research shows that employees' personalities are much better predictors of engagement than their salaries (Chamorro-Premuzic, 2013).

Some years after these research findings, it is interesting to note the absence of any significant change in the results of the most recent research on the pay topic. The financial incentives continue to be dethroned by non-monetary incentives that satisfy more the ego needs of employees.

In the study of the main motivational factors of public employees, we also considered the variable gender. Do women favour different factors from men or is the gender issue indifferent when it comes to identifying what creates motivation at work? What do the results of the EUPAN survey 2020 tell us about this?

Figure 5 | Top 5 motivation factors by gender

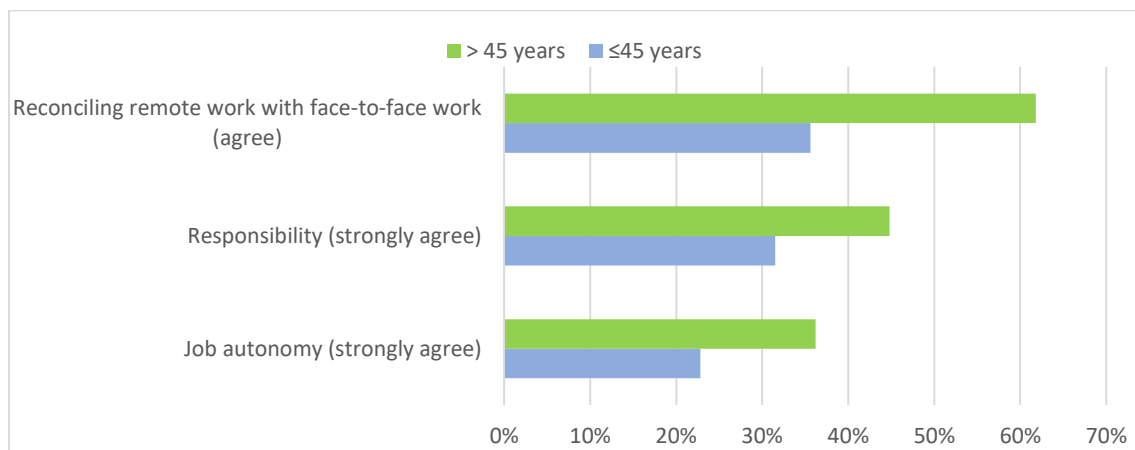


Source: 2020 EUPAN survey on central/federal public administration employees' motivation.

We used the Mann-Whitney test to check whether there are differences between genders in the importance they ascribe to motivational factors. We found out this was the case ($p < 0.05$) regarding six statements. Namely, those that affirm public administration employees are significantly motivated by work-life balance; a good relationship with line managers; trust in the employee-manager relationship; teleworking; fair performance appraisal; and health and safety policy at work. In all of these, women agreed more strongly with the specific statement than men did.

The fact that the motivational factor most valued by women is work-life balance can be an indicative of a certain imbalance in the division of family tasks, to their disadvantage, which is more pronounced in some Member States than others due to different cultural traditions and customs.

Figure 6 | Top 3 significantly motivation factors by age



Source: 2020 EUPAN survey on central/federal public administration employees' motivation.

Regarding the association of age with the statements on what significantly motivates PA employees, the Mann-Whitney test showed it to be statistically significant ($p < 0.05$) in three cases: reconciling remote work with face-to-face work; responsibility; and job autonomy (by letting them to establish their own ways of working).

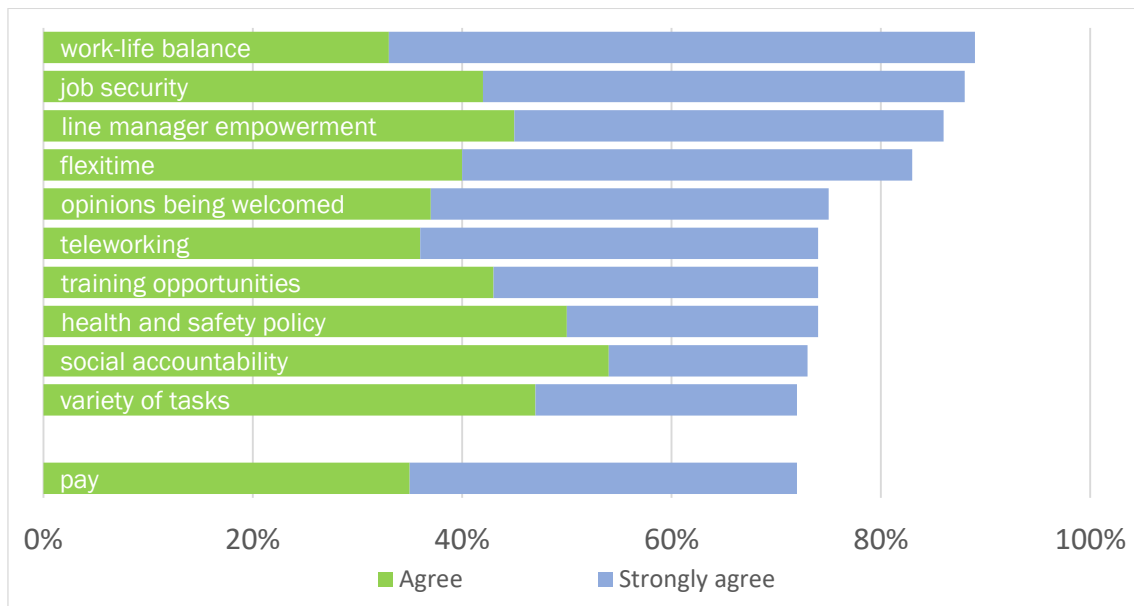
If we notice, it is the employees over 45 who most value hybrid work (remote and face-to-face), responsibility and autonomy as motivational factors. They are precisely those who, due to their accumulated professional experience, need a less monitoring by their line manager.

The test evidenced no association between hierarchical standing and agreement with the statements regarding motivational factors.

Extrinsic motivation means an individual's motivation is stimulated by external factors, like rewards and recognition. In this last case, it fulfils both the basic need of esteem as individuals and facilitates belonging. As human beings, individuals place great value on how they themselves and their work are regarded by others. Some people may never be motivated internally, and only external motivation would work with them to get the tasks done. The same person may be motivated by both intrinsic and extrinsic factors depending on their life cycle. We must bear in mind that motivation is something extremely volatile. What motivates now may not work tomorrow.

Research says extrinsic rewards can sometimes promote willingness in a person to learn a new skillset. However, we must bear in mind that extrinsic rewards deplete very quickly.

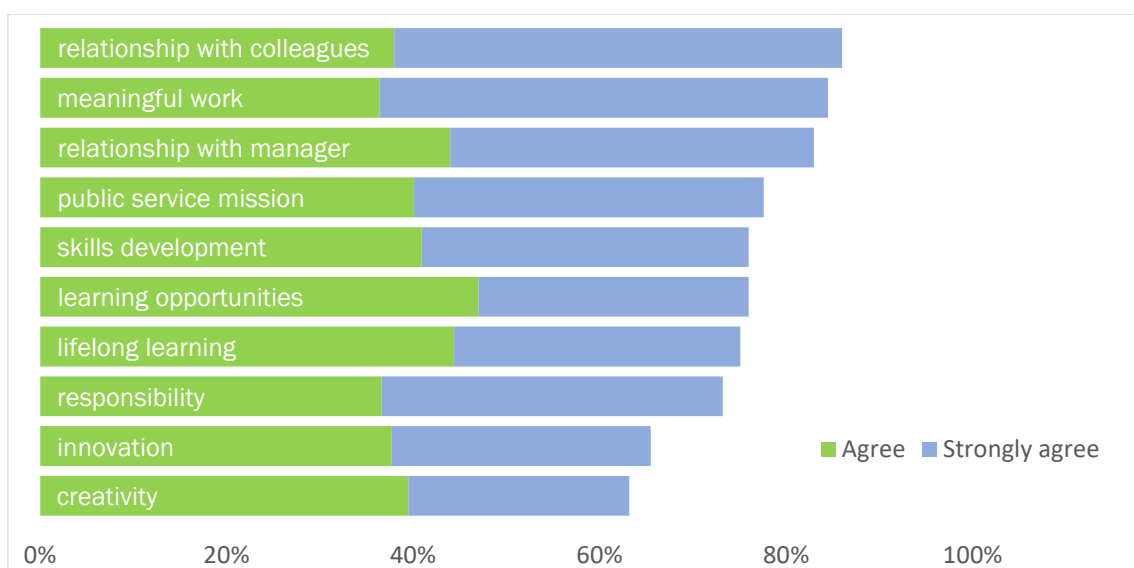
Figure 7 | Top 10 extrinsic staff motivational factors



Source: 2020 EUPAN survey on central/federal public administration employees' motivation

The traditional “carrot and stick” approach to motivation does not seem to work anymore. The results of various surveys have been illustrating that satisfaction; motivational factors are not purely external, but rather internal motivations. As regards the main intrinsic motivational factors, the relationship with both colleagues and managers and the meaningful work occupy the first three rank positions. These factors, together with work autonomy and learning/training opportunities have a positive impact on the quality of the working environment (Cazes et al. 2015; OECD, 2017) as well as for the organization, and on a macro-level to citizens and society.

Figure 8 | Top 10 intrinsic staff motivational factors



Source: 2020 EUPAN survey on central/federal public administration employees' motivation

The literature offers a plurality of motivation drivers or factors, but some seem to come up more frequently. Among these are four factors that appear more consistently

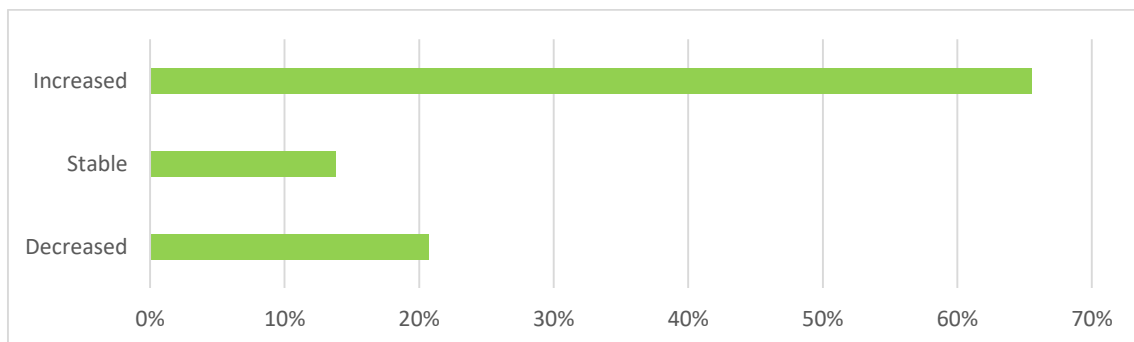


on the top tiers of the several rankings, like the public good; job content or meaningful work; autonomy; and a good work atmosphere in terms of interpersonal relationships with colleagues and managers. Social interaction at work is once again underlined. Its impact is felt at various levels, in quality, productivity, health and well-being of employees.

An indirect indicator of the possible level of employees' motivation may be negatively correlated with the dynamics of early retirements in central and federal public administrations in recent years. For this study, we set as reference period the last five years (2015-2020).

A first finding of the survey is that 50% of respondents do not know whether their public administration undertake such monitoring or not. Among those who estimate, they know enough to answer, 62% say their administrations engage in monitoring the early retirement of their employees. To this subgroup, we additionally asked what, if any, was the discernible trend in the last five years.

Figure 9 | Early retirement trend in the last five years



Source: 2020 EUPAN survey on central/federal public administration employees' motivation

A majority (41%) of the respondents who said administrations monitor early retirements were unable to point a trend. Among those who did point out a trend, two out of three (19 in 29) said early retirement has increased in the last five years. Only about one in five respondents (6 in 29) held the opposing view.

Another question in the same vein pertained to the use of employee turnover statistics as a proxy for motivation. Here the rationale was yet again that a negative correlation with motivation or, more specifically, engagement is all, but inevitable.

Almost half the respondents (48%) said their administration monitors employee turnover. When further questioned about the trend registered in the last five years, most of these respondents (47%) said it had increased and 17% held the opposing view.

Both early retirements and employee turnover may be possible indicators of non-satisfaction or demotivation. In the case of early retirement, we must not forget that it is accompanied by a penalty in terms of the pension's value. In principle, only those who are dissatisfied take such a decision. The literature has drawn attention to the positive association between motivation and job satisfaction and employee retention (Parker et al., 2010; Chen, Sharma, Edinger, Shapiro & Farh, 2011; Hu & Liden, 2014). Generally speaking, those motivated and engaged by their work and work environment do not tend to leave the organisation where they are.

Does motivation change with age?

To answer this question, we focused on two crucial age groups (cohorts) that represent distinctive professional life-cycle moments: entry in the public administration and approaching career end, which implies talking about millennials and older employees.

4.1 - Millennials

The most cursory demographic analysis of the public administration workforce in the EU – and beyond – will yield serious concern with the future thereof. Not unlike European societies themselves, public administrations are experiencing population ageing and decline. Baby boomers (1946-1964) are reaching retirement age while, concurrently, in some countries the recruitment of millennials fails to reach the volume necessary for ensuring sustainability. In this context, it becomes relevant, from a management perspective, to understand how this generation may be recruited, engaged, and motivated.



However, when we talk about millennials - also known as Gen-Y⁵, Net generation⁶, digital generation⁷, generation next -, are we referring to which age group? If we consult specialised literature, we can see that the conceptual scope of millennial generation can be more restricted or comprehensive. For some authors this

⁵ McManus (1999); Sheth, Sisodia & Sharma (2000)

⁶ Don Tapscott (1997); Oblinger & Oblinger (2005)

⁷ Marc Prensky (1991)

sociological concept includes anyone born between the early 1980s and 1990s⁸ and for others can be extended until the early 2000s, which proves that generational cut-off is not an exact science.

Scepticism about the young is rooted in the myth of the Golden Age and associated narratives of decline. It makes it hard to objectively assess the value system of millennials and understand how it may align with motivation for public service. To move beyond ageism and arrive at truly evidence-based policies for recruiting and engaging this generation, we must be familiarised with the state of the art of scientific research and institutional practice in this regard. As such, we shall begin by briefly reviewing the literature.

One significant study is PricewaterhouseCoopers' 2011 *Millennials at Work. Reshaping the Workplace*. The primary research for this publication is a survey based on a convenience sample of 4.364 graduates across 75 countries. Thirty-one of the interviews were conducted in Portugal. The research objective was to find out if, given the millennials' hopes and expectations, "business leaders and HR teams need to revise their current strategies". Nevertheless, the report argues the relevance of millennials does not stem solely from their purported differences, but also their numbers. Millennials are a 'demographic echo' of their parents' generation – the so-called Baby Boomers – and result from the single sizeable bump in the downward trend of the birth rate (PwC, 2011).

In the fall of 2016, *Public Administration Quarterly* published a special issue⁹ that aimed to “investigate whether millennials are attracted to public service, and if they espouse PSM [public service motivation] values related to making a career choice in the public sector” (Ng, Gossett & Winter, 2016). According to the editors, although extrinsic motivations seem to be more important for this generation than for the ones preceding it, pessimistic views of millennials and their value systems are falsified by the data. However, the research also reveals strong structural pressures that block the inflow of millennials into public administrations, namely hierarchy and bureaucracy, in the derogatory sense of red tape. While millennials do not lack public service motivation, they tend to perceive government organisations as incapable of delivering on that front and prefer to work towards the common good via employment in the third sector (i.e., non-profit organizations). According to Toyota, while public administrations look for talent millennials yearn for relevance and even if some of them are willing to help reform this sector, they do not know where to begin pursuing this goal (Toyota, 2019).

A recent systematic review of the literature on factors affecting the preference for public sector employment at the pre-entry level – including 28 articles, most of which based on samples from the North American context – corroborates that there is an image problem. Consequently, it is crucial to improve employer branding at pre-entry level (Korac, Saliterer, & Weigand, 2019). Given that third sector employment is the most serious competitor of public administrations in what regards recruiting public

⁸ Merriam-Webster Dictionary; Jay Gilbert (2011) The Millennials: A new generation of employees, a new set of engagement policies, in *Yvery Business Journal*, September/October.

⁹ Vol. 40, No. 3

service minded millennials, the authors suggest that the public service's unique extrinsic motivators – in Portugal these would be job security, career mobility, flexibility, and health benefits – might be the very competitive advantages to leverage in this competition.

In this context, a few years ago the improvement of public sector competitiveness in attracting new employees was set as one of the Danish government priorities. For this purpose, they were set up marketing activities targeting, among others, recent graduates via Career and Education Fairs. The pay system was changed, making it more attractive for younger persons entering the State sector and the personnel policy was reformed to be more modern and active, aiming at becoming a front-runner in HRM (Pilichowski, Arnould, & Turkisch, 2007).

In Latvia, a study on *The Future Role and Development of the Public Administration* tried to find out what the younger generation requires of employers and how prestigious an employer public administration is for them. The primary research for this purpose was an opinion poll of Latvian higher education students and recent graduates. One of the highlights from the executive summary is that at EU level there is a lack of strategies for targeting and purposefully attracting a new generation of employees into public service. As for the factors identified that most hinder public administration's odds of recruiting such talent, the report points towards a lack of competitive remuneration, top-down functioning, and poor employer branding (BISS & ODA, 2015).

The results of the EUPAN survey reinforce Gossett & Winter perception of the weight of extrinsic factors in the millennials' motivation, like job security, as the baby boomers and the Gen-X, although the latter will not necessarily stick with the same employer throughout their professional life.

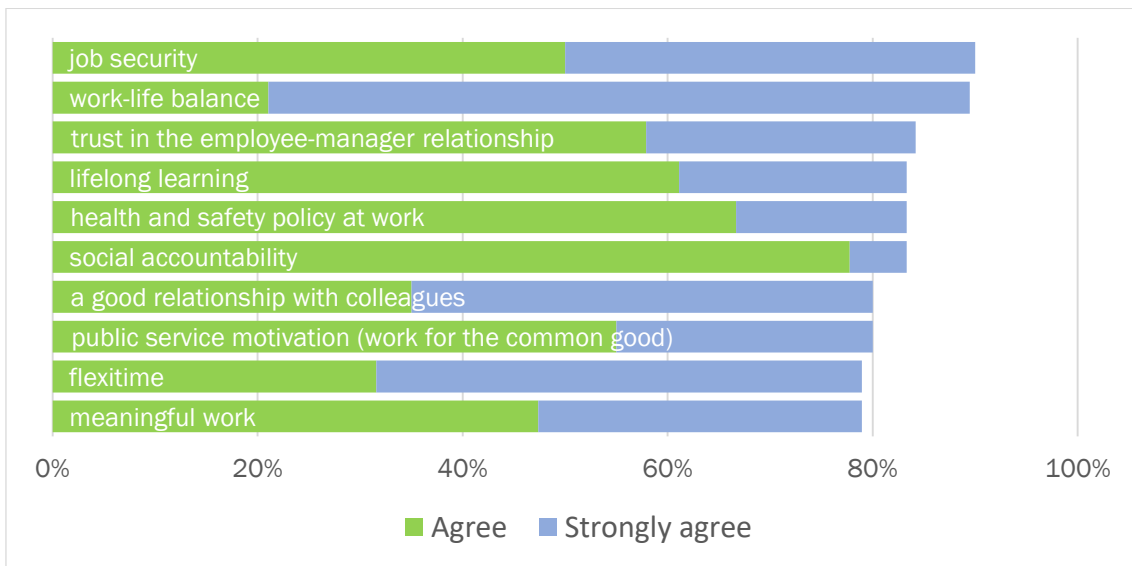
A 2020 survey¹⁰ by Manpower Group with a target public of 19,000 young people, from 21 to 36-year-olds in 25 countries suggests that millennials crave job security above almost all else. About 87% said job security was a priority when looking for employment and almost two-thirds intend to stay with their current employers for the next few years or longer. The traditional permanent job is still the key that unlocks a range of life's necessities (like to secure a loan, a mortgage, a mobile phone, and electricity contract or even a room to rent). Millennials know that "jobs for life" are a thing of the past. They realise they can be laid off during crisis periods and in addition they know digital technology will disrupt the labour market in unpredictable ways.

Millennials crave job security above almost all else

In sum, millennials are not the flighty freedom seekers that mythology would have us believe. When they do quit jobs, it is probably because they want more job security, not less. (O'Connor, 2016).

¹⁰ Millennial Careers: 2020 Vision

Figure 10 | Millennials' top 10 motivational statements



Source: 2020 EUPAN survey on central/federal public administration employees' motivation

Besides job security, another important motivational factor is related to work-life balance. This factor is valued not only by millennials, but also by generation Z (Gen Z), people who were born between 1996 to the early 2000s. According to an online survey conducted by Dynamic Signal¹¹, Gen Z cares more about work-life balance and personal well-being, with income holding less importance.

A 2016 article based on a qualitative analysis of written statements produced by master's students seeking a career in public service emphasizes the relevance of meaningful work and of good people to work with (Henstra & McGowan, 2016; Korac, Saliterer, & Weigand, 2019), which is in line with the 2020 EUPAN survey results (Figure 10).

As regards social responsibility, specialised recruitment companies such as Hays report that jobseekers are increasingly motivated by social goals, that better contribute to societal development and cleaner environment.

Looking at the same cohort through a gender lens, millennial women prioritise job security above all else, which will enable them to ensure their autonomy and independence in the labour market.

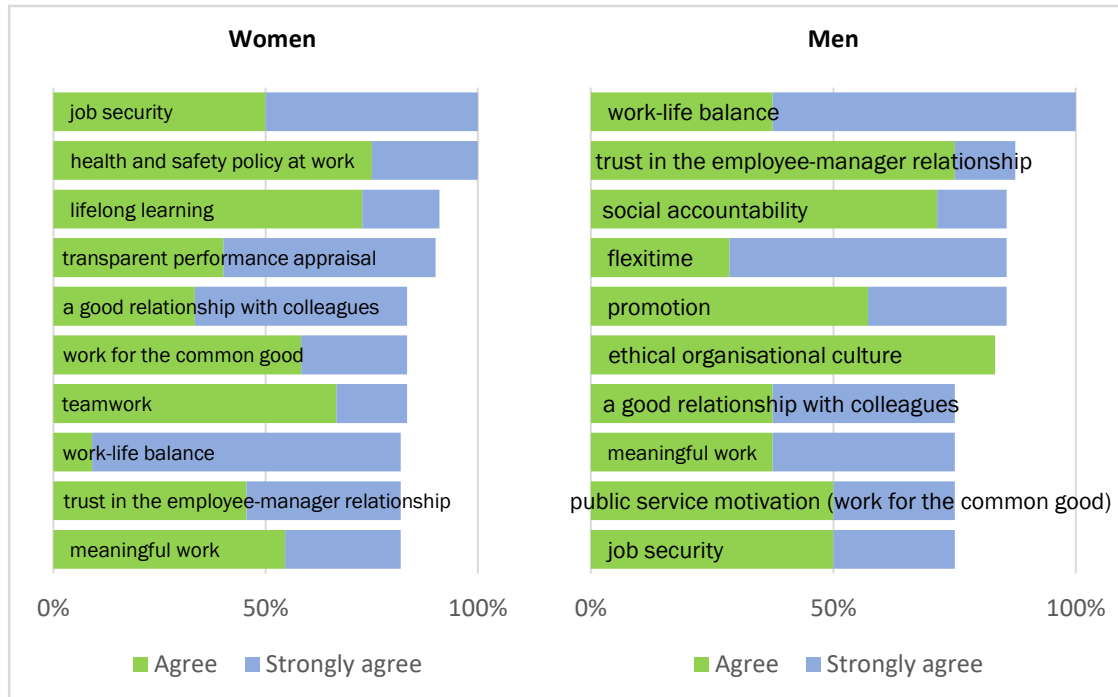
The importance women attach to having a paid job is confirmed by the data in the ILO-Gallup Report (2017) - Towards a better future for women and work: Voices of women and men. Women across the globe were asked if they preferred to work in paid jobs, care for their families, or do both. The data showed that 70% of women – regardless of their employment status – prefer to work in paid jobs.

Millennials want their work to have a purpose, to contribute to improving the world and to be proud of their employer.

¹¹ Gen Z in The Workplace: Everything You Need To Know.

A study on work values in three countries (Israel, Hungary, and the Netherlands) also showed that females ranked the importance of job security higher than males did (Elizur, D., 1994). However, studies in the opposite direction can also be found.

Figure 11 | Millennial women and men top 10 main motivational factors



Source: 2020 EUPAN survey on central public administration employees' motivation.

The statement regarding the motivational value of the health and safety policy at work ranks highly among millennial women but is absent from millennial men's top 10. Conversely, trust in the employee-manager relationship ranks highly among millennial men but is unheard of in millennial women's top 10

The work-life balance, the relationship with colleagues and a transparent performance appraisal are the three motivational factors that received a 'strong agree' from millennial women. The valuation changes in the case of young men who express a positive stronger opinion in relation to flexitime, work-life balance, and meaningful work.

The work-life balance, the relationship with colleagues and a transparent performance appraisal are the main work motivators for millennial women

Other existing research indicates that millennials seem to have a higher predisposition for turnover (i.e., less engagement) than older generations. A direct consequence of this is that “encouraging talented and skilled young individuals to enter public service could only be effective if they want to remain and thrive in their government positions” (Ertas, 2015). Research also shows that the factors that are credited as playing a role in choosing to work for an organisation – e.g., diversity or environmentalism – are not guaranteed to reduce turnover and deliver embeddedness once millennials are already on board (Deloitte, 2019).

Overall, the body of research on the differences between millennials and previous generations in terms of PSM is largely inconclusive, with reviewers identifying contradictory results (Ertas, 2015; Calk & Partick, 2017; Korac, Saliterer, & Weigand, 2019). This may ultimately mean millennials “are no different from other generations in their desire to make a difference and in what they want from their job” (Taylor, 2012). The research onto the differences between millennials and previous generations also suffers from essentialism, widely varying methodologies and sampling strategies, confusion between generational/cohort and age/life-cycle effects, varying definitions of millennials in terms of the years that are used as cut-off points for classifying someone in this generation, and several other problems and biases.

What Millennials want out of their jobs are no different from other generations

Concurrently, in 2018 Rudolph, Rauvola and Zacher published in *The Leadership Quarterly* a scathing review of the literature on leadership and generations at work. In these authors’ analysis (1) theories of generational differences are based on flawed assumptions, (2) we currently lack the methodological acumen to prove such differences exist, and (3) the existing body of research is inconclusive. As such, they call for a moratorium on intergenerational effects research and propose the empirical testing of lifespan developmental approaches – e.g., life transitions or perceived career stages – as an alternative (Rudolph, Rauvola & Zacher, 2018).

Finally, in some contexts, public service motivation may not even be the clinching factor in recruiting and engaging millennials. Depending on the economic context, there may be a large contingent of young qualified employees that the job market disregards through unemployment or underemployment. This process is known as brain waste. One of the ways state actors seek to alleviate the adverse impact of demographic ageing and decline on their economies and welfare systems is by co-opting immigrants, who tend not only to be younger but also to have higher birth rates.



Now, not only can this macro tactic be replicated in public administrations, where nationality is not a formal requirement for the performance of public duties of a technical nature and therefore for recruitment (Neves, 2013), but Korac, Saliterer and Weigand make it the closing claim of their systematic review that ethnic minorities

discriminated elsewhere on the job market may find a safe haven in public employment and, conversely, the administrations may look at these kinds of people as a pool of talent over which they hold a competitive advantage (Korac, Saliterer, & Weigand, 2019). In their paper on public service motivation, Perry and Wise acknowledge the existence of a literature on representative bureaucracy that argues, “that a widely representative bureaucracy facilitates inclusion of a range of policy perspectives in a society” (Perry & Wise, 1990).

According to the EUPAN 2020 motivation survey, the respondents knew their respective administrations’ policies in this area, and which differences in their own

attitudes are correlated with age. All in all, these results tend to corroborate the main trends identified in literature. Regarding the first group of insights, the evidence points out that:

- Only 30% respondents cumulatively knew their public administration carried out some kind of survey, and whether age had been one of the independent variables taken in consideration in the resulting study.
- Similarly, only 30% respondents cumulatively knew whether age management is on the agenda of their central/federal public administrations and answered that in fact it is.
- Less than 18% cumulatively know whether their administration has some kind of age management policy, and answers that such a policy has indeed been implemented.
- On the other hand, more than 45% cumulatively say they know whether age elicits any abusive generalisations or negative stereotypes in their central public administrations and then go on to answer in the affirmative.

Regarding the insights stemming from the opinion questions, we have that:

- Younger PA employees agree less than the elder ones that PA employees in general are significantly motivated by reconciling remote work with face-to-face work, responsibility, job autonomy, creativity, and innovation.
- Younger workers also seem less keen on teleworking, or at least sceptical that this can significantly motivate them.

However, this perception contrasts with the results of another study. A survey conducted by Raišienė, Rapuano, Varkulevičiūtė, and Stachová in Lithuania found out that there is an age divide in terms of a positive or negative outlook towards teleworking, with the young showing a more positive trend. The baby boomers and older member of generation X were more likely to miss having feedback and interconnection, feel isolated, be less able to manage work-life balance when working from home, and feel overloaded. On the other hand, younger members of generation X and millennials tend to see the advantages of teleworking. In sum, this study “confirmed that the younger generations are more technology-friendly, and older generations’ employees consider more valuable work one that happens in a physically common space” (Raišienė et al., 2020).

- Unsurprisingly, younger public administration employees’ expectations regarding the impacts of digitalisation and AI on their motivation are much higher than older ones. This can possibly be explained by greater information on digital technologies they have.

In sum, the research on the purported influence of generations on public administration is inconclusive and much of what is written about millennials may stem from age-old prejudices regarding the young. Where differences have been identified, as is the case of the EUPAN 2020 motivation survey, they are either trivial

platitudes (millennials are keen on AI and digitalisation) or can be accounted for by other perspectives, such as a life-cycle development approach.

4.2 - Older Employees motivation

Older employee motivation is on the agenda of EU Member States (MS) central public administrations since the early 2000s. The demographic challenge Europe faces due to lower fertility rates and longer life expectancy has led to a fall in the working population in most EU MS with straightforward impact on public sector.

The high level of demographic ageing experienced by European central public administrations is mainly due to the disproportionately high number of baby boomers, hired by the State employer during the growth periods of public sectors, between the 1960s and 1970s (Bossaert, Demmke & Moilanen, 2012). On the other hand, the higher entry age of new employees, due to the generally higher diploma requirements for performing public functions as well as the financial crisis of 2007-2008 and subsequent austerity measures have put budgetary constraints on new recruitments.

The share of older workers in the EU-28's public administrations increased by more than five percentage points since 2008 (Eiffe, 2018). More than one in three public service workers in Europe are now over 50 years old (Hauser, 2017).



For obvious reasons, a smaller ratio of workers versus retirees, and an older central and federal public administration workforce, increase pressure on social security systems.

Most EU countries then opted to change their retirement policies by delaying the legal retirement age and reducing early retirement incentives. Typically, such measures affect the workforce as whole and not public administration employees in particular. However, given that for political and economic reasons many public administrations have had to rein in the admission of new employees, it becomes particularly relevant within the scope of this sector.

Furthermore, public administrations face the challenge to maintain the capacity to provide the same or higher quality public services, especially considering the societies' growing demands and expectations for flexible and adaptable, but also sustainable, efficient, accountable, and equitable public services delivery.

Thus, to ensure the necessary workforce to meet these expectations and maintain the level of service provision, it is imperative to keep employees motivated, engaged and active for a more extended period. HRM is thus under a tremendous pressure as it faces the challenge of providing practical strategies to carry this goal out.

In this part of the study, our focus is to identify older employees' motivational factors that lead them to extend their working lives and maintain their engagement and performance at the workplace.

The definition of older workers or employees varies a lot in the literature. Scholars have used this expression to refer to workers more aged than 50 to 75 years old, depending on the study purpose and field.

The term seems to be context-based, thus, to limit it to chronological age may be an insufficient operationalisation of the age factor in the work setting. Elements such as generation, tenure and experience shall also be considered to better delimit the older employees group.

Ageing affects our biological, psychological, and social functioning. As a result, this process affects us individually at the personal, organisational, and societal levels. Persons of the same chronological age often differ in terms of health, career stage, and family status.

For this study, we will consider as older employees those aged 55 and above. Backing this choice are recent statistical data that register a decline in labour market participation as from this threshold (e.g., *Government at a Glance 2017*). Furthermore, the statistical office of the European Union (Eurostat) defines older workers as those aged 55-64 in employment and uses this age bracket for comparisons between EU Member States.

Older employee motivational factors

Given the ageing workforce, the interest of organisations on age management and age-related work motivational factors is increasing and a question arises: are older public employees' motivating factors different from the other age groups? The same question we asked in the case of the millennials.

Research carried out has shown that studies tend to have as scope the labour market as a whole, and when focusing on public sector motivation they do not address the age perspective, *i.e.*, the motivational factors that may be associated with the age groups or life cycle stages.

One of the exceptions comes from the Netherlands. The Government observes in *Working for the Public Good. Strategic Government Human Resources Policy 2025* that "there is no academic consensus concerning the assumption that generations X, Y and Z have fundamentally different needs to employees who have been working for longer periods" (Rudolph, Rauvola and Zacher, 2018).

Bearing this in mind, the main findings of relevant studies will be briefly presented. The first set of studies deals with the interaction between age and work-related motivation (Kooij, De Lange, Jansen & Dijkers, 2008; Kooij, De Lange, Jansen, Kanfer & Dijkers, 2010; Beier, 2015). Secondly, the factors that influence the decision to continue working are addressed through empirical studies on the effects of age-related social identity regarding attitudes towards retirement and work (Desmette & Gaillard, 2008) and work values to predict post-retirement work intentions (Wöhrmann, Fasbender, & Deller, 2016). The results of a survey conducted in the Netherlands to older employees at the labour market (Sewdas *et al.*, 2017) and a survey carried out in 2007 on which work motivational aspects were more

relevant to Dutch public sector employees (Leisink & Steijn, 2008) were also considered, as well as the results of the EUPAN 2020 motivation survey.

State of the art on age and work motivation

The concept of “older worker” varies in literature and covers dimensions such as age, generation, tenure, and experience. As such, the elders’ group is heterogeneous with individuals showing different career stages, professional development, health conditions and family status, which conditions their life and work priorities.

Research on older employees’ motivation in the workplace does not always consider this heterogeneity. However, it generally fulfils the purpose of identifying trends with regard to motivational factors in the over 55-age group.

The studies on the relationship between age and work-related motivation are based on literature review, meta-analysis, and longitudinal study methodology, and feature a labour-market perspective. The main conclusions advanced by these studies are that chronological age and intrinsic motives often go hand-in-hand. Conversely, the roles of growth and extrinsic motivations wane with age (Alcover & Topa, 2018).

The reason for this may be the fact that one key influence on employee motivation is their perception of time left to work. Socioemotional selectivity theory (Carstensen *et al.* 1999), states that individuals are guided by the same essential set of socioemotional goals throughout life, such as seeking novelty, feeling needed, and expanding one’s horizons. However, the relative priority of different sets of goals changes as a function of perceived time left in life. When the future is perceived as open-ended, individuals prioritize goals that optimize the future. This includes goals that pertain to the acquisition of information, goals that aim at personal development, and goals that aim at establishing new social contacts that could be helpful in the future. With age increasing, goals related to deriving emotional meaning from life are prioritized over goals that maximize long-term payoffs, and emotionally gratifying social contacts are preferred over contacts with novel social partners (Löckenhoff & Carstensen, 2004).

In a similar line of thought, Baltes and Baltes (1990) explain the change of goals that individuals undertake through life based on a process involving three components: selection (in this case of goals, which is influenced by biological, social and psychological opportunities and constrains throughout life); optimization of means to achieve relevant goals; and compensation strategies to accommodate possible losses. How these components of adaptation are deployed depends on the specific personal and societal circumstances that individuals face and produce as they age.

This change of priorities and goals that occur throughout life can influence the choice of activities to which employees are engaged. An employee that sees retirement approaching fast may feel more motivated to pass along what they have learnt than to pursue one last glorious promotion (Beier, 2015). Lang and Carstensen (2002) found that psychological ageing triggers a rise in the generativity, “the interest in establishing and guiding the next generation” (Erikson, 1950), as a motivator, making jobs or tasks such as teaching and mentoring a better fit for older workers (Kooij *et al.*, 2010).

Regarding personal and professional growth, seen as a higher-level need by motivational theories, the negative impact of age is related to work features such as advancement, new learning, and training. The reason put forward for this negative interaction is that changes brought about by ageing (chronological age) typically point to a decline of fluid intelligence, cognitive speed, memory, and reasoning abilities, which are associated with solving novel problems and learning performance.

The primary reasons for older employees to remain active at work appears to be their enjoyment of work, satisfaction in the use of their skills, sense of accomplishment and pleasure in being creative

However, some authors argue that these age effects are offset by stability or gains in knowledge acquired via life experiences (Beier, 2015), and strategies developed to maintain performance in the face of declining cognitive abilities. Moreover, studies conducted in laboratory settings and field research using real-world training material generally show that age is not a barrier to learning, mainly when one designs training with the needs of mature employees in mind. In particular, training that links content to prior knowledge and training that is self-paced benefit older learners (Beier, Teachout, & Cox, 2012; Callahan, Kiker, & Cross, 2003; Kubeck *et al.*, 1996).

In the case of work-related extrinsic motivation factors, results show that older employees reported lower motivation for job characteristics related to prestige and financial compensation, compared to younger employees. Extrinsic social motivation related to status striving (i.e., recognition and prestige) seem to decrease with age. This conclusion supports Kanfer and Ackerman's (2004) suggestion that the strength of achievement related to the demonstration of mastery and excellence, compared to other colleagues, declines with age.

In economic models, employees are seen as competing to secure promotions to more highly compensated jobs with greater authority and autonomy (Carmichael, 1983; Lazear & Rosen, 1981). However, the perspectives for promotion opportunities are narrower for older employees, especially for those who have reached the top of their own careers or face weak prospects of further promotion.

Older employees may regard a steep age-earning profile as both motivating and demotivating. On the one hand, as it considers experience and tenure, it may provide positive incentives to continue working. On the other hand, when employees are at the top of their careers, it means that they have reached a plateau in earning potential. Therefore, although older employees focus may change to more intrinsic work aspects, the characteristics of the employment system, among which, compensation, cannot be neglected as a relevant motivational factor for older employees.

Summing up, the primary reasons for older employees to remain active at work appears to be their enjoyment of work, satisfaction in the use of their skills, sense of accomplishment derived thereof, and pleasure in being creative (Kooij *et al.*, 2008). Modern approaches tend to emphasise individual differences in motivation that encompass the strength of unconscious needs, motivational orientations, and conscious values that an individual maintains concerning particular job characteristics and work outcomes (Kooij *et al.*, 2010).

Factors influencing the decision to continue to work

Desmette & Gaillard (2008) developed empirical research which purpose was to investigate the relationship between perceived social identity as an “older worker” and attitudes towards early retirement and commitment to work. Rather than seeing retirement as only an individual and opportunist strategy, researchers wanted to assess the effects of the stigmatization of ageing in the workplace and on decision to retire.

Considering that the “older workers group” may be affected by social stigmatization, potential target for prejudice and discrimination, identification with the group may lead to responses to cope with such devaluated identity. Responses can take the form of individual strategies, like bridge employment and early retirement, or collective action to improve the image of the group, such as claiming better conditions than of the “younger workers group”.

The study results showed that early retirement intentions were higher when individuals strongly identified with older workers as a group. On the other hand, employment policies increasingly promote longer careers that has an impact on employee behaviour. Findings in this context reveal that Individuals who categorized themselves as “older workers” and who perceived their workplace makes use of age for distinguishing between workers were more likely to engage in conflict with younger workers to gain age-related benefits.

This conclusion led the researchers to suggest the development of management strategies aiming at building a common organisational identity rather than age-based identities (older workers vs. younger workers), and intergroup processes, in order to reduce potential conflicts and negative effects of age-related diversity in the workplace.

Wöhrmann, Fasbender an Deller (2016) analysed the relationship between work values, having as reference the structure of four higher order values elaborated by Schwartz and collaborators (2012), and four types of post-retirement work intentions. The theoretical approach was based on the protean career theory (Hall, 1976; Hall, Briscoe, & Kram, 1997) stating that individual work values are crucial for career-related decision-making. Post-retirement work was considered as a late-career stage characterized by individuals engaging in work and work-related activities beyond retirement age.

The work context values considered were self-enhancement, self-transcendence, conservation, and openness to change, and the four types of post-retirement work intentions consisted of voluntary work, same-employer paid work, other-employer paid work and self-employed paid work.

Self-enhancement refers to one’s own interests, in contrast to self-transcendence, which refers to one’s interests in the benefit of others. Conservation refers to self-restriction, order, and preservation of the *status quo*, in contrast to openness to change, which refers to interest in gaining new and different ideas, actions, and experiences (Schwartz *et al.*, 2012).

Conclusions of this study showed that older workers with high self-transcendence work values were more willing to work in retirement, regardless of the type of work.

On the contrary, older workers with self-enhancement work values seem not to intend to engage in any type of work. The reasons for it may be their perceptions of post-retirement status being lower than the current one, due to possible age discrimination at work. Moreover, working after retirement can be seen as a sign of necessity rather than a search for personal fulfilment.

Older workers with higher conservation work values were also less likely to be willing to engage in any type of work as they consider retirement as a permanent removal from society and the labour force.

Unsurprisingly, older workers with higher openness-to change work values showed a preference for performing voluntarily work or to work for another employer after retirement.

Finally, the study authors included some suggestion for further studies development and for practical application, namely to career counsellors that “should assess their clients’ work value orientation (i.e., self-transcendence, self-enhancement, conservation, and openness to change) to ensure that the available late-career options fit their individual work value orientation”.

Another empirical study, carried out by Sewdas and colleagues (2017) tried to demonstrate that various preconditions and reasons influence working beyond the retirement age, and explored how the domains of the research framework *Study on Transitions in Employment, Ability and Motivation* (STREAM) apply to this purpose. The main finding of the study on the Dutch labour market was that STREAM domains had a positive impact on the decision to work beyond retirement age. Findings for each of its domains are as follows:

Health - All participants have indicated that being in good health was a necessary precondition for continuing to work, which, in turn, contributes to staying fit and healthy.

Work characteristics - Most of the employed participants considered that having flexible working arrangements (part-time work, fewer obligations, and teleworking) were an essential precondition for extending working life. They mentioned part-time work as the critical precondition.

Skills and knowledge - Motives related to skills and knowledge include full use of competences, ability to pass on skills and knowledge, and learning new skills and knowledge.

Social influence - Not wanting to stay at home alone was also mentioned as a reason for continuing to work.

Financial benefit - For some participants extending working life was an economic need, despite not being the most important reason or sole reason for the majority.

Life purpose – Participants mentioned three specific reasons for continuing to work: i) contribution and participation in society; ii) concern about their lives as retirees; iii) work contributes to give life purpose, namely the opportunity to maintain daily routines.

Three main conclusions can be drawn from these studies. The first is that retirement is no longer seen as a phase that excludes work or work-related activities (Wöhrmann *et al.*, 2016). The decision to retire or continue working depends on factors such as work-related values (social focus on the benefit of others); attitudes towards one's job, employer, career; skills and knowledge; social and family status; health; family care needs; valuing leisure activities and financial situation. The second main conclusion is that, a common organisational identity should be developed rather than age-based identities (especially if comprising age-based benefits) and the third one intergroup processes should be defined to ensure employees' quality of life.

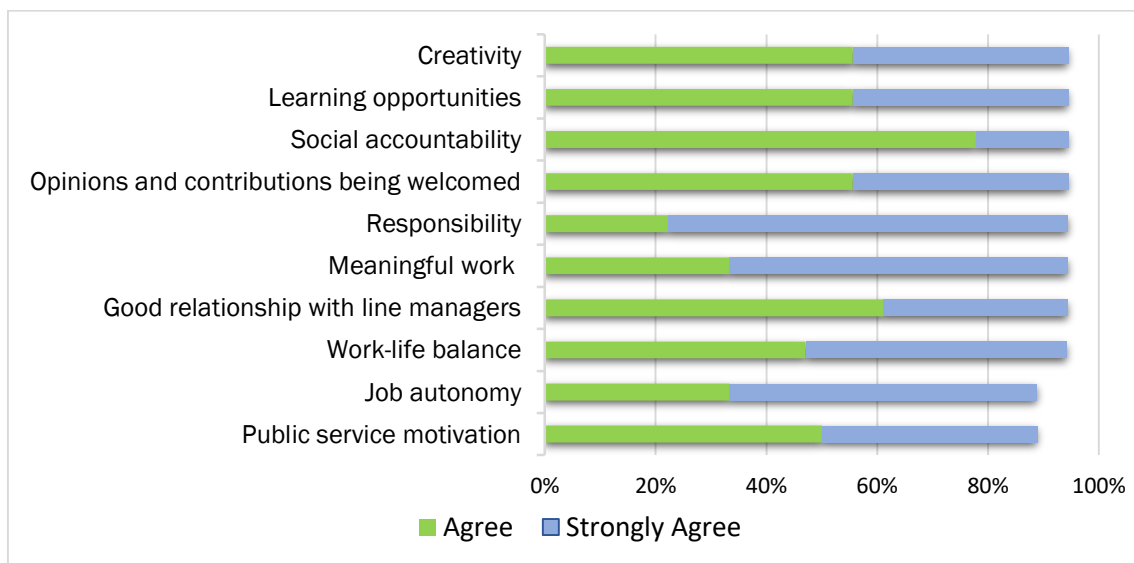
What motivates older employees?

EUPAN 2020 motivation survey results reveal that employees aged 55 and over selected a mix of intrinsic and extrinsic factors as main motivators at work. However, a slight predominance of intrinsic ones is registered, namely, creativity, learning opportunities, responsibility, meaningful work, good relationship with line manager and public service motivation, which is in line with the opinion defended by researchers that age and intrinsic motives often go hand-in-hand and conversely, the roles of growth and extrinsic motivations wane with age as noted above.

From the extrinsic factors chosen, pay or rewards are not included in this Top 10. Priority was assigned to factors related to the organisational climate (social accountability and employee opinions and contributions welcomed), working conditions (work-life balance) and work structure (job autonomy).



Figure 12 | Top 10 motivational factor for employees over 55 years' old



Source: 2020 EUPAN survey on central public administration employees' motivation.

Having the opportunity to be creative at the workplace, i.e., to generate new and useful ideas that can lead to innovation and an improvement in the organization, is appealing to 94.5% of the survey older respondents. This result contradicts perceptions that older employees are less flexible and open to change (Ng and Feldman, 2012), but is in line with some research findings suggesting that, overall, younger, and older employees do not differ with regard to creativity and innovation (Rietzschel and Zacher, 2015).

The high score obtained by the learning opportunities factor (94.5%) contradicts motivational theories which claim that age (chronological age) correlates negatively with work-related growth motives such as new learning (Kooij et al., 2011).

Social accountability and public service motivation factors results, 94.5% and 88.9%, respectively, appear to reveal the respondents' orientation towards the primacy of public values and concern for the public good.

The involvement of employees in decision-making is also highly appreciated by 94.5% of older respondents, who feel motivated when their opinions are considered.

A good working environment stimulates employees' performance, creativity, commitment and promotes their well-being. Crucial for building a healthy and stimulating working environment is a good relationship with colleagues and managers, especially line managers. The 94.4% of elderly respondents seem to confirm this line of argument by choosing a good relationship with line managers as one of their key motivators.



Flexible working arrangements or the possibility to adjust working time and place to individual needs are tools that contribute to the promotion of work-life balance. In turn, work-life balance can be considered as a key factor for a more age-friendly working environment. The fact that 94.2% of older respondents gave priority to this issue seems to reinforce its importance and is in line with other studies, which argue that it is an essential precondition for prolonging working life.

Meaningful work is one of Herzberg's two-factor theory motivators, inherent to the job itself, that truly influence employees to perform better. Task variety, degree of responsibility, opportunity to use skills and have an impact on the organization performance are aspects that contribute to give meaning to work. 94.4% of respondents agreed and strongly agreed (61.1%) that meaningful work motivates them.

According to Hackman and Oldham (1976, 1980) job autonomy refers to the degree to which employees can make independent decisions and have autonomy to planning and executing tasks, including the degree of individual control over when, where, and how they work. This concept is often linked to the recognition of employees' knowledge and experience as well as to a sense of trust in their judgement and behaviour or attitude towards work. It is also linked to greater responsibility and accountability in the performance of employees' tasks and duties. The relevance of responsibility and professional autonomy is reflected in the fact that employees aged over 55, 94.4% and 88.9%, respectively, considered them to be main motivators in the workplace.

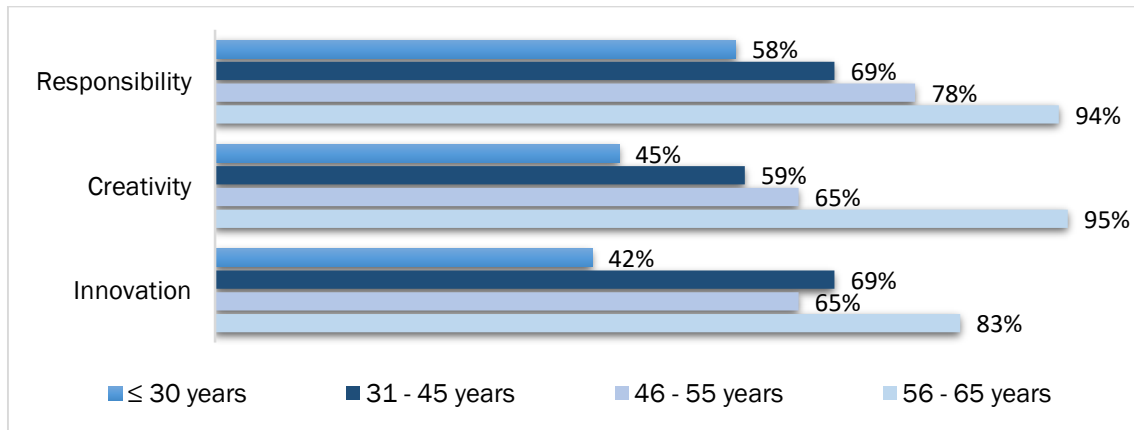
It is also worth noting that although the results obtained for factors more related to generativity, such as coaching and mentoring, do not enable them to be positioned among the favourite motivational factors; this should not be taken to contradict the arguments advocating generativity as a motivating factor for older employees, considering the small sample size.

Work-life balance is an important precondition for prolonging working life

When comparing results obtain for the different age groups, a combination of intrinsic and extrinsic factors as the motivators for employees over 55 years old can be identified.

Creativity (95%), responsibility (94%) and innovation (83%) are the three intrinsic factors that stand out for older employees.

Figure 13 | PA employees' intrinsic motivational factors by age groups correlation



Source: 2020 EUPAN survey on central/federal public administration employees' motivation

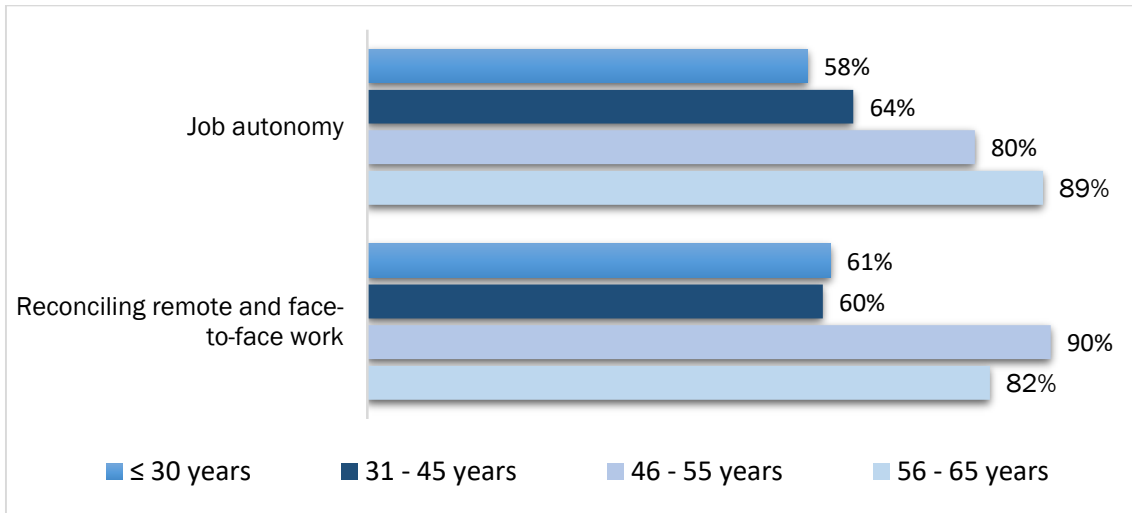
Creativity and innovation go hand in hand contributing to workplace and performance improvement. The former consists of new and useful ideas generation, whereas innovation entails the actual implementation of those ideas (Rietzschel and Zacher, 2015). The results recorded for creativity and innovation are in line with the argumentation presented by Kooij and colleagues (2008) when they conclude that the main reasons for older workers to remain active at work seem to be, among others, the pleasure of being creative.

Regarding extrinsic factors, those that stand out for older employees in relation to other age groups are job autonomy (89%) and reconciling remote and face-to-face work (83%), that is to say hybrid work.

Performing tasks with a high degree of responsibility and autonomy requires experience and knowledge, which sometimes are linked to tenure in a given job. As such, more experienced employees, who tend to be older, select job autonomy more than their younger counterparts as main motivator. This preference meets studies' findings claiming that older employees tend to attach more weight on the sense of satisfaction they can derive from the work itself and to job characteristics such as autonomy (Kooij et al. 2011). On the other hand, there seems to be a parallel with leadership styles theories that advocate different leading approaches according to the employees' developmental and related psychological states. Hersey and Blanchard (1972), for instance, advocate that employee's need training and structure when they are new and inexperienced and so accept a more directing style and, on the contrary, when employees are reliably competent and almost entirely self-directed, the ideal style is delegating (Van Wart, 2013).

Different leading approaches according to the employees' developmental and related psychological states.

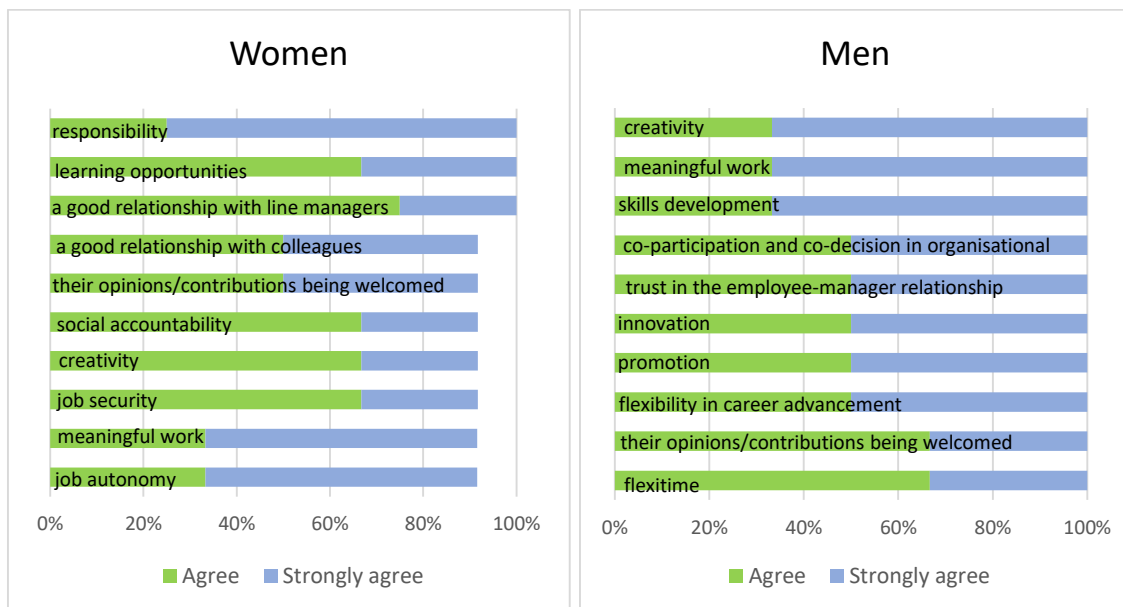
Figure 14 | PA employee’s extrinsic motivational factors by age groups correlation



Source: 2020 EUPAN survey on central/federal public administration employees’ motivation

Looking at a gender lens, women over 55 years old prioritise responsibility above all else.

Figure 15 | Women and men over 55 years old Top 10 main motivational factors



Source: 2020 EUPAN survey on central public administration employees’ motivation.

Older women and men only share creativity, meaningful work and their opinions being welcomed as main Top 10 motivators. But while the former attribute, apart from these factors, a greater motivational load also to responsibility and job autonomy, the latter value more creativity and skills development. Flexitime, surprisingly, seems to be a motivational factor valued just by men.

Within flexible work arrangements hybrid work model (combining office and remote work) is increasingly prominent, as it meets employees' needs. According to the

findings of the Dutch labour market study based on the STREAM research, the work characteristics have a positive impact on the decision to work beyond retirement age.

What we said about millennials applies equally to older employees. The logic of approach cannot be divisive, labelling, because there are no significant differences in what motivates one and the other. The bet should rather be on cross-generational cooperation, which can seem like an essential new skill in the contemporary world (Farkačová, 2020).

A Belgian study conducted by Vlerick Business School under the Federal Public Service Personnel and Organisation suggests that intergenerational cooperation is quite a challenge and merits special attention. There is a need for better cooperation between employees of different ages. The study's recommendations are, after all, to combat stereotypes linked to age, to develop further empathy and mutual respect, to recognize the value of complementarity, to reinforce what brings employees together and to ensure there is a feeling of equity (De Vos, De Schampelaere, & Van Bruystegem, 2011).

In turn, the French Hays Survey 2020 on *La Cohabitation des Générations au Travail* concludes that despite the preconceived ideas about each generation these seem to have a common vision of work (Hays, 2018).

In the same direction is the Dutch government strategic human resources policy 2025, *Working for the Public Good* for which "there is no academic consensus concerning the assumption that generations X, Y and Z have fundamentally different needs to employees who have been working for longer periods".

Also, for Casey Wahl there is no significant differences in what motivates employees across age, gender or even cultural lines: millennials value social relationships at work just as much as older employees and Japanese employees want feedback at the same rate as Americans.

We must not forget that, as Adi Bhat recalled, that employees are not clones, they are individuals with different traits. Some employees respond better to intrinsic motivation while others may respond better to extrinsic motivation and possibly alternately along the various stages of their working lives. Human behaviour is always subject to change.

5

Digitalisation & AI impact on motivation



5 | Digitalisation & AI impact on motivation

Digitalisation, automation, robotics, Artificial Intelligence (AI), Big data, cloud computing, Internet of things (IoT), blockchain among others, are elements of what has been called the *Fourth Industrial Revolution*. They are the result of the acceleration of technological advances in the last decade. Such developments are radically changing the prospects for the type of jobs that will be needed in the future and how, where, and by whom they will be done. As in previous industrial revolutions, the expectation of a positive transformation goes hand in hand with the concern of a widespread disruption in labour markets, resulting in risk of job polarisation, job loss and displacement for some occupations due to automation.

Economic history suggests that major innovations can be disruptive. They can result in substantial job losses in the short-term, even if this is more than offset in the long-term by the creation of more productive and rewarding jobs with substantial improvements in living standards (Mokyr, Vickers and Ziebarth, 2015; OECD, 2016). Today, the disruptive effect concern is intensified as advances in digital technology extend the spectrum of automation to work and tasks hitherto considered not subject to it, as, for example, accountancy, logistics, legal works, transportation, translation, financial analysis, medical diagnostics, and text writing (Frey and Osborne, 2017 apud Pouliakas, 2018).

According to the most recent edition of the World Economic Forum's - The Future of Jobs Report (2020) - automation, in conjunction with the recession caused by the COVID-19 crisis, is creating a 'double-disruption' scenario for employees. The current pandemic-induced lockdowns and economic contraction are accelerating the digitalisation of work processes and the adoption by companies of technological solutions that will transform tasks, jobs, and skills by 2025. Key findings of the report include the need to address concerns about productivity and well-being. About one-third of all employers (participating in the survey) expect to also take steps to create a sense of community, connection and belonging among employees through digital tools, and to tackle the well-being challenges posed by the shift to remote work.

CEDEFOP's first European Skills and Jobs Survey (ESJS), carried out in 2014, covered approximately 49.000 EU adult workers in the 28 EU Member States. Survey results also show that 13% of jobs in public administration and support services have a very high risk (i.e., a probability higher than 0.7) of automation (Pouliakas, 2018). Shortly after, the OECD Survey of Adult Skills (PIAAC), carried out in 2015, estimates that, for the universe of 29 member countries, an average of 9% of jobs are at a high risk of being automated, ranging from around 12% of jobs in Austria, Germany, and Spain to around 6% or less in Finland and Estonia. At least 70% of the tasks are automatable for these jobs. However, a larger share of jobs shows a high risk of partial automation (between 50% and 70%).

On the other hand, public organisations' hierarchical structure, work division in silos, and patterns of work in place reflect the "rational-analytical model of the industrial age, where separation and coordination had a central role and where effectiveness and efficiency were the guiding principles" (Hopman & van den Berg, 2015). Twenty-first century society requires a different approach to work and its organisation.

Teleworking, networking, partnering, and co-creation are more and more a part of day-to-day work. Moreover, the need to assure continued provision of public services during the COVID-19 pandemic has promoted the exponential growth of remote working and distance learning in the public sector, as well as the acceleration of organisational digitisation and digital transformation.

Governments across the EU have digitisation, automation, and AI on their agenda for the public sector, both in terms of the production and delivery of services and of the impact on the way their employees work. Digital society and economy are also a cornerstone of Europe's recovery plan, which is expected to produce significant changes in the way organisations and employees work and relate. This may require upskilling and reskilling programmes, for employees to be able to continue perform their functions in the new environment. What is the public employees' view of this reality, how do they see digitalisation and AI at the workplace?

5.1 - Digitalisation

Before analysing the impact of digitalisation on motivation, it is important to first define the concept of digitalisation adopted in the scope of this study, also to distinguish it from the digital transformation often considered synonymous when they are not. Among the diversity of definitions existing in the specialised literature, we have chosen that of the OECD, for which digitalisation is “the use of digital technologies and data as well as interconnection that results in new or changes to existing activities” (OECD, *Going Digital: shaping policies, improving lives*, 2019, p. 18). When public organisations resort to applying digital technologies, their aim is to simplify, improve and/or automate operations, or processes of their business, making work faster and more efficient. The digitisation process is the step prior to digital transformation. Digital transformation provides organisations with tools that allow them to take decisions in a more automatic and objective manner, based on digitised information (data), which, in turn, allows enriching the information itself. We can consider it as a promoter of deep change in processes, competences, and business models, maximising the potential of digital technologies.

The digitisation process is the step prior to digital transformation

However, it should be borne in mind that any digital technology not only has advantages; there are also negative impacts that need to be taken into account. Although the bulk of the literature and empirical work in the area of ICTs covers the industry sector, the findings of the studies carried out are also important for the public sector.

One of the impacts of Information and Communication (ICT) on the structure of employment, which has been pointed out is job polarisation (Morikawa, 2016) which translates into a decrease in the number of jobs requiring upper secondary education or vocational qualification and an increase in the number of jobs requiring higher education qualification or compulsory schooling. These different employee's qualification levels are directly related to the type of tasks they perform, ranging from mainly routine cognitive tasks to non-routine manual or cognitive tasks. According to

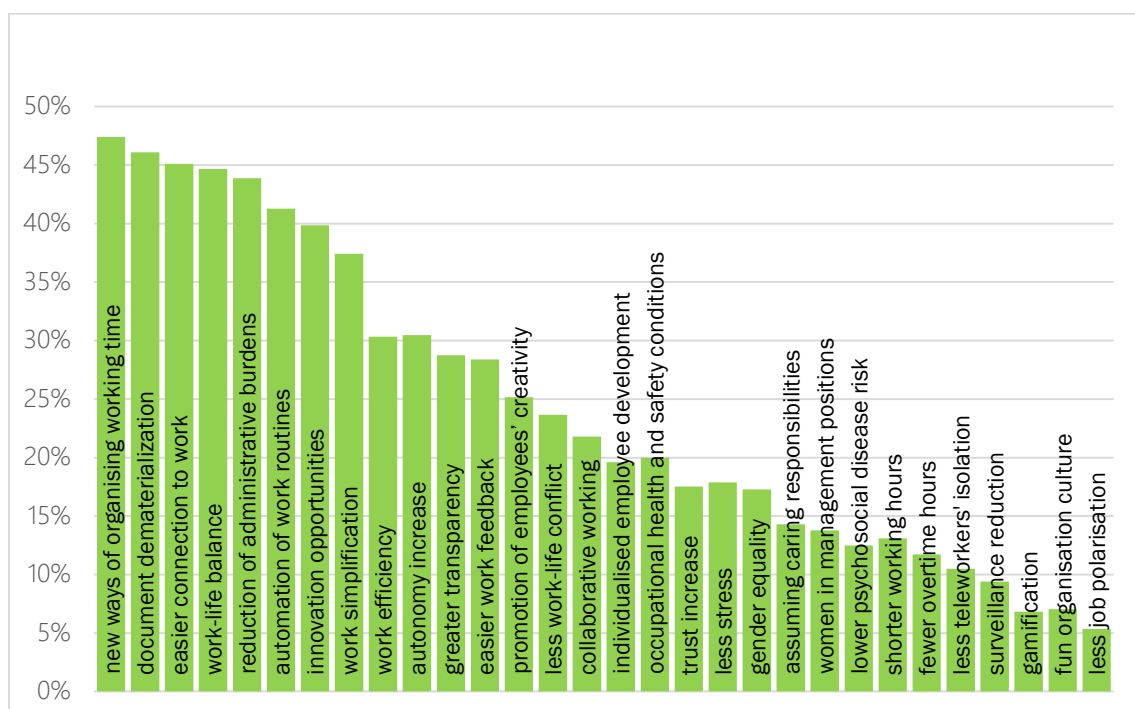
a task-based model imported from economy, ICT complements cognitive non-routine tasks, but replaces workers performing routine tasks (Autor, Levy & Murnane, 2003, Acemoglu & Autor, 2011). Since the 1980s, that a relative decline in the employment rate of middle-education workers and of those performing routine cognitive tasks has been observed. In the case of automation, the most affected are low-educated workers, and to a lesser extent the middle-educated ones.

What motivational impact have digitalisation-induced changes in public employees' everyday working life? This is what we will try to analyse based on the results of the EUPAN 2020 survey.

Respondents were asked to express their degree of agreement or disagreement with a battery of statements related to the impact of digitalisation on motivation.

It was noted that 7% of respondents had trouble positioning themselves vis-à-vis the proposed statements. They opted for saying they did not whether to agree or disagree with them. The assertion regarding gamification – which we defined explicitly as the possibility to incorporate game elements in the workplace – was the most difficult one in this aspect. Almost 17% respondent said they did not whether to agree or disagree with this statement, which leads to the conclusion that it is not a known and adopted tool for learning engagement in most of central and federal public administrations in EUPAN countries.

Figure 16 | Strongly agree digitalisation contributes to motivation via...



Source: 2020 EUPAN survey on central/federal public administration employees' motivation

Of the proposed ways in which digitalisation can contribute to motivation, the one which the respondents seem to regard as most plausible is through new ways of organising working time, as 47% strongly agree with this statement. The implementation of remote working and particularly teleworking during the pandemic

crisis is one of the examples to be given in this area. Other statements that get high percentages of strong agreement are document dematerialization (46%); easier connection to work (45%); work-life balance (45%); reduction of administrative burdens (44%); automation of work routines (43%); innovation opportunities (40%); and work simplification (37%). To which we could also add better and faster access to information, more services offered by public administration to employees available all year round at any time, better internal communication, vertical and horizontal, facilitation of teamwork (only possible during the COVID-19 crisis thanks to the digitisation of working relationships through the various platforms for videoconferences and remote meetings, like Zoom, Webex, Teams, Go ToMeeting, among others) and development of employees' potential as other important positive impacts of digitalisation.

The statement that digitalisation contributes to motivation via innovation opportunities gets an almost unanimous aggregate agreement, with 90% of respondents saying they either strongly agree or simply agree with it.

Work efficiency leads the second peloton of statements regarding how digitalisation may contribute to motivation, with 30% of respondents strongly agreeing, and 55% agreeing. Other commensurable statements, in terms of strong agreement, are autonomy increase (30%); greater transparency (29%); and easier work feedback (28%).



In the remaining statements, the decline in agreement, strong and otherwise, eventually makes the whole item more neutral. The impact of digitalisation on motivation through the promotion of employees' creativity (25%); less work-life conflict (24%); collaborative working (22%); and individualised employee development (20%) is still deemed by most to be on the strong side of the spectrum.

Starting with the statement relative to the impact of digitalisation on motivation via occupational health and safety condition, though, the median of the respondents' answers starts to fall on the neutral category. Thus, we have, in descending order of the share of respondents opting to strongly agree with the statements - occupational health and safety conditions (20%); trust increase (18%); less stress (18%); gender equality (17%); assuming caring responsibilities (14%); women in management positions (14%); lower psychosocial disease risk (13%); shorter working hours (13%); fewer overtime hours (12%); less teleworker isolation (10%); surveillance reduction (9%); gamification (7%); fun organisation culture (7%); and less job polarisation (5%).

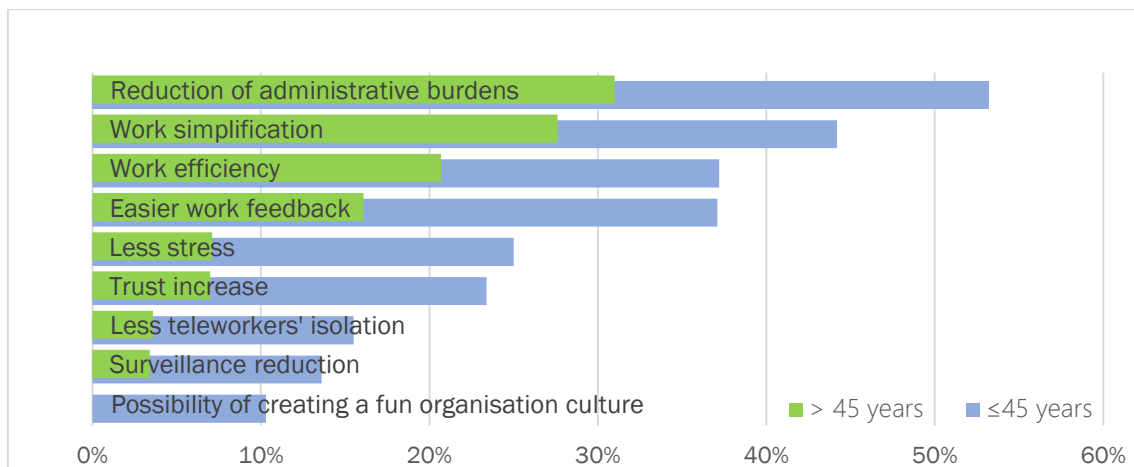
In some cases, most of the respondents chose to disagree with the proposed statements. Such is the case, namely, with lower psychosocial disease risk, shorter working hours, and overtime hours.

The Mann-Whitney test did not detect any statistically significant ($p < 0.05$) differences between genders in terms of agreement with statements on the contribution of digitalisation towards motivation.

On the other hand, we did find statistically significant differences ($p < 0.05$) in terms of age regarding nine ways in which digitalisation may contribute to motivation. They are reduction of administrative burdens; work simplification; work efficiency; easier work feedback; less stress; trust increase; less teleworkers' isolation; surveillance reduction; and the possibility of creating a fun organisation culture.

In all cases, younger respondents (≤ 45 years old) showed a more substantial agreement with the statements in question. This can be explained by more information about digitalisation and its potential, leading them to assume more positive expectations. As before, with motivational factors, we also used the original five age groups and tested for non-parametric, ordinal, correlations via Kendall's tau-b. This allows us to point that age is also associated with agreement that digitisation impacts motivation via the automation of work routines. However, under this second approach, the associations with work efficiency; surveillance reduction; and the possibility of creating a fun organisation culture no longer prove statistically significant.

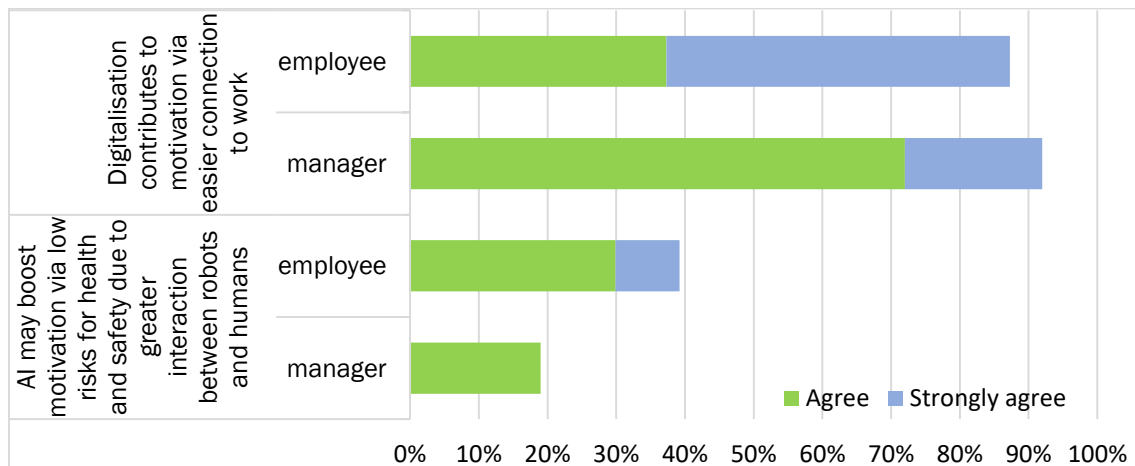
Figure 17 | Strongly agree digitalisation contributes to motivation via by age



Source: 2020 EUPAN survey on central/federal public administration employees' motivation

Regarding distinctions in terms of hierarchical standing, the only detected as statistically significant ($p < 0.05$) by the Mann-Whitney test is in the sense of managers being more sceptic than employees that digitalisation contributes to motivation via easier connection to work.

Figure 18 | Digitalisation contributes to motivation via by hierarchical position



Source: 2020 EUPAN survey on central/federal public administration employees' motivation

Let us now see where public employees stand in relation to artificial intelligence.

5.2 - Artificial intelligence

Trying to find a universally accepted definition of IA is an inglorious task, at least at present. In the box below, we have selected two definitions, one from the EU High-Level Expert Group on AI and the other from the OECD.

BOX 1

Artificial Intelligence (AI) refers to:

- Systems that display intelligent behaviour by analysing their environment and taking actions – with some degree of autonomy – to achieve specific goals”. (EU High-Level Expert Group on Artificial Intelligence, 2019).
- Machine-based systems that can, for a given set of human-defined objectives, make predictions, recommendations or decisions influencing real or virtual environments. AI systems are designed to operate with varying levels of autonomy. In addition, AI are “machines performing human-like cognitive functions”. (OECD, Artificial Intelligence in Society, www.oecd.org/going-digital/artificial-intelligence-in-society-eedfee77-en.htm; OECD (2019), Recommendation of the Council on Artificial Intelligence, <https://legalinstruments.oecd.org/en/instruments/OECD-LEGAL-0449> p.12)

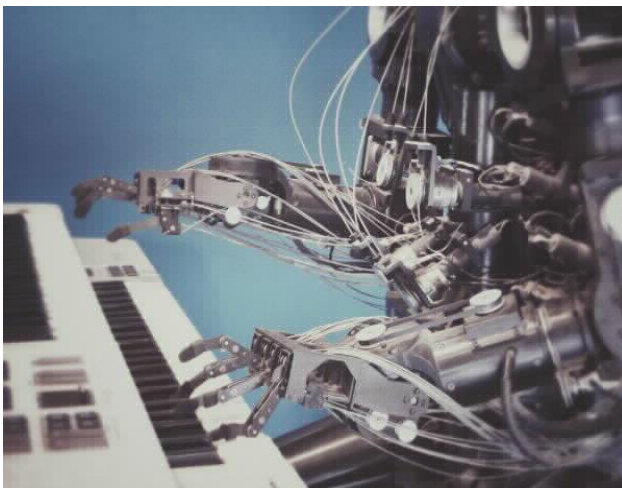
Digital technologies and AI, and their impact on jobs, skills and working environments have been on the agenda of international organisations such as the International Labour Organisation (ILO) and the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and

Development (OECD), as well as the European Commission (EC) and the European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training (CEDEFOP), for almost a decade. As of March 2020, it has become part of our personal lives and workdays.

ILO's Future of Work Initiative was established in 2015, followed by the setting up of an independent global Commission in 2017, aiming at undertaking an in-depth examination of the future of work. Its conclusions include the need for considerable investments, in terms of training and skills upgrading, to smooth the transition from existing to new jobs. This is *sine qua non* condition for making the new wave of technological breakthrough as inclusive as possible. The initiative's final stage was the adoption of the Centenary declaration on the future of work in 2019.

The OECD has been working on digitisation, innovation, and AI for several years. In February 2020, it set up the AI Policy Observatory to gather information and promote dialogue on the subject.

In 2016, the EC launched its skills agenda with which it aims to improve the quality and relevance of skills formation, in order to keep step with rapidly changing labour market skills requirements. In 2020, this initiative was updated to respond to the challenges posed by the green and digital transitions and ensure recovery from the



socio-economic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. It links to other strategies, such as the European Digital Strategy; Industrial and small and Medium Enterprise Strategy; and the Recovery Plan for Europe and Increased Support for Youth Employment.

CEDEFOP has carried out the first European Skills and Jobs Survey in 2014 that was a valuable resource informing the development of the European Commission's 2016 'New

Skills Agenda for Europe'. The Centre's 'Digitalisation, AI and the future of work' project analyses the impact and drivers of digitisation and automation on employment and the changing skills needs and skills mismatches. It also examines the implications of digitisation for new forms of work and learning, such as platform or gig work, or ICT-based remote work. The project's knowledge aims to inform policy on the future of vocational education and training.

The AI implementation in the public sector has been on the political agenda of most EU Member States. It began with the Ministerial Tallinn Declaration on eGovernment adopted in 2017 and further reinforced at both the Digital and eGovernment High Level Conference organised under the EU Austrian Presidency in September 2018 and the Digital Government Conference: *Next steps for a human-centric digital government*, organised by the EU Finnish Presidency in October 2019. In this event, the emerging debate on AI has been framed within the context of the policy priorities of the Tallinn

AI in the public sector is on the political agenda of most EU Member States

Declaration and in particular, the need to ensure enabling drivers required to nurture a data ecosystem fertile for AI to be grounded and effective.

At the end of May 2020, Czech Republic, Cyprus, Denmark, Estonia, France, Finland, Germany, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, the Netherlands, Portugal, Sweden, the United Kingdom (part of the EU still in 2019), as well as Norway and Switzerland, - that also signed the EU Declaration on AI and are associated to the Coordinated Action Plan (Misuraca & Noordt, 2020) - have published an official AI national strategy.

It is the case, for instance, of Portugal that launched its National Strategy for Artificial Intelligence in June 2019. It was the result of a collaborative work between different areas of governance and was developed under the National Digital Competences Initiative e.2030 - Portugal INCoDe.2030. The AI Portugal 2020 envisions seven pillars with evidence-based approaches on public policies and decision-making processes.

The potential benefits of AI have been pointed out at various levels, such as employees, citizens, services, and governments. Of the many applications of AI, for example, in e-commerce, navigation, robotics, agriculture, automobiles, marketing, human resources and healthcare, the case of social media (Instagram, Facebook, Twitter) and e-commerce (Amazon) are certainly the best known by people in general, especially young people.

In the field of health, learning algorithms can become more precise and accurate as they interact with training data, allowing humans to make more reliable diagnoses, care processes, treatment variability, and patient outcomes.

Experts predict that artificial intelligence will enable the next generation of radiology tools, that are accurate and detailed enough, to replace the need for tissue samples in some cases. Analytics, that can drill down to the pixel level on extremely large digital images, can allow



medical staff to identify nuances that may escape the human eye, thus anticipating medical intervention and saving lives.

The same is true in the area of oncological diseases. The IA is expected to be able to assess whether a cancer is going to progress rapidly or slowly and making it possible to prescribe the appropriate treatment. Patients will be treated based on an algorithm rather than clinical staging or the histopathologic grade, which will represent a huge advance in cancer treatment.

The 4th edition of the AI Index Report (2021) prepared by the Human-Centered Artificial Intelligence Institute (HAI) at Stanford University states that investment in AI

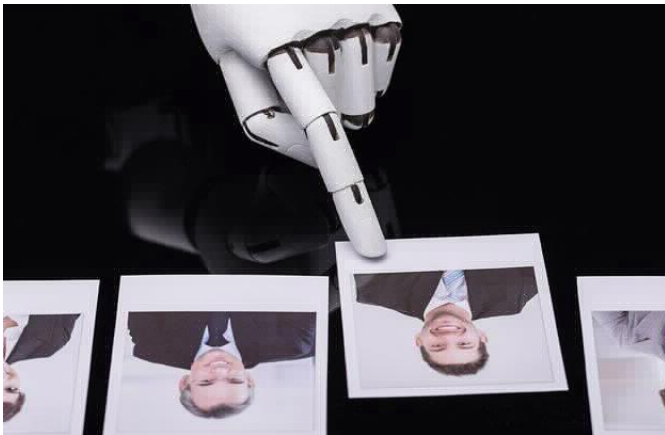
in research and drug development, particularly in the molecular and cancer areas, has increased significantly.

In the area of recruitment, the benefits of artificial intelligence are also evident. It helps with blind hiring. By using machine learning software, HR units can examine applications based on specific parameters. AI drive systems can scan job candidates' profiles and resume to provide recruiters an understanding of the talent pool they must choose from.

AI offer an incredible potential to change organizations, public and private, as well as employees' lives

A Japanese start-up - Attuned - through a 55-question test, what it is called "predictive HR analytics" by using AI can identify faster than ever, what motivates employees or when they are feeling less motivated. This tool has proved to be very useful. Based on this information, managers can intervene immediately, avoiding the employee's frustration increase, who may leave the organisations as a last resort. This technology can also identify the departments in the organisation where a newly recruited employee might be well-suited for, and his motivational profile, i.e., like if it is motivated by high competition or prefers more autonomy. Therefore, it makes possible to place the right employee in the right place, fulfilling the wish of every employer. In Casey Wahl's own words, "management, up until now, has been art", but technology "is bringing some science to it". Therefore,

this tool is of great use for human resources management regardless of the nature of the organisation.



Many applications of AI have started to enter into our everyday lives, from machine translations, to image recognition and music generation, and are increasingly being exploited in industry, commerce, and government.

In just a few years, it is expected that the potential will exist to free up nearly one-third of public employees' time, allowing them to shift from routine tasks to high-value work. Governments can also use AI to design better policies and make better decisions, improve communication and engagement with citizens, and improve the speed and quality of public services. AI can be used to make existing processes more efficient and accurate, to consume and analyse unstructured information, such as tweets as to help governments gain insights into citizen opinions (Jamie Berryhill et al, 2019). IA is an area with great challenges for public administrations, and, at the same time, that raises a certain distrust in employees. An understandable reaction when AI complex areas are not well known and there is no consensus on the impacts on employees. It is easy to find "lawyers" for the defence and prosecution of IA, which

provokes further distrust and a certain fear¹². AI offer an incredible potential to change organizations, public and private, as well as employees' lives. What matters is to take advantage of the potential benefits of AI while reducing and mitigating its negative impacts.

If technology influences the impact of AI, however other factors like economic, social, and cultural ones should also be considered. The use of the same technology can lead to different ways of organising work across countries (Frontier Economics, 2018).

AI could affect a significant minority of existing jobs, being occupations performed by low-educated workers more likely affected compared to those performed by high-educated workers. The potential job losses in the short term will be compensated with the creation of new occupations, due to the new products and services created by robots and computers.

Many jobs will be created by artificial intelligence. The World Economic Forum's Future of Jobs Report 2016 assumed that as from 2020 the possibility of a 10% increase in the volume of employment associated with the new digital technologies.

Organizations with positive expectations regarding the effects of AI and robotics on their business have significantly higher ratios of university graduates and employees with postgraduate degrees. According to a study, the return to postgraduate education in Japan already exceeds 10%. The diffusion of AI and robots may further raise the return to higher education (Morikava, 2016).

AI could lead to positive or negative changes in the quality of the working environment (Eurofound, 2017). The dark side of AI, like any other disruptive change agent in the workplace, can create emotional reactions. Employees' obsolescence and skills gaps are not in line with the need to drive more complex activities, digital upgrading, reskilling, and upskilling higher cognitive skills and emotional skills. These can include creativity, innovation, negotiation, leadership, adaptability, empathy, advanced communication that will be in greater demand. Concerns about jobs loss and loss of control on the processes (smart process automation), disruption of relationships (as people interact with machines on a routine basis), increase employees' resistance to change.

The diffusion of AI and robots may further raise the return to higher education

¹² Statements such as that of Elon Musk, Tesla, and Space X CEO, that IA could end up being smarter than human beings are and create an "immortal dictator", may foster in society the feelings of mistrust and fear towards it.

Selected below are some arguments pros and cons AI:



- The automation of routine tasks could lead to greater autonomy and learning opportunities.
- Simplification and speeding up procedures (e.g. recruitment automation).
- AI does not replace employees, it is their partner, as it requires the human partner to become effective and remain that way.
- AI increases the employee value by providing them with meaningful insights that increase their knowledge and ability to perform tasks.

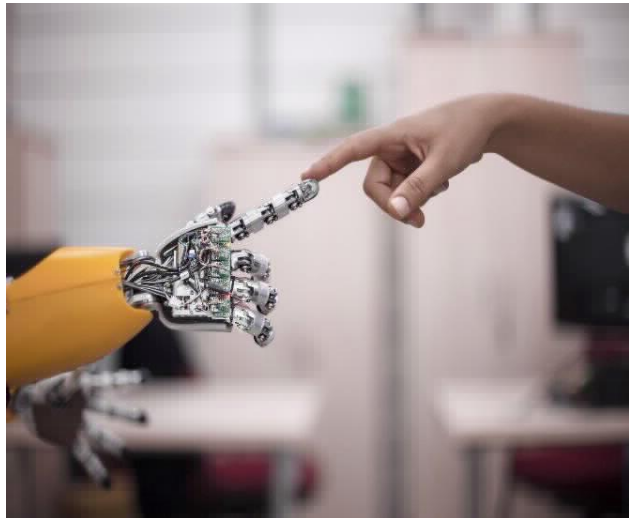


- The workplace of machines with sensors could make employees subject to increasing degree of monitoring, with potential negative impacts on their autonomy.
- Greater interaction between robots and humans, could lead to new risks for health and safety.
- Greater emphasis on measurable aspects of work as indicators of performance and pay influencers.
- A continuous monitoring based on data.

Surveys show that workers see automation as an opportunity to free up their time to make meaningful contributions, which they find more rewarding (Darino, L, Hancock, B., Lazaroff, K., 2019). AI allows employees to focus on activities that are more important by shouldering the burden of time-consuming and repetitive activities and synthesizing large amount of data to enable better-informed activity (McFarlin, 2019) as creates products that empower them instead of rendering them obsolete. By taking over menial tasks, that allow employees to reduce substantially the time they need to spend at a job, AI provides extra freedom for them to invest in other activities that are socially and mentally rewarding. A shift in working life is underway.

AI can also help employees to meet the three psychological needs identified by Self-Determination Theory, as necessary for building motivation and improving mental and emotional wellbeing. They are autonomy (feeling adequately empowered to make decisions on one's own), competence (perception, both by employer and others, that is knowledgeable and effective in his/her job role), and relatedness (feeling of connectedness to others) (Ryan & Deci, 2001). Meeting these psychological needs requires creating an AI value proposition that focuses on improving employees' abilities to do their jobs (McFarlin, 2019).

Employee engagement in AI management systems can be analysed through theory X and one of the examples given is Uber. Engagement is promoted through organisational controls, i.e., behaviour and outcome controls, in order to ascertain whether the work is being carried out in accordance with the defined work standard, rewarding or punishing employee's actions. Many platform companies employ AI management systems to control their workers (Hughes, Robert, Frady & Arroyos, 2019). In the public administration sector, the logic of performance appraisal is predominantly by objectives, behaviour control, as a rule, does not apply. However, we must always bear in mind that it is part of the DNA of human beings to want freedom and to satisfy the need for self-determination.



Employees must be seen as holistic beings. The obsession with control can generate a boomerang effect. The worst way to stimulate employee motivation is to institute policies and practices of excessive control.

There is a resistance to AI, particularly across skilled positions. We can give the example of the case of doctors in USA, refusing to adopt the Sedasy machine, which automated anaesthesiology, when this tool aim is to aid them and not competing with them.

At the moment, the fear of AI being able to match or surpass the creativity and agility of the human brain does not yet arise and according to some experts will not arise.

An example is journalism, where stylistic elements of writing and editing cannot be replaced by AI-powered machines. AI and human thought are very different but synergistic, complementing each other. The literature tells us that AI is frankly better

AI is frankly better at processing large amounts of quantitative information while humans can make better decisions in an uncertain environment.

at processing large amounts of quantitative information while humans are much more intuitive and can make better decisions in an uncertain environment.

Research conducted by the European Commission's Joint Research Centre as part of the AI WATCH has made a first landscaping attempt to discover how public administrations are currently using this technology.

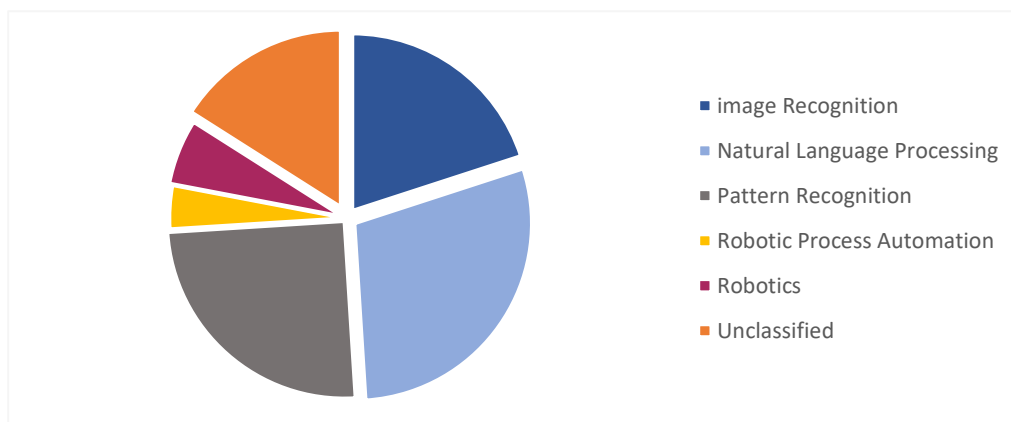
AI is assumed to have a multiple potential to increase the quality and consistency of services delivered; to improve the design and implementation of policy measures; to allow more efficient and targeted interventions; to enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of public procurement; to strengthen security; to improve health and employment services and to facilitate the interaction with wider audience (Misuraca, Noordt & Boukli, 2020).

Many European AI strategies seem to focus on creating favourable conditions to enable private companies to develop AI to boost their business operations and create better services or goods. However, much less attention is given on how to use AI to improve public services and government operations.

Let us take a brief look at AI use in public administration in EU Member States, starting with the identification of the most implemented technologies.

The most AI technologies currently in use are the natural language processing, such as Chatbots or Speech Recognition (29%), followed by pattern recognition (25%) and image recognition (20%). The robotic process automation (6 %) is less reported.

Figure 1: Types of AI technologies in use in PA

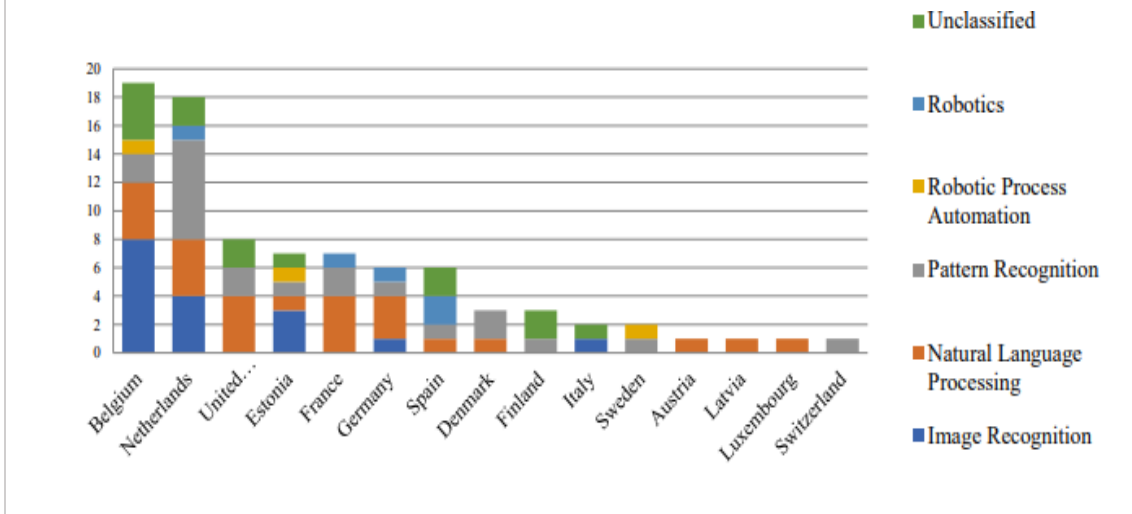


Source: Misuraca, Gianluca et al. (2020), p. 94

It is not surprising to say that there are significant differences among European MS in terms of AI implementations, as the level of technological and economic development also differs between them. While on average, each country has three implementations of AI-technologies, the highest number of initiatives are in the Netherlands with 20, followed with 19 implementations by Belgium. It is likely that these countries currently have the highest number of listed indicators due to challenges in the data collection. Another reason may be the policy emphasis that has been put recently on developing AI in the public sector in these MS.



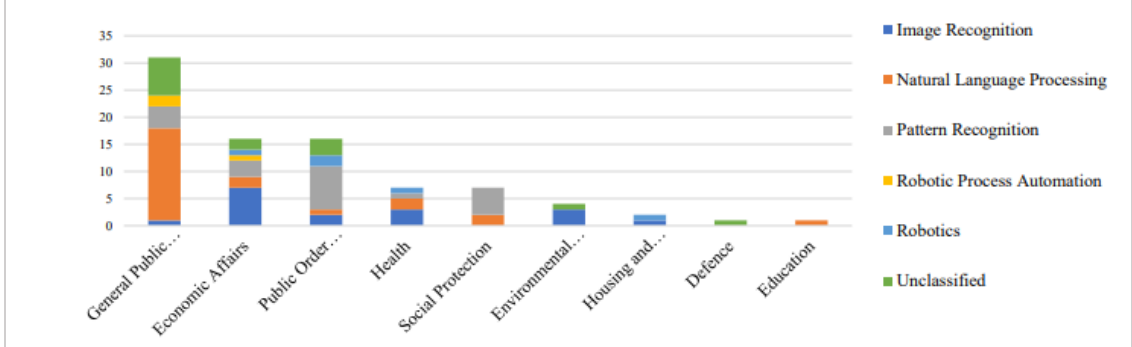
Figure 2 | AI Implementations in the public sector in the EU



Source: Misuraca, Gianluca et al. (2020), p. 95

If we approach AI by policy sector, we see that concerning the General Public Services, the greatest percentage of AI-tools currently in use is based on Natural Language Processing. One could think of Chatbots providing information about various administrative procedures or automatic translations of documents or the transcription of political debates using NLP-technologies. There are however not many Image Recognition technologies¹³ being used in General Public Services, while they are more common in the Economic Affairs policy domain.

Figure 3: AI type of technology per policy sector in Europe



Source: Misuraca, Gianluca et al. (2020), p. 95

Despite the current debate on the positive aspects of AI implementations in the health domain, the research shows that while hospitals might implement AI-technologies, public administrations operating in this domain at policy level, seem to be lacking behind as only a couple of AI-technologies have been implemented so far in the sample analysed. Only one case of AI in the Defence sector has been identified. It is very likely that AI-projects in the Defence policy domain are not well documented

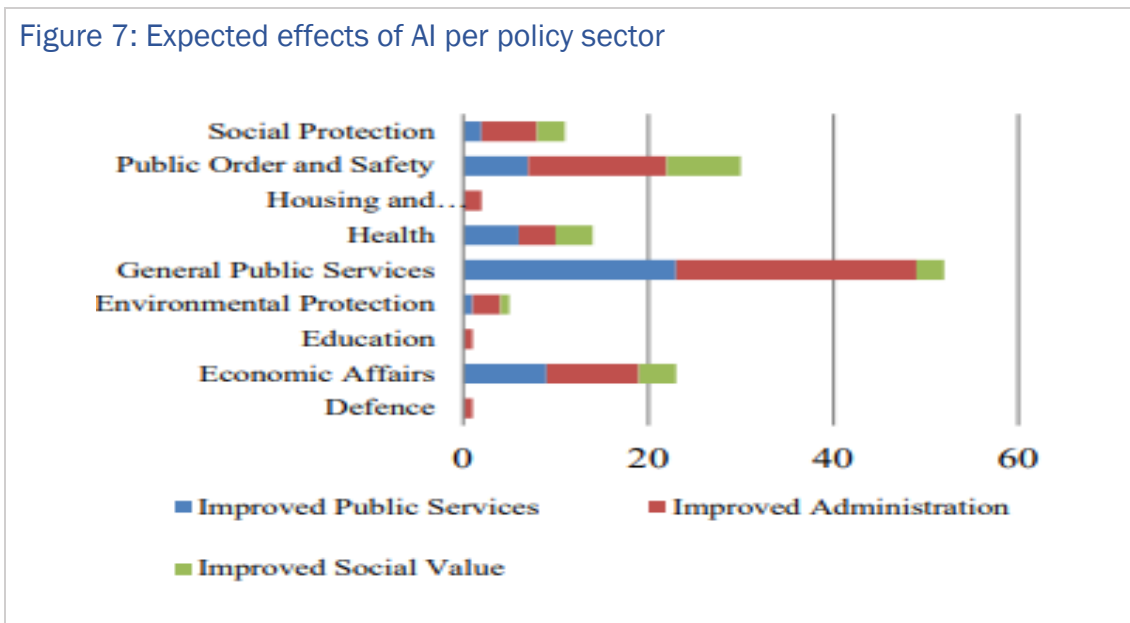
¹³ The French region of Lyon and Grenoble is experimenting AI in facial recognition in trains and stations. Germany takes a different position on facial recognition through AI.

online due to security concern and hence could not have been gathered in the data collection.

The technologies needed for large-scale surveillance are growing rapidly, with significant progress in 2020 in techniques for image classification, face recognition, video analysis and voice identification.

Only a very small number of AI-projects in the “General Public Services” realm considers the goal of improved social value as the main to achieve. Most of the projects seem to be only focusing on the internal efficiencies and administrative procedures of the organization, without considering the social value. Only projects in the "Public Order and Safety" domain do consider more the expected impact on citizen's safety.

Figure 7: Expected effects of AI per policy sector



Source: Misuraca, Gianluca et al. (2020), p. 97

There is a general tendency to use technologies in the government to improve organisational effectiveness and efficiency, without considering how these technologies could provide avenues for increasing collaboration or inclusion of different stakeholders and citizens.

Another area of IA intervention is education. Artificial Intelligence, through specific branches such as Machine Learning and Deep Learning, may reveal itself as an enabler of more meaningful learning and the promotion of richer learning contexts (together with Virtual and Augmented Reality). These contexts may facilitate the development of pedagogical models adapted to the specific needs of each student in a world currently experiencing constant and profound change.

AIED (Artificial Intelligence in Education) solutions can, among others, support teachers in the implementation of individualised learning processes

AIED can support teachers in the implementation of individualised learning processes according to the learning rhythms and styles of each student.

according to the learning rhythms and styles of each student through the provision of adapted learning experiences (Adaptive Learning).

It should also be mentioned the Intelligent Tutoring Systems that identify early situations of students' learning difficulties. These systems will allow the student a significant learning according to his/her profile and style, offering the teacher the space and time he/she needs for an effective monitoring of all the students.

The Finnish *AuroraAI* national artificial intelligence programme aims to implement a human-centred operating model in which artificial intelligence helps citizens and companies utilise services in a timely and ethical manner. The purpose of the *AuroraAI* network is to link different services and provide the correct services to citizens and businesses at the correct time.

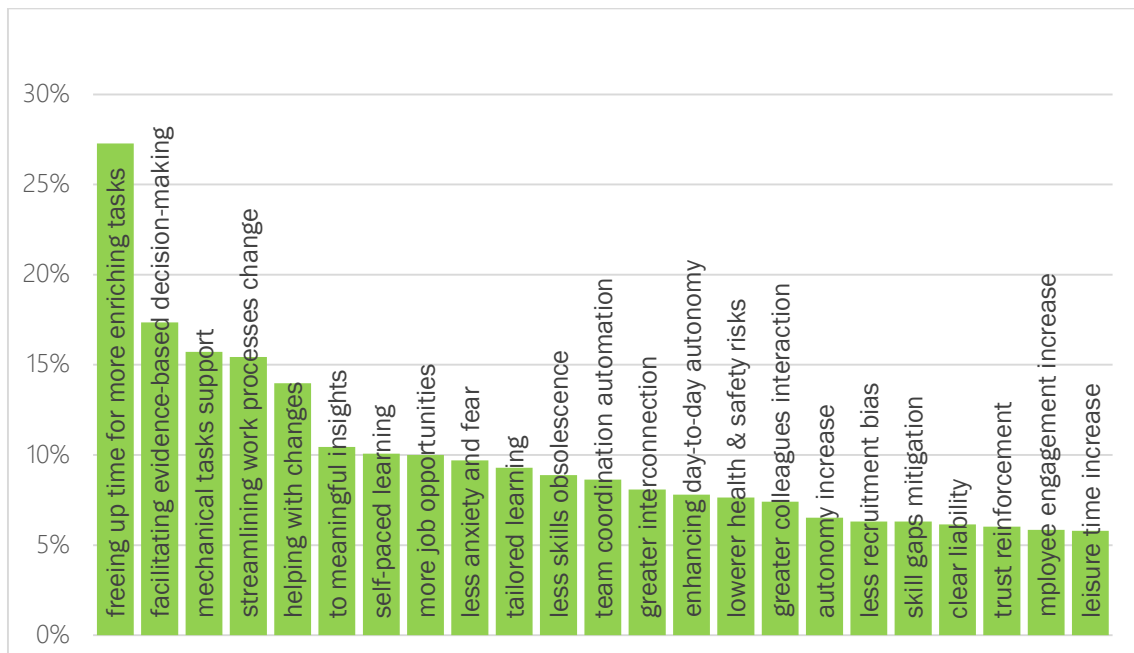
In the Netherlands, the deployment of Artificial Intelligence offers excellent opportunities in a digitising era strengthening security, both in the judicial and defence domains.

In Portugal, some projects promoting the use of artificial intelligence in the fields of health, education, urban mobility, and spatial planning are underway and aim to strengthen the modernisation of the public administration and its role and benefits to citizens.

Within the framework of our study, we sought to find out how artificial intelligence (AI) is expected to affect the motivation of MS central and federal public administration employees. For the purpose of the survey carried out, it was defined AI as “machines performing human-like cognitive functions” (OECD, 2017). It was asked respondents to express their level of agreement with a battery of statements starting with: “AI may boost motivation via (...)”. As before, respondents could either strongly disagree, disagree, be neutral, agree, strongly agree, or say they did not know.



Figure 19 | Strongly agree AI boost motivation via ...



Source: 2020 EUPAN survey on central/federal public administration employees' motivation

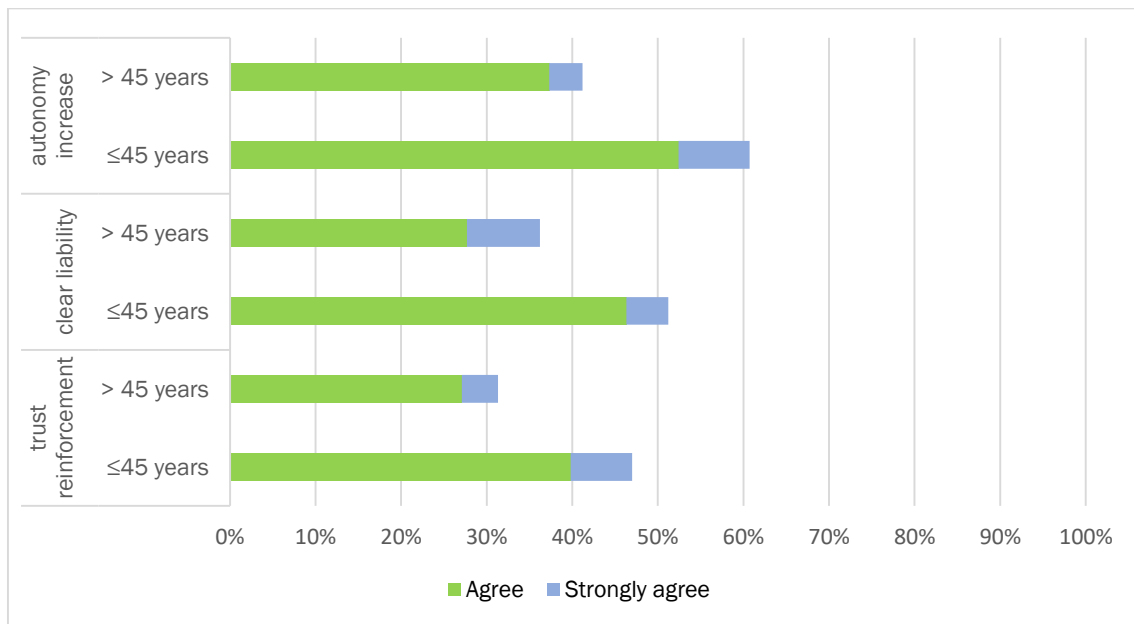
The statement most strongly agreed with was the one that AI may boost motivation via freeing up time for more enriching tasks (27%), which is in line with the literature that indicates this aspect as one of the positive aspects of AI. In the second place, but at a great distance, shows up the notion that motivation gains to be made from AI are to emerge from its role in facilitating evidence-based decision-making (17%). Other statements follow on the relevance of mechanical tasks support (16%), streamlining work processes change (15%), and helping teams and individuals respond with agility and speed to changes (14%).

Then there is a brisk fall and then a second peloton of statement begins headed by competence improvement due to meaningful insights (10%). Other statements follow in close succession, as follows: allowing employees to learn at their own pace (10%); more job opportunities (10%); less anxiety and fear (10%); learning tailored to employee's needs (9%); reduction of employees skills obsolescence (9%); team coordination automation (9%); team members connections increase (8%); enhancing day-to-day employee autonomy (8%); low risks for health and safety due to greater interaction between robots and humans (8%); greater colleagues interaction (7%); autonomy increase (7%); less likely recruitment bias against certain groups of applicants (6%); skill gaps mitigation (6%); clear liability in case of damage (6%); trust reinforcement (6%); employee engagement increase (6%); and, finally, leisure time increase (6%).

In terms of gender, the only statement flagged by the Mann-Whitney test as being statistically significant ($p < 0.05$) was that AI might boost motivation via clear liability in case of damage.

The test did not find any significant differences between respondent age groups regarding their agreement with these statements.

Figure 20 | Difference in agreement with AI statements by age groups



Source: 2020 EUPAN survey on central/federal public administration employees' motivation

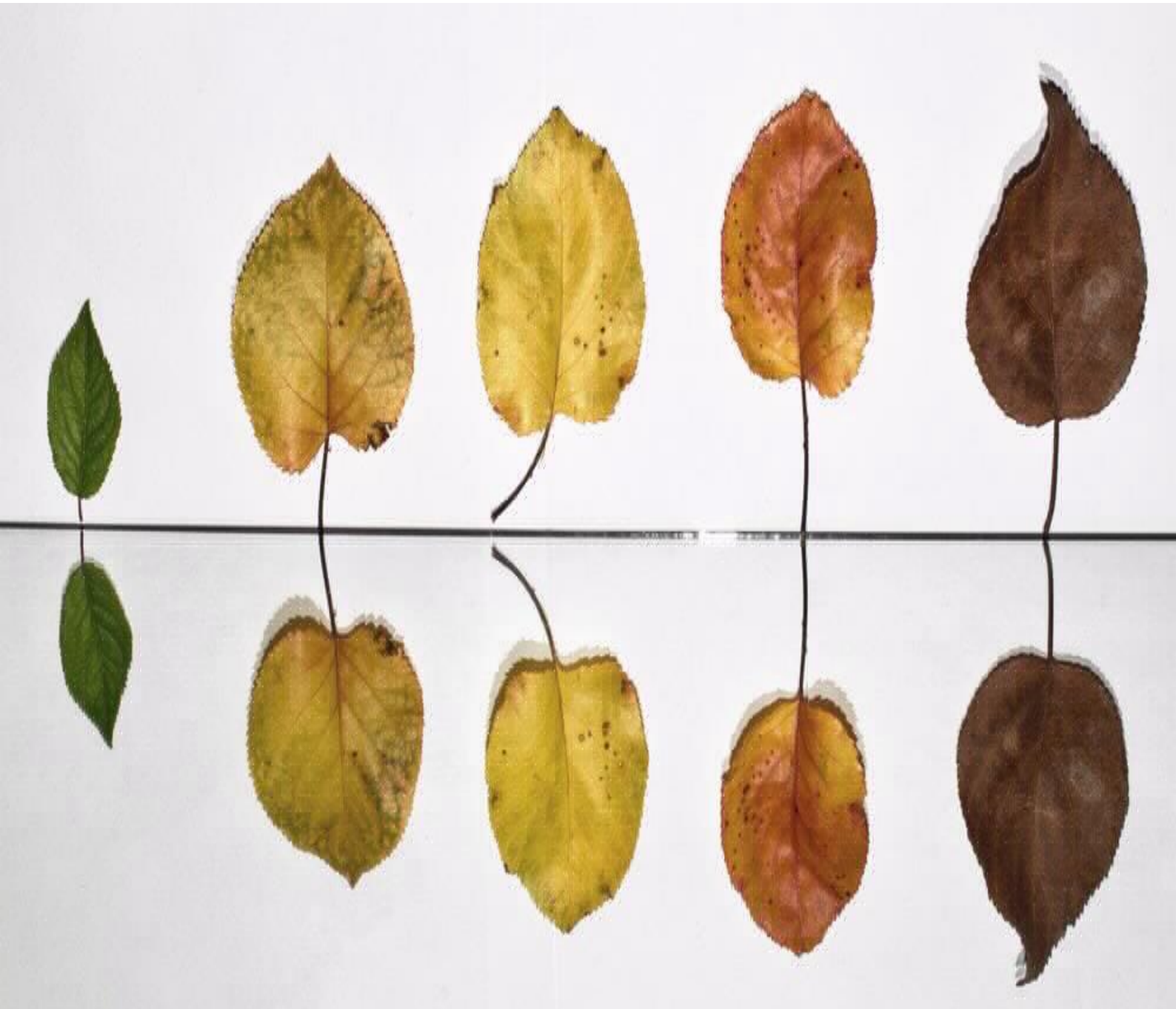
Regarding broad age groups, the tests flagged statistically significant differences in agreement with the statements that AI may boost motivation via clear liability in case of damage; autonomy increase and trust reinforcement. In all cases, younger respondents showed a greater propensity to agree with the said statements. If we use the original five age groups and test for non-parametric, ordinal, correlations via Kendall's tau-b, the tests also flag age's relation with the notions that AI may boost motivation via mechanical tasks support, and via clear liability in case of damage as statistically significant. Trust reinforcement and clear liability are not statistically significant in this perspective, but autonomy increase maintains its relevancy.

The Mann-Whitney test flagged the connection between hierarchical position and agreement with the statement that AI may boost motivation via lower risks for health and safety due to greater interaction between robots and humans as statistically significant ($p < 0.05$). Nine per cent of employees tend to agree with this statement, while no managers do. Considering that humans are social beings, who need to interact with each other, to maintain their mental health, healthy mind-set, and well-being, it must be recognised that AI can reduce or eliminate these interactions.

The perception, based on the responses to the EUPAN survey, is that public employees, because AI is not yet generally part of their daily working lives, do not have sufficient knowledge about the impacts of this digital technology to enable them to make informed value judgements. Hence, they have opted for more moderate survey response options.

6

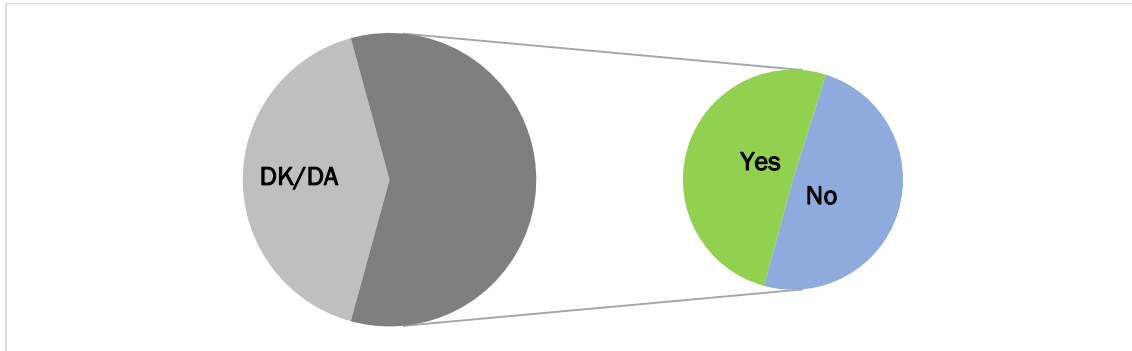
Motivation along the employees' life cycle



6 | Motivation along the employees' life cycle

The fourth and final section of the EUPAN questionnaire was concerned with tracking the changes in motivation along public central/federal administrations employees' life cycle and career. Every question on this section was to be answered by all respondents. These ones started by informing whether age management is on the agenda of their central/federal public administrations.

Figure 21 | Age management in PA's agend

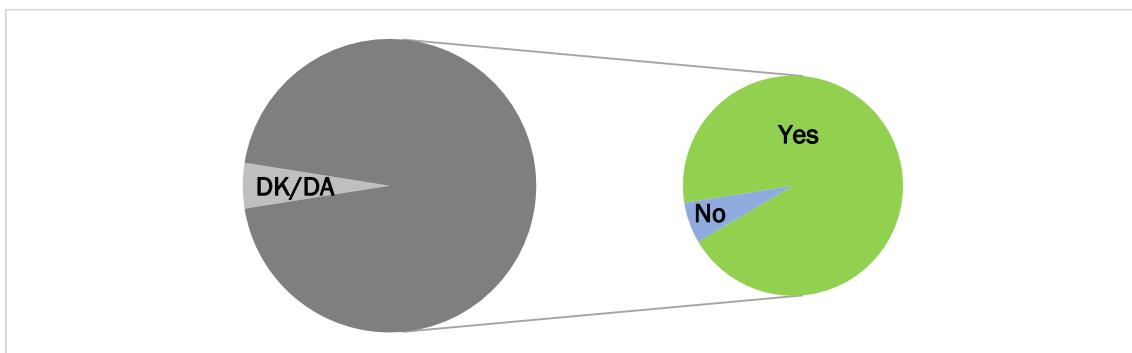


Source: 2020 EUPAN survey on central/federal public administration employees' motivation

More than two out of every five (42%) respondents did not know if age management is on the agenda of their central/federal public administration. Of the respondents who said they knew whether this was the case or not, about half (51%) said their administration does keep age management on its agenda. Considering both steps, only three out of ten (30%) respondents say this is so.

The next question was somewhat personal. It asked if, according to the respondents' own experiences, they consider that the weight of different motivational factors changes throughout an employee's career. It turns out to be a much more straightforward question; with many respondents feeling able to answer (only 5% say they do not know). In addition, almost every one of those who do answer (96%) says motivation factors do indeed change throughout one's career.

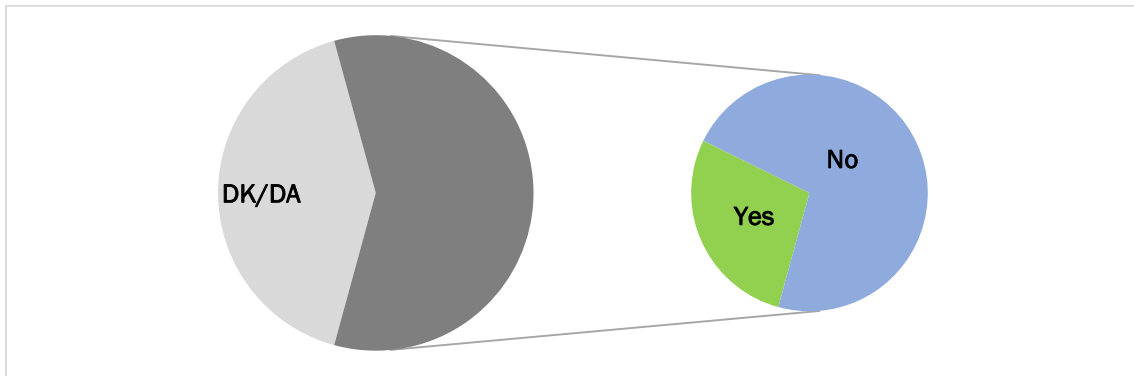
Figure 22 | The weight of different motivational factors changes over the employees' career



Source: 2020 EUPAN survey on central/federal public administration employees' motivation

Respondents could not answer the next question on a merely subjective basis. It required from them some knowledge on the activity of their respective administrations. What was asked was whether public administrations had implemented any age-differentiated human resources policy to promote employee health, safety, and wellbeing. As it turns out, only about three out of every five (59%) respondents feel they know enough to offer an answer on this topic. Among this more knowledgeable group, more than seven out of every ten (72%) say their administration had implemented no such policy.

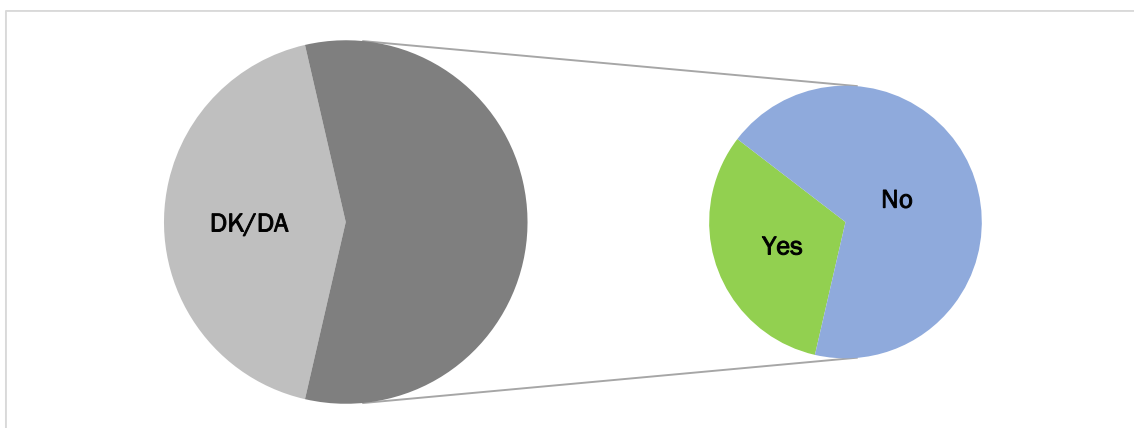
Figure 23 | PA implemented age-differentiated HR policy(es) aimed at HSWB¹⁴



Source: 2020 EUPAN survey on central/federal public administration employees' motivation

A similar pattern emerges when the question is whether administrations have implemented any age management policy. More than two out of every five (43%) respondents do not feel they know enough to answer, and a vast majority (68%) of those who do feel they can answer does so in the negative.

Figure 24 | Age management policy implementation in PA



Source: 2020 EUPAN survey on central/federal public administration employees' motivation

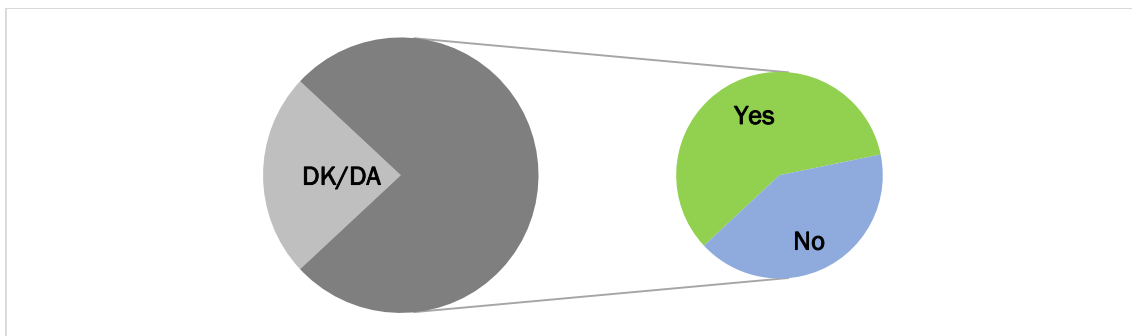
¹⁴ HSWB – Health, Safety and Wellbeing.

It was then asked respondents if, in their opinions, age elicits any abusive generalisations or negative stereotypes in their central/federal public administrations. While 24% respondent claims not to know, the majority (76%) does agree to give a positive answer to the question. Of these, 59% respondents say there does indeed exist age-related abusive generalisations or negative stereotypes.

In organisations, despite the legal protection that exists in public administrations to prohibit age-related discrimination, it is common to find unfair assumptions about the ability of older employees, which influences the behaviour of younger colleagues and sometimes of managers towards them. The five of the most common stereotypes are: “They can’t learn new things; They are less productive; They take more time off sick; They will retire and leave the organisation; They are ‘overqualified’ (and this is bad)”, (Twumasi & Johnson, 2018).

From a managerial point of view, as we saw earlier, there are numerous benefits to having a diverse workforce, including different ages. The ageing of societies cannot be ignored. So, we must take advantage of all the skills that exist in organisations and managers must think beyond these ageing stereotypes.

Figure 25 | There are abusive age generalizations or negative stereotypes in PA

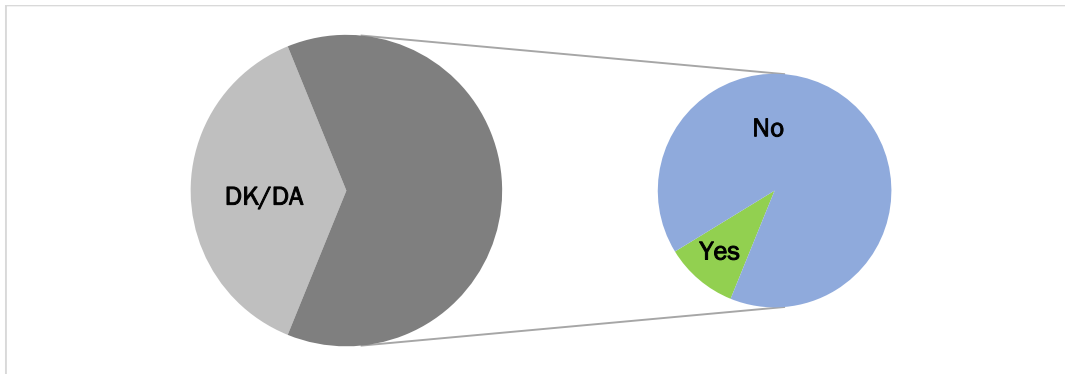


Source: 2020 EUPAN survey on central/federal public administration employees' motivation

When further asked if their central/federal public administration has defined age-specific training programmes (e.g., for older employees to prevent skills obsolescence), 38% respondents said they do not know if this is the case. Of the remaining respondents, an overwhelming majority (90%) is confident that such programmes do not exist in their administrations.



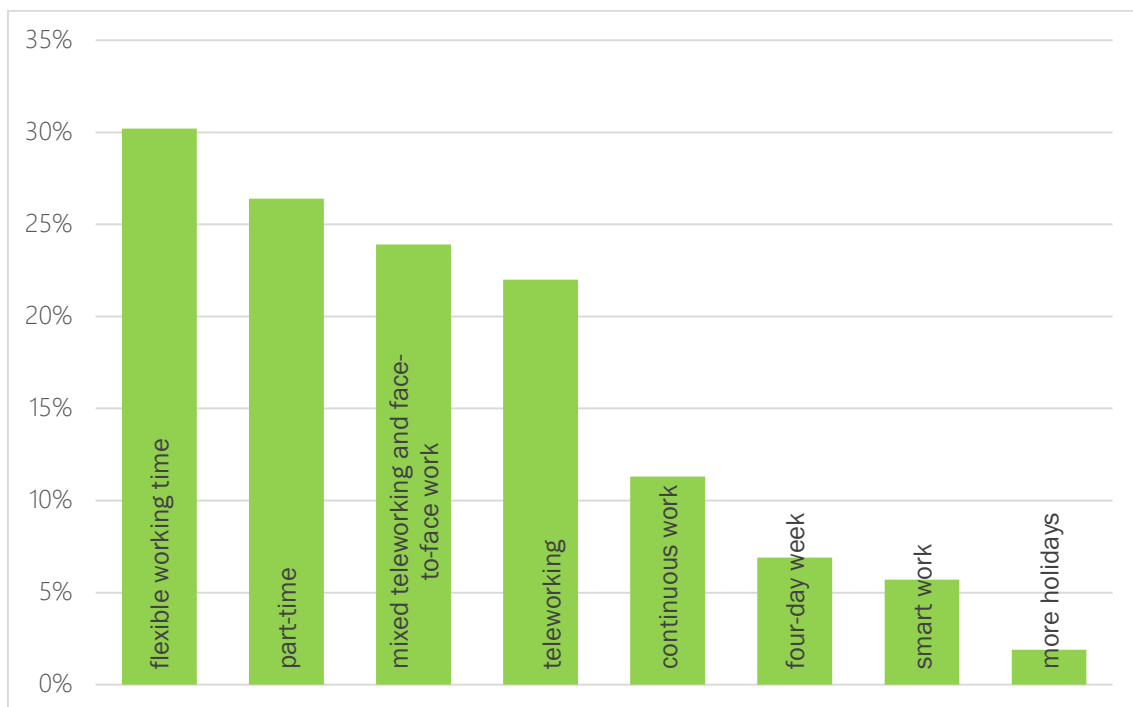
Figure 26 | Age-specific training programmes in PA



Source: 2020 EUPAN survey on central/federal public administration employees' motivation

It was also asked whether respondents' central/federal public administrations have provisions for employees at specific stages of their life cycle. This question was semi-open and accepted multiple answers.

Figure 27 | Provisions for employees at specific stages of their life cycle

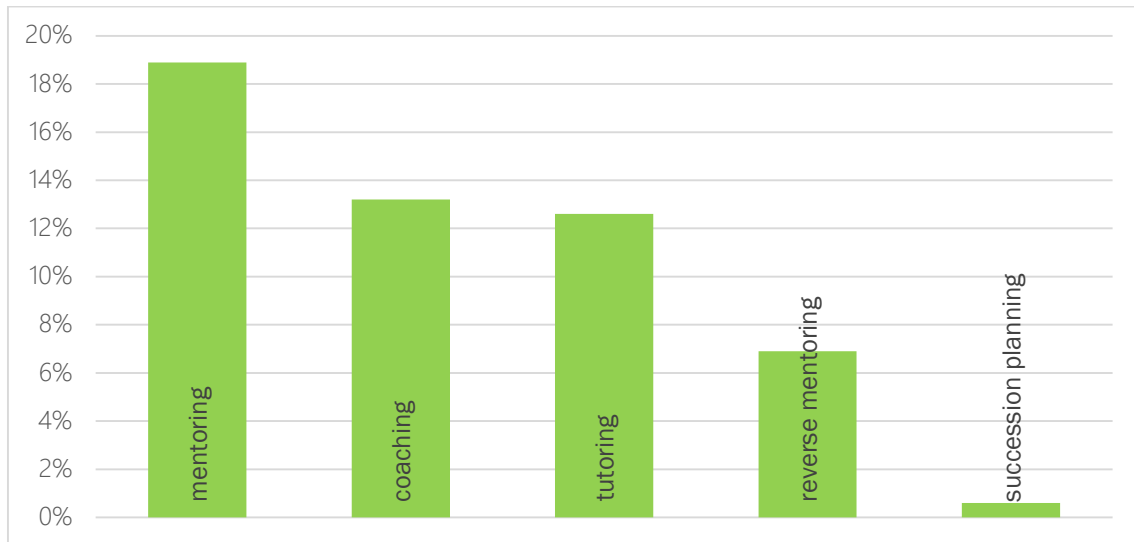


Source: 2020 EUPAN survey on central/federal public administration employees' motivation

According to data, 30% respondents say their administrations offer flexible working time as a specific life cycle stage provision for their employees. The 26% respondent mentions part-time work, which comes second place. From then on, all specific provisions score less than twenty per cent: mixed teleworking and face-to-face work (24%); teleworking (22%); continuous work (11%); four-day week (7%); smart work (6%); and, added ad hoc, as a result of the semi-open question, more holidays (2%).

Another question consisted of asking whether central/federal public administrations promote motivation by encouraging employees to take on age-specific roles or functions. As before, this was a semi-open, multiple answer question.

Figure 28 | PA promotes motivation by encouraging employees to take on age specific roles or functions

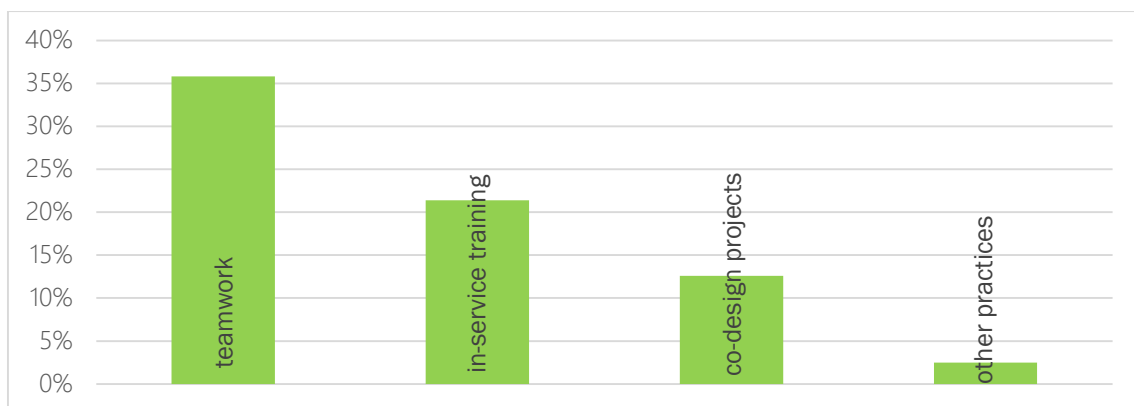


Source: 2020 EUPAN survey on central/federal public administration employees' motivation

The first role to be identified by respondents (19%) refers to mentoring. Coaching and tutoring follow in second and third place, both with thirteen per cent. Seven per cent of respondents' mention reverse mentoring and, finally, someone took advantage of the semi-open nature of the question to write in succession planning.

Finally, we also asked if the respondents' central/federal public administration promotes intergenerational knowledge transfer via some specific practices.

Figure 29 | PA promotes intergenerational knowledge transfer by...



Source: 2020 EUPAN survey on central/federal public administration employees' motivation

The most mentioned such practice turned out to be teamwork, which was cited more frequently than by 36% respondents. More than one in every twenty respondents also mentioned in-service training (21%) and co-design projects (6%). Less than three per cent of respondents cited other practices.

7

COVID-19 impact on motivation



7 | COVID-19 impact on motivation

The COVID-19 pandemic, which emerged in late 2019, is a public health crisis that has considerably increased the pressure on societies, economies, and labour markets. Today, adding to an already highly challenging scenario – due to demographic change, environmental emergency, and technological transformation –



economies are facing the devastating effects of the pandemic.

Addressing workers' motivation while neglecting the impact of the pandemic crisis on it would constitute a reductive approach to the theme under study. It has thus become an unavoidable variable.

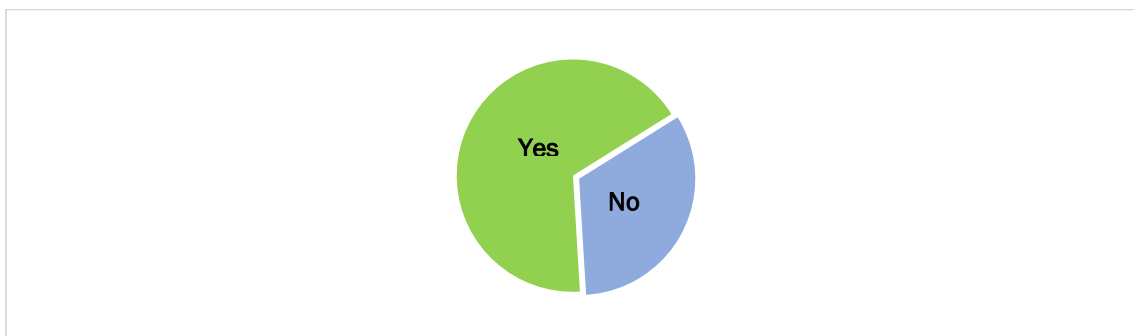
Several EUPAN Member States have conducted surveys related to how public administrations and their staff were coping with COVID-19.

We asked whether respondents' organisations had implemented teleworking before the COVID-19 pandemic. Two out of every three (67%) said this was the case.

According to the European Labour Force Survey, between 2006 and 2019 the incidence of workers working from home grew slowly in the EU27, from 10% in 2006 to 14.3% in 2019, but the share of employees working from home increased especially for those working from home sometimes, reaching 7.9% in 2019.

According to the results of the EUPAN survey 2020, most respondents mentioned that teleworking was already practised in the respective administrations before the COVID-19 crisis.

Figure 30 | Teleworking before COVID-19

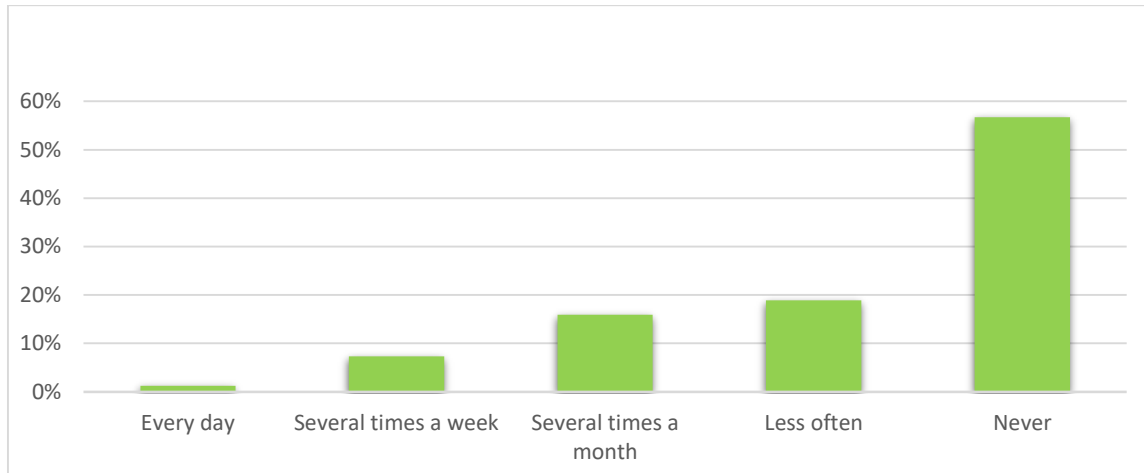


Source: 2020 EUPAN survey on central/federal public administration employees' motivation

Looking at the same information through an age lens, the tests flag as statistically significant ($p < 0,05$) the fact that 80% respondents over 45 years old say that their organisations already allowed teleworking before COVID-19, while only approximately 59% respondents aged 45 or less answer in the same way.

More than one out of every two respondents (57%) never worked remotely before the COVID-19 pandemic, while approximately every fourth respondent (24%) did so at least once a month.

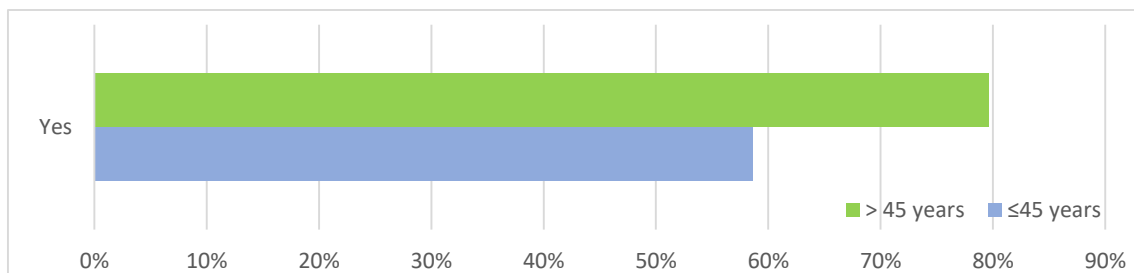
Figure 31 | Frequency of remote work before COVID-19



Source: 2020 EUPAN survey on central/federal public administration employees' motivation

Still regarding remote work frequency, none of the independent variables we are systematically looking at as potentially relevant – age, gender, and hierarchical position – is associated with differences that are flagged as statistically significant by the either Mann-Whitney's U or Chi-square.

Figure 32 | Teleworking before COVID-19



Source: 2020 EUPAN survey on central/federal public administration employees' motivation

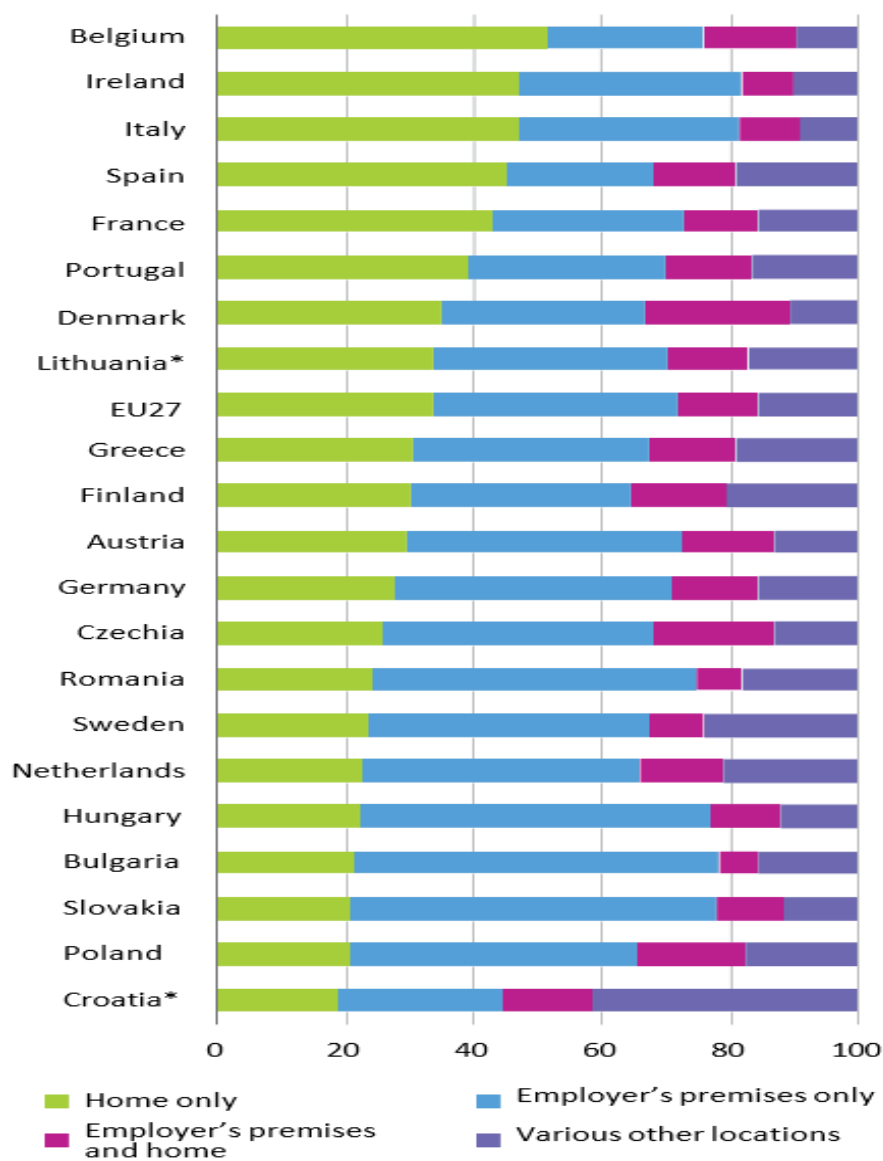
Bearing in mind teleworking in the EU Member States by age, we find that working from home was more frequent among those aged above 25 years than among very young workers (15-24 years) in all of them. Estonia and Luxembourg were the only EU MS where the share of teleworking among young workers (15-24) was close to the share registered among those aged above 25 years (Eurostat, LFSA-EHOMP).

Looking at the same question through gender and hierarchical position prisms does not reveal statistically significant differences.

Regarding the primary working arrangements in the respondents' organisations during the COVID-19 pandemic, most of the answers (41%) refer that this was mainly teleworking. In addition, every fourth (25%) respondent said it was only teleworking, and almost one out of five (18%) respondents said it was a mix of teleworking and face-to-face working.

It is evidence that the COVID-19 pandemic, with its prolonged and successive lockdowns, has led to the widespread adoption of teleworking in both the public and private sectors as a way of protecting workers' health, an attempt to prevent the spread of COVID-19 contagions and maintain organisational functioning.

Figure 21: Employees' place of work during the pandemic, by country, EU27 (%)

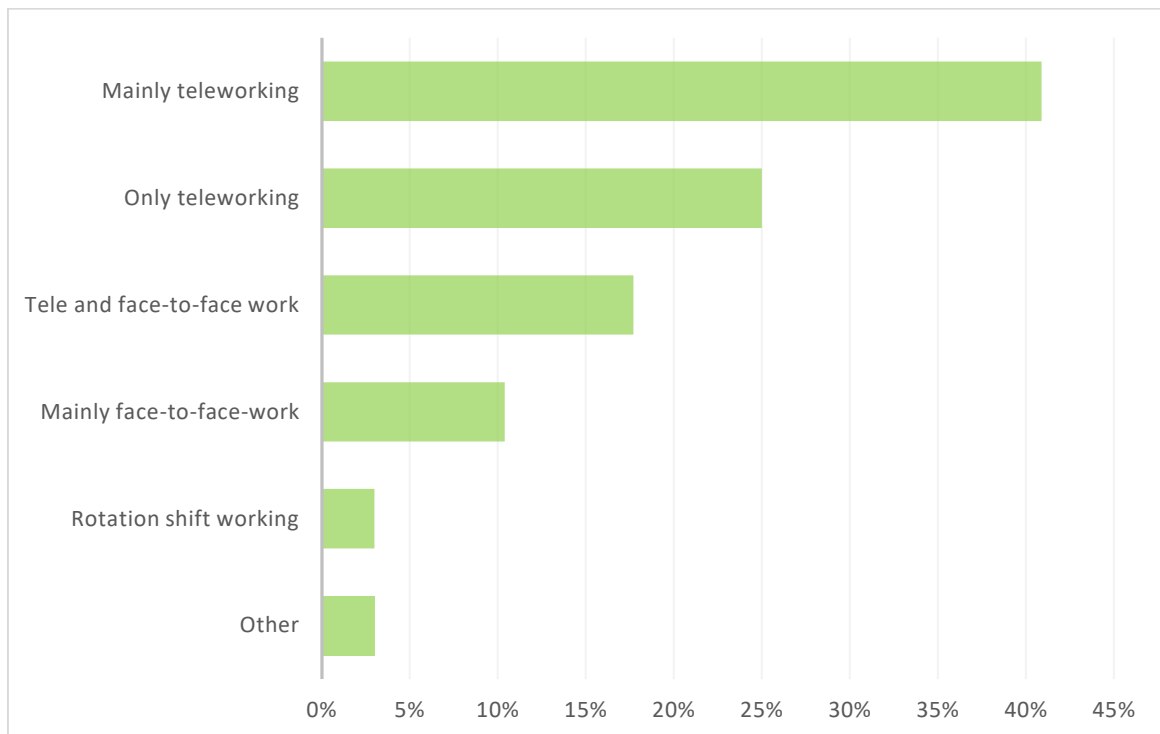


Source: Eurofound (2020b), p. 33. Notes: *Low reliability; Cyprus, Estonia, Latvia, Luxembourg, Malta and Slovenia not included due to insufficient number of cases.

According to Eurofound data, only in six MS (Belgium, Ireland, Italy, Spain, France and Portugal) was the percentage of teleworkers $\geq 40\%$. The hybrid format was most frequent in Denmark, Finland, Austria, Poland and Czechia.

In the case of Public Administration, the situation is the opposite, since the majority of employees have been teleworking (Fig. 33).

Figure 33 | Working arrangement during COVID-19 pandemic

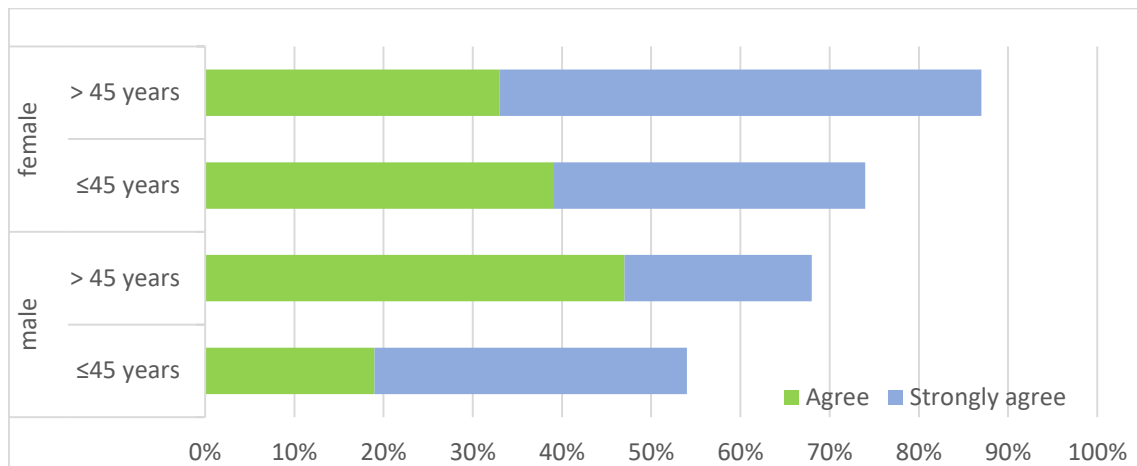


Source: 2020 EUPAN survey on central/federal public administration employees' motivation

None of the independent variables we are systematically looking at as potentially relevant – age, gender, and hierarchical position – is associated with differences in COVID-19 working arrangements flagged as statistically significant by Chi-square.

Looking for patterns through an intersectional lens, we were only able to consider the intersection of dichotomized age and gender, given the number of managers responding was too low to allow any meaningful analysis of the intersection of either age or gender with hierarchy.

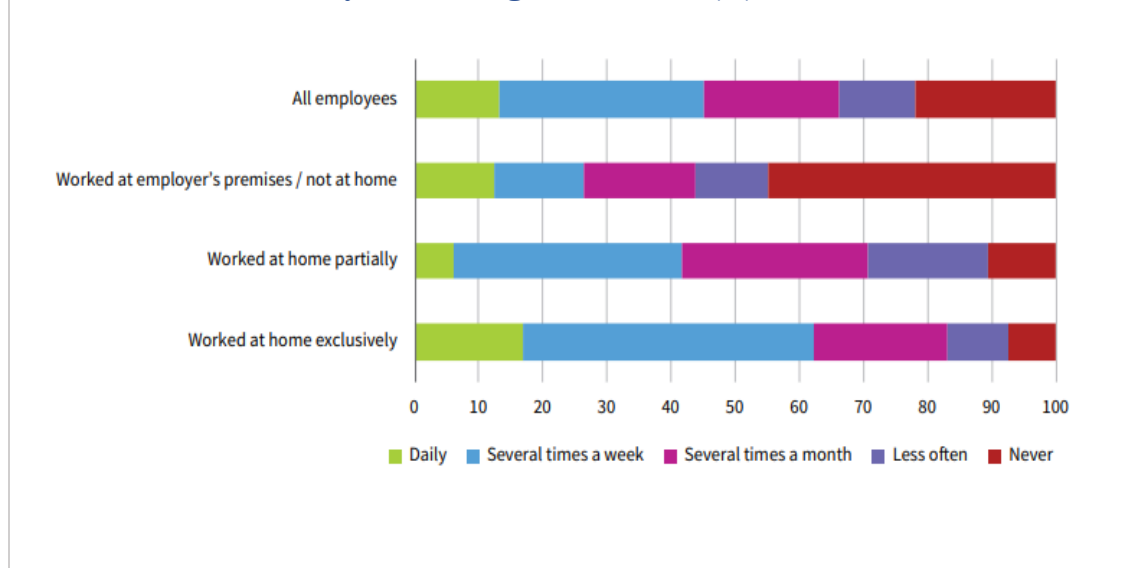
Figure 34 | Employees significantly motivated by teleworking



Source: 2020 EUPAN survey on central/federal public administration employees' motivation

Although teleworking can be a motivating factor, when we compare with the results of the research carried out by Eurofound, we can see that in a situation where the current pandemic does not exist, the employees' preferences regarding the teleworking regularity go towards a hybrid work regime (Figure 23).

Figure 23: Preference regarding regularity of working from home if there were no COVID-19 restrictions, by teleworking status, EU27 (%)



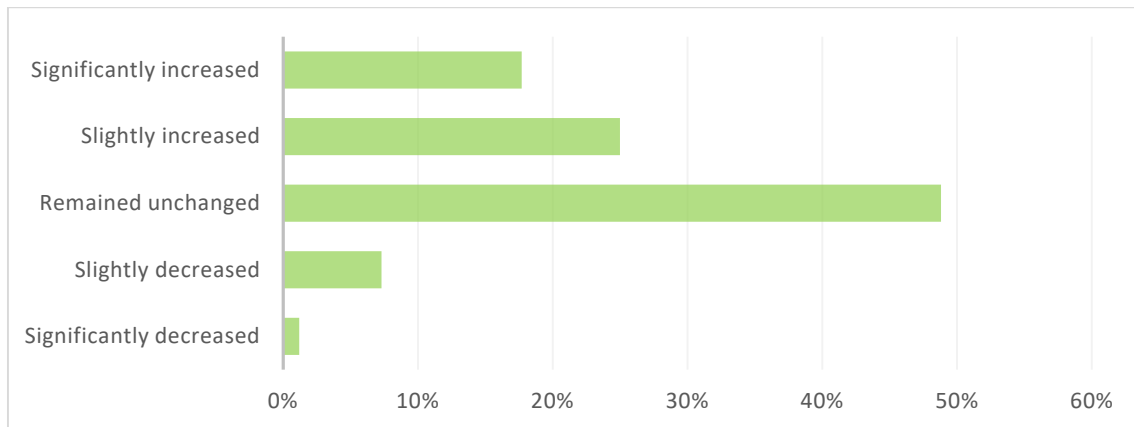
Source: Eurofound (2020b), p. 34.

We tried both combining dichotomized gender and age into a 4-category variable and then running the Mann-Whitney test and doing ordinal regression with gender and age as factors. The most promising relationship to emerge in terms of age-gender intersectionality was regarding telework itself. Females over 45 years old appear to be more motivated by teleworking than younger women and then men in the same age bracket. This result falls in line with other recent studies, such as the one carried out in Lithuania including both the public and the private sectors.

As for working hours, these have, on average, increased during the COVID-19 pandemic. Although almost every second respondent says they have remained unchanged, the number of respondents that say they have either significantly increased (18%) or slightly increased (25%) far surpasses that of those who say they have significantly (1%) or slightly (7%) decreased.

The academic research on remote productivity is mixed, with some saying it declines others promise it increases. Emotional pressure and economic pressure associated to the people worry about losing their jobs, paying their rent, and protecting their health, the fear for relatives, the amount of worrying news and inertial for work were identified as the three negative motivators leading to reduced work performance. Hence the role of leaders in changing this situation, especially when the post-coronavirus recovery will require productivity growth.

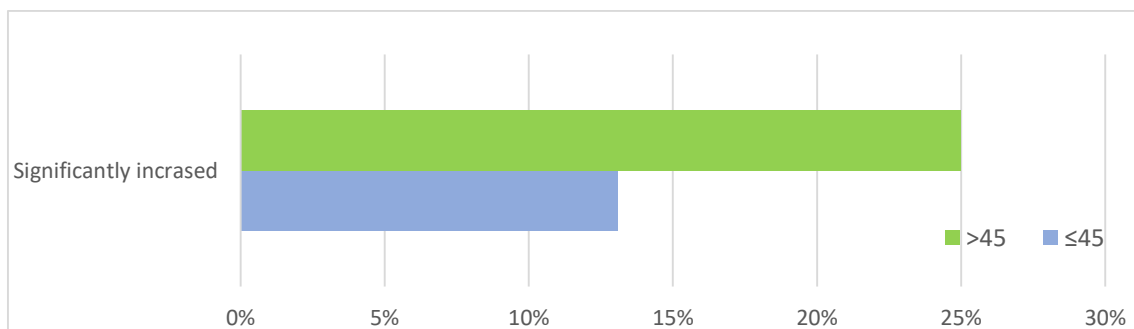
Figure 35 | Evolution of working hours during COVID-19



Source: 2020 EUPAN survey on central/federal public administration employees' motivation

However, this evolution has not been the same for everyone. Mann-Whitney's U flags the difference between broad age groups as statistically significant. Every fourth (25%) respondent in the elder broad age group says their working hours have significantly increased. In comparison, the same only applies to about every eight respondents (13%) in the younger broad age group.

Figure 36 | Evolution of working hours during COVID-19



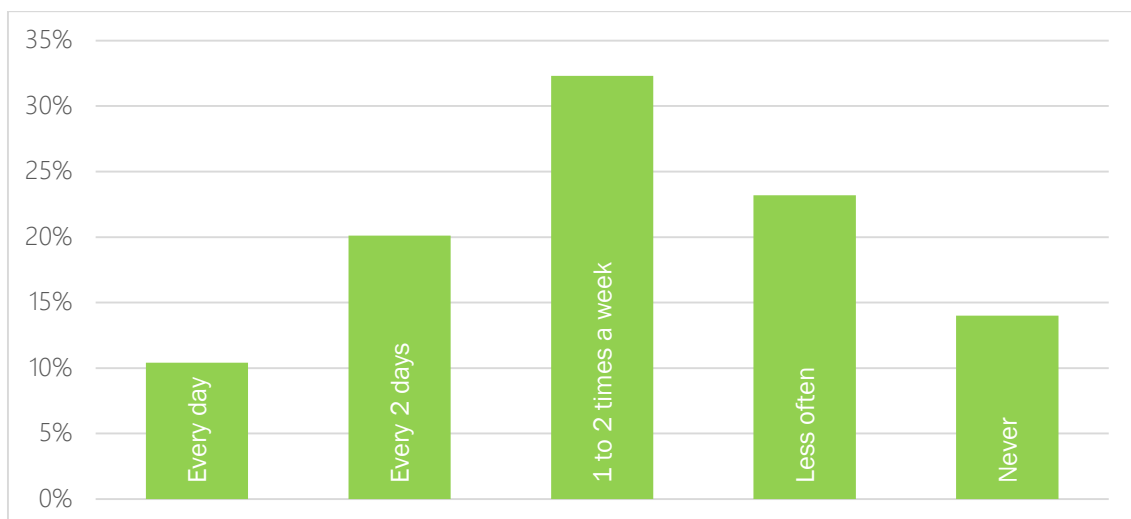
Source: 2020 EUPAN survey on central/federal public administration employees' motivation

None of the other independent variables we are systematically looking at as potentially relevant – gender and hierarchical position – is associated with differences in the evolution of working hours that are flagged as statistically significant by either the Mann-Whitney's U or the Chi-square tests.



As for the frequency of work outside regular working hours in the last few months, to respond to work requests, the most frequent answer is that it takes place one to two times a week (32%). Besides, 10% respondents do this, every day, and 20% respondent does so every other day. On the other hand, only 23% of respondents work outside regular working hours more seldom than once a week, and 14% never do so.

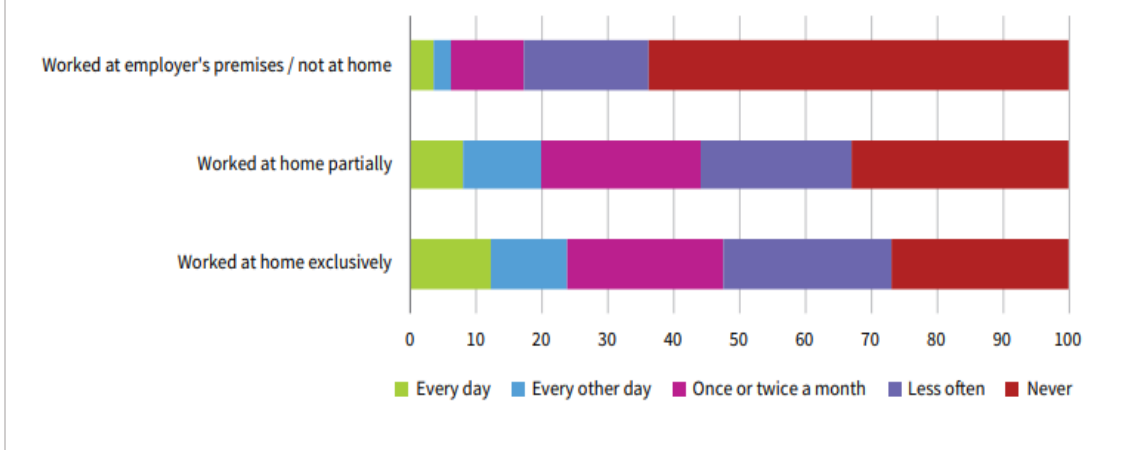
Figure 37 | Frequency of work outside normal working hours in the last few months



Source: 2020 EUPAN survey on central/federal public administration employees' motivation

In the e-survey launched by Eurofound across the European Union called Living, working and COVID-19 in April 2020, those working from home during the pandemic were much more likely to indicate working every day or every other day in their free time (Figure 22). Over one-fifth of teleworkers (24%) reported working during their free time, compared to 6% of those who worked only at the employer's premises or locations outside the home.

Figure 22: Working during one's free time during COVID-19, by work location, EU27 (%)



Source: Eurofound (2020b), p. 34.

Note: *Low reliability; **Before COVID-19: worked from home at least several times a week before the pandemic (How frequently did you work from home before the outbreak of COVID-19? Answers "daily" or "several times a week"); ***During COVID-19: started to work from home as a result of the situation (Have you started to work from home as a result of the COVID-19 situation? Answers "Yes").

Among the countries analysed, for example, by Bloomberg, only Italy recorded the same number of working hours in the March-April 2020 period, precisely the opposite in relation to the other countries (Austria, Belgium, Canada, Denmark, France, Netherlands, Spain, UK, and USA).

The USA registered the biggest increase, from eight hours a day to more than ten hours worked per day. France and Spain, which also increased the working hours of workers from eight hours to ten hours, an increase of two hours.

Only in January 2021 did Italy increase the hours worked from eight to around nine. The remaining countries maintained the hours they had been working since March-April 2020 or even reduced them, as was the case in Belgium, Denmark, France, and Spain.

The recent study (2021) on the impact of teleworking and digital work on workers and society, commissioned by the European Parliament, points out some of their positive and less positive aspects. If teleworking and ICT-based mobile work (TICTM) allows higher flexibility and autonomy, on the other hand, is often accompanied by greater work intensity and longer working hours, with negative effects on workers' work-life balance, especially in the case of women with children (M. Samek Lodovici et al., 2021).

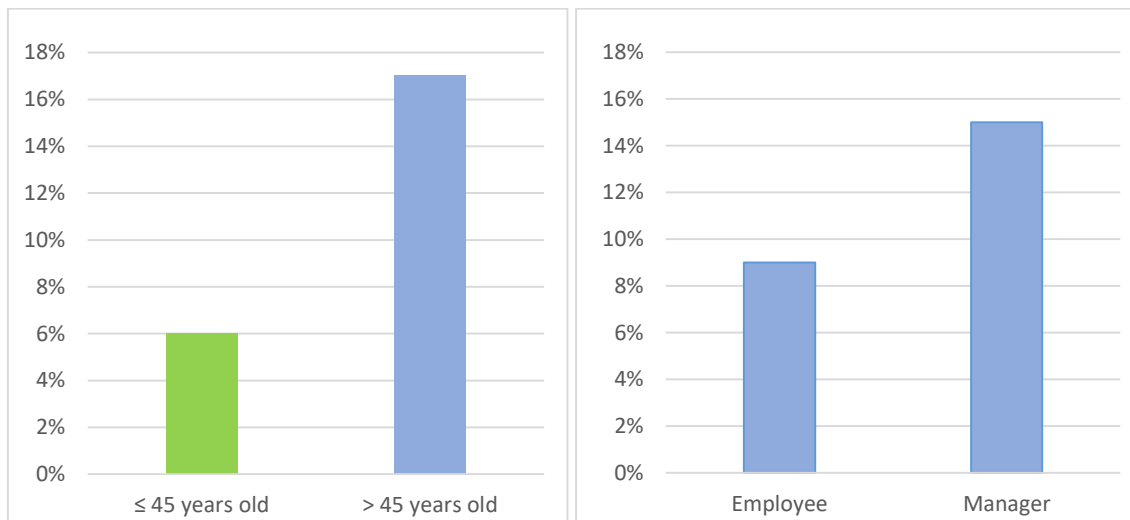
From the International Labour Organization (ILO) perspective, unrealistic expectations, and additional pressure on already overstretched employees can lead to disengagement and increase the risk of burnout. Besides, organizations need to be aware of the increase in the work demands on managers themselves, which can result from managing remote teams (ILO, 2020).

In terms of employee’s productivity in the remote regime of work, there is no consensus in the academic research, which is split between its decline and its increase. According to a survey, conducted between 2010 and 2015, of over 20,000 workers of more than 50 major companies around the world, it was found that teleworking was less motivating. The situation worsened, with huge differences when people had no choice in where they worked. Total motivation dropped 17 points (McGregor & Doshi, 2020).

There is no consensus in the academic research on employee’s productivity in the remote work

Mann-Whitney’s U shows the increase in work outside normal working hours to have impacted harder on older workers and, significantly, on managers. The percentage of older workers who worked outside regular working hours every day is 11 pp. above their younger counterparts, while that of managers is 6 pp. above the corresponding figure for employees. However, the most significant difference in terms of hierarchical position is situated on the second rung of frequency – every two days –, where managers are 24 pp. above employees. There is no indication that gender plays a role in this respect.

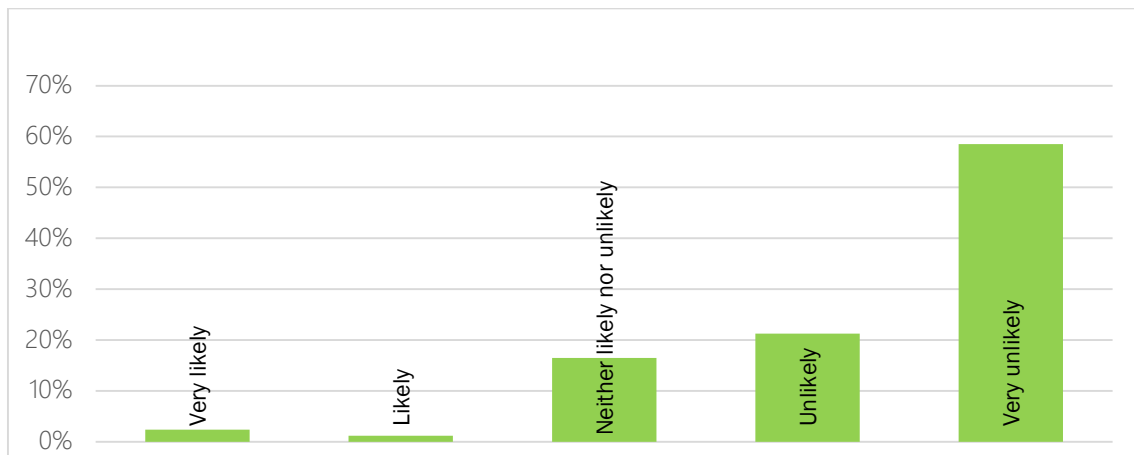
Figure 38 | Worked outside normal hours every day by position and age group



Source: 2020 EUPAN survey on central/federal public administration employees’ motivation

On a brighter note, four out of five (59% plus 21%) respondents regard as very unlikely or unlikely the possibility that they might lose their jobs, within the next three months, due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Moreover, only three per cent (2% plus 1%) consider such an event very likely or likely.

Figure 39 | Probability of losing job due to the COVID-19



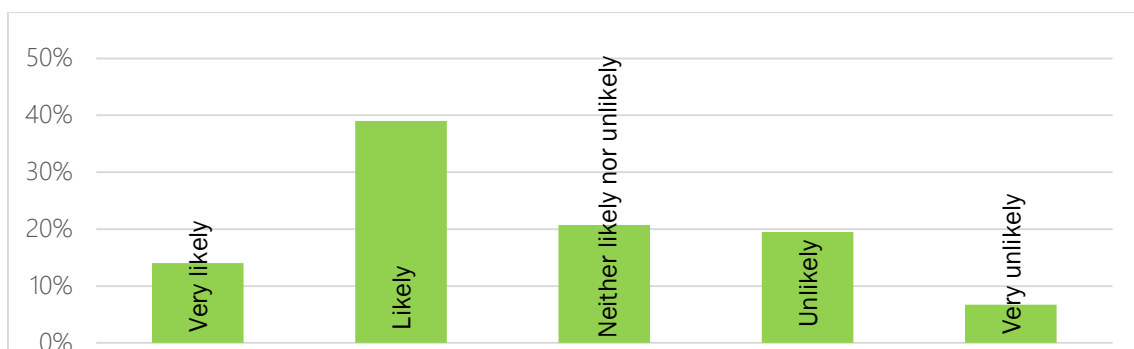
Source: 2020 EUPAN survey on central/federal public administration employees' motivation

None of the independent variables we are systematically looking at as potentially relevant – age, gender, and hierarchical position – is associated with differences in perceived probability of losing job that the Mann-Whitney U or Chi-square tests flag as statistically significant.

On the other hand, most respondents (53%) regard as very likely (14%) or likely (39%) that their central/federal public administrations will apply austerity measures to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic in the next four to six months. Only close to every fifth respondent (21%) is agnostic on this topic, and a bit more than every fourth (26%) remains optimistic, answering that this is very unlikely (7%) or unlikely (20%).

At the beginning of the first wave of the pandemic, some public employees of certain central public administrations expressed their fear that austerity measures might be implemented, including job losses. The experience lived during the 2017-2018 financial crisis, which led to the dismissal of staff in some Member States, justifies the fear of the situation being repeated. However, so far there is no evidence of any measure in this regard implemented in the central and federal administrations of the MS.

Figure 40 | Probability of austerity measures in response to COVID-19 in the next 4-6 months

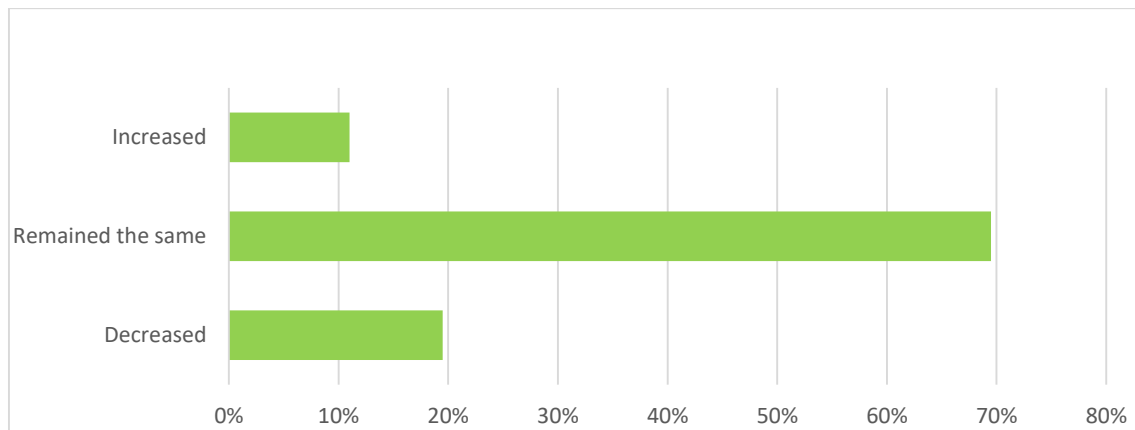


Source: 2020 EUPAN survey on central/federal public administration employees' motivation

None of the independent variables we are systematically looking at as potentially relevant – age, gender, and hierarchical position – is associated with differences in perceived probability of austerity measures that the Mann-Whitney U or Chi-square tests flag as statistically significant.

While most of our respondents (70%) say that their work motivation has remained the same during the COVID-19 pandemic, those who say it has decreased (20%) outnumber those who say it has increased (11%).

Figure 41 | Evolution of work motivation during COVID-19



Source: 2020 EUPAN survey on central/federal public administration employees' motivation

None of the independent variables we are systematically looking at as potentially relevant – age, gender, and hierarchical position – is associated with differences in terms of the evolution of work motivation that the Mann-Whitney U or Chi-square tests flag as statistically significant.

Regarding this issue on the motivation *status quo* during the pandemic crisis, we can note the results of the surveys carried out in Lithuania, Germany, and Portugal, in the teleworking perspective. What is the state of play on it?

A survey carried out in Lithuania concluded, from a sample (n=436) of teleworkers, that working from home two days a week can be a strong motivating tool. It does not adversely affect the quality of employees' collaboration; mutual trust; providing feedback and similar aspects that are identified as negative by individuals who telework most of the time (Raišienė et al., 2020).

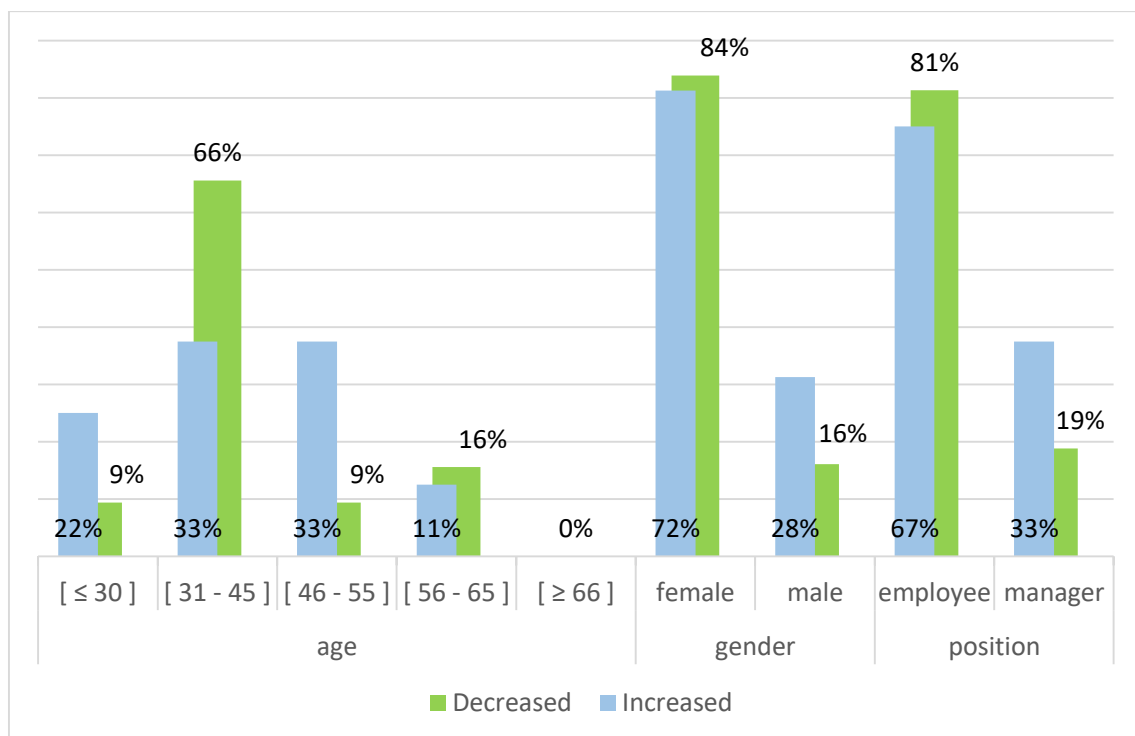
According to the results of the study conducted by the German administration, in 2020, employees had to face new challenges with teleworking. One in two employees had to deal with technical difficulties, just as many complained about communication deficits in the exchange with colleagues and a quarter had difficulties managing the work-life balance. Motivation problems were the least of the challenges, only 13% of respondents had to struggle with it.

The Portuguese Directorate General for Administration and Public Employment (known as DGAEP) also conducted a study on the work organisation models

adaptation in Portuguese Central Public Administration during the COVID-19 pandemic in 2021. As far as motivation is concerned, respondents were asked to compare teleworking to face-to-face work. The findings pointed out that during the pandemic there has been no significant change in motivation regarding teleworking (49%); while 24% of public employees felt “more motivated” and 15% “much more motivated” (Madureira, 2021).

According to the Remote Work Barometer¹⁵, which analysed the evolution of remote work in Portugal, collecting weekly feedback from Portuguese workers during and after the COVID-19 crisis in the first wave, we can draw some conclusions. These being: there are no changes in productivity and work compared to the previous week; homesickness increases with time; in the number of respondents who definitely miss their colleagues at work there is a significant increase. When workers were asked whether compared to last week how much their general feeling about remote working changed, 72.52% responded that it remained the same, and when asked if the worker felt better working remotely than in person, on a scale of 1 to 5 the value obtained was 3.

Figure 42 | COVID-19 impact on the evolution of motivation by gender, age, and position



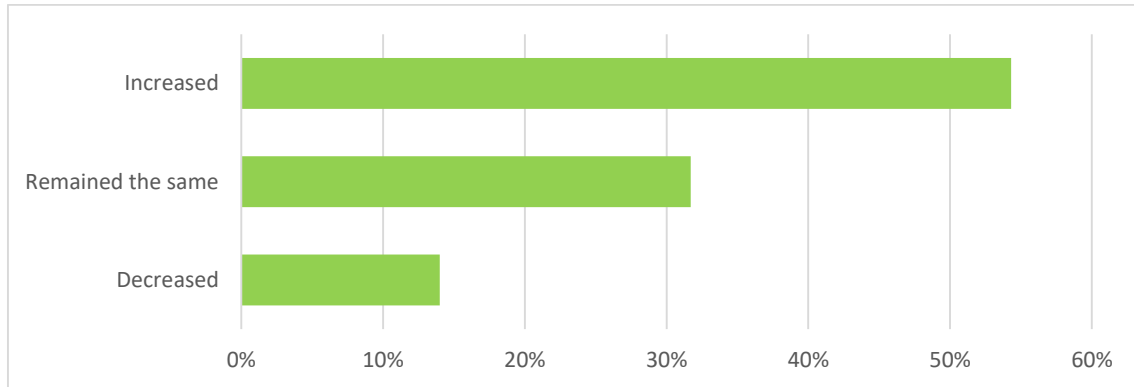
Source: 2020 EUPAN survey on central/federal public administration employees' motivation

On the other hand, more than every second respondent (54%) says their motivation regarding remote work has increased during the pandemic crisis. In comparison, only

¹⁵ Barómetro de Remote Work – Landing. Jobs, Revista Pessoas by ECO, 15 April 2020.

a minority (14%) holds the opposite view, and almost every third (32%) respondent says it has remained the same.

Figure 43 | Evolution of remote work motivation during COVID-19

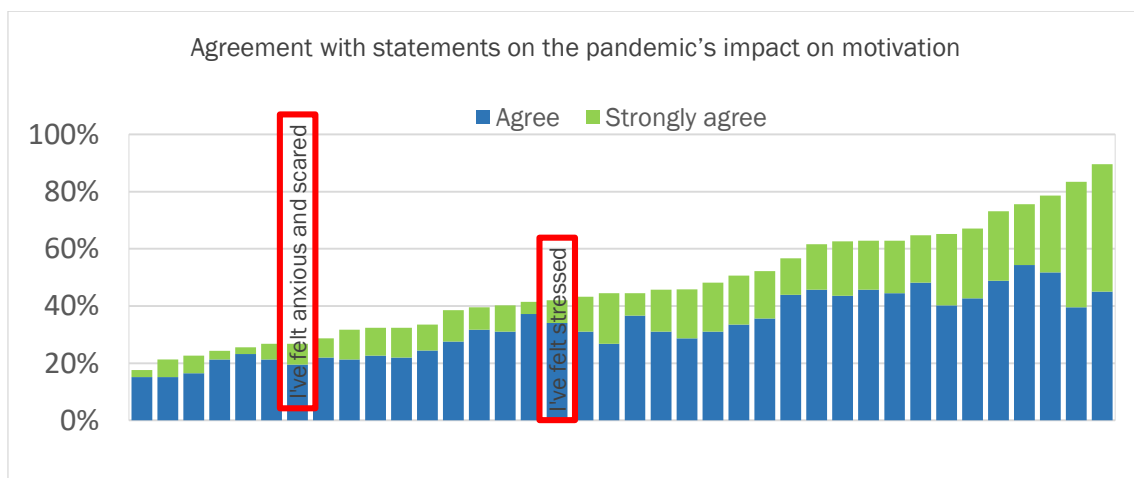


Source: 2020 EUPAN survey on central/federal public administration employees' motivation

None of the independent variables we are systematically looking at as potentially relevant – age, gender, and hierarchical position – is associated with differences in the evolution of remote work motivation that the Mann-Whitney U or Chi-square tests flag as statistically significant. None of the variables discussed up to this point is associated with gender in a statistically significant way.

We also wanted to investigate the relationship between the pandemic, mental health, and motivation. In the leadership in times of COVID-19 questionnaire, only 7% and 8% of respondents strongly agreed with the statements regarding one's feelings of anxiety and fear respectively, on the one hand, and of feeling stressed, on the other. The corresponding score for mere agreement were 20% and 34%. As such, they are not particularly prominent in the context of all other statements, but they reflect that about two out of five respondents have experienced such issues.

Figure 44 | Motivation & mental health



Source: 2020 EUPAN survey on central/federal public administration employees' motivation

In the particular case of teleworking, which due to the pandemic has become the new normal working model in most private and public sectors, there has been a general trend of an increase in the number of hours worked compared to the pre-Covid19 period.

The lockdowns decreed in the various countries led to the closure of schools and kindergartens, as well as support services for the elderly. The services that were outsourced started to be taken over by the employees caring for their relatives, simultaneously with their work activity. In countries where culturally the change in social gender roles towards a balanced distribution of domestic and family tasks is not yet fully internalised, it has led to an incidence of work overload on women, leading to situations of burnout, stress, depression, and anguish. The blurring of the boundary between working time and family time tended to become inevitable. Many mothers with young children, where dependency is higher, even confessed that they could only work at night, when their children were in bed.



In addition to the long working hours, another aspect impacting on employee's mental health is related to social isolation, particularly critical for those ones living alone and older, and may exacerbate other existing mental health problems. Fear, anxiety, and worry are the most common feelings. However, the context, the conditions of isolation, the sociability network, and the characteristics of the people (more or less anxious) may act as facilitating or hindering factors for their adaptation to new circumstances. The increased use of online monitoring and surveillance methods, together with the variables just mentioned, may also negatively affect the mental health of teleworkers. At the same time, the possible lack of space and ergonomically sound equipment may also increase their physical health risks. In the case of women teleworking from home, there is an increased risk of domestic violence (M. Samek Lodovici et al., 2021, p.14).

A very important aspect of work is its social character: the possibility for workers to



interact with others, to develop relationships, to learn from others, and to receive feedback and support when needed. Working in isolation means some of those important features may be absent and that can have important repercussions for workers' motivation, self-development and ultimately their health and well-being.

The second round of the e-survey asked how frequently respondents feel isolated when working. Overall, 12% of survey respondents reported they felt isolated ‘always’ or ‘most of the time’ when working. This affects a larger share of younger respondents – 15% of those aged 18–34 – and decreases with age; 12% of those aged 35–49 and just 9% of those aged 50 and over report this. Isolation is also reported by a larger share of those exclusively working from home (15%) compared to those working from other locations (10%) (Eurofound, 2020). It is widely recognised that the various work demands, including the quantitative and emotional demands mentioned above, impact on individuals’ health.

If we compare the feeling of isolation of workers in the EU 27 by sectors, we find that only 10% of public administration employees experienced this feeling, a percentage lower than the average of the 27 MS (12%). Only the construction, health and agriculture sectors are below 8% (Eurofound, 2020).

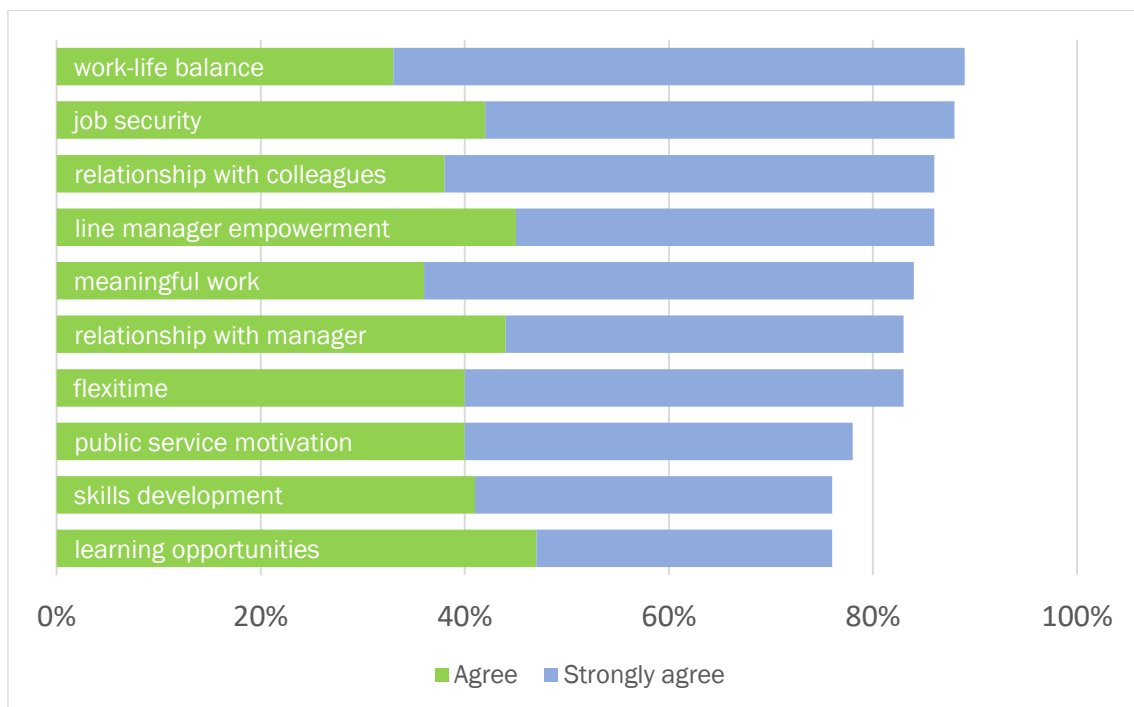
The recognition of the need for psychological support of people in the context of a pandemic crisis led to the adoption of institutional initiatives in this area. We can give the example of the Portuguese Ministry of Health that jointly with the Order of Psychologists established a psychological support hotline. At the level of public administrations, there is a greater focus on the prevention of psychosocial risks of



employees resulting from the pandemic. According to Samuel Antunes, mental health is not a privilege or a benefit, but a right of people.

Our research also aimed to understand the role of work-life balance in the hierarchy of motivation factors, regardless of their being intrinsic or extrinsic. We found out it is *primus inter pares*, but we also wanted to know how COVID-19 might have affected this aspect of motivation. To do this, we looked at the relative positioning of two items in the agreement ranked statements on the pandemic’s impact on motivation. The two statements were “It’s hard for me to clearly separate remote working from my personal life” and “I had the possibility of reconciling professional and personal life”. The former, which suggests increased difficulty in managing this balance, is agreed with by about two out of every five respondents. The latter, which suggest managing this balance had been feasible, is agreed with by nearly three out of every five respondents. If a direct comparison were possible, the net result would thus be that the perception of positive evolution wins by a margin of every fifth respondent. However, it may be safer to say that work-life balance has not come to the fore during the pandemic, as either a positive or a negative factor.

Figure 45 | Top 10 intrinsic & extrinsic motivational statements



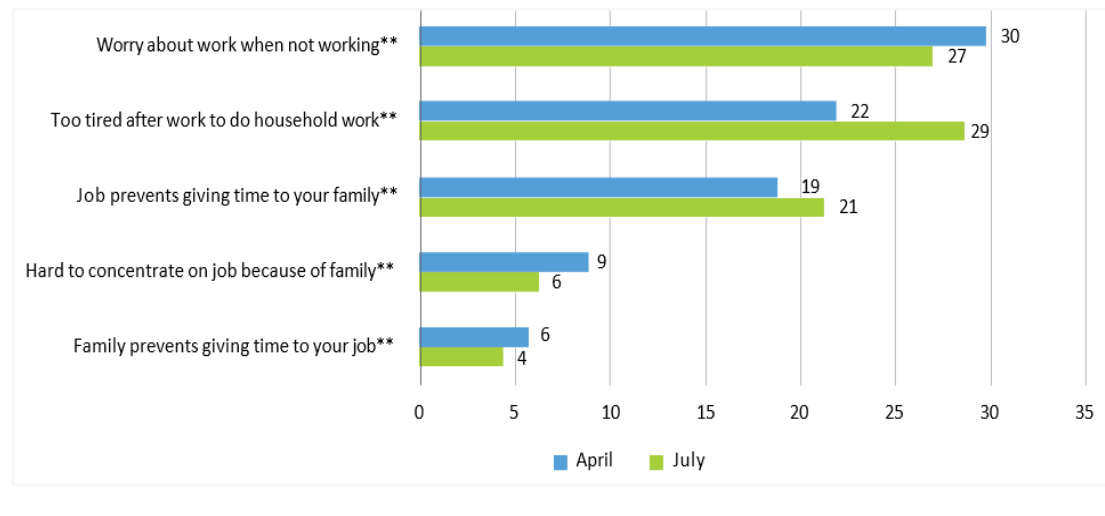
Source: 2020 EUPAN survey on central/federal public administration employees' motivation

At the peak of the COVID-19 pandemic in April 2020, the e-survey revealed that respondents – especially women with children under 12 – were struggling to balance their work and personal life. Indeed, although teleworking was a key factor in ensuring business continuity, it has led to a rise in the number of people working from home, resulting in difficulties in managing work–life conflicts and an increase in the incidence of overtime (Eurofound, 2020a and 2020d).

In April, among the five work–life balance dimensions, respondents most often worried about the job even when not working. In July, respondents more often reported that they were too tired after work to do household work compared to the earlier round in April.

Overall, however, work–life balance remained stable among respondents over the months of the COVID-19 pandemic. In July, Austria, Germany, Hungary and the Netherlands were the countries where respondents express the highest level of work–life balance, while the lowest level is recorded among respondents in Portugal. Work–life balance levels improved significantly in 15 of the 27 Member States between the two survey rounds.

Figure 11 Changes in work–life balance at EU level, EU27 (%)



Source: Eurofound (2020b), p. 21.

Notes: This chart presents the proportion of workers who replied, 'always' or 'most of the time' on a five-point scale from 'always' to 'never'.

**Statistically significant change ($p=0.05$).

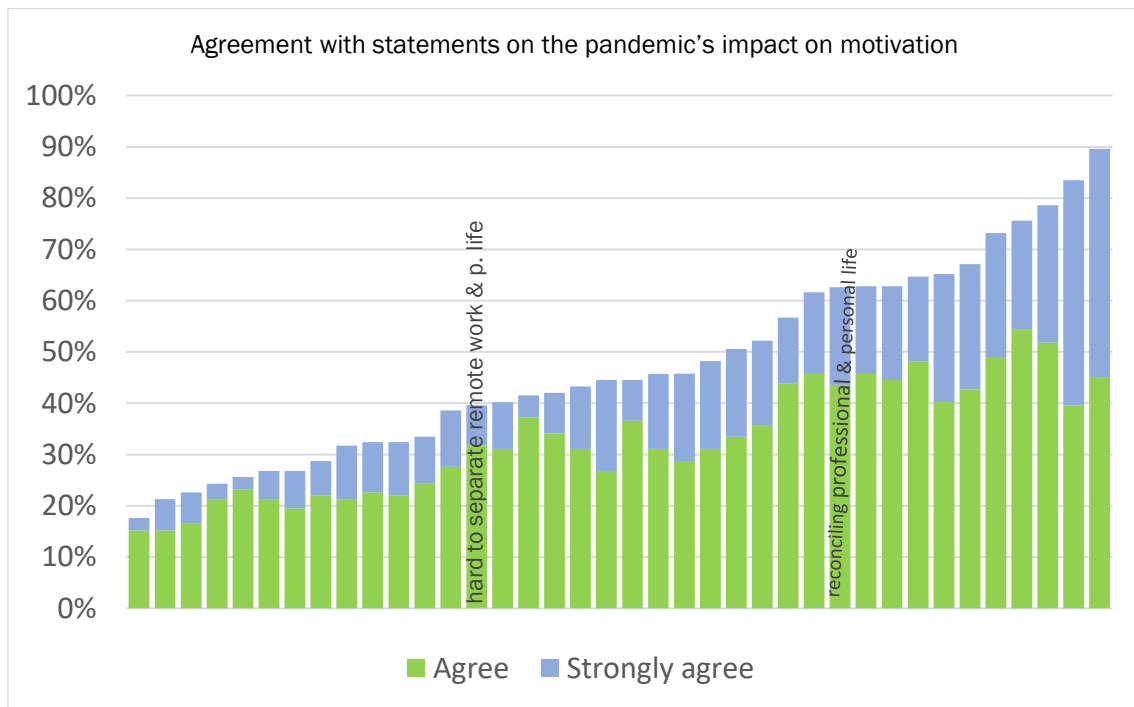
As pointed out in the first findings of the Eurofound e-survey, respondents with children were found to be the group most challenged by the new living and working arrangements. The main differences between those with and without small children are in relation to concentration levels and juggling time between work and family. Women with children under 12 reported more work–life conflicts in the July survey than both men with children of the same age and respondents without children or with children older than 12. The largest differences between men and women with young children are reflected in the statements 'hard to concentrate on the job because of family' and 'family prevents giving time to the job' (Figure 11).

Similarly, in countries such as Denmark, Finland, France and Sweden, the gender difference in doing household work was just 2 or 3 hours, whereas in Romania and Greece, the difference was as great as 13 or 14 hours.

The difference between men and women in terms of participation in childcare and housework increases even more among respondents who have children aged under 12. On average, women spent 62 hours per week caring for children (compared to 36 hours for men) and 23 hours per week doing housework (15 hours for men). Single parents, both male and female, spent longer hours than average on childcare (52 hours for women, 36 hours for men), and female single parents with children under 12 (not shown) spent the longest hours of all groups (77 hours per week).

Burnout, stress, decreased productivity, absenteeism, less concentration, less focus, less capacity for analysis, learning and decision-making are some of the consequences of not being able to switch off. Some Member States have begun to adopt measures to force the switch-off.

Figure 46 | Work-life balance



Source: 2020 EUPAN survey on central/federal public administration employees' motivation

Motivational factors

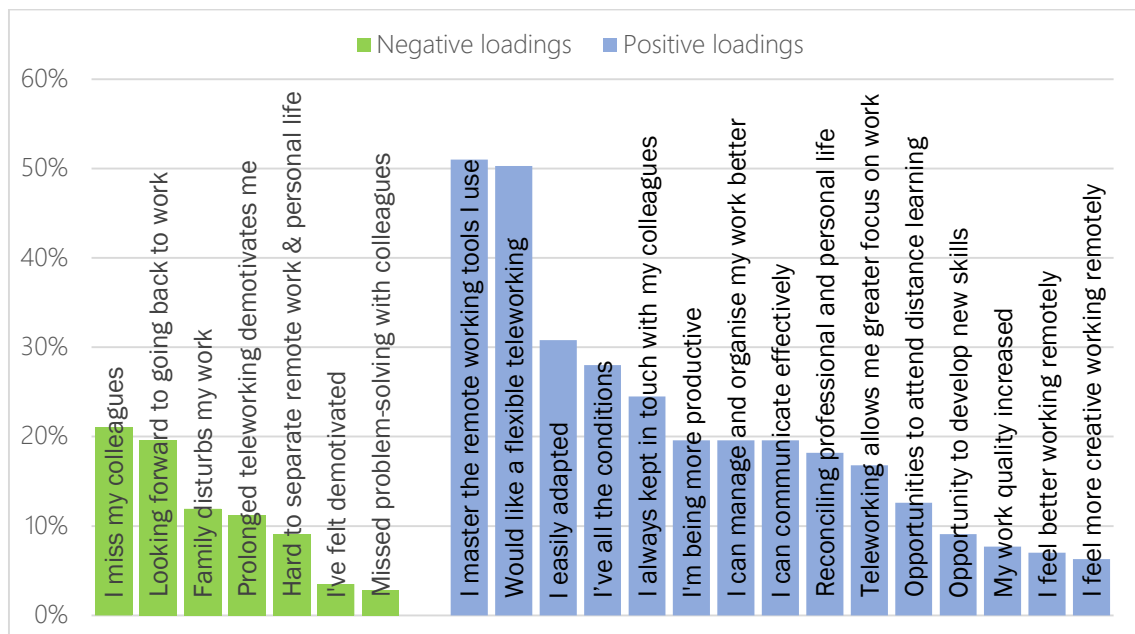
Trying to probe several aspects of COVID-19's impact on motivation, we then asked respondents to express their level of agreement with a battery of thirty-nine diverse statements. We devised these statements to reflect specific concerns, and we performed an exploratory factor analysis to see how they merge into meaningful patterns. Based on the criteria of parsimony and meaningfulness, we retained seven factors. Given that all these factors proved to be interpretable, we opted to apply no rotation to the original solution.

When reading these results, one should bear in mind that we do not have at least five observations per original value, which is a rule of thumb. We only have 4.3. Furthermore, we looked at Bartlett's sphericity test ($p < 0.05$) and Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin's measure of sampling adequacy (0,784) and found the results to indicate that factor analysis was appropriate. Finally, in the descriptions below we only mentioned statements whose factor loading, be it positive or negative, had an absolute value above 0,3.

The first most prominent pattern in the data is a factor that brings together, on the one hand, disagreement with statements that reflect teleworking demotivation - ("prolonged teleworking demotivates me", and "during the pandemic, I've felt demotivated") or urgency in going back to face-to-face work ("after the deconfinement, I was looking forward to going back to work", "the family context [e.g. young children, parents, grandparents] disturbs my work", "It's hard for me to clearly separate remote working from my personal life", "I miss my colleagues when working

remotely”, “I’ve felt lack of problem-solving with colleagues in remote working”, and “I miss my colleagues when working remotely”), and, on the other hand, agreement with statements that reflect a feeling of being productive and even more focused during this period (“I’m being more productive working remotely”, “teleworking allows me greater focus on work”, “I can manage and organise my work better when working remotely”, “I easily adapted to the new working environment”, “I feel better working remotely than I do in person”, “I feel more creative working remotely”, “during the pandemic my work quality increased”, “after the crisis, I would like to have a flexible teleworking and face-to-face regime”, “I can communicate with my team/colleagues effectively when working remotely”, “I had the possibility of reconciling professional and personal life”, “I’ve all the conditions to work remotely”, “during the pandemic, I’ve always kept in touch with my colleagues”, “I master the remote working tools I use”, “during the pandemic, I’ve had the opportunity to develop new skills”, “In the event of a new confinement, I feel I’m psychological better prepared to cope with it”, and “during the pandemic, I’ve had greater opportunities to attend distance learning”). In synthesis, this factor signifies a well achieved personal transition to the new paradigm and an unwillingness to look back. Hence, considering the literature, we dubbed it *There Is No Turning Back*.

Figure 47 | Strong agreement with *There is No Turning Back* statements

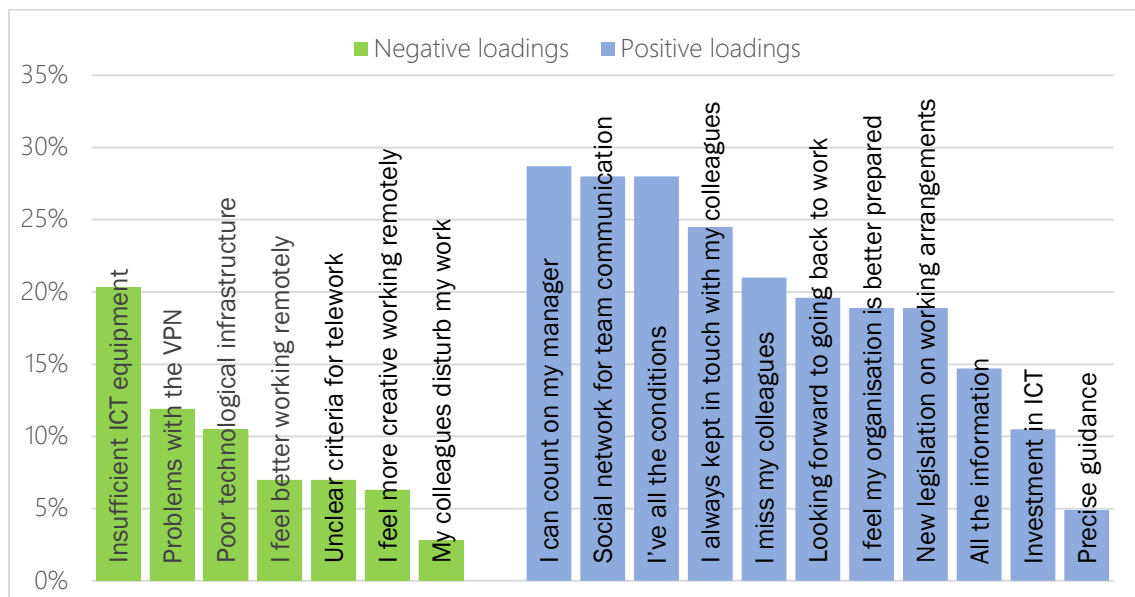


Source: 2020 EUPAN survey on central/federal public administration employees' motivation

The second factor to emerge synthesises respondents' denial that their services were technically or organizationally unable to deal with telework - (“there is poor technological infrastructure in my organisation”, “the criteria for determining who teleworks and who works in person were unclear”, “there was insufficient ICT equipment for teleworkers”, “my colleagues disturb my work”, “I feel better working remotely than I do in person”, “I feel more creative working remotely”, “I had problems with the VPN network that made my work harder” and) and their assertion that the

services have more than adequately dealt with the pandemic (“In the event of a new confinement, I feel my organisation is better prepared to cope with it”, “my organisation gave me all the information so that I could return to work safely”, “since the beginning of the pandemic, my organisation has been investing in the modernisation and expansion of the technological infrastructure”, “since the beginning of the pandemic, the central public administration has been preparing legislation to implement new ways of working [e.g., digital flexible working arrangements]”, “I can count on the support of my manager for any situation, professional and private”, “during the pandemic, I’ve always kept in touch with my colleagues”, “after the deconfinement, I was looking forward to going back to work”, “I miss my colleagues when working remotely”, “I’ve had precise guidance on the work to be done”, “my unit set up a social network [e.g. WhatsApp] for team communication”), and “I’ve all the conditions to work remotely”. All in all, this speaks of empowerment, organisational engagement, and the belief that we will pull through, being thus best summarised by the famous WWII slogan *We Can Do It!*

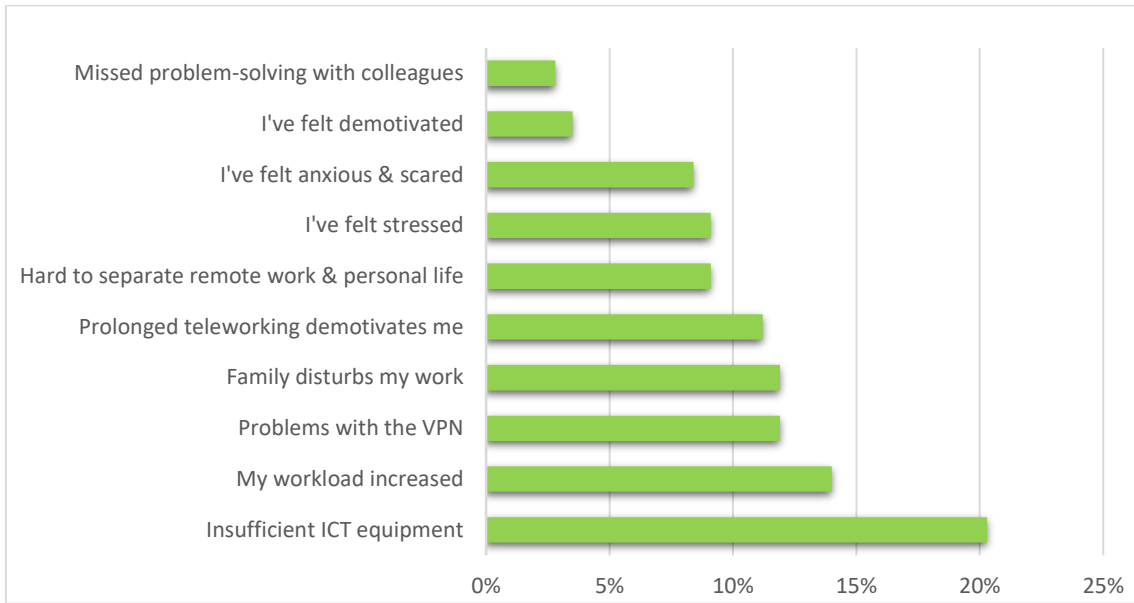
Figure 48 | Strong agreement with *We Can Do It!* Statements



Source: 2020 EUPAN survey on central/federal public administration employees' motivation

The statements that load into the third factor to surface translate the specific forms of anxiety that emerged during these times (“during the pandemic, I’ve felt anxious and scared”, “during the pandemic, I’ve felt stressed”, “I had problems with the VPN network that made my work harder”, “during the pandemic my workload increased”, “the family context [e.g., young children, parents, grandparents] disturbs my work”, “It’s hard for me to clearly separate remote working from my personal life”, “during the pandemic, I’ve felt demotivated”, “there was insufficient ICT equipment for teleworkers”, “prolonged teleworking demotivates me”, and “I’ve felt lack of problem-solving with colleagues in remote working”). We thus believe it can be adequately named *Pandemic Blues*.

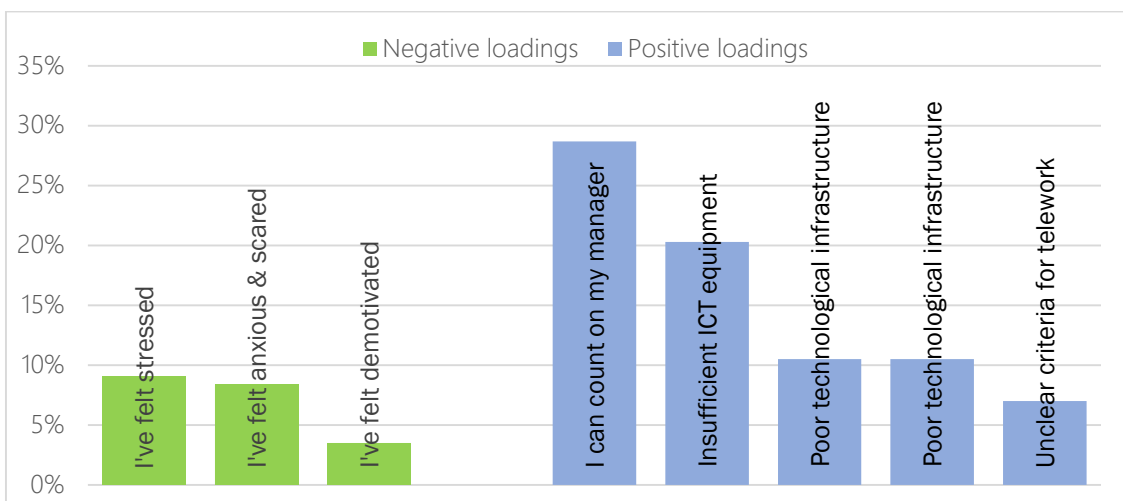
Figure 49 | Strong agreement with *Pandemic Blues* statements



Source: 2020 EUPAN survey on central/federal public administration employees' motivation

Part of the story with the fourth factor is that affirms the existence of the very same technical and organisational problems whose denial is an integral part of the *We Can Do It!* attitude - (“there was insufficient ICT equipment for teleworkers”, “there is poor technological infrastructure in my organisation”, “I had problems with the VPN network that made my work harder”, and “the criteria for determining who teleworks and who works in person were unclear”), while simultaneously complimenting the leadership of line managers (“I can count on the support of my manager for any situation, professional and private”) and denying the anxiety items that make up the *Pandemic Blues* (“during the pandemic, I’ve felt demotivated”, “during the pandemic, I’ve felt stressed”, and “during the pandemic, I’ve felt anxious and scared”). Combining these elements gives a distinct *Keep Calm and Carry On* feel to this factor.

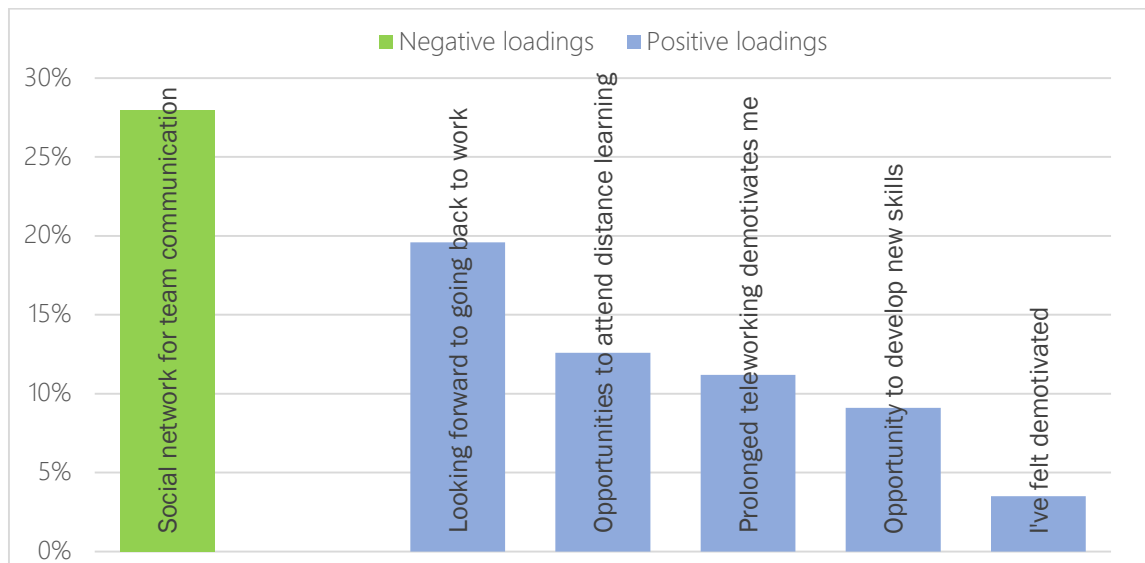
Figure 50 | Strong agreement with *Keep Calm and Carry-On* statements



Source: 2020 EUPAN survey on central/federal public administration employees' motivation

The fifth factor's narrative is, both in terms of the statements with which there is an agreement - ("I've had greater opportunities to attend distance learning", "I've had the opportunity to develop new skills", "I was looking forward to going back to work", "prolonged teleworking demotivates me", and "during the pandemic, I've felt demotivated") and disagreement ("my unit set up a social network [e.g., WhatsApp] for team communication"), that of the self-taught teleworker who survived being mostly left to their own devices but thinks enough is enough (a secondary aspect is agreeing with statements whose denial is a crucial feature of the *There Is No Turning Back* attitude) and wants to come home. We named this factor *Crusoe*.

Figure 51 | Strong agreement with *Crusoe* statements



Source: 2020 EUPAN survey on central/federal public administration employees' motivation

On the contrary, factor six scores negatively with the empowering statements that define *Crusoe* - namely "I've had the opportunity to develop new skills" and "I've had greater opportunities to attend distance learning" - while featuring the most substantial positive loading (i.e., denoting agreement) with the statement that "prolonged teleworking demotivates me". Given this general overtone of stagnation, we opted to call it *Pandemic Slump*.

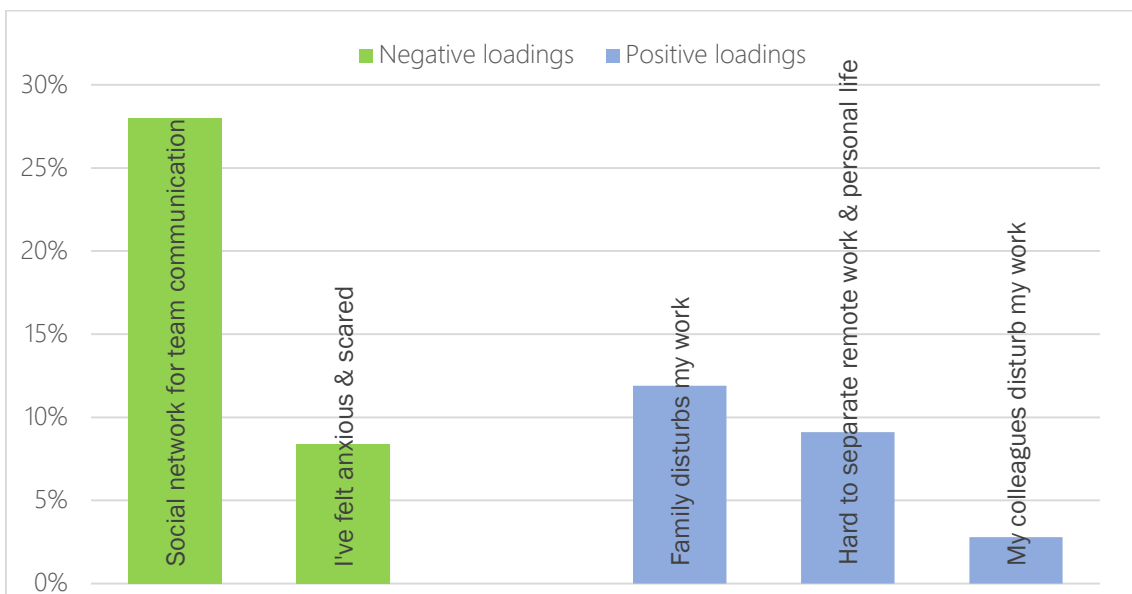
Figure 52 | Strong agreement with *Pandemic Slump* statements



Source: 2020 EUPAN survey on central/federal public administration employees' motivation

Factor seven, the last one we opted to retain, manifests in strong agreement with statements that emphasise the way others can disturb one's work -("It's hard for me to clearly separate remote working from my personal life", "my colleagues disturb my work", and "the family context [e.g., young children, parents, grandparents] disturbs my work") while displaying negative loadings on statements that emphasise anxiety ("I've felt anxious and scared") and connectedness ("my unit set up a social network [e.g. WhatsApp] for team communication"). The meaning implied by respondents who agree with these statements seems to be *I am Better Off by Myself*.

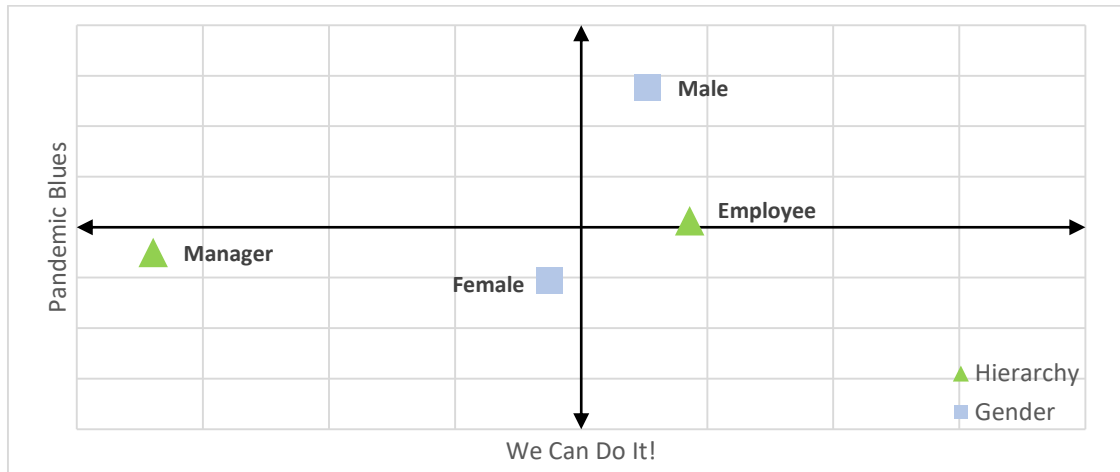
Figure 53 | Strong agreement with *I am Better Off by Myself*



Source: 2020 EUPAN survey on central/federal public administration employees' motivation

The positioning of some independent variable categories along these factors differs in a statistically significant way. Namely, managers turn out to be relatively sceptical regarding the idea that *We Can Do It!* and males seem to more under the *Pandemic Blues*.

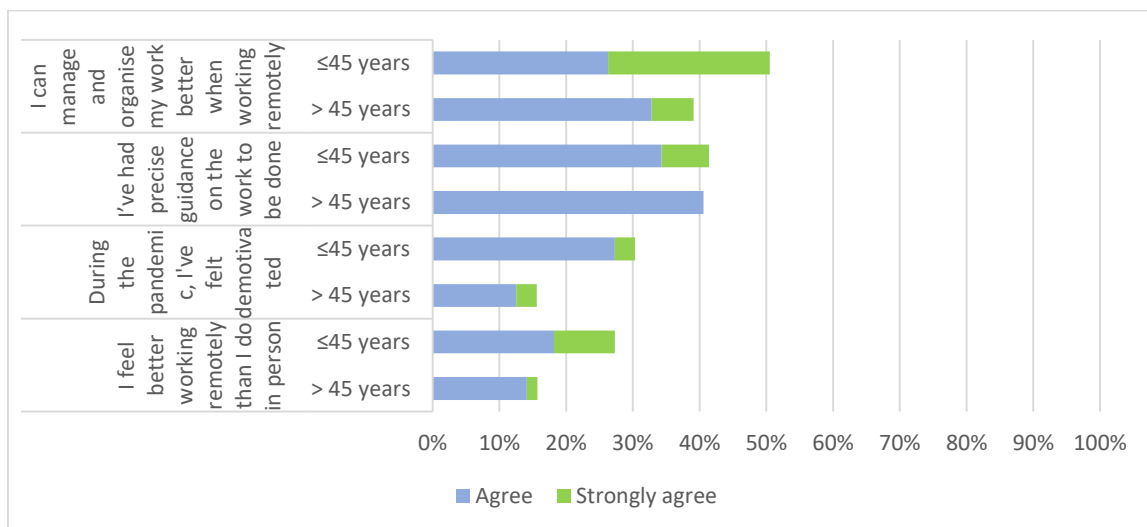
Figure 54 | Pandemic Blues Vs We Can Do It



Source: 2020 EUPAN survey on central/federal public administration employees' motivation

In terms of concrete answers to questions and keeping in mind the independent variables we are systematically looking at as potentially relevant, we found evidence that respondents aged up to 45 years old tend to agree more with statements that show them to be at ease with the new circumstances. Namely “I feel better working remotely than I do in person”, “I can manage and organise my work better when working remotely”, and “I’ve had precise guidance on the work to be done”. On the other hand, they agree more with the statement: “during the pandemic, I’ve felt demotivated”.

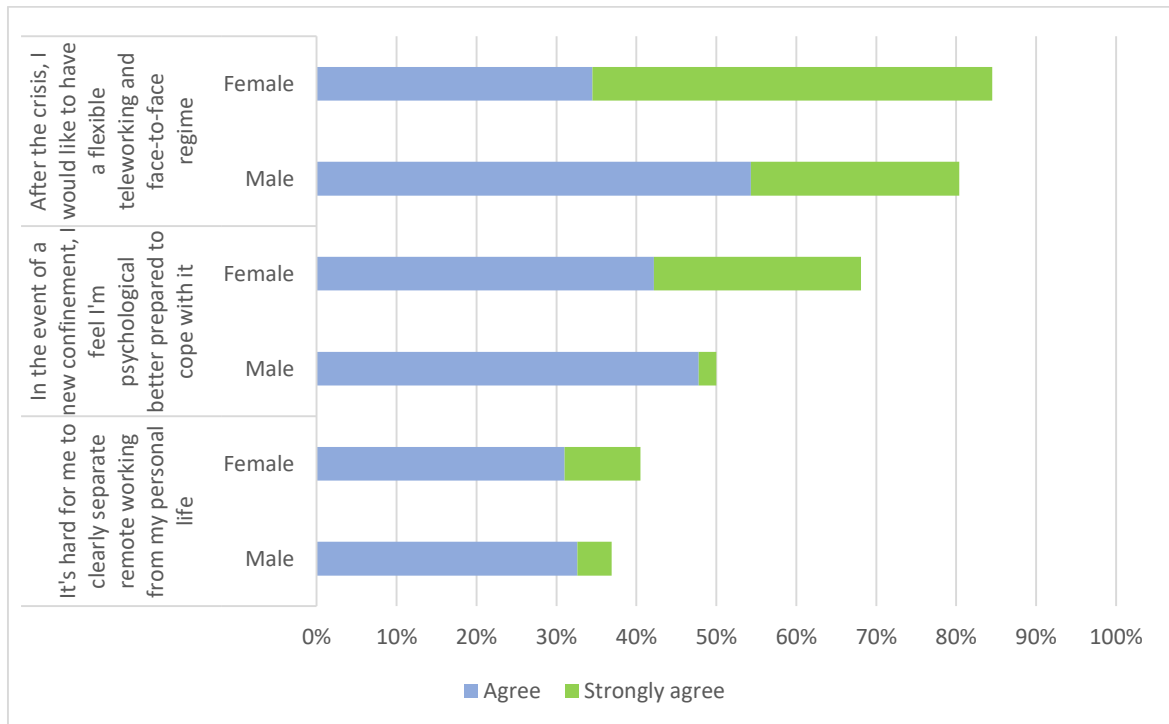
Figure 55 | Agreement levels differing across wide age groups



Source: 2020 EUPAN survey on central/federal public administration employees' motivation

As for gender, females agree more strongly than males with three statements related to their gender role. While it is harder for them to clearly separate remote working from their personal lives, they also feel more that in the event of new confinement, they would be psychologically better prepared to cope with it and are more looking forward towards having a flexible teleworking and face-to-face regime after the crisis.

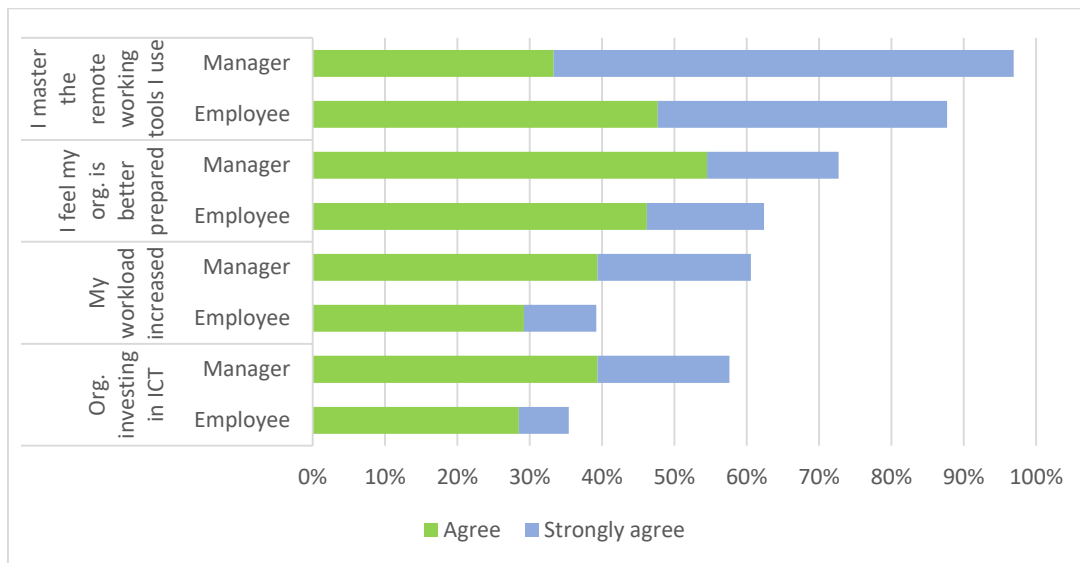
Figure 56 | Agreement levels differing across genders



Source: 2020 EUPAN survey on central/federal public administration employees' motivation

Regarding our third independent variable, respondents' hierarchical position relates to either their agreement level with specific differences that are flagged as statistically significant by the Chi-square (taking both variables as categorical) or the Mann-Whitney's U (taking statement agreement level as an ordinal variable) tests. Managers, it turns out, are more prone to agree that they master the necessary tools that their organisation is now better prepared for such contingencies, that their workload has increased, and that the organisation is currently investing in getting a better ICT infrastructure.

Figure 57 | Agreement levels differing across the hierarchy



Source: 2020 EUPAN survey on central/federal public administration employees' motivation

Understanding motivational factors contributions

As we have seen above, the 2020 EUPAN survey found that during the first wave of the pandemic there was no significant change in the motivation of employees, where almost 70% responded that it had remained the same. Only around 20% indicated that it had decreased.

During the first wave of the pandemic there was no significant change in the employees' motivation

Ordinal correlation analysis (Kendall's Tau-b) shows demotivation during the pandemic to be associated with many other measures. For instance, with negative feelings; the lengthening of the telework period; the absence of maintaining contact with the team and the support network that this represents – both in the sense of a demotivating absence and, in the opposite direction, of contact immunizing against demotivation –; or age. A similar but even more intricate pattern is associated with the answers to the question that asked respondents to describe the evolution of their work motivation during the pandemic.

Given this degree of complexity, we chose to use in the subsequent analysis not the individual indicators but the immanent abstract constructs that these indicators reflect. We already identified these earlier through factor analysis of the batteries of statements about motivation and leadership. Thus, we will have to deal with just over ten measures (and with less error), instead of several dozen variables.

The use of factors as independent variables has, for linear regression analysis, the additional advantage of, as long as the factors have emerged from the same non-rounded factorial solution, not being correlated with each other and, as such, not giving rise to any concern regarding multicollinearity.

Moving on to the stepwise fitting of a multiple regression model, the computer then added successive factors considering their F probability (0.05 for entry and 0.10 for removal). Six of the seven factors related to statements about motivation were thus successively added, and none of the four factors related to statements about leadership.

The first factor to be included, which also retains the highest β (0.400) in the final solution, is *There Is No Turning Back*. Its meaning, we recall, is general agreement with statements that denote that the individual has been feeling productive and focused during the pandemic. Respondents scoring high in this factor dominate the situation at all levels and do not feel inclined to return to the old normal.

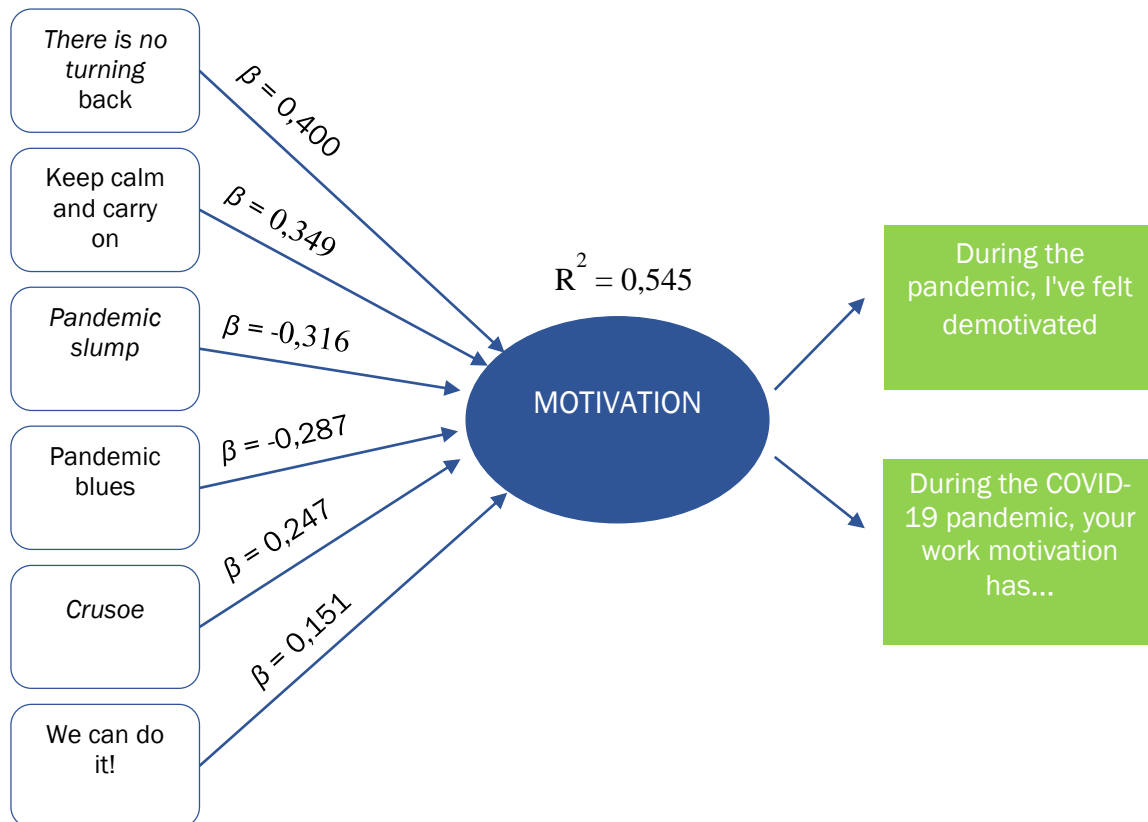
The algorithm then adds the *Keep Calm and Carry-On* factor, which retains a β of 0.349 in the final solution. It reflects phlegm and team solidarity in face of organizational inability to deal with ICT related aspects of the crisis.

The third factor integrating the model is *Pandemic Slump*, which associates demotivation with deprivation of opportunities to learn and progress. The β in this case is -0.316, the minus sign indicating that the higher the score reached by the individual in this factor, the lower the probability of feeling motivated. Given that this factor partially loads one of the demotivation indicators, its inclusion in the model is partly tautological and, moving on, will require model revision.

Fourth, the algorithm adds to the model the *Pandemic Blues* factor, which reflects the anxiety and sadness associated with the setbacks that characterize life under the pandemic. Like in the previous one, a high score is negatively associated to motivation. Its β is -0.287.

The fifth factor to enter the model is *Crusoe*, so-called because, like the eponymous character, people scoring high in it have managed to prosper during isolation, but miss the company of others, and how things were, and want to return. Its β is 0.247.

Finally, with a β of 0.151 – that is, less than half the importance of any of the first three factors –, the model also integrates the *We Can Do It!* factor. The latter reflects unbreakable faith in the capacity of the public administration as a collective, and of the teams themselves, in particular, to overcome the challenges posed by the pandemic.



Source: 2020 EUPAN survey on central/federal public administration employees' motivation

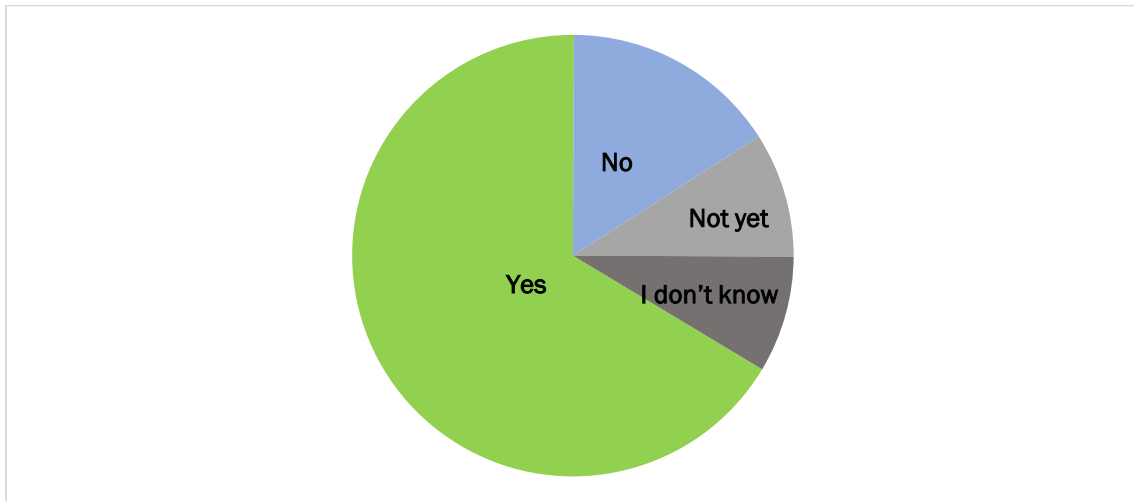
The *I am Better Off by Myself* factor, derived from statements on motivation, and the *Leadership Quality*, *Laissez Faire*, *Manager Agency*, and *People-oriented vs Performance-oriented Management* factors did not pass the threshold of statistical significance required for inclusion in the model.

This allows us to describe the motivated public employees. They are, above all, a) people enchanted by a new way of doing things, who cannot imagine going back; in addition, they are b) members of resilient organizations capable of not leaving them behind when ICTs fail; they are still c) people who manage to put their ambition in parentheses and are not affected by narrowing training and learning opportunities; and, more generally, d) people with good emotional self-regulation when dealing with the inevitable hardships of the pandemic. The e) ability to improvise in a new situation, and f) state optimism in the face of the existential crisis are also part of their profile.

Ongoing and future changes

We asked respondents if there had been any change in the work organisation with deconfinement and on the return to work. Two out of three respondents (67%) said this was the case. Every fourth respondent says there were no changes (16% say “no” and 9% “not yet”). The remaining nine per cent say they do not know.

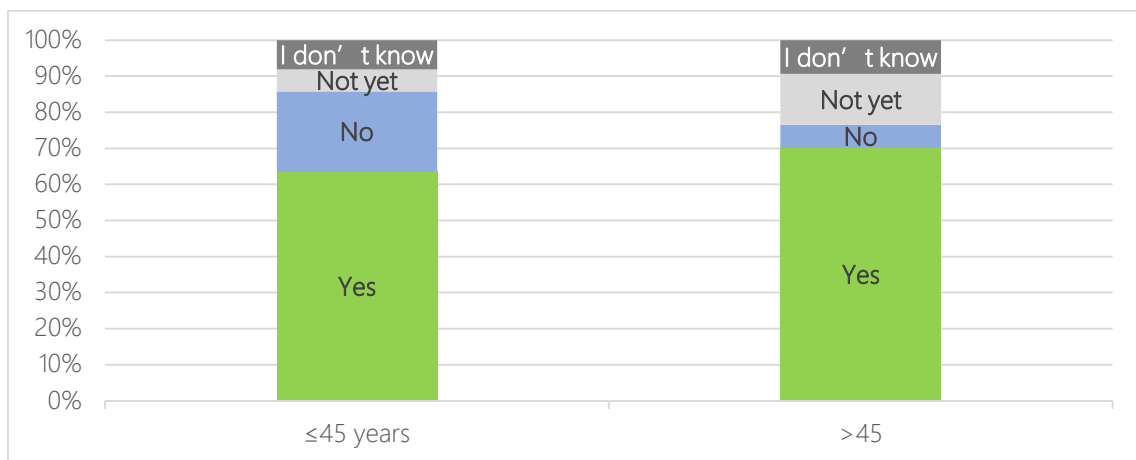
Figure 58 | There have been changes in the work organisation



Source: 2020 EUPAN survey on central/federal public administration employees' motivation

The tests flagged a statistically significant difference in the way this variable behaves according to age. The categorical denial of their work organisation changes is more frequent among respondents up to 45 years old than among their older counterparts.

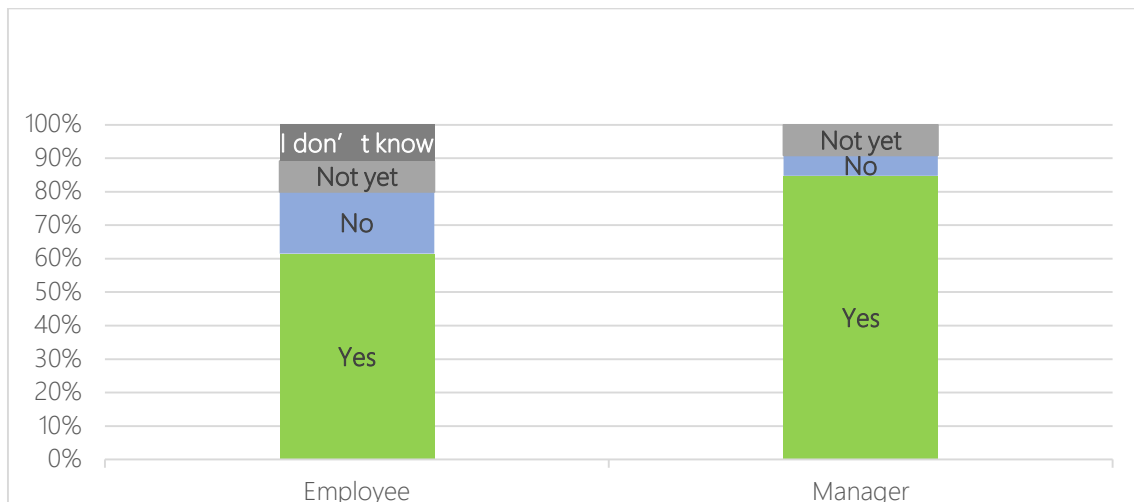
Figure 59 | Work organisation changes by age



Source: 2020 EUPAN survey on central/federal public administration employees' motivation

We also discovered a statistically significant difference according to respondents' hierarchical positions. The proportion of managers who say that after deconfinement, on the return to work, there were changes in the work organisation is much larger than the equivalent proportion amongst employees, who, in their turn, are more prone to say they do not know if upper management undertook such changes.

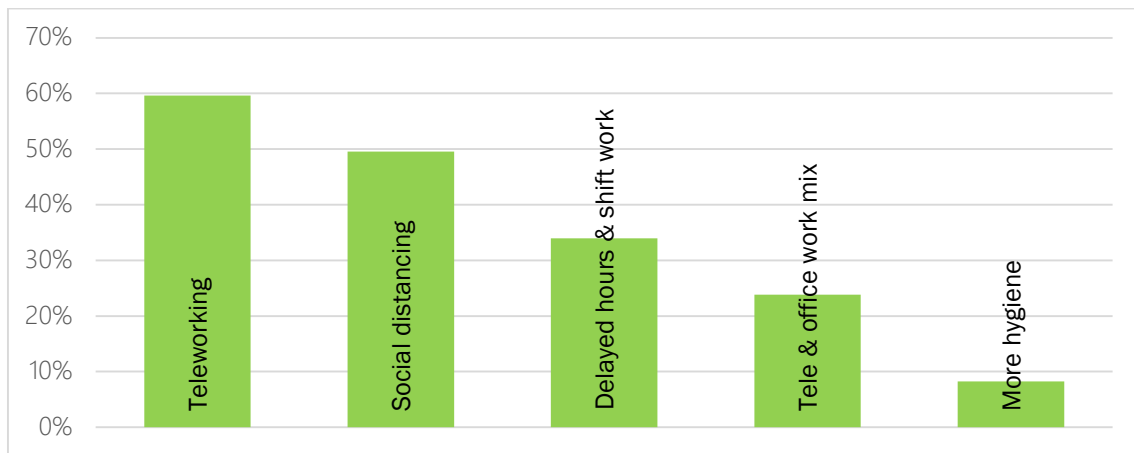
Figure 60 | Work organisation changes by position



Source: 2020 EUPAN survey on central/federal public administration employees' motivation

Three out of every five (60%) respondents who had said there were changes in work organisation mentioned teleworking. Every other respondent (50%) in this subgroup also mentions social distancing (e.g., maximum occupancy). Similarly, every third (34%) respondent cites delayed hours and shift work. Every fourth (24%) respondent who said management enacted changes references the emergence of a mix of teleworking and office work. Finally, there were references to more hygiene (e.g., masks, disinfectant) in eight per cent of the answers.

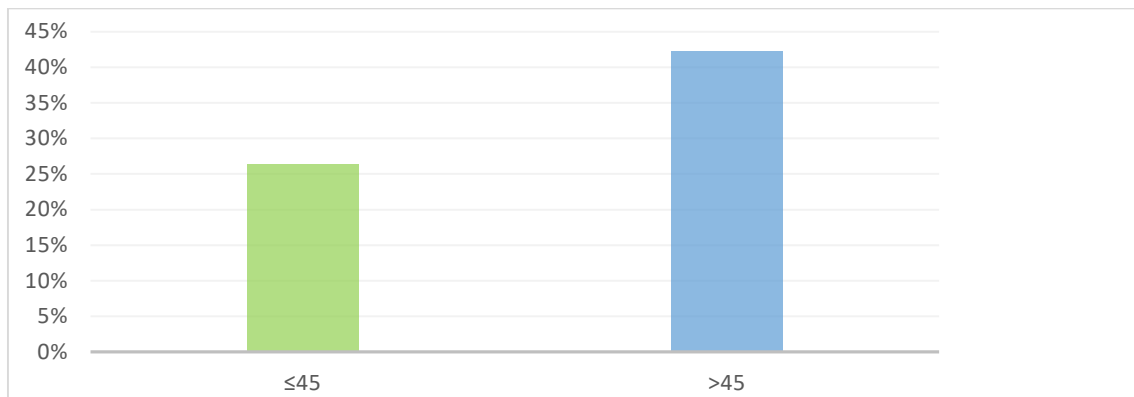
Figure 61 | Changes in work organisation



Source: 2020 EUPAN survey on central/federal public administration employees' motivation

The tests regarding the independent variables yielded two statistically significant differences. The first of these is that older respondents (>45) are more prone to point out that there were changes regarding social distancing than their younger (≤45) counterparts.

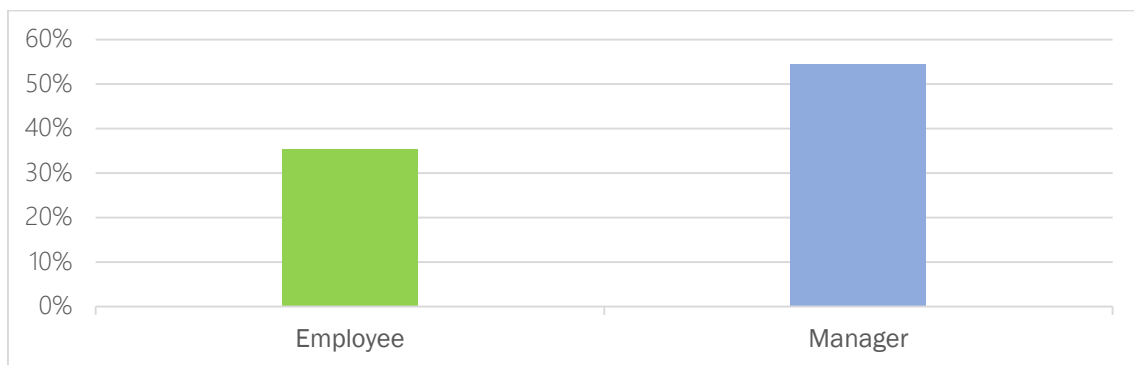
Figure 62 | Social distancing changes by age



Source: 2020 EUPAN survey on central/federal public administration employees' motivation

The second statistically significant finding is that the proportion of managers who acknowledge teleworking changes is larger than the corresponding share of employees.

Figure 63 | Changes related to teleworking



Source: 2020 EUPAN survey on central/federal public administration employees' motivation

The number of respondents that reported foreseen changes was too small to compute statistics. Still, the gist of the information produced is that telework is here to stay but with nuances, such as some administrations moving towards a flexible mixed teleworking and office work paradigm. The normative framework of teleworking also seems to be catching up with praxis and replacing the *ad hoc* decisions made at the beginning of the pandemic.

It is evidence that the COVID-19 pandemic, with its prolonged and successive lockdowns, has led to the widespread adoption of teleworking in both the public and private sectors as a way of protecting workers' health, as well as an attempt to prevent the spread of contagions, by avoiding unnecessary social contact, and maintain organisational functioning.

In the transition to post-COVID times, what will be the new normal? What will change in the organisation of work? What do the empirical studies tell us based on the multiple surveys¹⁷ carried out in different countries?

In all of them there is a common denominator, the balance of teleworking has been positive. The overwhelming majority of employees consider that the ideal solution in the post-COVID return to normality is to share workdays between the office and home.

One of the studies on *Remote Work in Portugal* concludes that 95% of Portuguese people want to continue working from home at least one day a week, for others the ideal situation would be to keep teleworking between two to three days a week, which is in line with the findings of a 2020 survey in Germany. In this country, there has been an increase in part-time workers at home. The working life of millions of Germans is set to become more flexible after the coronavirus pandemic.

The ideal solution for employees' majority in the post-COVID return to normality is to share workdays between the office and home

Among the main advantages of teleworking identified in this study are the absence of time lost in commuting (32%), greater time and place flexibility, less recurrent interruptions (27%), the possibility of a flexible agenda (25%) enhanced job autonomy and the increase of time for the family (13%) improved work-life balance (M. Samek Lodovici et al. 2021, p.14). It was also clear that attracting and retaining talent in organisations involves working conditions including teleworking.

With the return to post-COVID 'normality', the extensive use of teleworking is expected to continue, although not on a full-time basis. The covid-19 pandemic has reinforced the need for flexibility. Hybrid forms are more likely to prevail, combining remote and office working. It now appears very likely that the experience of working from home during the COVID-19 crisis will lead to a growth in teleworking when the crisis abates (Eurofound, 2020). The main teleworking preference cited was several times a week (32%) with only 13% indicating that they would like to telework daily. The preferred teleworking arrangement for most respondents, therefore, still involves a significant continuing presence at the workplace. (Eurofound, 2020, p.34)

In the technology sector teleworking is here to stay, at least for new hirings and in the telecommunications sector, the model adopted in the return to work is the hybrid one. At Siemens, for instance, as long as the duties allow it, employees can work remotely without limit of days. Roche Diagnostics, meanwhile, has decided to scrap schedules, because in the words of its managing director, Nazli Sahafi, "work is what you do, not where you are or how many hours you spend doing it".

A May 2021 survey of 1,000 American adults showed that 39% would consider resigning if their employers were not flexible about remote working. And among

¹⁷ In Portugal alone we are aware of three surveys, two aimed at workers in general launched by Jones Lang LaSalle (2020) and the Portuguese Catholic University (2021), and the third one at central government administration employees, carried out by the Directorate-General for Administration and Public Employment (2021).

Millennials and generation Z, the percentage increases to 49%, according to data from Morning Consult.



According to Mercer's latest survey (October 2020), it is becoming increasingly clear that the future of work is not a fully remote model, but hybrid. For most employees there will be no going back to the daily commuting and traditional 8-5 workdays, but rather fluidity between remote and in person work environments (Lauren Mason, Global Survey #8).

Flexibility, agility, and productivity are the new trends of the new normal, according to Michael Page's study, "The next normal" (2021).

Moreover, the most strategic leaders are offering hybrid working models, which boost employee autonomy and well-being, and encourage

diversity and inclusion through more equitable and attractive jobs.

Public administrations that do not offer this possibility (hybrid solution) will find more difficult to recruit young talents.

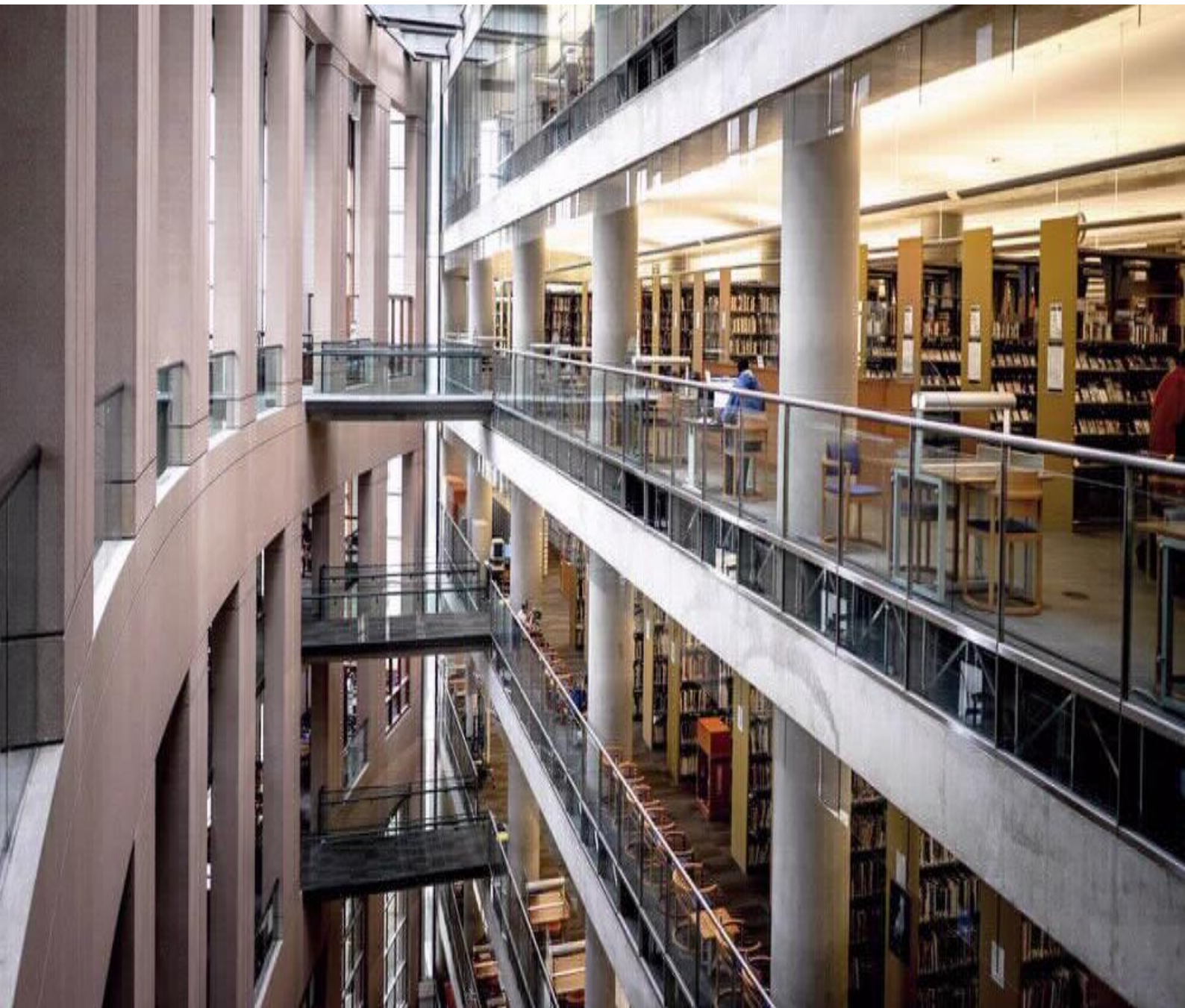
It is also envisaged that individual offices and fixed places delimiting the space, will disappear. Besides working at home or in the office there is a new trend that is beginning to emerge, a third workspace as Accenture notes. Over 79% of employees report that they would like to work occasionally in a "third space" (Ferreira, 2021), which would be a different place from the modalities we are used to. This leads to the need to reconfigure workspaces to promote greater collaboration, as collaboration and socialisation are essential for human beings. Thus, it advocates replacing hierarchical structures with more asymmetrical formats, based on greater sharing of the purposes that link the different parts of the organisation, as well as democratising the distribution of power within organisations, with less hierarchy (closer and more communicative), resulting in more team-based set-ups and agile ways of working.

The post-COVID period will be one of greater flexibility in work, with job sharing, hot desk, clean desk (ecological issues, promotion of creativity) more collaborative work, with an increasing importance of social areas. Therefore, diversified workspaces, in

the office, at home, in another city or region, in a coworking space adapted to the needs of organisations and their employees will be the near future. The monolithic model will progressively give way to more diverse models. However, the transformation of spaces may have adverse effects, such as the increase of individual behaviours within the group. Despite working towards a common project, there is no interaction between workers is what a study published in the Harvard Business Review concludes.

8

Organizational approach to motivation



8 | Organizational approach to motivation

It was also a topic of interest of our research to try to gauge the real interest of public administrations in knowing the degree of motivation of their employees in the work context. Motivation, satisfaction, and engagement surveys seem to be a good indicator for this purpose. With reference to the responses to the 2020 EUPAN survey, we found that only 26% of respondents said they did not think there had ever been one. A relative majority (43%) said there had indeed been one or more motivation surveys. Still, almost three out of ten (28%) respondents in this subgroup said there had never been such a survey. A similar number (29%) said that there had been a survey, albeit differently themed.

The surveys subject varies, with the most common being satisfaction (27%) and engagement (15%) The other alternative themes identified were teleworking (6%), smart work (6%), Covid-19 (6%), and ethics 6% and other (18%).

The minimum and maximum reference years of previous studies on motivation indicated by respondents were 2004 and 2020, respectively. Their highest frequency falls during the years 2018 (17%), 2019 (28%) and 2020 (26%).

In some Member States, the launching of employee feedback surveys is a regular practice. An example is Belgium, where in 2006 the Council of Ministers decided that all public institutions would survey personnel satisfaction every other year. Following this decision, the federal service for strategy and support designed its satisfaction measurement instrument, while outsourcing the implementation of the process. The results of the surveys should lead to action and identification of areas for improvement. Thanks to the different areas and sub-areas of the survey it is possible to propose very concrete actions that directly address the weak points of each organisation. The improvement actions are integrated in a global action plan that, together with an action implementation report, is communicated to each target group.

Another example comes from the Czech Republic. Since January 2019, an internal regulation¹⁸ for the implementation of employee satisfaction surveys was established. The organizations should conduct these surveys annually.

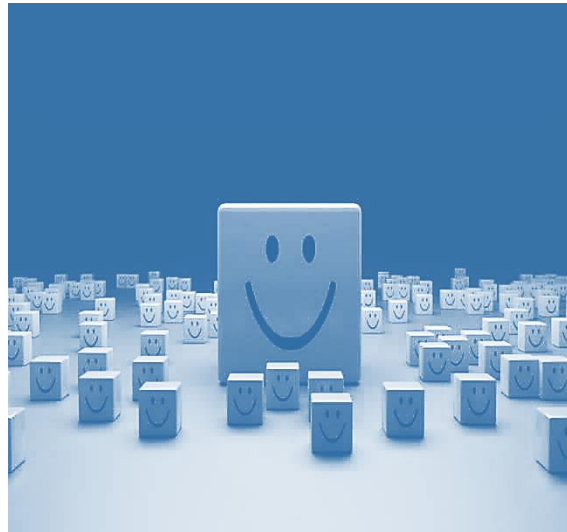
In Austria, the surveys focus on job satisfaction, career opportunities, work-life balance and other topics of interest and are promoted by the III Section of the Federal Chancellery in coordination with all government departments. The technical processing of the data is the responsibility of Statistics Austria. The results of the surveys are analysed and discussed in close cooperation with the staff development

¹⁸ Under this regulation, the hierarchy of each organization is responsible for inviting all employees (both under Act No. 234/2014, on Civil Service, and under Act No. 262/2006, of the Labour Code) to participate in the survey. The human resources departments of the different organizations are responsible for organizing and carrying on the studies. This regulation provides a sample questionnaire but does not impose any specific wording of questions. Neither does the document stipulate the aggregation of data from the different organizational reports into a single federal public administration-wide report. The observation strategy prescribes organizational referenda, but the participation (or not) of each employee is a personal option, and the anonymity of results is guaranteed. The questionnaire should be made available on both online and paper formats.

officers of the ministry departments in order to identify concrete measures for improvement and further development.

In addition, the Danish public administration promotes a triennial employee satisfaction survey tailored to each organization context. In result, each service chooses the very methods of research, and one should not expect them to select a questionnaire, much less a similar one, in all contexts. From the Danish administration's perspective, employee satisfaction surveys focus on employees' perceptions of their workplace, work, and well-being. The aim is to make efforts to promote involvement and motivation and to create healthy and effective workplaces.

Regarding the scope of the questionnaire, the few answers that indicated something different from the offered pre-coded alternatives, could, upon analysis, fit into the original categories. Eighty-five respondents said their public administration had launched some survey. Of these, 37% said the study covered only a specific organisation, 28% respondents said the survey covered all public administration, 24% mentioned the survey concerned only the central/federal administration and finally 18% said the survey had involved only a specific ministry.

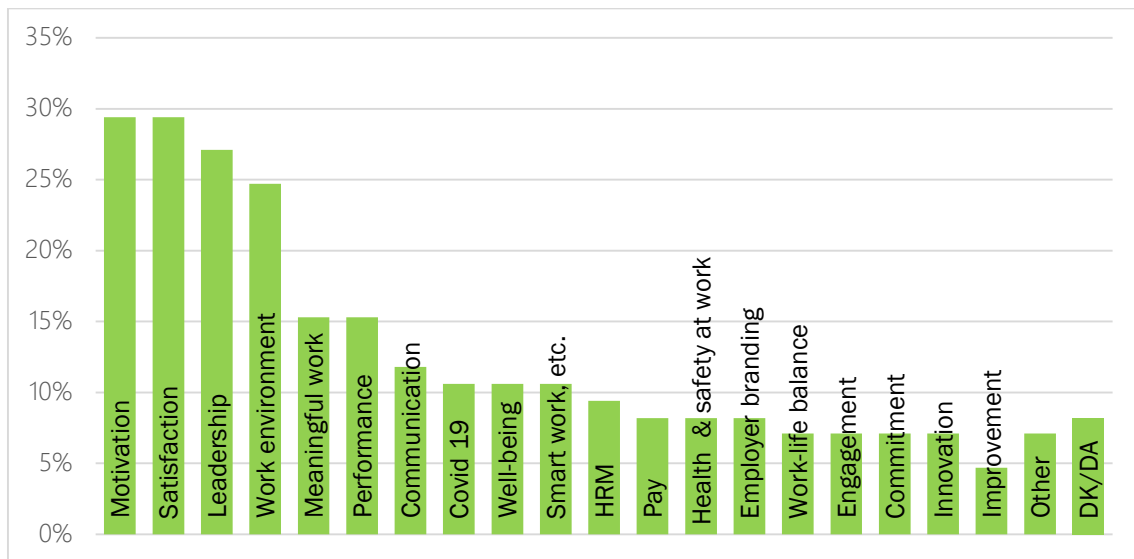


Still considering the subgroup of eighty-five (85) respondents who said there had been some kind of survey, it was asked which groups had been targeted by it. The vast majority (92%) said it targeted all employees, civil servants *strito sensu* (4%), middle managers (8%) top managers (6%). Some respondent used the “other” option to signal that the survey did not cover senior managers, or that they were not sure whom it covered.

In relation to respondents who said there had been some kind of survey, an open-ended question regarding the main topics was also raised. Thus, they had to be analysed and coded the answers. Eventually, it was found out that 29% respondents said that the survey(s) covered either motivation or satisfaction, *ex aequo*, as one of its central topics, for 27% leadership or management was one of its main topics. Work environment, organisational culture, or relation with colleagues followed in close fourth place (25%). Job design and performance assessment as main survey topics were mentioned by 15% respondents. Other issues scored lower.

Regarding the main conclusions of the surveys, the results are too diverse to be suited to a comparative analysis. A greater or lower frequency of any given finding would not have statistical significance. On the other hand, we can summarise the results in terms of topics in a purely qualitative way, without assigning them numeric values.

Figure 64 | Main topics covered by previous surveys



Source: 2020 EUPAN survey on central/federal public administration employees' motivation

After several iterations, the thematic analysis coalesces into the following distinctive patterns of meaning:

- public administration's employer brand is strong amongst its staff;
- staff engagement, on the whole, is good and on an upward trend;
- there are mixed views on work-life balance and how it is evolving;
- there is room for improvement in: communication and transparency, not only vertical but also horizontal between organisations and departments thereof; performance assessment, training and career prospects; mobility
- results vary between departments, hierarchical positions and education levels;
- while professionals are more sceptic than other staff, managers tend to be more upbeat;
- a variety of extrinsic factors partly drive staff engagement: positive interpersonal relations; recognition; job meaningfulness; job autonomy; job security; and flexible work, teleworking, and smart work arrangements;
- the main intrinsic factors promoting staff engagement are: public service motivation; and personal achievement;
- although public administration' employer brand is strong amongst its staff; its external brand is poor;
- citizens are sceptic of public administration;
- negative stereotypes about public administration enjoy wide acceptance;
- respondents see codes of conduct as helpful;
- rebranding efforts either lack notoriety or are met with scepticism;

- citizens' mistrust of public administration is not grounded on experience;
- agility and innovation in adapting to a changing environment, and professional future, are primary concerns;
- middle management's leadership outperforms that of senior management.

Twenty-two per cent of respondents did not know the conclusions to the surveys.

If carrying out employee surveys is an important measure, the use of the results for the implementation of public policies and/or changing organisational practices is no less important. In this sense, in the question "have administrations put to work the knowledge produced via the surveys on improving conditions, 39% respondents stated there had been concrete measures or policies based on the survey's results. Nevertheless, a relative majority (47%) of respondents said they did not know if such was the case and 14% categorically stated that there had not been any change resulting from the survey's results.

In terms of specific policies and measures, the respondents said survey results have had impact on a variety of areas. They highlighted financial and non-financial reward systems reform; working conditions improvement; occupational health and safety plans; follow-ups on mental health, wellbeing, and work-life balance; working time regulations; teleworking, homeworking, or smart work policies; internal communication planning; workforce planning; training and impact assessment thereof; worker involvement/engagement/motivation policies; leadership guidelines; organisational democracy and mobility promotion.

We also questioned respondents who said there had been a survey about motivational factors. More than half (57%) of them said the study had looked for differences in motivational factors in terms of age groups. This analytical perspective often was accompanied by an emphasis on gender (48%); careers (40%); and seniority (38%). A few other analytical intents were collected by this semi-open question, though they were not pre-coded. They refer at looking at motivation factors thru administrative loci (e.g., ministry, organisation, department, division) (7%); education level (6%); region (5%); and work content or mode of work (5%).

Few respondents could inform on what conclusions the administrations or researchers derived from looking at the data through these categorisations. One respondent pointed out that their survey showed the likelihood of leaving the administration was not linearly related to seniority, with mid-career employees less likely to leave public administration. Another respondent's statement partially corroborates this observation by stating their study showed that employees under 29 years old tend to be more critical of public administration. On the other hand, someone reported that his national survey delivered the conclusion that motivation slumped mid-career, only to pick up again on older staff.

Another respondent reported, almost tautologically, that the survey showed related institutional locus (service or organisation) and social environment. Also unsurprisingly, more than one respondent communicated that managers and those

in higher positions were more motivated or optimistic. On the other hand, at least one respondent mentioned that their survey showed that employees that are more qualified tended to express more significant frustrations regarding public administrations. More than one respondent said their survey showed little difference in motivation according to gender. Regarding COVID-19, someone pointed out their survey concluded that younger employees experienced more difficulties working from home.



9

Human Resource Management Challenges



9 | Human Resource Management Challenges

As aforementioned, Human Resource Management is under a tremendous pressure for providing practical strategies to motivate, engage, and keep the workforce satisfied to meet today's service provision expectations.

HRM faces a tougher challenge in motivating public employees, especially if we consider that performance appraisal is, in the majority of central/federal public administrations, at the centre of employees' recognition and rewarding systems. Influenced by the New Public Management (NPM) advocates, pay-for-performance (PFP) systems have proliferated in the public sector over the last several years. Poorly implemented PFP proved counterproductive, crowding out public employees' intrinsic motivation and blurring the distinction between the public and private sectors, insofar as public employees expect today more monetary incentives (Christensen, 2002). Furthermore, the changes in macro conditions that resulted from the sovereign debt crisis eventually made this path unfeasible and forced public managers to trace back their steps and refocus on non-financial motivators (Re'em, 2011).

On the other hand, public leadership is also on the spotlight as the described restrictive scenario demands for the strengthening of employees' trust in those who steer them. A robust ethical leadership embodying the highest standards of integrity is required to promote employee commitment.

Another factor to take into consideration today is this unprecedented and critical situation posed by the COVID-19 pandemic. This worldwide public health emergency has represented one of the most significant challenges to societies, and in particular to the public sector. Governments' priorities have been to protect citizens while ensuring the provision of core public services and addressing emerging challenges. The functioning of health and social protection systems were a priority to ensure everyone's safety. On the other hand, efforts to keep employees safe while maintaining public services delivery capacity led to an almost overnight transformation of work and workplaces. EU Member States' central/federal public administrations have provided similar answers, highlighting the generalisation of remote work (teleworking); the staff redeployment; flexible working arrangements and the reinforcement of public services digital and innovation capacity.

The current crisis put additional pressure on HRM and leadership that are confronted with providing answers to questions such as: how to best guide staff, communicate, ensure their well-being, motivate, and keep public administration workforce engaged, productive and happy in this "new normal".

9.1 - Age-related Human Resource Management

Today, challenges multiplicity requires a variety of human resource policies, measures, and practices to fit individual needs, namely the support and promotion of longer careers. Therefore, human resource management should aim at improving and sustaining employees work motivation, work ability and opportunity to continue working even at a later age.

However, the approach should be holistic and take into consideration the different stages of working life and age cohorts, not only targeting older employees. The main reason for such an approach is to avoid objection reactions from younger employees, and feelings of discrimination from older ones, thus prioritizing the forging of common organisational identity to promote employees' quality of life.

The purpose of age-related human resource management shall be to promote successful ageing at work, i.e., "the maintenance of workers' health, motivation, and working capacity or work ability now and in the future," (Kooij et al., 2015).

Considering the importance of this topic, we sought to know the state of the art in this area in EU Member States (MS). To this end, the EUPAN 2020 survey included a few questions related to motivation along the employees' life cycle that start inquiring if age management is on the agenda of their central/federal public administration. 42% of respondents did not have enough knowledge to answer to this question. Of the respondents who said they knew whether this was the case or not, half (50%) said their administration does keep age management on its agenda, which corresponds to 30% of total respondents.

In addition, the survey also asked whether public administrations had implemented any age management policy. In this case, 43% of respondents do not feel they know enough to answer, and the totality of those who do feel they can answer does so in the negative.

Based on these results we can conclude that a life-cycle based human resource management is not widespread in EU MS administrations.

For this study purpose, and considering the researched carried out, the focus of human resource management to promote and support longer working lives, shall be on the following domains: age discrimination; preventive and holistic health management; flexible working conditions; age-oriented training; knowledge management, and career management.

Life-cycle based human resource management is not widespread in EU MS administrations

For each of these domains, the topics considered to require special attention are highlighted in brief, and examples of good practice are presented. Results from the EUPAN 2020 survey on motivation along the employees' life cycle issue are included for some domains.

Age discrimination

Age discrimination or *ageism*¹⁹ is a factor that undermines a good working environment as seen above.

Most respondents (76%) to the EUPAN 2020 survey presented their perception on this topic. Of these, 60% say there does indeed exist age-related abusive generalisations or negative stereotypes in their central/federal public administration, which confirms concerns with it.

¹⁹ Ageism is the stereotyping, prejudice, and discrimination against people based on their age. Ageism can take many forms, including prejudicial attitudes, discriminatory practices, or institutional policies and practices that perpetuate stereotypical beliefs. ([WHO, 2020](#)).

Under the scope of ageism, one central measure taken at EU level was the drawing and approval of the Employment Equality Framework Directive. This Directive aims at promoting and ensuring diversity and inclusion in the European labour market, thus recognising the importance of “combating every form of discrimination, including the need to take appropriate action for the social and economic integration of elderly and disabled people” (Directive 2000/78/EC, 2000).

However, legal instruments by themselves are not enough to promote an “age-neutral culture”. Public organisations leadership alongside with HR managers play a significant role to overcome age-related negative stereotypes. Practices such as the introduction of age-neutral standardised CVs and recruitment methods, such as age inclusive advertisements, recruitment panels and on-boarding strategies, appear to be fundamental to fight age-related discrimination.

In addition, workforce planning plays a significant role in identifying the up-skilling and re-skilling needs of older employees to avoid skills obsolescence, as well as skills mismatch due to jobs changing profiles.

BOX 2

Examination of laws according to age discriminating formulations in City of Hamburg (Germany)

In the context of gender mainstreaming, it has become essential to remove sex-discriminating formulations in laws and replace them by sex-neutral formulations.

The City of Hamburg went one-step further and asked a former employee to check all existing laws and regulations as to their effects on age discrimination. In the framework of this legal ‘age mainstreaming’, an emphasis was placed on recruitment and career management policies. For example, it was checked whether rules were acceptable which allowed that older employee should not be required to use new IT procedures, and whether job appraisals, which are not mandatory for employees above the age of 55 were potentially discriminatory. The results of this evaluation led to changes that should help to build up an age management policy in the city of Hamburg.

Source: Robert Bosch Foundation as cited in European Commission (2017). *Quality of Public Administration. A Toolbox for Practitioners. Theme 4: Organisations – Managing Performance, Quality and People*. Luxembourg: Publications Office of the European Union, p. 118.

The findings of an empirical study developed by Desmette & Gaillard (2008), mentioned above, advocate that organisations' managers should promote a positive work environment by adopting a work-life approach to human resource management. To this end, intergroup processes, such as the creation of mixed teams, are suggested so that both older and younger workers can benefit. Intergenerational collaboration allows for mutual transfer of knowledge and experience between generations. Similarly, organisations that integrate multigenerational workforces are also considered more productive. Promoting the construction of a common organisational identity is a way to hinder possible age-related stigmatisation.

Holistic health management

A set of components such as working conditions, work environment, leadership, organisational and HR management, and individual lifestyle have an impact on employees' health, and consequently on their performance and capacity to work. Within these large blocks are critical elements like:

...discrepancy between work demands/capacities of employees, all kinds of physical and psychological stress, exhaustion from demanding requirements, monotony caused by repetitive work, no decision latitude and over - or under challenging tasks.” (Bossaert, Demmke & Moilanen, 2012).

All these factors contribute to employees' *work ability*, which Sousa and Ramos (2019) defined as “*a product of the individual and his work context: To be able to continue working in the short, medium and long term, individuals have to balance their personal resources – physical and mental resources – with work requirements*”.

Considering that the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on ways and location of work may produce more permanent changes, the question of new and emerging occupational safety and health risks arises more pressingly.

A preventive, proactive, and holistic health management is essential to tackle absenteeism due to sick leaves, prevent accidents at work and occupational diseases, secure mental health at the workplace, and thereby promote longer active employment.

To know if MS administrations had in place any age-differentiated human resources policy to promote employee health, safety, and wellbeing, a question on it was included on the EUPAN 2020 survey. As a result, 59% of respondents felt they knew enough to offer an answer on this topic. Among these, 72% say their administration had not implemented a policy on the matter.



Working conditions

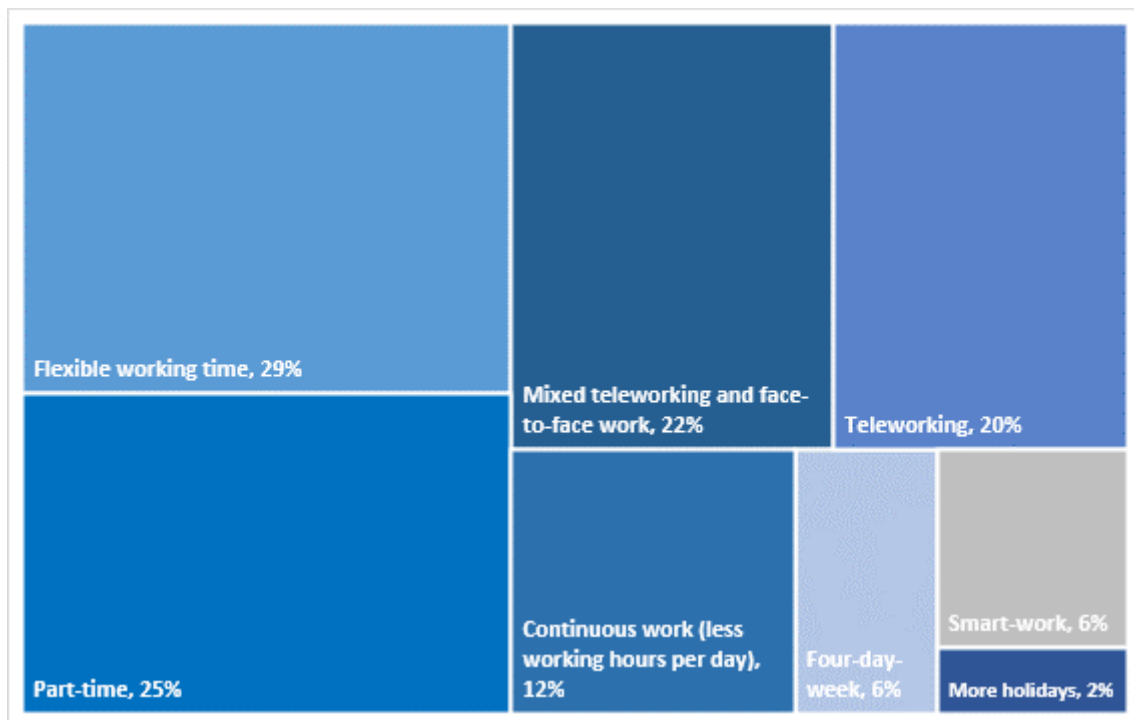
Flexible working arrangements such as flexitime (e.g., flexible time schedules, part-time work) and flexplace (e.g., teleworking, and smart working), alongside with new ways of work (e.g., job sharing) were adopted by the majority of central/federal public administrations. Though with differences regarding a variety of options and scope, according to the study developed by the Austrian Presidency in 2018 on “New way of working in Public Administration”.

The common aim of these flexible working arrangements is to better promote work-life balance, healthier workplaces, and higher employees’ satisfaction.

A question on whether MS federal/central public administrations have provisions for employees at specific stages of their life cycle, namely, flexible working time, four-day-week, part-time, teleworking, smart-work, continuous work (fewer working hours per day), mixed teleworking and face-to-face work (hybrid work) and more holidays, was included in the EUPAN 2020 survey. The aim was to know the extent of each one of these working arrangements within MS.

The most referred to provisions in place were flexible working time (29%), part-time (25%), mixed teleworking and face-to-face work (22%), followed by teleworking (20%). From then on, all specific provisions score less than twenty per cent: continuous work (12%); four-day week (6%); smart work (6%), and more holidays (2%).

Figure 65 | Provisions for employees at specific stages of their life-cycle



Source: 2020 EUPAN survey on central/federal public administration employees’ motivation

During the pandemic, teleworking as proven to be fit for purpose in protecting employees’ health (containing the spread of the COVID-19 virus) while maintaining, as far as possible, the operability of the public entities to ensure the continuity of public services’ provision.

In brief, the possibility of having access to more flexible working arrangements seems to be an essential precondition for good work environment and extending employees' work participation.

Box 3

Flexible working time and satisfaction

In the Netherlands, there are many provisions for part-time work, flexible working hours and telecommuting. One widely used instrument is granting older employee's additional days off per year (*leeftijdsdagen*). Furthermore, the PAS (*Partiële arbeidsparticipatie senioren*) regulation allows for reduced working hours with slightly reduced salary but without loss of pension benefits.

Source: OECD (2007). Ageing and the Public Service. Human Resources Challenges. Paris: OECD, p. 229.

Training

Job demands in the public sector follow the fast technological, economic, and social developments. Therefore, tasks performance requires continuous knowledge and skills up-dating, mainly through training.

However, the participation of older employees in training is generally low, which bears the risk of skills obsolescence and consequent productivity decrease as competencies held may become inadequate or insufficient for the performance of their duties.

The motivation for training and development activities can be negatively affected by stereotypes about age-related difficulties with learning new things and inflexibility or unwillingness. Such stereotypes have led organisations to limit training or



development opportunities provided to older employees. However, these learning opportunities can also be neglected by the employees due to two main reasons: when biases are internalised by them and when individual goals associated with perceptions of time left to work change. These perceptions affect employees' choices for task engagement and the types of training and development activities they still

want to pursue.

Data from the 2015 report "Managing a Diverse Public Administration and Effectively Responding to the Needs of a More Diverse Workforce" show that training designed to the needs of an ageing workforce is not of great concern for most of EU public

administrations. Only a small number of MS (1/4) has taken action on this field (Gerson, Bellinelli, Lafortune & Mendes, 2015).

The persistence of this situation is confirmed by the results of the EUPAN 2020 questionnaire for the question on the existence of age-specific training programmes (e.g., for older employees to prevent skills obsolescence) in MS central/federal public administrations. In fact, 38% of respondents did not give an answer. Of the remaining respondents, an overwhelming majority (90%) are confident that such programmes do not exist in their administrations.

However, another perspective must also be taken into consideration in this approach. Providing specific training for older employees can be a form of discrimination, and of maintaining stereotypes, which the recipients may not like. In countries where Later Life Workplace Index has been applied, researchers, based on survey results, have drawn attention to this issue, proposing instead joint training.

Finally, the pandemic crisis has reinforced the need, indeed, the urgency for digital skills updating for all public employees. Overnight, most of them had to start working from home on a daily basis and for extended periods due to *successive lockdowns*. In some cases, online training to this end was provided, which was also a novelty. This situation further highlights the need to provide training to all workers without exception.

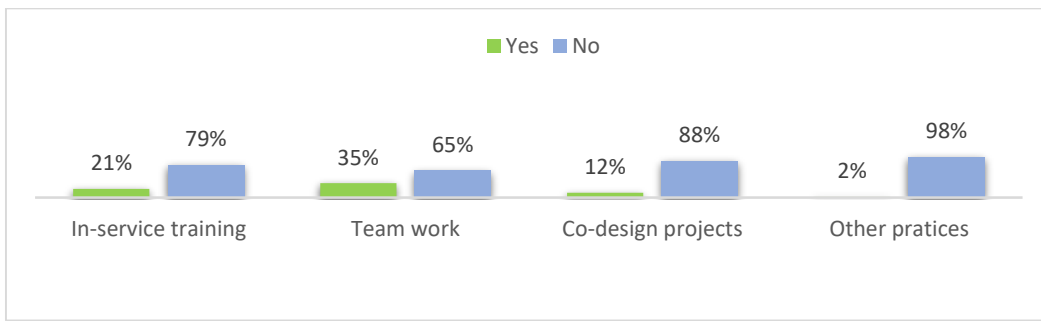
Knowledge management

An ageing workforce presents particular challenges regarding the maintenance of institutional knowledge and expertise in MS public administrations. Also relevant in this regard is the fact that older employees tend to be motivated by generative jobs or tasks such as mentoring. In this context and aiming to prevent such knowledge loss, public administrations should promote transfer strategies and intergenerational learning and programmes aimed at tapping into the knowledge and experiences of retirees.

The majority of EU MS public administrations refer, in the 2015 report, not having in place specific programmes aiming to transfer competencies of older employees to younger ones. Only a minority of countries implemented, either at the central/federal or at the ministry level, several policies related to knowledge transfer. (Gerson, Bellinelli, Lafortune & Mendes, 2015).

The results of the EUPAN 2020 survey reveal the existence of practices attempting to promote intergenerational knowledge transfer in some central/federal public administrations. However, the most mentioned of such practices turned out to be teamwork, cited by 35% of respondents, followed by in-service training, mentioned by 21% and co-design projects referred by 12%.

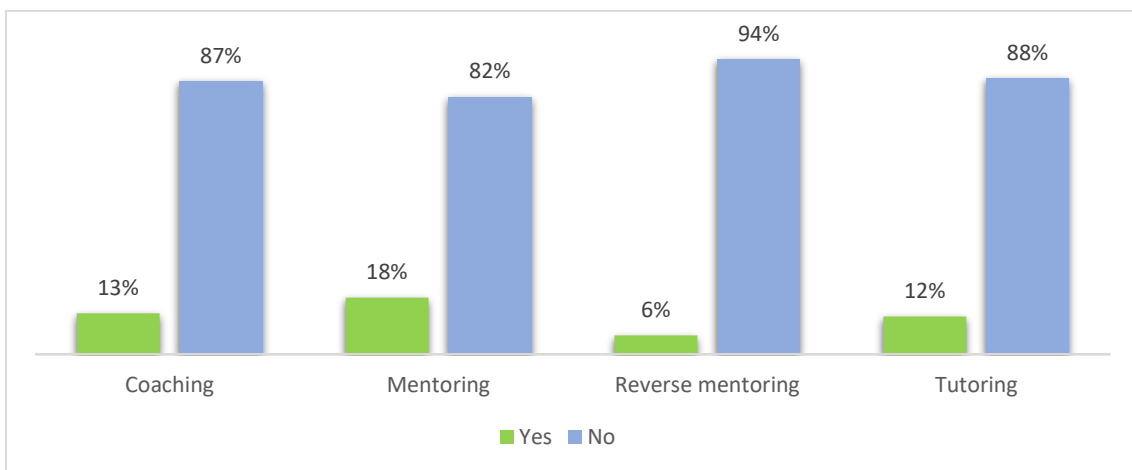
Figure 66 | Intergenerational knowledge transfer practices promoted by MS



Source: 2020 EUPAN survey on central/federal public administration employees' motivation

In this context, our respondents were also asked if corresponding central/federal public administrations promoted motivation by encouraging employees to take on age-specific roles or functions. 18% of them mentioned mentoring, 13% referred coaching, 12% tutoring and 6% cited reverse mentoring.

Figure 67 | Motivation promoted by age-specific roles or functions



Source: 2020 EUPAN survey on central/federal public administration employees' motivation

This low percentage of responses shows that this issue is not yet a priority, which indicates the need for MS central/federal public administrations to engage in practices that effectively promote and ensure knowledge transfer.

Box 4

Austria's strategies for knowledge management and staff development

Austria has implemented a federal strategy of knowledge management in public administration. It aims to support line managers in the communication process, organisation within the department, knowledge quality and further training in such a way that knowledge is available for the whole organisation.

Additionally, as part of the Federal Civil Service's staff development programme, a cross-mentoring scheme is available as a tool for the promotion of women's careers. The mentors pass on their experience and know-how, give advice on career planning and facilitate access to professional networks. The dyad has to agree upon goals to attain in the course of a year-long relationship. Mentees may also have their potential analysed to define goals even more precisely. After setting up their goal(s) mentor and mentee must meet at least four times.

To become familiar with their roles as mentor or as mentee participants are invited to take part in accompanying workshops which are followed up by supervision sessions. Within the supporting programme, several networking meetings open to all mentors, mentees and personnel developers take place. Mentees may organise peer groups dealing with different relevant topics to engage even more in networking.

Yearly evaluations help to develop and amend the programme regularly.

The Department for Personnel Development and Mobility in DG III - Public Administration and Administrative Innovation – within the Federal Chancellery coordinates the programme.

Source: Jobbörse Republik Österreich as cited in Gerson, D., Bellinelli, G., Lafortune, G., & Mendes, C. (2015). *Managing a Diverse Public Administration and Effectively Responding to the Needs of a More Diverse Workforce: 2015 EUPAN Survey*. Paris: OECD and EUPAN, pp. 40-41.

Career management

The challenge that longer working lives pose to organisations is the need for more varied and flexible career management.

Flexible career patterns take into consideration the different competencies, skills and specific needs of each employee promoting their engagement through the different stages of the respective life cycle. Policies, like individual development plans, flexible career paths, re-entry programmes, mid-career programmes or second career opportunities appear to be the most used options in EU countries (Gerson, Bellinelli, Lafortune & Mendes, 2015), but only for a minority.

The most common policies are vertical and horizontal mobility, while re-entry programmes and second career opportunities are rare. The deep career embeddedness of public employees is one of the reasons for the lack of second career opportunities. Professional development commonly takes place within a particular career, especially in career system, and a standardised and administrative careers' management is the rule for public administration staff that contrasts with individual and age career planning.

Transition to retirement should also be addressed, as this is a sensitive stage in the employee's working life cycle. Planning, information, and counselling should be offered to the employee. Individual measures tailored to employee's needs, such as more flexible working hours, and pre-retirement schemes, should be made available.

The existence of life-cycle perspectives is not usual within central/federal public administrations. However, Germany's Employment Agency (Bundesagentur für Arbeit) provides one good example.

Box 5

The Life-Cycle Oriented HR Policy of the German Employment Agency

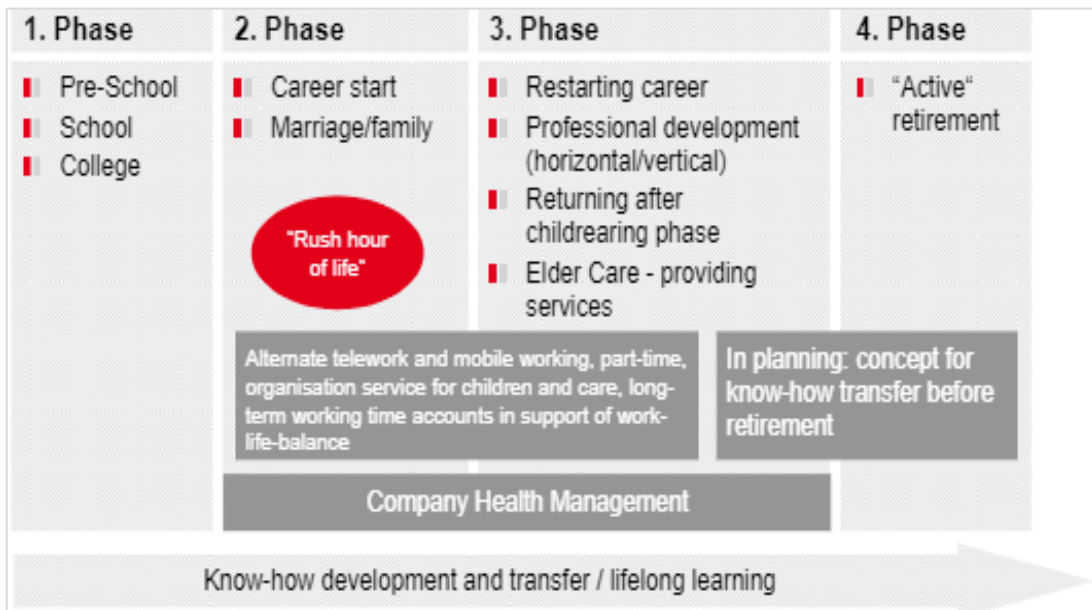
The life-cycle oriented HR policy of the Bundesagentur für Arbeit (BA) - (Figure XXX) is an intergenerational approach that seeks to enhance the work ability of its staff focusing on competencies, health, and engagement to promote life-long learning and wellbeing in the workplace in Germany.

These are requirements to promote life-long learning and, therefore, to support all measures fostering sustainable change and innovation. An overall strategy to deliver customer-oriented services effectively and efficiently encompasses these aspects. With its life cycle- oriented HR policy, the BA pursues a strategy that has high flexibility and the best possible reconciliation of work and private life in comparison with employer interests, also including the promotion of equal opportunity and gender mainstreaming. As a result, 61% of the employees rated their reconciliation of work and private life in an internal survey as good or very good. For almost 80 % of staff, equal opportunity policies are very important. Services and tools in the BA's intergenerational management approach deliberately target employees at all stages of their professional careers and beyond.

The BA considers this policy, which includes corporate health management as well as knowledge management, as providing significant leverage to enhance engagement and motivation. In turn, these have a high correlation with customer satisfaction and individual and organisational performance, as mentioned before.

Flexible working arrangements are specific measures to bring organisational and individual needs together. Such arrangements include part-time, mobile working, teleworking, family service to support employees in organising childcare as well as care of relatives, on-the-job training, and a job re-entry programme after longer periods of absence following parental leave.

Figure A | The life-cycle oriented HR model of the German Employment Agency



Source: Bundesagentur für Arbeit as cited in Gerson, D., Bellinelli, G., Lafortune, G., & Mendes, C. (2015). *Managing a Diverse Public Administration and Effectively Responding to the Needs of a More Diverse Workforce: 2015 EUPAN Survey*. Paris: OECD and EUPAN, pp. 38-39.

To design specific measures for each of these domains, it is advisable to conduct a state-of-the-art assessment of organisations at this level to set priorities. In 2020, the Later Life Workplace Index (LLWI)²⁰ presented as an effective multifaceted measurement tool of organisational practices aiming at better facilitating ageing at work. This tool is built around nine dimensions, namely: Organisational Climate; Leadership; Work Design; Health Management; Individual Development; Knowledge Management; Transition to Retirement; Continuing Employment and Health and Retirement Coverage; and is intended to allow the identification of areas for improvement within each organisation.

²⁰ //www.leuphana.de/portale/late-life-workplace-index/llwi.html

10

Conclusion



10 | Conclusion

In the course of this study, we have tried to make a first approach to the issue of public employees' motivation in EU central and federal administrations. We wanted to find out the main motivational factors in terms of age, gender and hierarchical position.

To this end, we begin by considering the various existing theories of motivation (Maslow, Alderfer, McClelland, Herzberg, Adams, Vroom, Skinner, Locke; PSM, SDT, OJT, McGregor), most of which are difficult to operationalise, and each having a limited scope. According to Campbell (1970), an ideal theoretical approach, would be one that is able to identify content variables and at the same time explain the process by which they affect conduct. Nevertheless, ideal theories do not exist because they require conditions that are also ideal for their realisation.

Starting from the preponderance attributed to different motivational factors, these theories however share the same objective, that of trying to identify and analyse the factors that stimulate people's behaviour, which are the reasons for their actions, desires, and needs, what make employees feel satisfied in their workplace, which motivates them to achieve high levels of performance and productivity.

It is recognised that a stimulating, satisfying and productive work climate is beneficial for both the organisation, the leaders and the employees.

In order to obtain a more robust knowledge about the main motivational factors of employees and to see to what extent there would be coincidence between the results of the various employee surveys, we resorted to the analysis of much of the existing literature on this topic, as well as took into account the results of the staff commitment/satisfaction/motivation surveys carried out by the public administrations of some Member States (Estonia, Finland, France, Ireland, Luxembourg, Austria, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia) and the EUPAN survey 2020.

According to literature, there seems to be consensus regarding the leadership style, reward system, organisational climate, workplace structure, work organisation, and working conditions. Studies carried out over time by authors such as Houston (2000), Jurkiewicz, Massey, and Brown (1998), among others, concluded that public sector employees tend to be more motivated by job content, self-development, recognition, autonomy, interesting and challenging work and the chance to learn new things, as well as by the possibility to conciliate work and family life.

With reference to the results of the surveys conducted by the above mentioned EU public administrations we find that the employees' highest motivation stems from leadership, work-life balance, work environment, job content, employment safety, lifelong learning, career prospects, autonomy, self-satisfaction, well-being and pay.

Employees' motivated mostly by work-life balance; leadership; job security; job content (meaningful work)

In the case of the EUPAN survey 2020, work-life balance (highly valued by most respondents and especially by women), meaningful work, good relationship with colleagues, job security and flexitime are the most relevant staff motivation factors in central and federal public administrations, for both genders.

The EUPAN 2020 survey also allowed identifying extrinsic and intrinsic motivational factors. Within the extrinsic factors, public employees attach greater importance to work-life balance, job security, line manager empowerment and flexitime. As far as intrinsic factors are concerned, the greatest motivation comes from relationship with colleagues and managers, meaningful work and public service mission.

With regard to early retirement and employee turnover, which can be viewed as indicators of demotivation and dissatisfaction regarding the work performed and the organisation, an increasing trend was found in the last five reference years (2015-2020).

Focusing on the motivation of millennials and older workers is another strand of this study. We wanted to find out whether the factors that motivate younger workers are different from older ones as has been claimed. Is there any scientific evidence for this pseudo-labelling?

Overall, with reference to EUPAN 2020 survey, work-life balance, flexitime, job security (which contradicts the stereotype attributed to this generation), meaningful work (that can preferably have a social and environmental impact), relationship with colleagues, are the main motivational factors for millennials. If we analyse these factors by gender, we find, in order of importance, that women marked work-life balance, a good relationship with colleagues and a transparent performance appraisal. In the case of male millennials, and adopting the same criteria, the highest incidence fell on flexitime followed simultaneously by work-life balance and meaningful work.

The conclusion drawn is that millennials are no different from other generations in what they wish from their jobs. Theories of generational differences are based on flawed assumptions, on age-old prejudices regarding the young, which needs to be demystified. The kind of simplistic approach that advocates generational difference leaves out other important variables for understanding what motivates young people. Such as geographical area (the work expectations of an American, Asian or European coincide?), educational background (will what motivates a young person with a low education be identical to one with a high level of education, for example, with a master or PhD?), skills, the family context and the personality of young people. Young people, like people, are not robots programmed to respond to incentives in the same way, and it is good they do not respond.

A similar finding applies to older workers. The decision to retire or to continue working beyond the legal retirement age, thus extending working life, depends on several factors as we have seen. Among them we can mention work-related values, attitude towards one's job, employer, career, skills and knowledge, health condition, social and family status, family care needs, financial situation and valuing leisure time. Elder's group is a heterogeneous one. And policies for senior citizens must take account of this diversity in the workplace. In the same way, strategic management,

of the both public and private organisations, must focus on building a common organisation identity rather than an age-based identity, capable of empowering inter-group inequality and conflicts. Recent research has drawn attention to the possibly demotivating nature of the differentiated treatment of older people in the workplace, which can increase prejudice and discrimination, reinforcing the social stigmatisation of this group.

What else seems to motivate older employees to remain active is their enjoyment of work, satisfaction in the use of their skills, sense of accomplishment derived thereof and pleasure of being creatives. Circumscribing to the results of the EUPAN 2020 survey we find that responsibility, meaningful work job autonomy and work-life balance (an important precondition for prolonging working life) are the motives that received a “strong agree” from the respondents. When the gender perspective is introduced, the weight given to meaningful work is shared by both. However, in addition to this motivator, women also emphasise responsibility and autonomy, while men value creativity and skills development more.

Another focus of this study has to do with the impact of digitalisation and artificial intelligence on the motivation of public employees. In relation to digitalisation, its greatest value is placed on the fact that it can change the way the work is done, also provide news ways of organising working time, allowing for more work-life balance, document dematerialization, easier connection to work, and work efficiency. The reduction of administrative burdens, work simplification and easier work feedback have identical motivational potential for both genders. The youngest public employees have more positive expectations than their older colleagues regarding digitalisation, possibly as a result of more information about this area.

Freeing up time for more enriching tasks is the primary way in which MS central/federal administration employees believe AI can contribute towards motivation. They expect to leave the most mechanical components of work to robots.

This study also sought to find out whether age management is on the central/federal administrations’ agenda. Most respondents agree that age is associated with abusive generalisations or negative stereotypes in their administrations. A situation that must be reversed because it is demotivating. Employees recognise that motivational factors change throughout their career, which is related to different needs and priorities. Flexible working time, part-time, hybrid work are the most frequent labour provisions at specific stages of their life cycle. The role of public administration in encouraging employees to take on specific roles or functions should be highlighted. Mentoring followed by coaching and tutoring were the main ones to be identified by the respondents. As regards intergenerational knowledge transfer, its promotion is made mainly by teamwork, in-service training and co-design projects.

One of the major events on a global scale that marked 2020 and continues to mark 2021 has been the pandemic crisis. The analysis of its impact on staff motivation has become unavoidable in this study. The main conclusions to be drawn are related, on the one hand, to the stable motivation of the employees and, on the other hand, to the change verified in the organisation of work, both in terms of teleworking and the reorganisation of work spaces, in order to safeguard social distancing as a preventive measure for the transmission of COVID-19.

The pandemic contributed to the popularisation of teleworking, which increased exponentially due to lockdowns, both in public and private sector organisations, whenever the workers' duties were compatible with it. Only in this way was it possible to ensure both the protection of workers' health and the functioning of services. Teleworking has become the new normal working model, with the advantage of being able to contribute to a better balance between work, family life and leisure time and to reduce commuting. A significant part of public workers (54%) are of the opinion that their motivation towards remote work increased during the pandemic. Females over 45 years old appear to be more motivated by teleworking than younger women and men in the same age bracket.

The future of work will inevitably involve remote work, which will lose its status as a temporary flexible work solution and gradually becomes a definitive solution. Its advantages are immense. It has the potential to improve productivity, attract and retain talent, increase participation in the labour force and assist in the transition to a low carbon economy. According to the various surveys that have been carried out, the preferred format for employees of central/federal public administrations in the EU is the hybrid regime, i.e. being able to stay 2 or 3 days in telework and the remaining days of the week in face-to-face work. This guarantees the social interaction so appreciated by employees and promotes mental health. However, besides this binary work regime - telework/in-person work - a third format called "third place" is gaining space, which provides more flexibility, since the worker is not limited to the two aforementioned intermediate spaces.

Considering an organisational approach to motivation, we can say that public administrations have shown considerable interest (43%) in knowing the degree of motivation of their employees, through surveys, whose content focuses mainly on motivation, satisfaction, engagement, leadership and work environment. Between 2019 and 2020 their number increased. Through this tool it is possible to collect information on employees' perception of their workplace, work and well-being, with a view to implementing concrete measures or policies that contribute to the creation of healthy and effective workplaces, thus increasing motivation. And indeed, the outcome of the surveys has led, in some MS, to changes in this direction.

The last focus of the study was on the human resources management challenges, since the approach to motivation also involves taking into account the HRM dimension. It was concluded that a life-cycle based HRM is not widespread in EU MS public administrations, that ageism continues to exist in workplaces, which undermines employee engagement and motivation, and more inclusive leadership is needed to break down age-related prejudices. Flexible working conditions, like flexitime and flexplace, were adopted by the majority of central/federal administrations, especially during the pandemic. In turn the fast technological, economic and social developments in public sector and society require skills updating, in order to avoid employees' skills obsolescence, particularly critical in older ones. Despite the existence of practices to promote intergenerational knowledge transfer, these have a limited scope, because they are adopted only in some MS administrations. In this area there is still a long way to go. Also, with a negligible weight in the HR function, that should be a crucial one, is the existence of an employee life cycle management, that encompasses various stages in the career of

an employee, beginning with recruitment and concluding with resignation, termination, or retirement.

In short, the work motivation is fed by a series of variants, which we have identified throughout this study, with different impacts depending on personal traits and employees' life cycles. It is thus a continuous process based on their needs. One certainty we have is that motivated employees are an asset for any organisation, and its success is directly proportional to staff motivation.

11

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