

Orientations to Work in Italy

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Abstract: This article offers an interpretation of data on the work orientations of Italians. The data used are taken from the latest survey carried out by the European Values Study, supplemented with other information specific to the Italian job market, which may aid understanding of the situation in that country. These extrinsic and intrinsic work orientations are analysed in light of the main changes that have taken place in Italy's labour market.

Keywords: job market, extrinsic orientations, intrinsic orientations, values change

This article focuses on the work orientations of Italians and falls within the scope of analyses concerning the fourth European Values Survey (EVS). This international survey is sponsored and conducted by the European Values Study coordinated by the University of Tilburg in the Netherlands (and as regards Italy, by the University of Trento). The survey is repeated every nine years and was carried out for the first time in 1981, for the second in 1990, for the third in 1999, and for the fourth in 2008/2009.

The results obtained by the four international surveys, which were conducted by four separate national research teams, are of great interest but must, of course, be evaluated with due caution. There are, in fact, considerable problems to be overcome when using a single questionnaire at an international level (above all cross-culturally), and comparison among the results may prompt reservations, as evidenced in other studies (Halman, 1995; Scidà, 2000).

Nonetheless, the number of European countries participating in the initiative has grown continuously with each successive survey, from the ten that took part in 1981 (Belgium, Denmark, France, West Germany, Great Britain, Ireland, Italy, the Netherlands, Northern Ireland, and Spain) to the fully 47 research groups in 47 countries involved in the fourth survey, which is based on a total sample of 67,786 interviewees aged over 18. Structurally, the survey sample is random and stratified by age, sex, and place of residence, whether urban or rural. It is therefore sufficiently

representative of the universe examined, and covers most European countries. This coverage is probably the main reason for the EVS's reputation.

A further positive feature of the EVS is that it takes account of ongoing changes in society: while some of the questions have been modified and others have been added, yet others have remained unchanged since 1981 so as to enable longitudinal comparison of the data. This is, of course, only possible for those questions (or variables) that have always been included in the questionnaire. Finally, the EVS covers a wide range of topics and human values: for example, life, family, religion, politics, society and, obviously, work.

Work orientations and welfare models

In much of the sociological literature on the evolution of, and changes in, social systems, one of the subjects invariably studied is work and the new and different forms which it acquires as it is transformed. It is indubitable that modernity has been the inventor of work, whether this is understood as a factor of production and wealth, in the manner of Adam Smith and eighteenth century economic thought, or whether it is viewed from the complex Marxist perspective which regards work as the essence of a person, as his/her highest and most authentic creative capacity to transform the nature and consciousness of sociality.

There has been a conceptual reversal between these phases whereby work has changed from being a degrading and tedious activity reserved for the lower classes in the social hierarchy into a condition of right; a path, in other words, from the pre-modern to the modern meanings of the term.

The amount of recent literature on work is truly impressive, even if we accept that the subject traverses many disciplines, such as economics, sociology, law, and philosophy. The most recent interest in the subject focuses on the role performed by work in the transition from the industrial to the post-industrial era (Touraine, 1969; Bell, 1973), both in terms of organisation of the productive and socio-economic model (Costa, 2001; Reyneri, 2002), and as a typically social experience of identity-construction by single individuals (Bauman, 1996; Sennett, 1998).

The phases through which work as such has developed are also linked with individuals' attitudes to work: whilst in traditional, agrarian and pre-modern societies, work was considered to be a 'necessary evil' for survival, in the industrialised countries (where the main objective was economic growth and the accumulation of wealth) importance was attached to the 'material success' arising from work. With the advent of post-industrial societies endowed with advanced welfare systems, work no longer simply represented a requirement to ensure security¹ and the

satisfaction of basic needs; rather, it appeared to be a means for self-realisation and self-development (Yankelovich et al., 1985).

With regard to the latter point, some authors have suggested that the work orientations of individuals can be classified on a limited number of dimensions. These dimensions largely correspond to the reasons why people work (Yankelovich et al., 1985) and to those aspects of work considered desirable (Herzberg et al., 1959). In general, two orientations are distinguished: one intrinsic, the other extrinsic² (Halman and Müller, 2006).

A person is said to have an extrinsic orientation when they consider work to be a means to achieve goals external to the work itself: that is, when the expectations of work are in direct relation to the effects of employment (high income, advancement) (Tarnai et al., 1995: 140). Good working conditions; generous pay; job security; a good physical working environment; low levels of stress and pressure; good working hours; generous holidays: these are paramount because they reduce the impact of the unpleasant characteristics of a job (Halman and Müller, 2006: 119).

A person is said to have an intrinsic orientation whenever the main objective of work lies within the 'work itself': when, in other words, work is considered as a means to use one's abilities thanks to its opportunities for personal development and expression. In fact, 'expressive' is another term used to denote this orientation, precisely because it emphasises internal growth related to work, rather than the external signs which may result from it (Halman and Müller, 2006: 118).

Of course, the last change mentioned, which concerns intrinsic orientations, could not have developed if the welfare systems present in contemporary society had not guaranteed satisfaction of individuals' primary needs: the welfare state has made citizens more independent of the labour market precisely because, in many contexts, incomes are guaranteed by the State, and no longer depend wholly on earnings from work (Halman and Müller, 2006). There are three principal obligations imposed on the labour and social policies of every nation: a) to reduce poverty and, more broadly, income inequalities; b) to protect against uninsurable labour market risks (and its interactions with longevity risks), and c) to increase rewards from labour-market participation (Boeri, 2002).

Generally speaking, European labour markets are relatively dynamic, indicating that the supply of jobs tends to match demand. In fact, in many continental European countries, workers can change jobs, return to work, and escape unemployment with relative ease. In this context, social policies for employment perform a special role: they protect employment, support labour-market re-entry, and provide assistance to vulnerable people.

Apart from the recent financial crisis, which has had an international impact, European economies have grown more slowly than those of their direct competitors such as the US and the Asian countries. This is evident if we compare levels of employment and unemployment, which increasingly

diverged during the 1990s. This sustained the belief that the rigidity of the European labour market and the social protection system were the principal causes of the low levels of economic growth and persistent levels of unemployment in Europe (Blanchard and Wolfers, 2000).

Against this background, the idea that the so-called 'European social model'³ (Grahl and Teague, 1997) had become obsolete began to take root. However, at the labour-market and employment-policy levels, we believe that we should refer to *models*. The differences among European countries are marked: in the UK (as in the US), for example, it is much easier for companies to lay off workers than in other countries, just as the minimum income policies of Italy and Greece differ considerably from those elsewhere in Europe.

Most European countries, therefore, have sought to redefine their systems in order to solve the problem of low employment levels. According to the classification provided by some authors (Ferrera, 1998; Boeri, 2002; Sapir, 2006), welfare systems in Europe can be divided into four models:

- *Mediterranean*: mainly Italy, Greece, Spain, and Portugal. This is a model with a very low level of labour-market flexibility and high levels of 'traditional' employment protection (full-time and open-ended contracts). Overall levels of social protection are high;
- *Continental*: countries such as France, Germany, Austria, Belgium, and Luxembourg. This model is characterised by a relatively low level of labour-market flexibility and a relatively high level of social protection;
- *Nordic*: Denmark, Holland, Iceland, and the Scandinavian countries. These countries have high levels of labour-market flexibility, but this is matched by high levels of social protection and strong active labour policies, which focus on the reskilling of workers and their re-entry into the market;
- *English-speaking*: Ireland and the UK. This model comprises a high level of labour-market flexibility and social protection centred on support measures midway between the European social model and that of the US.

We would add a fifth option to these four models, although it does not in fact represent a further model, but rather a collection of situations: those of the *transition countries*. The countries of Central and Eastern Europe, the former Soviet Union, and the Balkans have undergone transition processes from planned to market economies with major repercussions for their labour markets.

If we start from the assumption that work orientations are linked with a country's levels of prosperity and welfare, and that the inhabitants of a country with a more 'prosperous' and 'secure' economic and labour market exhibit a greater tendency towards an intrinsic work orientation than do those who live in less 'affluent' or less 'secure' countries (Pretto,

2012), we may hypothesise that the changed economic and labour-market conditions have also resulted in changes in work orientations.

The employment situation of Italians

We begin our examination of the data at our disposal by comparing the results of the most recent EVS (2008/2009) with those of the three previous ones, in order to observe – with respect to the Italian subset – both the current situation and any changes that have occurred over the past thirty years. Table 1⁴ shows that the Italian employment trend is decreasing with respect to the 1990 survey: in that year 58 percent of Italian respondents declared that they were in paid employment. This proportion dropped to 56 percent in the 1999 survey, and fell further to 54 percent in the 2008/2009 survey. This obviously implies that the share of those not in paid employment increased to 46 percent.

Table 1: Employed and employment status in Italy for EVS Surveys (data in %, rounded)

	1981	1990	1999	2008-09
<i>Employed (v89)</i>				
Yes	51	58	56	54
No	49	42	44	46
<i>Employment status (v337)</i>				
30 hours a week or more	32	38	34	32
Less than 30 hours a week	4	7	9	8
Self employed	15	8	11	13
Military service*	-	0	0	0
Retired/pensioned	19	15	19	22
Housewife or otherwise employed	22	18	14	10
Student	5	9	8	8
Unemployed	3	5	4	7
Disabled*	-	0	0	0
Other, please specify* (does not work because of disability)	-	0	1	0

* Note: This option was not offered as a possible answer in 1981. In the other surveys, if answer is less than 0.5% it is rounded to 0 by default.

After the sharp drop from 15 percent in 1981 to 8 percent in 1990, the data on self-employment show continuous growth: self-employed workers represented 11 percent of the total in 1999, and 13 percent in the most recent survey. Although the proportion of self-employed workers is increasing, sectoral disaggregation shows that it is not increasing everywhere. There is, in fact, a growth of self-employment in industry,

construction, and all non-commercial branches of the services sector while among sales personnel, skilled manual workers (craftsmen) and agricultural workers it is declining. What is happening therefore is that self-employment is increasing in areas previously dominated by employed workers. However, this increase is fictitious, since most of the self-employed workers work mainly for a single client: they therefore have the *formal* status of the self-employed, but basically work as employees (Rizza, 2003).

The increase in self-employment, therefore, should not be misinterpreted: attention should focus on the current rapid increase in 'second-generation' self-employment (Bologna and Fumagalli, 1997), where autonomy is no longer based on property or assets, as used to be the case of shopkeepers, craftsmen, farmers, entrepreneurs and self-employed workers generally. Careful consideration shows that there has been a growth in a specific *form* of self-employment, that is, the more precarious and fluid kind involved in 'atypical' or 'quasi-subordinate' types of employment and employment contract. Although self-employment is increasing, at its heart lies a growth in external collaboration and outsourcing to self-employed workers.

Among employed persons, the percentage of those with full-time jobs (at least 30 hours or more per week) has returned to exactly the same percentage as in 1981, i.e. 32 percent.

With regard to those working fewer than 30 hours a week (part-time), there has been an increase of four percentage points compared with the 1981 survey (see Table 1), while the 1999 figures are similar to those of 2008/2009. It is likely that the increase is due not only to the lesser availability of full-time work but also to the recent regulation of the Italian labour market, whose legislative framework began to change significantly at the end of the 1990s. In Italy, law no. 196 of 24 June 1997 (the so-called 'Treu Package', after the former Minister of Labour) was the first of a series of initiatives designed to remove restrictions on the use of so-called 'atypical' contracts. In particular, the law adopted a more flexible attitude towards the measures already contained in previous laws (e.g. with regard to part-time work, training/work agreements, apprenticeships, and socially-useful work), and permitted the introduction of so-called 'temporary agency work'.

The array of different types of contract again changed with approval of delegated law no. 30 of 14 February 2003, and with the subsequent legislative decree no. 276 of 10 September 2003. These began to give the labour market a very different shape to the one known in Italy until then. Until they appeared, the standard type of work contract between an employee and an employer was the open-ended contract, which is still the most widespread type of employment relationship. Open-ended contracts

have no termination date, and they may be full-time (40 hours in the industrial sector and 36 in the public sector) or part-time.⁵

This new form of labour-market regulation, besides representing a new kind of insecurity for workers to which they were not culturally or psychologically accustomed (and for which they were not even prepared) has not been accompanied (or has been only partially) by labour policy which combines this new employment flexibility with social security guarantees for workers, such as income support measures during transition between jobs, or vocational training or retraining schemes.

In Table 1, we also find an increase in the number of unemployed persons (or first-job seekers) from 3 percent in 1981 to the current 7 percent. The number of respondents in the South who were unemployed was almost four times the corresponding number for the North. Interviewees in the South also declared that they had been unemployed for more than three months in the past five years in 40 percent of cases: in the central regions, this percentage fell to 24, and in the North it was around 19 percent (see Table 2).

Table 2: During the last five years, have you experienced a continuous period of unemployment longer than 3 months? (Survey 2008/2009, data in %) (v349)

	Yes	No
Sex		
Male	22.0	78.0
Female	32.0	68.0
Age		
19-29	51.9	48.1
30-59	25.2	74.8
60 and above	13.4	86.6
Education		
Primary school	20.2	79.8
Secondary school, college incomplete	27.9	72.1
College, university incomplete	30.9	69.1
University degree	23.1	76.9
Geographical area		
Northern Italy	18.6	81.4
Central Italy	24.3	75.7
Southern Italy	40.1	59.9
Grand Total	27.1	72.9

Table 2 allows us to determine the profile of those who had remained jobless for at least three consecutive months in the previous five years. It should be emphasised, however, that the question in the form in which it is put in the questionnaire is only partially useful, in that it does not offer

indications of the 'type'⁶ of unemployment being referred to because it does not record the total duration.

In general, therefore, unemployment more markedly affects the South of the country, and women and young people in particular. Unemployment among women (at 32 percent) is ten percentage points higher than unemployment among men. The youngest respondents were the most likely to have been unemployed for more than three months in the past five years, those having experienced the problem amounting 51.9 percent among those aged between 19 and 29. This problem affected 25.2 percent of those aged between 30 and 59, and 13.4 percent of the over-60s.

As regards educational qualifications, Table 2 shows that the lowest percentage of interviewees who had been unemployed for at least three months was among those who had elementary school educations. It is likely that these were individuals of a certain age who had completed their school education at a time when it was not yet compulsory to continue until conclusion of lower-secondary school⁷. If we look at the data relating to age cohorts, we observe that the over-60s represent the lowest percentage of respondents who had been jobless for long periods: those working at age 60 were probably employed on open-ended contracts, and were therefore less likely to be jobless.

Respondents with low-to-medium educational qualifications (from lower-secondary certificates to upper-secondary diplomas) had most often experienced a period of unemployment of at least three months. This could be connected with a presumed lack of specialisation on the part of these individuals: for several decades we have been living in a society defined as 'post-industrial' or 'technocratic' (Touraine, 1969) in which non-specialised workers and office workers no longer represent the paradigmatic category. Levels of school education and pre-job training have become crucial for today's workers (Butera, 1998), who are increasingly required to be professionally, technically, and technologically competent (Bell, 1973). In the absence of these competences, the chances of being excluded from the labour market increase significantly.

Finally, a last aspect to be mentioned relates to recourse to a specific social 'shock absorber' known in Italy as the *Cassa Integrazione Guadagni* (CIG, Redundancy Fund)⁸. As can be seen from Table 3, an increase in applications for CIG compared with previous years (around 227.5 million hours) was already evident in 2008 (the first year of the latest EVS). In 2009, the number jumps to 914 million hours, and there was a further strengthening of the trend in the first six months of 2010.

The increased use of this shock absorber by firms is a concrete indicator of the economic and productive crisis that has hit Italy in the past few years, and which has conditioned employment arrangements.

Table 3: Cassa Integrazione Guadagni (redundancy fund) by type of intervention (hours paid)

Year	Ordinary	Extraordinary	Special	Total
1980	171,284,193	135,852,891	-	307,137,084
1985	204,523,999	512,106,735	-	716,630,734
1990	111,476,338	222,217,400	-	333,693,738
1995	92,701,067	207,165,338	-	299,866,405
2000	73,443,158	73,732,088	-	147,175,246
2005	142,449,534	89,779,557	13,326,838	245,555,929
2006	96,571,464	111,194,082	23,509,256	231,274,802
2007	70,646,701	88,181,307	24,884,204	183,712,212
2008	113,024,235	86,688,660	27,947,360	227,660,255
2009	576,418,996	215,897,088	121,718,553	914,034,637
2010 (I semester)	212,897,164	246,254,694	174,442,486	633,594,344

Source: ISTAT (www.istat.it, under Time series).

It should be stressed in regard to social shock absorbers that, in Italy, they relate mainly to persons who have lost stable jobs. Unemployment benefits (which can last from eight to twelve months) are only paid if certain minimum requirements have been fulfilled, among them that of having worked for at least 78 days in the previous year. The category of those eligible for the benefit, therefore, does not include first-job seekers, persons who have worked fewer than 78 days over a year, or unemployed persons who have already received the benefit on a previous occasion. Hence, the weakest subjects in the labour market receive the least protection and support.

An analysis of extrinsic and intrinsic work orientations

Some authors have claimed that work is now no longer sufficient for individual self-fulfilment (see e.g. Abbruzzese, 1995). In reality, it is probably more correct to say that an individual's self-image is still intimately bound up with the role and social structure of work, but to the extent that the latter changes, the premises for a change of perception and sense of identity on the part of individuals emerge.

Society has been founded on work for less than two centuries. This means that, whilst work recognised by society (i.e. paid work) has, on the one hand, become the primary means to acquire the income allowing individuals to live, on the other, it has become a fundamental social relationship. It is only in the present period, in which the normal functioning of society – a full-time job for all – is again in question, that this is apparent: the potential reduction or decrement of work upsets certainties which once seemed self-evident (Mèda, 1995).

Table 4: Which of the following are important in a job? (qualities mentioned in %, data rounded)

	1981	1990	1999	2008-09
STRUCTURAL				
Good pay (v69)	66	72	85	77
Job security (v72)	58	61	76	75
Good hours (v73)	36	39	64	54
Generous holidays (v76)	15	19	35	23
PERSONAL WELL-BEING				
Not too much pressure (v71)	17	31	60	53
Meeting abilities* (v81)	48	54	75	70
A job that is interesting (v80)	43	56	75	68
RELATIONAL				
Pleasant people to work with (v70)	44	50	72	58
Meeting people (v77)	36	43	66	55
PERSONAL AND SOCIAL FULFILLMENT				
An opportunity to use initiative (v74)	36	45	64	53
A responsible job (v79)	25	32	53	44
A job useful to society (v75)	41	47	65	51
A job that enables you to achieve something (v78)	42	51	75	69

* Note: We chose to include this quality among the aspects connected to personal well-being because in the Italian version "Meeting abilities" was translated as "*Lavoro adatto alle proprie capacità*". In Italian, this statement can be understood in two ways: a) in the sense that the tasks required by the job do not exceed one's capabilities (being too difficult and thus putting too much pressure on the individual); b) in the sense that the tasks required by the job are not inferior to one's capabilities (being boring and making the respondent feel underrated).

We can compare the dimensions of work that interviewees believed to be important in the EVS; comparison of the four surveys enables us to determine whether there have been any major changes over the past thirty years. There are a number of questions in the EVS surveys which enable verification of what aspects of work are deemed very important. We have divided them into four groups, as in Table 4. The first two refer to extrinsic work orientations, while the last two reflect intrinsic orientations:

- *structural aspects* linked to the most tangible components of work;
- *aspects relative to personal well-being* connected to how the work is performed; perception of the suitability of one's professional abilities, and level of interest in the work;

- *relational aspects*, covering relations with colleagues (but also with the public, and with clients/users), with whom one can share common life experiences and a sense of belonging;
- *personal- and social-fulfilment aspects* tied to opportunities for self-fulfilment through work of good quality, and feeling that one is part of projects also useful for the community.

If we compare the responses regarding the work aspects deemed important⁹ in the three previous questionnaires (1981, 1990, and 1999), there first emerges a general tendency on the part of respondents to respond positively, and in ever-increasing numbers, to all the qualities presented to them; this tendency diminished, however, in the replies given in the 2008/2009 survey (see Table 4).

Despite this trend, the two qualities considered most important in all the surveys are good pay (which drops by eight percentage points compared with 1999, however) and job security. Apparent, therefore, is the priority given to the structural aspect of work as providing support and security for realisation of one's life-projects.

Table 5: Hypothesis Test for Difference between Proportions

Variable	comparison 1981-1990			comparison 1990-1999			comparison 1999-2008		
	Diff < 0	diff ≠ 0	diff > 0	diff < 0	diff ≠ 0	diff > 0	diff < 0	diff ≠ 0	diff > 0
V69	0.000	0.000	1.000	0.000	0.000	1.000	1.000	0.000	0.000
V72	0.000	0.000	1.000	0.000	0.000	1.000	0.868	0.262	0.131
V73	0.003	0.006	0.997	0.000	0.000	1.000	1.000	0.000	0.000
V76	0.001	0.002	0.999	0.000	0.000	1.000	1.000	0.000	0.000
V71	0.000	0.000	1.000	0.000	0.000	1.000	1.000	0.000	0.000
V81	0.000	0.000	1.000	0.000	0.000	1.000	1.000	0.000	0.000
V80	0.000	0.000	1.000	0.000	0.000	1.000	1.000	0.000	0.000
V70	0.000	0.000	1.000	0.000	0.000	1.000	1.000	0.000	0.000
V77	0.000	0.000	1.000	0.000	0.000	1.000	1.000	0.000	0.000
V74	0.000	0.000	1.000	0.000	0.000	1.000	1.000	0.000	0.000
V79	0.000	0.000	1.000	0.000	0.000	1.000	1.000	0.000	0.000
V75	0.002	0.001	0.999	0.000	0.000	1.000	1.000	0.000	0.000
V78	0.000	0.000	1.000	0.000	0.000	1.000	1.000	0.000	0.000

The variables in Table 4 have been subjected to statistical tests to verify the hypothesis of difference in proportions so as to control for the consistency of the percentage variations shown. The results of the tests by the differences between consecutive surveys for each single variable - where hypotheses of differences below zero, other than zero, and greater than zero were tested - are shown in Table 5¹⁰. For each hypothesis, the probability values are reported for which respectively $\Pr(Z < z)$ (difference

less than 0), $\Pr(|Z| \neq |z|)$ (difference other than 0), and $\Pr(Z > z)$ (difference greater than 0).

The statistical tests confirm the variations shown in Table 4, with certain probability levels in most cases; in the remaining cases, the differences are in any case statistically significant.

With reference to the data from 1981 to 1999, Venturelli Christensen (2000) has claimed that the constant increase in these responses is due to the fact that Italian workers had become more critical, more aware, and more selective in their judgements of employment. In light of the 2008/2009 data, we would add that the growing frequency of unstable working conditions and the general increase in situations of job uncertainty have contributed to reinforcing the importance of work in and of itself, as well as its quality. It is no coincidence that in the 2008/2009 survey, all the responses to these aspects showed diminishing percentages compared with the 1999 survey, which was the year in which the largest (and still growing) number of such responses was recorded; but the only aspect which has remained almost unchanged in importance is job security.

The two remaining criteria which can be included among the structural aspects - good working hours and generous holidays - are less significant than others in all the surveys. Moreover, as said above, it is evident from Table 4 that all the aspects proposed in the questionnaire have sharply diminished in significance, with the exception of the one regarding job security.

It is the relational quality connected with working with pleasant people that has been 'devalued' over time: in 1981, it was the fourth quality indicated by respondents, while in 1990 and 1999 it fell to sixth place, but with a difference of only one or two percentage points. In the 2008/2009 survey this quality was still in sixth place, but with a ten percentage point difference with respect to the fifth quality. In fact, the *Fourth European Working Conditions Survey* (carried out by the European Training Foundation in 2006) too showed that work in general is becoming increasingly demanding and individual because it involves job tasks which must mostly be undertaken alone. This survey also shows that fewer and fewer Italians expect to receive support (or even a simple opinion) from their colleagues and superiors. One wonders whether this form of individualism might not be an orientation which has been 'imposed' by the new types and new conditions of work in contemporary society, rather than being a deliberate orientation.

We therefore also decided to test the connections among the variables considered within the groups that we developed, and their role in construction of the groups themselves. In order to determine both the consistency of the groups and the contributions of the various variables, indices of association were calculated for the data relative to the survey carried out in 2008/2009. For each interaction among the variables

considered in the model, the phi coefficient, the contingency coefficient (Pearson's C) and Cramer's V^{11} were calculated (Agresti, 2002; Agresti, 2007). The values of the indices of association, in the order just mentioned, are reported in Tables 6 to 9, for each of the groups on which the analysis of the extrinsic and intrinsic work orientations was performed.

Table 6 reports the analysis among the variables referring to the structural aspect: the most significant relations are those connected to job security, and they are significantly correlated with both economic conditions (good pay) and working hours. On the other hand, the relations comprising the variable relative to holidays do not exhibit significant connections.

Table 6: Association coefficients - Structural aspect

	v69	v72	v73	v76
Good pay (v69)	- - 1			
Job security (v72)	0.631 0.534 0.446	- - 1		
Good hours (v73)	0.415 0.383 0.293	0.515 0.458 0.364	- - 1	
Generous holidays (v76)	0.407 0.377 0.288	0.361 0.339 0.255	0.419 0.387 0.296	- - 1

Table 7: Association coefficients - Personal well-being aspect

	v71	v81	v80
Not too much pressure (v71)	- - 1		
Meeting abilities (v81)	0.581 0.503 0.411	- - 1	
A job that is interesting (v80)	0.455 0.414 0.322	0.715 0.582 0.506	- - 1

Moving to analysis of the personal well-being aspect (Table 7), the variable exhibiting the highest degree of association with the others used in the set considered is the one which relates to the match between the job and personal abilities, where significant measures of association with all the

other variables considered are evidenced (excessive pressure and a generic interest in one’s job). Hence, having a job consistent with one’s abilities and personal skills can be considered the structural link which connects the components of this aspect and the variable which has the greatest relative importance.

The third area considered in the analysis is the one which links the two variables measuring an internal relational element (appreciation of fellow workers) and an external relational element (opportunities to meet people). To be noted in Table 8 is that, in this case, the measures of association indicate an intermediate-level link among the variables considered.

Table 8: Association coefficients - Relational aspect

	v70	v77
Pleasant people to work with (v70)	- - 1	
Meeting people (v77)	0.505 0.451 0.357	- - 1

Finally, we complete our analysis of the indices of association with discussion of the interactions among the variables relative to the personal fulfilment aspect (Table 9). These exhibit the highest level of heterogeneity, which can be explained by the fact that expectations and needs connected with personal fulfilment and social success mediated by experience at work can have an extremely wide and heterogeneous range and variety. As confirmation of this, to be noted is that there are relatively strong connections between the variable connoting a responsible job (v79) and those indicating the opportunity to use initiative (v74) and the sensation of being able to achieve something tangible (v78) respectively. The other variables considered take intermediate values, which confirms the above-mentioned heterogeneity between factors which guide stimuli for personal fulfilment compared with work experiences.

The analysis of association of the variables considered for construction of the extrinsic and intrinsic aspects substantially confirms the evidence yielded by measurement of the frequencies relative to individual variables. In fact, on the one hand there are significant differences in the relative importance of the variables for the various aspects; on the other, the most significant variables with regard to association with the others are those which exhibit a growth of significance over time (see Table 4). In substance, qualities like job security, having a job which matches one’s abilities, or the opportunity to achieve something tangible have over time

become the principal factors for identifying and assessing a job, but they are also the crosswise supporting elements of the intrinsic and extrinsic aspects considered.

Table 9: Association coefficients – Personal and social fulfilment aspect

	v74	v79	v75	v78
An opportunity to use initiative (v74)	- - 1			
A responsible job (v79)	0.59 0.508 0.417	- - 1		
A job useful to society (v75)	0.543 0.477 0.384	0.476 0.43 0.337	- - 1	
A job that enables you to achieve something (v78)	0.543 0.477 0.384	0.672 0.558 0.475	0.491 0.441 0.347	- - 1

Concluding remarks

On the basis of this last observation, we may state that, aside from the satisfaction of material needs, work is perceived or conceived as a sphere which permits the expression and realisation of oneself and one's aspirations. While the principal values of life in industrialised societies are often associated with traditional, religious, and family values, the emphasis in post-industrial societies is mostly on individualistic values. As far as those connected with work are concerned, this development is reflected in the transition from extrinsic to intrinsic work orientations. Work, therefore, becomes a way to be creative – as well as to achieve independence – and enables individuals to express themselves and develop their abilities (Yankelovich et al., 1985).

But is this still possible as the labour market shrinks and changes in a structural manner? Our first hypothesis linked a possible shift of preferences from extrinsic to intrinsic work orientations with the transition (typical of post-modern societies) to a concept of work as an opportunity for individual self-fulfilment, and not just as a means to provide for material needs. We also linked this possible shift with the level of growth in economic and welfare terms of the country in which people live and work.

With regard to Italy in particular, we may state that our hypothesis has been confirmed, and also that it can be extended in the opposite direction: a shift of preferences from intrinsic orientations towards extrinsic ones was verified by the 2008/2009 survey, which covered a period of

deterioration in economic and working conditions. Moreover, this relocation demonstrates that the transformation of the orientations is not an irreversible process, at least in the short term.

In the 1980s and 1990s, Italy underwent a socio-economic transformation which was no less spectacular than that of the economic miracle of the 1960s (Ginsborg, 1998): the three EVS surveys conducted during that period highlighted a tendency towards extrinsic work orientations at the beginning of the 1980s, followed by a marked increase in preferences for all the dimensions covered by the survey and therefore a greater interest in intrinsic orientations. Nonetheless, the advent of the economic crisis and the introduction of new types of contract have made the extrinsic dimensions of work once again predominant.

The former phenomenon has undoubtedly contributed to reducing the number of jobs available. The latter has generated a series of distortive effects which have rendered the expectations and perceptions of individuals with regard to the labour market more volatile and uncertain. The introduction of more flexible types of contract has often resulted in the increased precariousness of employment relationships (Berton et al., 2009; Toscano, 2007), with a progressive increase in the share of part-time and fixed-term contracts, particularly during the periods covered by the EVS.

Consequently, today more than ever before, it seems that a reversal of orientations with regard to a labour market more precarious than flexible is taking place, and that it has not been adequately off-set by new active labour and/or social policies. In fact, the Italian labour market remains excessively rigid and lacks policies for training or retraining the unemployed labour force.

To conclude, both the differences in general work orientations over time, and the increase in the relative importance of variables such as the search for job security and a job compatible with one's abilities, can be related to the two structural phenomena discussed in this article. On the one hand, in fact, we are witnessing a rapid worsening of general economic conditions which primarily affects employment relationships and relative expectations. On the other hand, changes in perceived values relative to work can be connected with the emergence of types of contracts intended to increase work-entry flexibility, but which, when used improperly, significantly condition people's perceptions of work.

Notes

¹ Maslow (1954) already included 'employment' among the other requisites (physical, moral, family, health, and property) at the second level concerning 'safety' in his pyramid of needs.

² Although this article uses the expressions 'intrinsic' and 'extrinsic orientation' in the senses given by Halman, it should be borne in mind that he, too, draws on Inglehart's theories on values (1971, 1977, 1990, and 1997). Inglehart

employed the expressions 'acquisitive' (or materialist) and 'post-acquisitive' (or post-materialist) values, using 'post-' for the latter because they emerge only after the former have been satisfied. Inglehart for his part expressly refers to Maslow's (1954) theory to explain the emergence of 'meta-needs' (freedom, political participation, and self-realisation) and related values in the generations born in Western countries in the years following the 1950s, and therefore into a socio-economic system that guaranteed satisfaction of the primary needs.

³ By 'European social model' is meant a system with high levels of public expenditure and social protection compared with other systems, such as those of the US or Japan. The crisis of this system is attributed to low levels of flexibility in the labour market and to a welfarist type of social security system (Boeri, 2002).

⁴ The abbreviations in the text for the variables (e.g. v89) correspond to those used in the 2008/2009 questionnaire in the EVS.

⁵ It should be emphasised that the analysis of part-time work would require an amount of detail which cannot be obtained by means of response options like those in the EVS questionnaire; a part-time contract for employees on 'open-ended' contracts cannot be assimilated with other forms of flexible work consequential on a choice, and which yield an income sufficient to guarantee an adequate pension. The conditions of 'involuntary' part-time workers, or ones with other forms of contract which involve the use of partially-employed quasi-subordinate workers, is quite different (Villa, 2010). Unfortunately, the EVS questionnaire does not include any questions on the types of contract held by respondents declaring that they were in employment; therefore, it is not possible to identify the type of open-ended contracts held by interviewees.

⁶ Unemployment is the condition of joblessness affecting persons of working age (from 16 to 64) who are actively looking for a job, either because they have lost the job that they had (unemployed in the strict sense), or because they are seeking their first one. Economists have developed a classification of unemployment, which can be of various types. By citing just some of them, we find situations that imply very different conditions:

- *frictional* unemployment, denoting the condition of being without work in the short term (1-5 months) affecting first-job seekers or persons changing jobs. Time is required for workers' requirements to match the labour market, so that a certain amount of frictional unemployment is inevitable.

- *seasonal* unemployment, which is when joblessness is caused by climatic and seasonal variations. This type of unemployment is also short-term, and is typical of jobs connected with tourism.

- *structural* unemployment, which is when joblessness is linked to a mismatch between labour supply and demand. In other words, it is due to the lack of correspondence between the abilities of the worker and the requirements of the employer, or differences in geographical location.

A period of unemployment between three and twelve months may therefore be either seasonal or frictional. If in a particular country, most unemployment is long-term (more than twelve months), it should be classified as structural unemployment. There is also the very long-term unemployment when joblessness exceeds 24 months. According to the Central European Bank's December 2011 Bulletin, in 2008, those who had lost their jobs more than one year earlier amounted to nearly six million, and in 2010 7.1 million: one-half of this latter group had been unemployed for more than two years.

⁷ Compulsory lower-secondary school education was introduced by law no. 1859 of 31 December 1962. The law extended the obligation to attend school for a further three years after completion of elementary school (which currently happens at around ten years of age). Prior to 1962, lower-secondary school was optional, and was only attended by those intending to go on to an upper-secondary school (for example a *lyceum* or a technical institute).

⁸ The *Cassa Integrazione Guadagni* is an economic benefit paid by INPS (the National Social Security Institute) and has the function of increasing or substituting the incomes of workers in precarious economic conditions due to lay-offs or short-time working. The CIG is 'ordinary' when the suspension or reduction of the company's activities is due to temporary and transitory events which cannot be blamed either on the employer or on the workers (for example, lack of orders). Its purpose is also to retain skilled labour within the company and to relieve companies in temporary difficulties of the cost of a temporarily idle workforce expected to return to work once the crisis has subsided. The CIG is 'extraordinary' in cases where a company is undergoing restructuring, reorganisation or conversion, or is suffering from a corporate crisis, or is subject to insolvency proceedings. 'Special' CIG is a wages support intervention intended to assist companies not covered by the law on temporary unemployment pay. It applies to companies operating in certain production sectors or specific regional areas which have been identified in government agreements; the term is fixed by individual territorial accords.

⁹ In the EVS 2008/2009 questionnaire, Question 14 was: 'Here are some aspects of a job that people find important. Please look at them and tell me which ones you personally find important'. The interviewees could choose among all the presented aspects (there were 17 in total, but only 12 were presented in all the surveys and were therefore comparable). The percentages were calculated based on the fact that the respondents mentioned the aspect.

¹⁰ For the sake of completeness, we would recall that tests on the differences between proportions postulate normality in the distribution of the data. In effect, the nominal variables follow a binomial distribution: nonetheless, in the case of large samples, and when the product of the magnitude of the proportion and the size of the sample is sufficiently great, one may use the normal random variable.

¹¹ The measures of association used here assess the relation between nominal or categorical variables. In statistics, an association is any relationship between two measured quantities that renders them statistically dependent, whereas the narrower term correlation refers to a linear relationship between two quantities. The variables analysed in this article are mostly dichotomous and the coefficients used here – that is, ϕ^2 , contingency coefficient (Pearson's *C*), and Cramer's *V* – allow one to measure the association between such kind of data. In more detail, the ϕ^2 coefficient is equal to the ratio between the chi-square and the number of observations; the contingency coefficient is the square root of the ratio between chi-square and the sum of chi-square and the number of observations. Finally, Cramer's *V* coefficient is similar to Pearson's *C*, but also takes account of the number of degrees of freedom used. This last measure has a range of variation between 0 and 1 inclusive, regardless of the number of variables considered, while the phi coefficient and Pearson's *C* are not. Cramer's *V* is by far the most widely-used coefficient to define the level of association for nominal data (Liebetrau, 1983).

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