5 CONCLUDING EPILOGUE

5.1 Introduction

In this last part we are going to give an overview of the most important themes in this dissertation, the conclusions and the theoretical implications.

We started each chapter with an overview of themes and presumed relations, mostly depicted in a figure of a conceptual model. In this chapter firstly (5.2) we are going to give an evaluation of the main findings at the hand of these conceptual models and study if our initial presumptions were correct. Secondly (5.3), in order to create a coherent conclusion of all chapters, the most important overarching themes and relations of these study will be reported and commented. An important overall question will be the one if work is still an important sociological category. A third element (5.4) is a feedback on the theories used in this dissertation. Three theories were used: The modernization theory, the crowding out thesis and the theory on Public Service Motivation (PSM). The first two, modernization and crowding out are relatively contradictory. The PSM-theory was used to see if publicly employed persons hold other values than privately employed. Fourthly (5.5) an evaluation on methodology items will be made. Lastly (5.6) there will be a concluding paragraph with conclusions encompassing all chapters.

5.2 Summary of main findings and evaluation of conceptual models

In chapter two we put work values into a historical perspective and investigated the change in work values and asked ourselves the question if with along with the modernization and decommodification (as a result of greater wealth and social policies) extrinsic work values would disappear in favor of more intrinsic work values and post-materialism. Furthermore the question was asked whether work can still be regarded as a key sociological category.

Our starting point was a model as depicted in figure 5.1.
In this study was no general trend found towards more intrinsic work values. Extrinsic work values did decrease over all countries but not in a magnitude that was expected. One of the aspects that might form an explanation is the crowding out effect, where people are not intrinsically or socially motivated, because they expect the welfare state to take care of certain aspects that people did voluntarily in the past. Another key finding in this chapter was the relation between intrinsic work values and post-materialism. People who have intrinsic work values tend to be more post-materialistic.

Given the findings of a correlation between unemployment and work centrality the importance of Rapid Economic Growth as a precondition for modernization are emphasized. This leads us to the revised scheme in figure 5.2.
5.2.1 **Summary of main findings chapter 3**

In chapter three we had a closer look at employment commitment and flexibility to avoid unemployment. As we have been arguing the concept of employment commitment is related to work centrality (studied in chapter 2) however the perspective is broader because both the financial and non-financial aspects of commitment to work are covered. The central question in this part of the dissertation was if work values could explain differences in employment commitment and whether institutional characteristics, such as union density, employment protection and exit culture could shed some light on differences in the nature of work values and employment commitment as well as flexibility to avoid unemployment. As an additional category for explanation personal characteristics (age, gender, etc.) were used.

![Conceptual model chapter 3](image)

When it comes to institutional characteristics we found that only welfare state generosity and exit culture have an effect on work orientations. Welfare state
generosity has a negative effect on all work values but the most on intrinsic and societal values which points into the direction of a crowding out effect. From the personal characteristics it is age (having a negative effect) and educational level (having a positive effect), both on flexibility to avoid unemployment. Gender and sector (civil service) both have an effect on societal/altruistic work values. Employment status and trade-union membership are having no or less effect.

One important remark has to be made here. In this study we deliberately chose for 8 countries that are highly industrialized, prosperous and don’t have dramatic differences in GNP. For the generalizability point of view more research with more and perhaps different countries will be needed. From theory and previous research we hypothesized a relation between gender and societal/altruistic values as well as public service and societal/altruistic values. This was confirmed in this research. However the magnitude, in particular for the public service employees, was surprising.

5.2.2 Summary important findings chapter 4

When work values are studied, one has to consider whether the values are met in the working place if that leads to positive working behaviors. In chapter 4 therefore the central theme was needs and supplies of work values. The gap between needs and supplies was investigated as well as their fit. Subsequently the consequences of fit in terms of organizational commitment and turnover intentions were explored. Intermediate variables were represented in box 2 and personal characteristics were depicted in box 3, within figure 5.4.
We found that the variables in box 1 extrinsic and intrinsic fit led to commitment in all countries. However when controls were added (such as job satisfaction and relations with management and family to work conflict) only one country (US) showed a significant effect of extrinsic fit on commitment and three countries (Norway Germany and Ireland) with a significant effect of intrinsic fit on organizational commitment.

As it comes to intention to leave, as expected, age is an important predictor. Lack of intrinsic fit predicts turnover to a moderate extent in most countries.

In this chapter we also investigated the gap between needs and supplies and found that it are the extrinsic values that show the biggest gap. When putting these categories into the order: extrinsic, intrinsic and societal/altruistic, one can distinguish a “funnel effect.”
Among civil servants the gap between needs and supplies has a different nature with supplies exceeding the needs on societal work values and a small gap when job security is concerned.

5.3 Overarching themes and subjects

A number of overarching themes in this dissertation are summarized, from which the most important are:

- Intrinsic extrinsic and societal/altruïstic work values, their discrepancy their fit and their consequences;

- How important is work in a financial and non-financial aspect for people;

- The context of the institutional surroundings and societal policies.

5.3.1 Intrinsic extrinsic and societal/altruïstic work values

We studied the importance of work values (chapter 2 and chapter 3). According to Rokeach values are a great unifying construct of human behavior. This is partly confirmed in this study. It has to be recognized that the values alone, at least in this study, do not explain the variance by itself but is a predictor among others (like job satisfaction, relation with managers, age, gender and trade-union membership). Until now the position was taken in many studies that along with the modernization process there is a process of decommodification that enables people to have an income without work. This would lead to more intrinsic and less extrinsic values for the group of working people. This study showed in an analysis over time that the most modernized countries do not have a systematic increase in intrinsic values, but over all countries there was a decrease in extrinsic values over time. When it comes to the relation between welfare state generosity -the most important indicator of decommodification- and work values the results are ambiguous. A negative relation between welfare state generosity and extrinsic values was expected. However the negative relation between intrinsic and societal values and generosity was found. So
the modernization theory is not supported in this aspect. Twenge et al (Twenge et al, 2010) also found a decrease in social and intrinsic work values and marked the generation effect as a cause. There has to be another explanation. The most likely is the crowding out thesis. Titmuss whose classic study showed that if people are driven by intrinsic values the effectiveness of measures like blood spending is decreased, if suddenly a financial reward is given for this effort. Similar effects are found in studies by Deci and Deci & Ryan. Societal and intrinsic work values are significantly negatively related to welfare state generosity. The magnitude of this relation (with an N of only 8) points into the direction of crowding out. Why should there be a negative relation between intrinsic and societal work values and welfare generosity? Hence if basic needs are met (what can be assumed in a generous welfare state) one would rather expect that the intrinsic and societal values would be stronger emphasized than if they were not met. Therefore it does not fit into common sense that this relation is negative except if the crowding out mechanism takes place and that people expect the state to take care of societal obligations. Intrinsic values would be corrupted because employers in general and the state in particular pays people for doing things they would have done anyway (cf. Deci & Ryan). So the negative correlation of welfare state generosity and intrinsic and societal values indicates into the direction of a crowding out effect. A positive indication of the relationship of intrinsic values and modernization was the relation between post materialism and intrinsic values. This points into the direction of a situation where those who have fulfilled their basic needs are more likely to adhere intrinsic work values. A first quick analysis on the 2008 data shows that the differences in this respect are diminishing. No longer intrinsic orientations are related to post materialism which to a certain extent contradicts the modernization theory. In sum: modernization theory is not supported and there is some indirect indication that crowding out might take place. In 1995 Harding & Hikspoors asked themselves if people with intrinsic values are the vanguard of the modernization in the labor force. Ester, Braun & Vinken even argued that extrinsic values have to be augmented if not replaced by more intrinsic values that stress more personal development and taking imitative. In other words are the intrinsic values antecedents for positive working behavior?
• Indications were found that intrinsic values are positively related to organizational commitment in particular in countries that can be characterized as Coordinated Market Economies.

• Employment commitment from a promotion focus (non-financial) was positively related to intrinsic work values.

When looking at the relation between work values and the two types of employment commitment a negative relation between intrinsic values and employment commitment from a prevention focus (financially). This seems in line with the agreement on the statement: “A job is a way of earning money no more” that measured the concept emphasized the instrumental attitude towards work.

The intrinsic values are more related to a promotion focused employment commitment (non-financial) and in general self-realization and non-financial orientation. The intrinsic values are more related to a promotion focused employment commitment (non-financial) and in general self-realization and non-financial orientation. From the analysis above one can conclude that intrinsic work values are important antecedents for positive work behavior. However when giving a closer look one sees that when for example other elements are added into a regression equation like supervisors, job satisfaction, work to family conflict that the effect of the values alone is limited. Moreover in some countries the values remain an element of importance and in others they don’t. Remarkable is that extrinsic work values also can lead to organizational commitment. In chapter 4 as a result of the low N we were unable to break down the three forms of fit into high medium and low for each country.

An important issue was the funnel effect. A funnel has been found between needs and supplies in particular in the extrinsic values. We argued that a possible cognitive dissonance in the area of extrinsic values can be coped with easier because it can be attributed to external circumstances. In concrete would this imply that a gap in job security can be attributed to one’s employer than to oneself. This possibility does not exist for a gap in the need for work that is useful for society. Does this make the gap between needs and supplies for extrinsic values more acceptable or even can the pure existence of the gap be related to the possibility to attribute it
externally? It can be argued that the effort needed to cope with a gap in intrinsic needs and supplies exceeds the one that is needed to overcome the gap that is needed to deal with extrinsic issues.

5.3.2 How important is work to people? (Work centrality and employment commitment)

We started this dissertation with the question whether work was still a key sociological concept and why people work. In general one can remark that work still is a key sociological concept but the centrality of work as it was is losing some ground to have lost importance when compared to leisure. Leisure more and more turns into a scarce commodity. This becomes apparent differently in younger and older age groups. Older age groups are on the eve of (early) retirement and the young age groups might want to balance their working effort with leisure. Decades ago there was a promise of a revolution of leisure due to an increased productivity. Arrived in the 21st century it seems like this promise has lost its spell to an important extent. Given the nature of work (as well as the nature of leisure) in highly digitalized service economies with lots of outsourcing of “cheap labor” the distinction between leisure and work is growing more and more confusing since the time of Veblen (1899) who noticed that somewhere doing activities labeled as leisure while others would do the same activities and received money for them. In the 21st century this distinction is even more confusing than before. Volunteering gardening or vocational training: are they work or leisure?

In chapter 3 the scope was expanded and the work centrality was broadened to employment commitment which also encompasses the motivation to accept a paid job even if there is no financial necessity. Opposed to certain results of earlier studies non financial employment commitment was not significantly positively related to welfare state generosity. In other words the answer to the question of Esser: “Does welfare makes us lazy?” has to be answered inconclusive. This raises the question if the Protestant Work Ethic is still alive or if we, as Bell (1974, 1976) predicted, are heading into a hedonistic ethos. The fact that our findings differ from other studies is that the two questions that measure employment commitment have been split and therefore the perspective becomes clearer as well as the causality.
5.3.3 Institutional surroundings

In this study we deliberately included institutional characteristics as explanatory variables. The framework of production regimes gives two interesting models in which value studies can be interpreted. It has been argued, in this study, that welfare state generosity, union density, employment protection and exit culture are factors one has to put into consideration when interpreting cross national differences. We found that to a certain extent the values are influenced by institutions Gallie (2007) has argued that welfare state features are transmitted through values into work attitudes. Compared to the results of Gallie and Parbothee and Cullen there is some evidence that institutions shape individual work orientations, in particular the welfare state generosity and exit culture, this is remarkable certainly given the limited scope of this study. Certainly this subject needs further study. One conclusion can be that the choice for a value or a certain work behavior is to a certain extent constrained by the institutional surroundings; however this does not imply dominance by production regime. In our view it is the combination of institutions personal characteristics and other factors that adds value to the explanation of factors like employment commitment, organizational commitment and flexibility to avoid unemployment.

5.4 Feedback on four theories

We started with four main theories that were used to explain some differences in work values: The modernization theory, the crowding out thesis, the theory on public service motivation and institutionalism. The first two are relatively contradictory. This section is going to be used to supply feedback on the use of these theories.

The modernization theory.
This theory expected a diminishing of extrinsic orientation when societies develop into postmodernism seems to explain differences in value change from 1980 to 1990. From 1990 onwards it looks more and more that the crowding out thesis applies the more because the non-financial employment commitment (prevention focus) is strongly negative related to welfare state generosity negative correlation between welfare state generosity and employment commitment from a prevention focus. However if we look at the results of work centrality in narrower sense and intrinsic
orientation one can distinguish a less transparent pattern. It seems that other phenomena have to be found to explain the specific change in work centrality and other work values. The phenomena of unemployment has a huge impact on work orientations. So we see a correlation between unemployment and the preference of work over leisure.

From our findings one would expect that an economic downturn with increasing unemployment possibly shifts values temporarily from post-materialistic to materialistic/extrinsic values. However, Inglehart places much stronger emphasis on socialization as an explanation for this shift in values, and that ‘one’s basic values reflect the conditions that prevailed during one’s pre-adult years’ (Inglehart 1990: page 68).

In favor of the modernization theory is the correlation found in this study between post-materialist values and intrinsic work values. Post materialism has always been regarded as a strong indicator for modernization. The fact that we found a relation between the intrinsic work aspects and post materialism is supporting this view. However one has to conclude that an increase in intrinsic values is not accompanied by a decrease in extrinsic values and therefore this value change depends, stronger than assumed up to now, upon other factors like crowding out or unemployment rates of a country.

The crowding out thesis.
This theory argues that both intrinsic and societal work values are diminished because people are paid to conduct intrinsic or societal motivated work and secondly because of welfare state provisions made work that encompasses activities in which one helps other people or makes a contribution to society less interesting because one work floor level they are crowded out by demands of efficiency and control. We investigated the relationship between welfare state generosity and societal/altruistic values and found a significant negative correlation. This could indicate a support for this crowding out thesis.

The Public Service Motivation Theory (PSM).
This theory expected more emphasis on societal/altruistic values by civil servants was confirmed. Civil servants and people interested in working in this sector in every
country showed a significant higher score on the societal/altruistic index. Further the demands for these values among civil servants are much higher than in other sectors as well as the perception of the level of these values that are met in the working situation. All in all the presumptions of the PSM theory are confirmed in this study.

Institutionalism.

Conducting an international comparative study one has to find an explanation for the differences between countries. Often cultural patterns are used to explain these differences. However in recent literature there is a “revival” of institutional explanations (Parbotheea & Cullen, 2003: Deeg & Jackson, 2007). With the production regime framework we included some institutionalism. Also in chapter 3 the institutional characteristics were several. As has been remarked the low N did trouble the picture and some promising correlations (although insignificant) were found. Therefore a more comprehensive study with broader range in institutional variety would be necessary to give a better evaluation. In sum we are convinced that institutional characteristics can explain value differences and value change to a certain extent, albeit not by themselves but always in combination with other features, like we did in this study using three levels of explanatory items (values, institutional characteristics and personal characteristics).

5.5 Methodology (evaluation)

On a conceptual and methodological level this study showed that the concept of employment commitment cannot be regarded as the sum of absence of a financial commitment and a presence of non-financial commitment. As we have shown the separate items have different implications where the absence of financial commitment has a stronger effect than the presence of a non-financial one.

A second methodological issue is that we added a third category to the distinction extrinsic/intrinsic to be social/altruistic issues. We could argue that people in civil service definitely hold other values than people in private companies. The thesis of the Public Service Motivation seems to be (at least partly) confirmed by a more detailed breakdown of work values into intrinsic extrinsic and societal. This breakdown into three factors instead of two gives a great deal of detailed information.
on important subgroups like civil servants and female employees. A remark has to be made about the measurement of work centrality. Some authors chose to have a setting where the respondent has to choose between comparable options as the ones in this study. However this approach neglects the fact that both or more options can be important to people. The subtracting (as has been done in chapter 2) gives a more relative position of the value. Public service is measured as only working for government. The category of people that works for the so-called quangos (quasi nongovernmental organization) is not included because they differ too much per country to be a homogeneous group.

5.6 Overall findings and conclusion

As we have argued in chapter 2 work values are rooted in processes of socialization and education, where individuals learn and internalize behavior in accordance to what is required and expected on the basis of their work role (Kraimer, 1997; Harding & Hikspoors 1995).

![Diagram](Image)

*Figure 5.5 The work socialization process (Harding and Hikspoors 1995) after research*

These close ties between cultural values, societal policies, socialization and work values were depicted in the figure above. Societal policies have been summarized by
the term ‘production regime’, in this study operationalized as welfare state generosity employment protection and union density.

Workplace practices affect the social conditions in which we live and are brought up (Parboteeah & Cullen 2003). These include a variety of welfare and labor market policies; such as care and exit policies that enable or restrict labor market involvement and labor market policies that either have commodifying or decommodifying effects on labor (cf Esping Andersen). We operationalized work place practices as ‘exit culture’. We saw that the items had their influence on work values.

The effect of school and family socialization has been exemplified in this by the socialization hypothesis. The socialization hypothesis states that ‘one's basic values reflect the conditions that prevailed during one’s pre-adult years’ (p. 68).

In the models in chapter 3 and 4 it is the influence of gender that represents socialization. Another element is the rise in educational levels (which enables cognitive mobilization) which is of important by itself and related to value orientation. We saw education being a positive antecedent for flexibility to avoid unemployment.

After research we added the economic conditions in our scheme the economic conditions in which we are raised set their mark on what values and practices prove efficient in the situation nations, families and individuals find themselves in at each time (Inglehart 1990; Inglehart 2008; Welzel & Inglehart 2010). We found evidence that unemployment relates to work centrality and that the welfare state provisions (of usually affluent states) shape work values and that in these countries there is a risk of crowding out. Finally, work experiences are likely to either reinforce our work values as either valid or create a condition where they must be reevaluated. Thus, Smola & Sutton (2002) report that individual’s values change when moving from e.g. college and into the workforce. Our findings of sector and work values (in particular public sector) also points into the direction of an influence of work experiences on work values.

Because the study has been one of separate chapters in this concluding epilogue we are going to join all results of the previous chapters in one concluding table which enables us to get a profile per country. The profiles added would enable us to evaluate the clusters like production regimes or in more popular terms differences between Rhineland and Anglo-Saxon models of capitalism. The added
value of the overview in table 5.1 is that we did not restrict ourselves to institutions but included value differences as well.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Welfare state generosity</th>
<th>US</th>
<th>GB</th>
<th>NZ</th>
<th>G W</th>
<th>G E</th>
<th>NW</th>
<th>SE</th>
<th>NL</th>
<th>IRL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>18.9</td>
<td>22.3</td>
<td>24.7</td>
<td>26.6</td>
<td>26.6</td>
<td>41.8</td>
<td>35.7</td>
<td>34.2</td>
<td>29.5</td>
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<td>Union density**</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>29.3</td>
<td>22.1</td>
<td>22.6</td>
<td>22.6</td>
<td>53.0</td>
<td>78.0</td>
<td>22.3</td>
<td>35.3</td>
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<td>1.1</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>2.3</td>
<td>1.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exit culture</td>
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<td>Med</td>
<td>Late</td>
<td>Early</td>
<td>Early</td>
<td>Late</td>
<td>Late</td>
<td>Early</td>
<td>Med</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rule / Skill orientation</td>
<td>Rule</td>
<td>Rule</td>
<td>Rule</td>
<td>Skill</td>
<td>Skill</td>
<td>Skill</td>
<td>Skill</td>
<td>Rule</td>
<td>Rule</td>
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<td>3.09</td>
<td>MD</td>
<td>3.12</td>
<td>MD</td>
<td>3.50</td>
<td>3.42</td>
<td>3.12</td>
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<tr>
<td>Disengagement at older age</td>
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<td>Yes</td>
<td>MD</td>
<td>In 99</td>
<td>MD</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>In 99</td>
<td>No</td>
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<td>High</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Low/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low/</td>
<td>Med</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
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<td>Low</td>
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<td>Yes</td>
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<td>Med</td>
<td>Med</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Score on intrinsic index</td>
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<td>High</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Med</td>
<td>Low</td>
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<td>Low</td>
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<tr>
<td>Score on societal index</td>
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<td>Med</td>
<td>Med</td>
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<td>Med</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Med</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Part</td>
<td>Part</td>
<td>Part</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Part</td>
<td>Part</td>
<td>Full</td>
<td>Full</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mediation Job satisfaction Intrinsic Fit commitment</td>
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<td>Full</td>
<td>Full</td>
<td>Part</td>
<td>Part</td>
<td>Part</td>
<td>Part</td>
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<tr>
<td>Extrinsic Fit related to commitment in final model</td>
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<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
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<td>No</td>
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<tr>
<td>Intrinsic Fit correlated with commitment in final model</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Societal Fit related to turnover intentions in final model</td>
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<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
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<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

This table affirms the distinction between Liberal Market Economies and Coordinated Market Economies. Not every characteristic is confirmed. In general one could conclude:

**Liberal Market Economies tend to be:**

- Low or medium (18-25) on welfare state generosity;
- Low on union density(14 -22)(except for the UK and Ireland former closed shop system);
- Flexible on employment protection (0,7-1,3);
- Rule oriented;
- Oriented towards disengagement from work on higher age;
- Committed on prevention focus;
- A decrease of promotion focus with growing age;
- Medium or high on extrinsic work value;
- High on societal work values;
- Medium or low on intrinsic work values;
- Medium to high on organizational commitment;
- No relation between intrinsic fit and commitment in final model.

*Coordinated Market Economies tend to be:*
- High on welfare state generosity (>25);
- Moderate to on union density (>22);
- Strict on employment protection: Oriented to a greater work centrality at higher age;
- More employment committed from a promotion(non-financial) focus;
- Low on flexibility to avoid unemployment (except for Germany);
- Intrinsic fit in the final model (except for Germany);
- Low on extrinsic work values (except for Germany);
- Medium or low on intrinsic work values;
- Low on societal work values (except for Germany);
- Medium to low on organizational commitment;
- Intrinsic fit related to commitment in final model (except for Germany);
- A partial decrease in promotion focus with growing age (for Germany and the Netherlands).

To have a better evaluation of this overall conclusion we applied a multidimensional scaling procedure where the variables that were researched were brought into comparable dimensions. As the graph shows on the horizontal axis one sees the countries from high LME characteristics to high CME characteristics. The Netherlands and Germany are somewhere in between.
These conclusions show that the Coordinated Market Economies differ more than the Liberal Market Economies. Germany seems to have elements of both systems, while the Scandinavian countries are more coherent with very similar elements, high work centrality, late exit culture, high prevention focus, high welfare state generosity and high employment commitment with promotion focus.

Some have argued that the Netherlands and Germany are in a transition towards a more Anglo Saxon model. Given the results of this study this certainly is possible, but would need another deeper study to confirm.

An element that is remarkable is the high score of all Liberal Economies on societal work values. For the US one could refer to De Tocqueville who in his America study in the 19th century emphasized the culture of voluntary associations to
help and get things done. One could also interpret this as a further indication of crowding out, because all the welfare states are not very generous.

Concluding one could say that capitalist systems differ in institutions as well as in values. The most coherent institutional characteristics and value systems can be found in the Liberal Market Economies (the Anglo Saxon model) and the Scandinavian social democratic welfare regimes with their emphasis on work and late exit practice. Germany and, to a lesser extent, the Netherlands, are in transition and a new study within four years could possibly reveal into which direction this transition goes.