



European Survey Research Association

Second ESRA Conference

Prague, 25 - 29 June 2007

Session: *Human Values*

Values and Social Classes in Europe

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Our presentation is about values, considered as organized and relatively durable systems of preferences, which constitute, in general and because they motivate action, good predictors of behaviour.

Values have their roots in individuals, in groups, in social classes, but they can also be connected with big aggregates like national states.

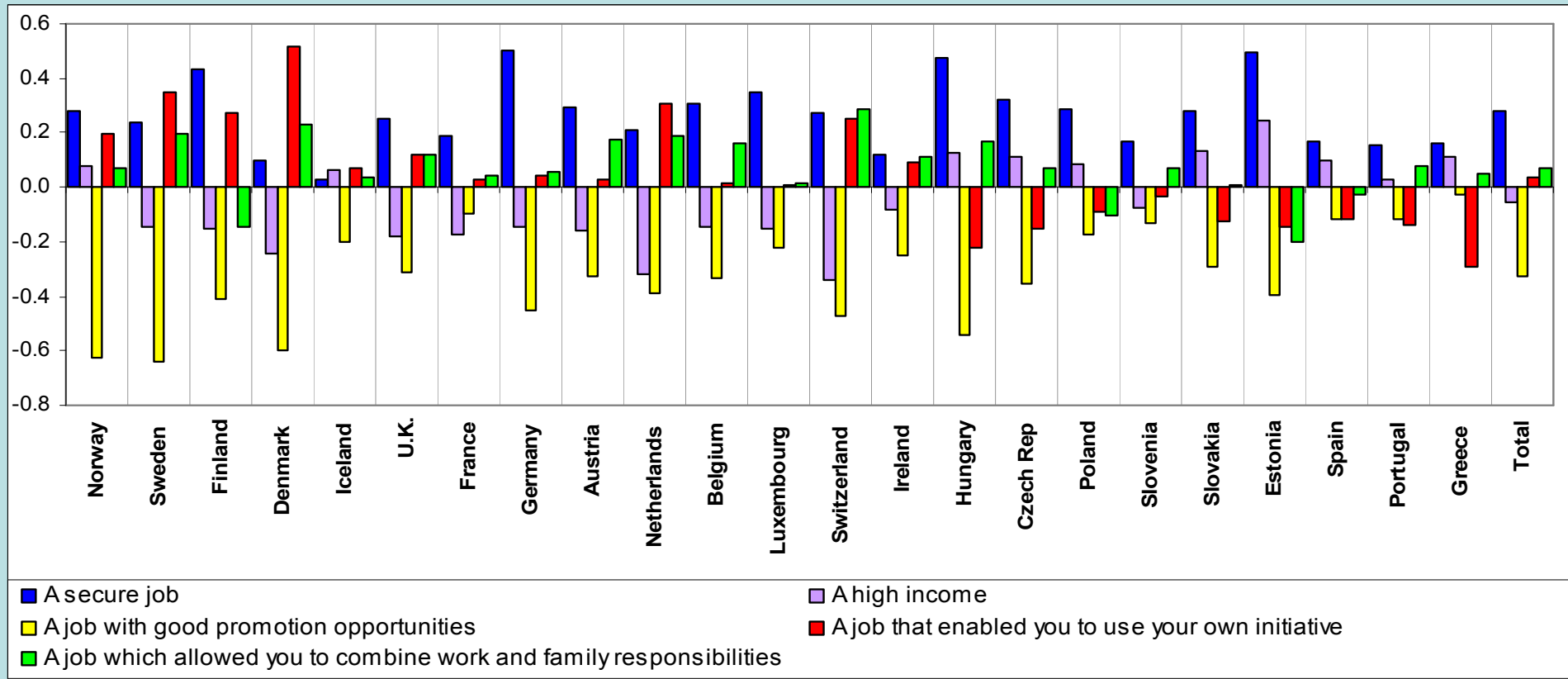
As referred by Shalom Schwartz, who proposed a structural theory of values – with which you are probably familiar – these express “motivational aims and they differ, precisely, according to the aims expressed”. (Schwartz, 1996).

The data we are going to refer to proceed from the two first waves of the European Social Survey (2002 and 2004). We use a typology of six categories (social classes) based on the information that the ESS also provides on occupation and situation in the occupation.

Even though we have comparative evidence from what Schwartz calls basic or trans situational values, there is no time to go through them. We shall then only show some information about other values, mostly linked with work. These are situational values, that is, values connected with specific contexts.

Work values priorities, by country

(centred means)



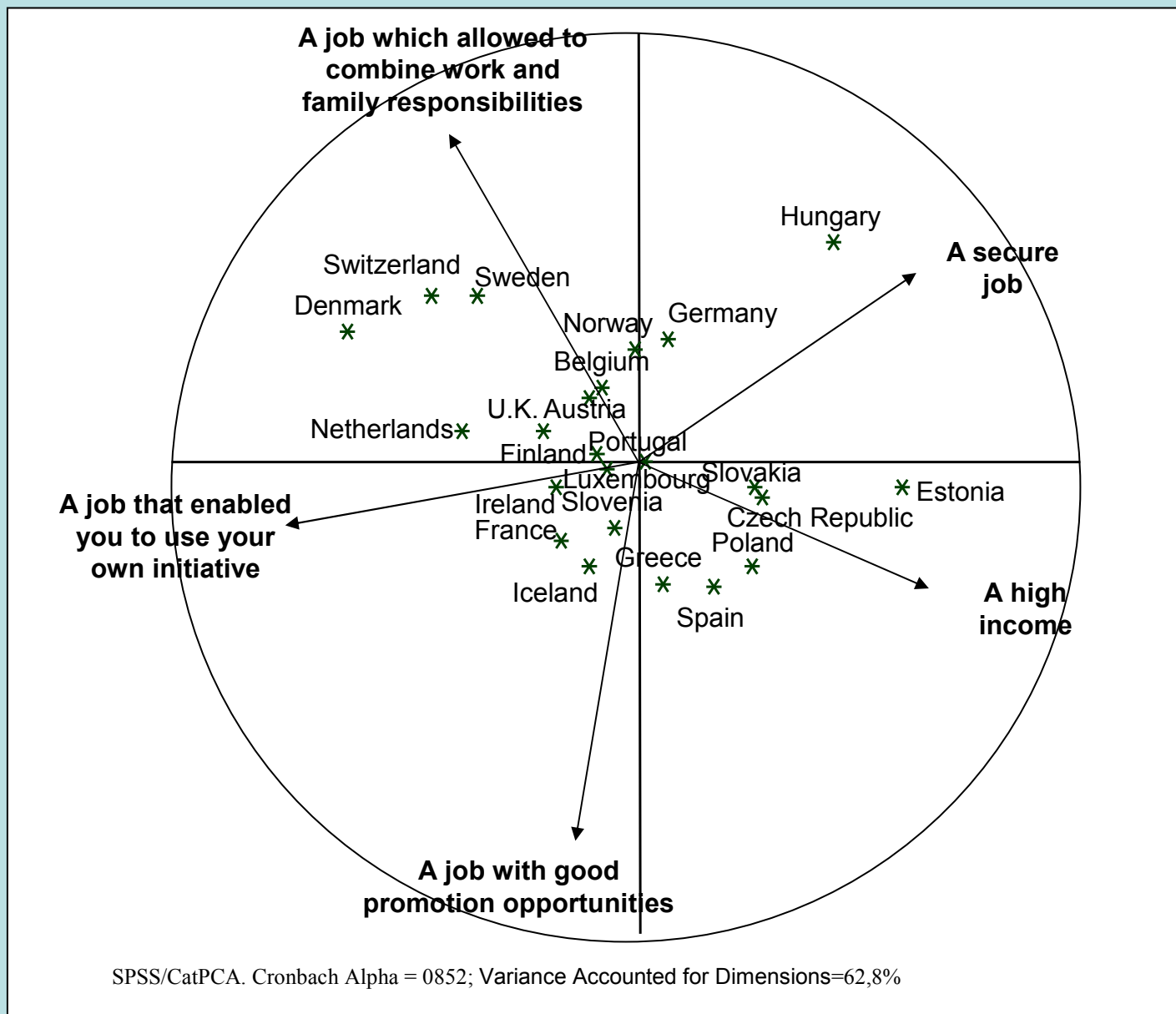
Source: ESS, round 2 (2004)

- About jobs, the majority of europeans give priority to security and to conciliation between work and family.
- They devalue high income and good promotion opportunities.
- A secure job is always above average and is the first priority in 19 cases. Exceptions are Sweden, Denmark, Iceland and Netherlands.

- In all countries, good promotion opportunities are below average and are the last priority. Exceptions are France, Portugal and Greece.
- A job that enabled initiative constitutes the first priority only in the cases of Sweden, Denmark, Iceland and Netherlands.
- Finally, for Enlargement and South European Countries a job that enabled initiative shows results below average, in most cases being the second last priority.

Concern with security indicates a reaction syndrome to the increasing labour market competitiveness due to globalization, and the resulting processes of dislocation and precariousness of labour.

Work values by country



Source: ESS, round 2 (2004)

Work values priorities by social class

(centred means)

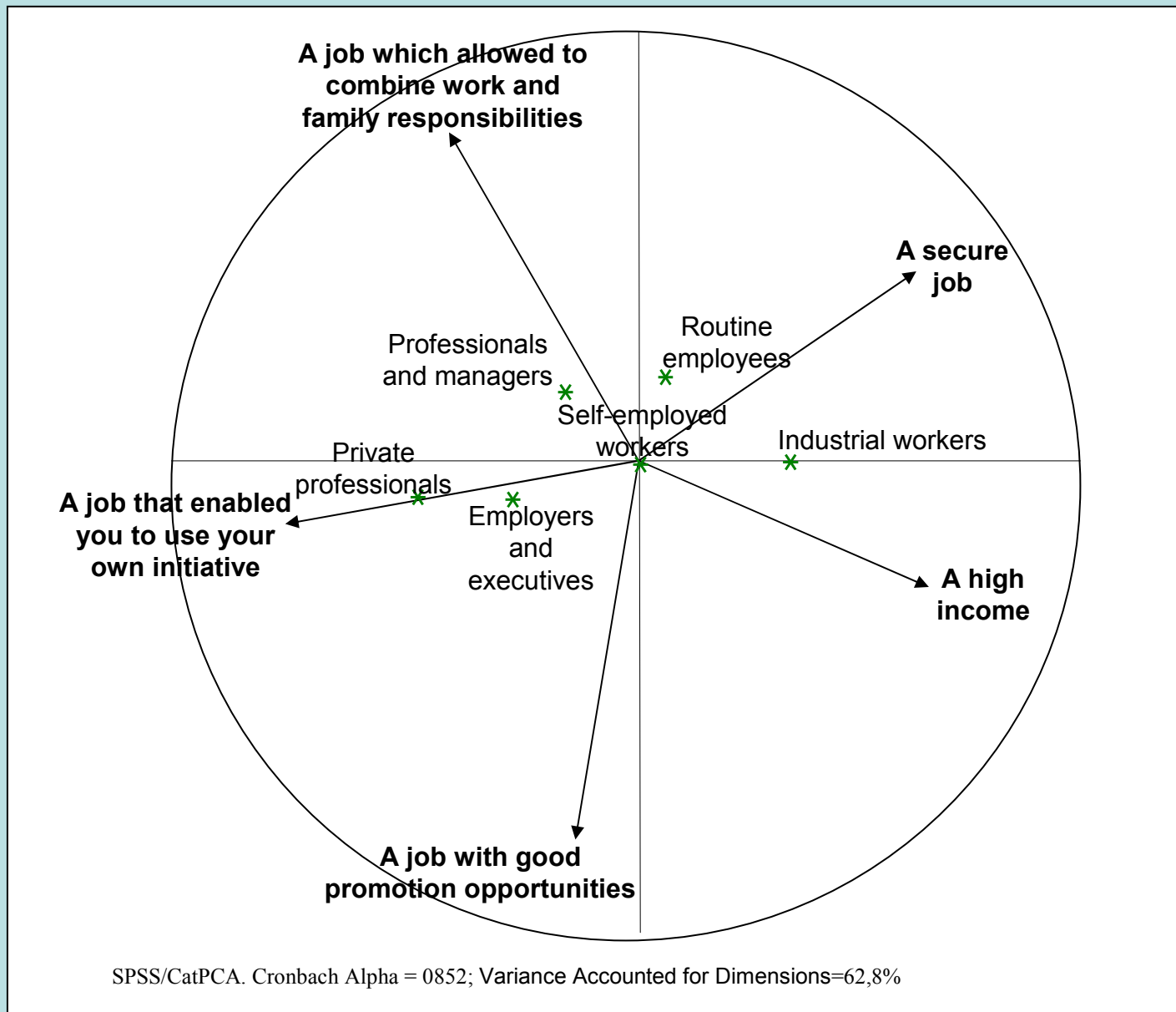


Source: ESS, round 2 (2004)

- Social classes also show different options. For all classes, good promotion opportunities constitutes, anyway, the last priority.
- High income only presents values above mean among industrial workers, being their second priority, just after a secure job.

- The private professionals have opposite profiles to industrial workers; they only coincide on the identical detachment to good promotion opportunities. Private professionals give primacy to job that allows initiative and conciliation between work and family responsibilities.
- Employers and executives, professionals and managers, and self-employed workers present a common value system, with results above average for a secure job, a job that permits initiatives, and one which allowed to combine work and family responsibilities.
- Finally, routine employees present results above average only for secure job and conciliation between work and family.

Work values by social class

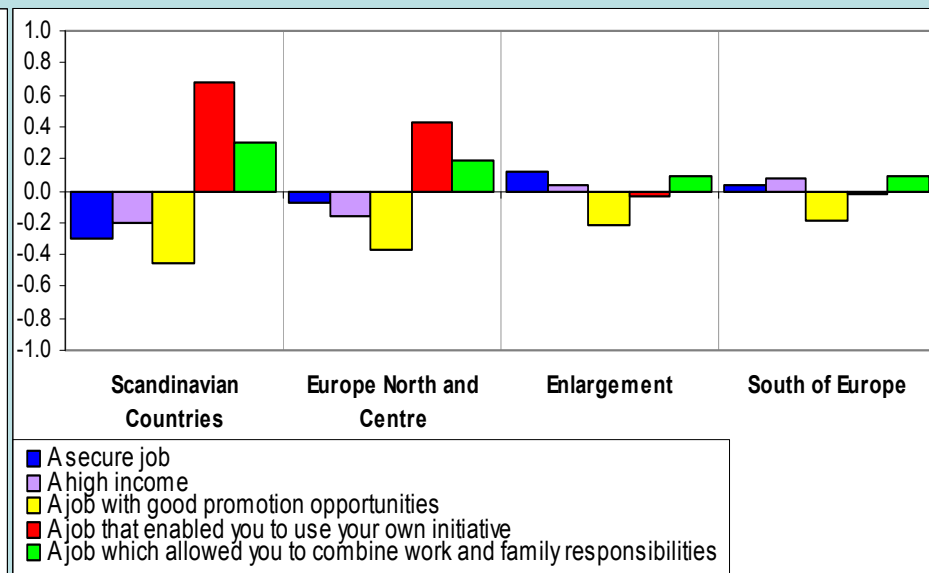
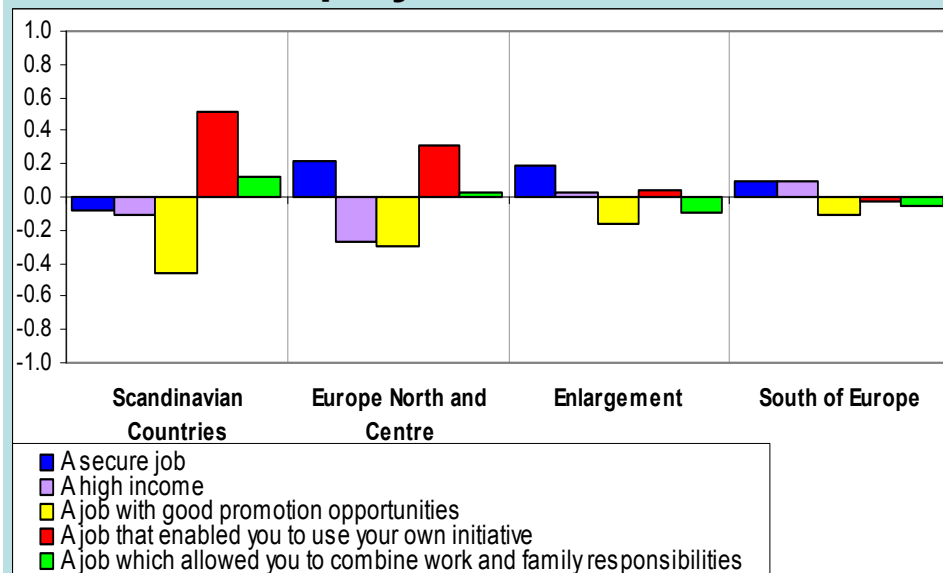


Source: ESS, round 2 (2004)

Work values priority by social class and country groups (centred means)

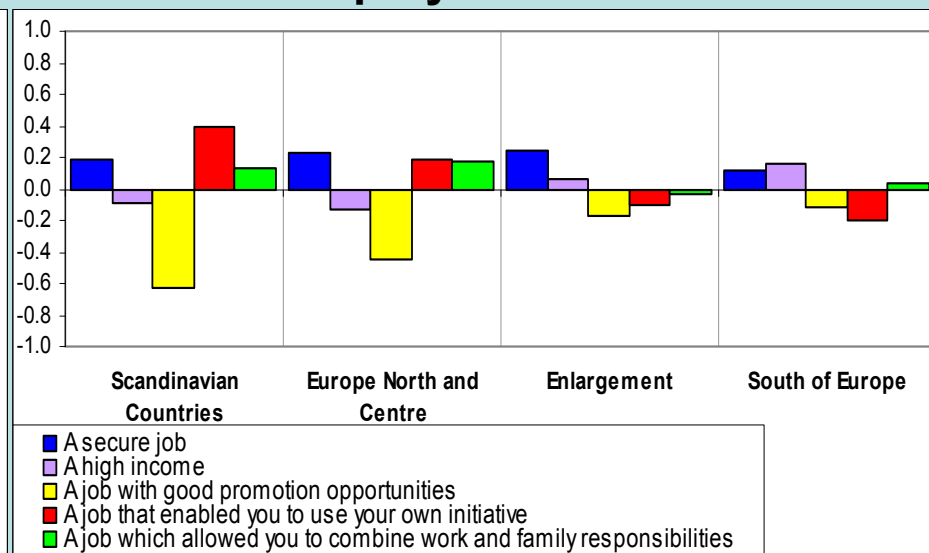
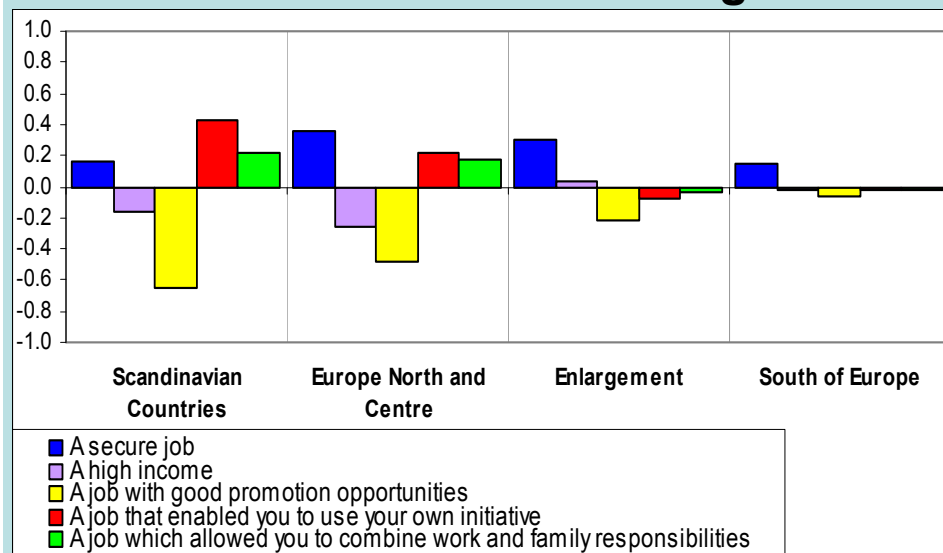
Employers and Executives

Private Professionals

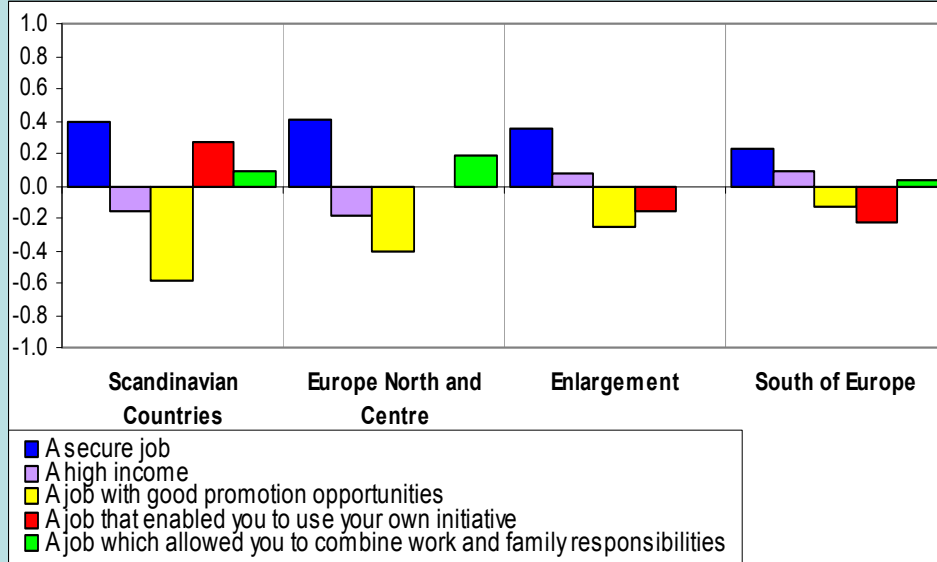


Professionals and Managers

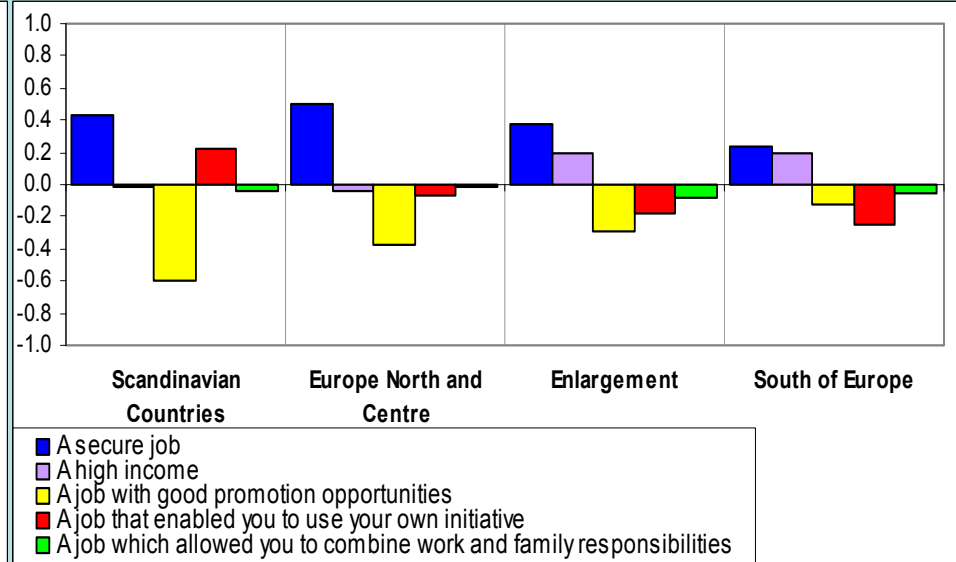
Self-Employed Workers



Routine Employees



Industrial Workers



Source: ESS, round 2 (2004)

- In the Scandinavian countries the most important values are:
 - A job that allows initiative; this is true for all classes;
 - A job that permits to combine work and family responsibilities, for classes with higher economic capital;
 - A secure job for the classes with less economic capital.
- In Northern and Central Europe only private professionals don't select a secure job in the two first options. Initiative only shows values lower than average in the case of routine employees and industrial workers.
- In Enlargement, a secure job has results above average for all classes.
- In Southern Europe all classes have results above the average for a secure job and high income, private professionals being the exception.

Synthesis table of the two most important work values

| | Scandinavian Countries | | Europe North and Centre | | Enlargement | | South of Europe | |
|-----------------------------------|--|---|--|---|---|----------------|---|----------------|
| | 1 ^o | 2 ^o | 1 ^o | 2 ^o | 1 ^o | 2 ^o | 1 ^o | 2 ^o |
| Employers and executives | A job that enabled to use own initiative | A job which allowed to combine work and family responsibilities | A job that enabled to use own initiative | A secure job | A secure job | | A secure job | A high income |
| Private professionals | A job that enabled to use own initiative | A job which allowed to combine work and family responsibilities | A job that enabled to use own initiative | A job which allowed to combine work and family responsibilities | A secure job and A job which allowed to combine work and family responsibilities | | A job which allowed to combine work and family responsibilities | A high income |
| Professionals and managers | A job that enabled to use own initiative | A job which allowed to combine work and family responsibilities | A secure job | A job that enabled to use own initiative | A secure job | | A secure job | |
| Self-employed workers | A job that enabled to use own initiative | A secure job | A secure job | A job that enabled to use own initiative | A secure job | | A high income | A secure job |
| Routine employees | A secure job | A job that enabled to use own initiative | A secure job | A job which allowed to combine work and family responsibilities | A secure job | A high income | A secure job | A high income |
| Industrial workers | A secure job | A job that enabled to use own initiative | A secure job | | A secure job | A high income | A secure job | A high income |

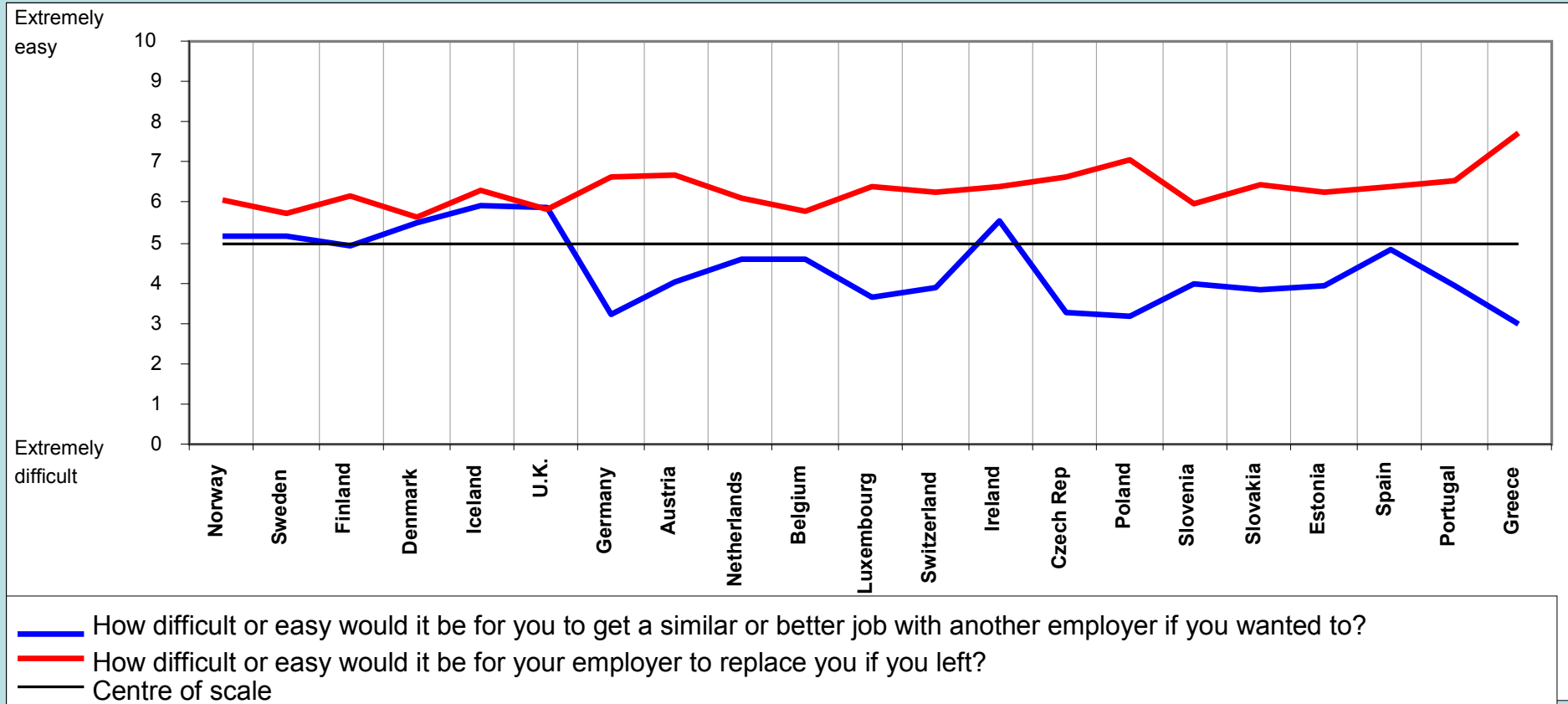
Source: ESS, round 2 (2004)

- **Between Scandinavian and North and Centre countries, on one side, and Enlargement and Southern, on the other, contrast is very clear.**

Different values come from different history and traditions, but the main causes of those contrasts have to do, probably, with the differences in economic development and the level of efficiency of the Welfare State.

People tend to evaluate with realism what goes on in their nations.

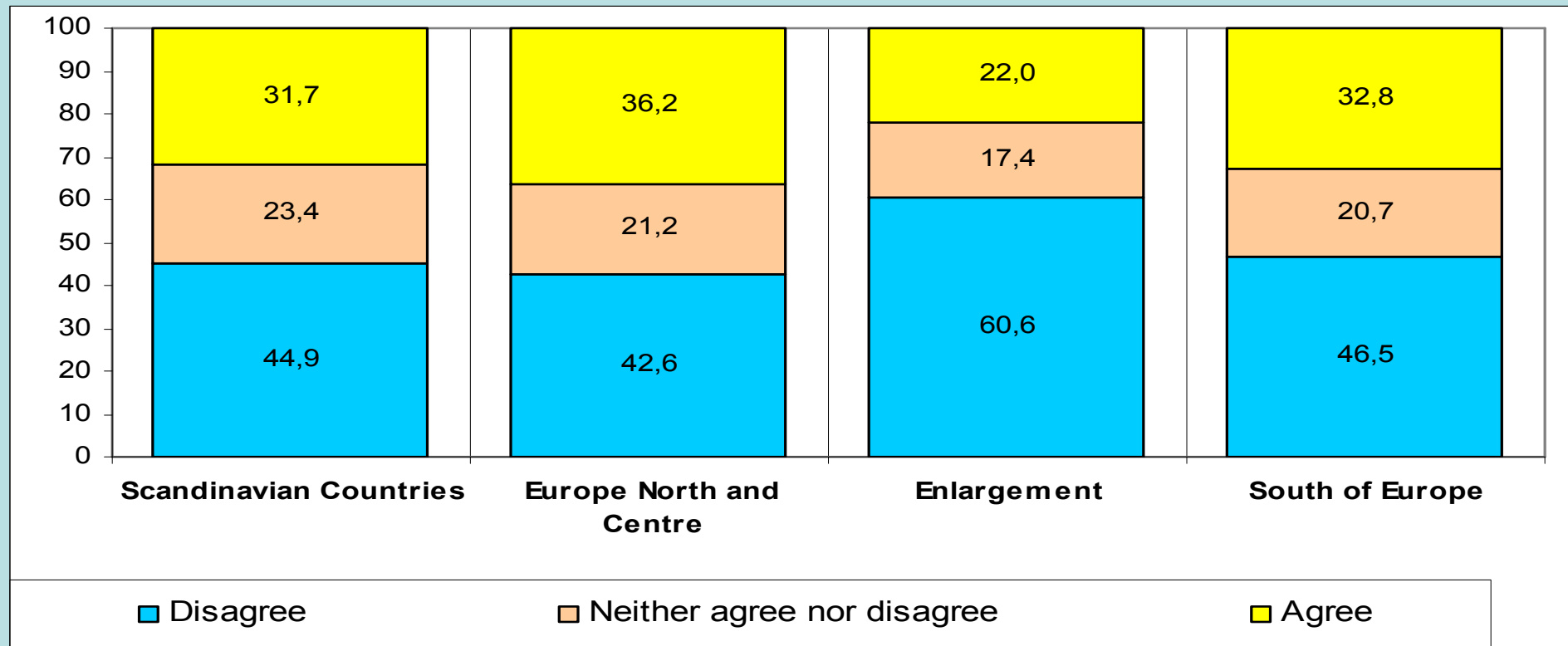
Difficulties in changing job



Source: ESS, round 2 (2004)

- In all countries, but even more in the Enlargement and in the South, respondents conclude that substitution is not problematic for the employer.
- In some Northern and Centre Countries – mainly in Germany – and in all Enlargement and the South, they consider much more difficult to find another adequate job.
- The gap between the first and the second evaluation is an additional sign of the pressure felt by most of the European employees.

I would turn down another job with higher pay in order to stay with this organisation (percent)

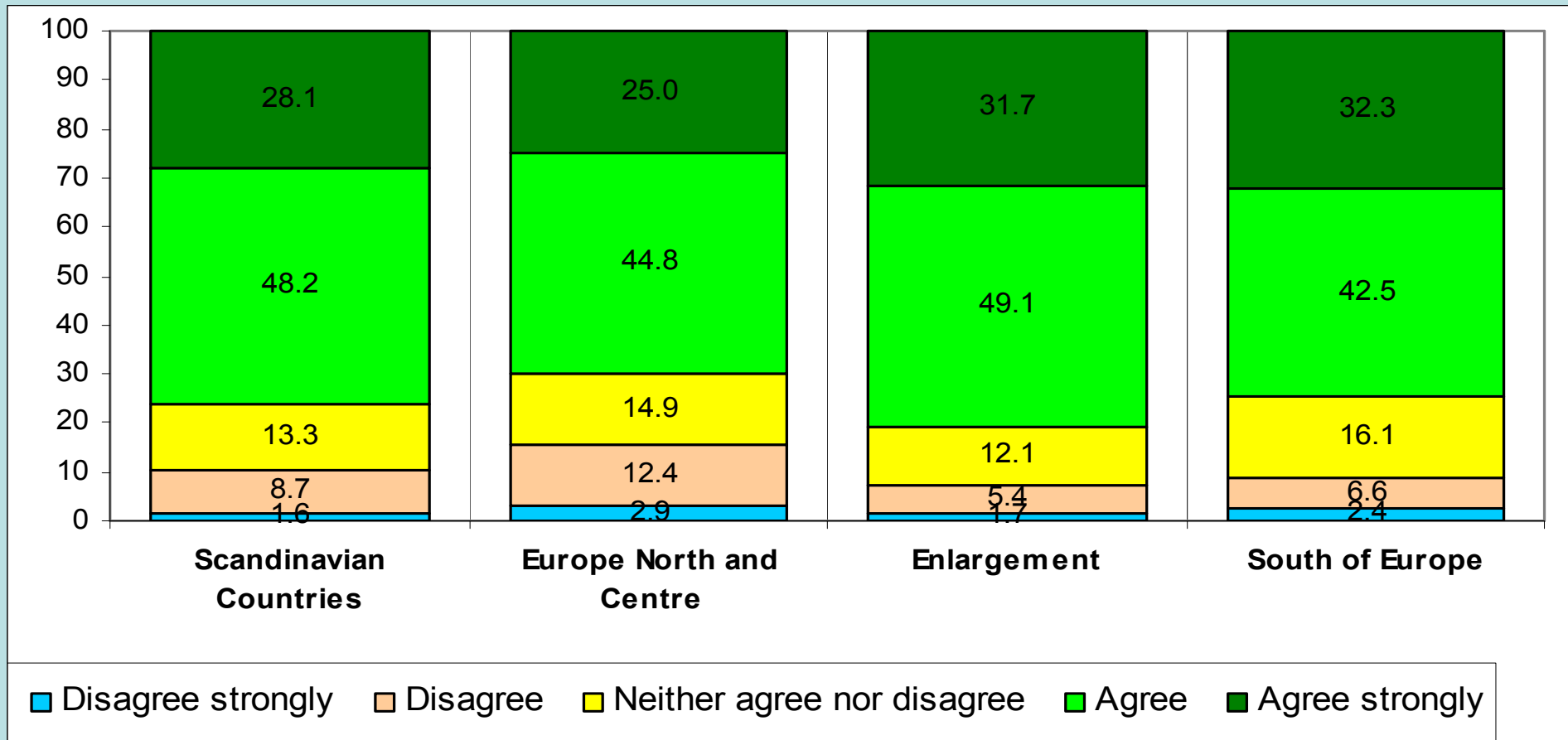


Source: ESS, round 2 (2004)

- **Fidelity to the employer organization is rather low: only about 32% of the european employees admit that they would reject another better paid job.**
- **In Enlargement countries more than 60% of the employees would accept the better paid job.**

Employees need strong trade unions to protect them

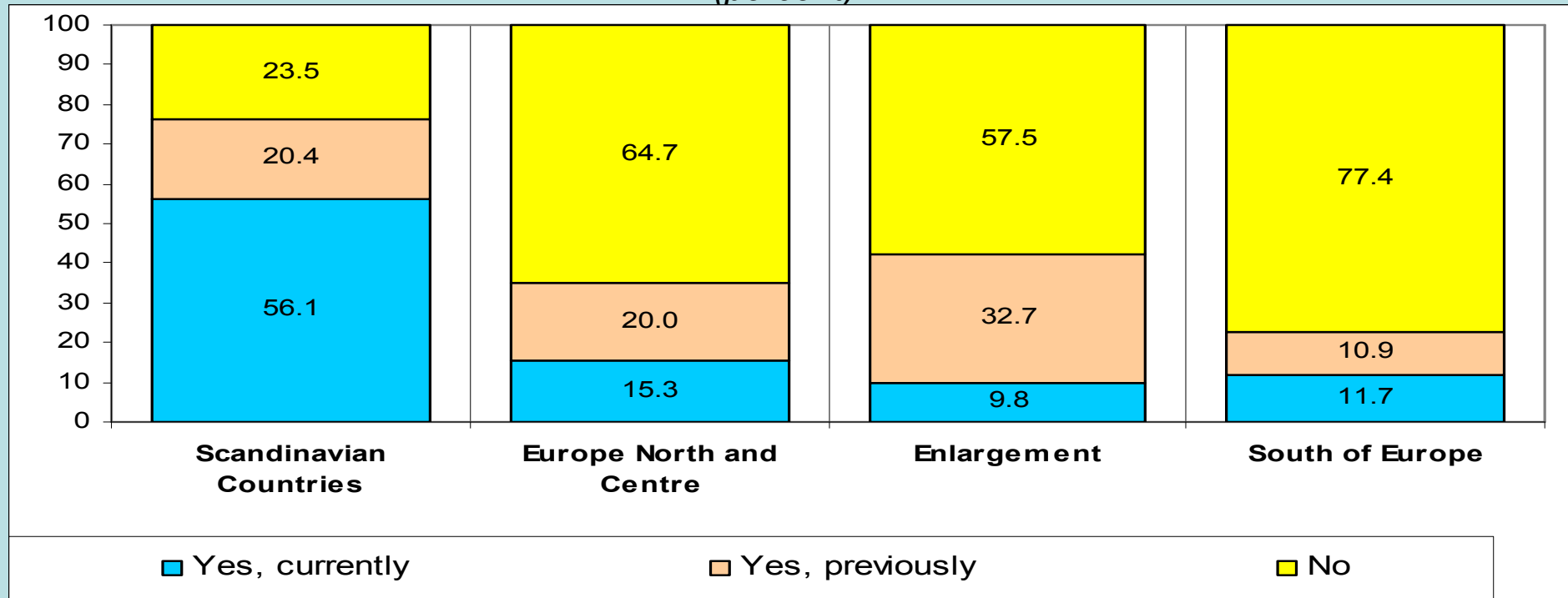
(percent)



Source: ESS, round 1 (2001)

- A clear majority of the europeans agree with the “need for strong trade unions to protect their working conditions and wages”.

Are you or have you ever been a member of a trade union? (percent)

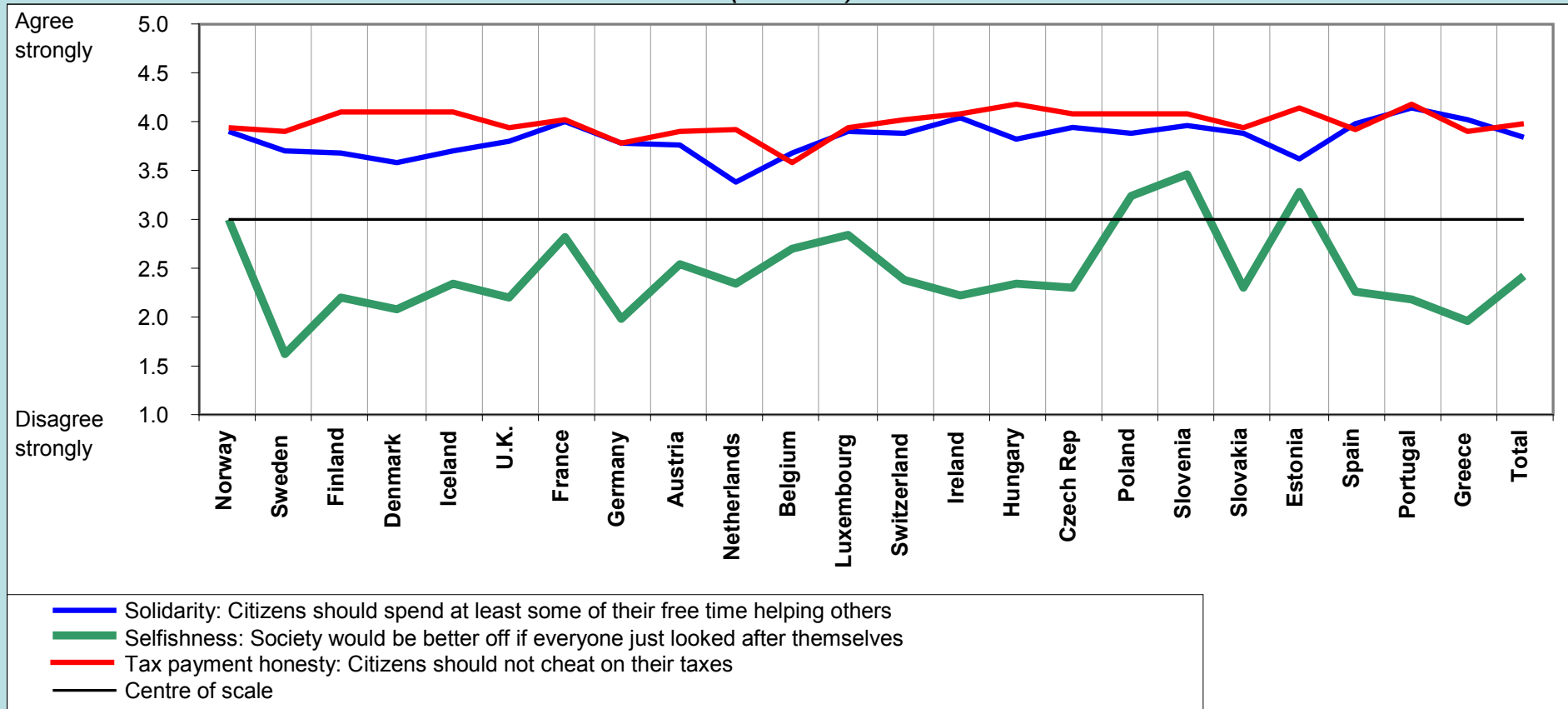


Source: ESS, round 2 (2004)

- Near 60% of the European employees say they don't belong to a trade union.
- High degree of trade unions enrolment depends, anyway, among other factors, on the level of services that these unions provide to their members. Significant levels of labour uncertainty and unemployment, on the other hand, don't favour that enrolment.
- Scandinavian countries have highest rate of enrolment, in huge contrast with Enlargement and South countries.

Solidarity, selfishness, and tax payment honesty, by country

(means)



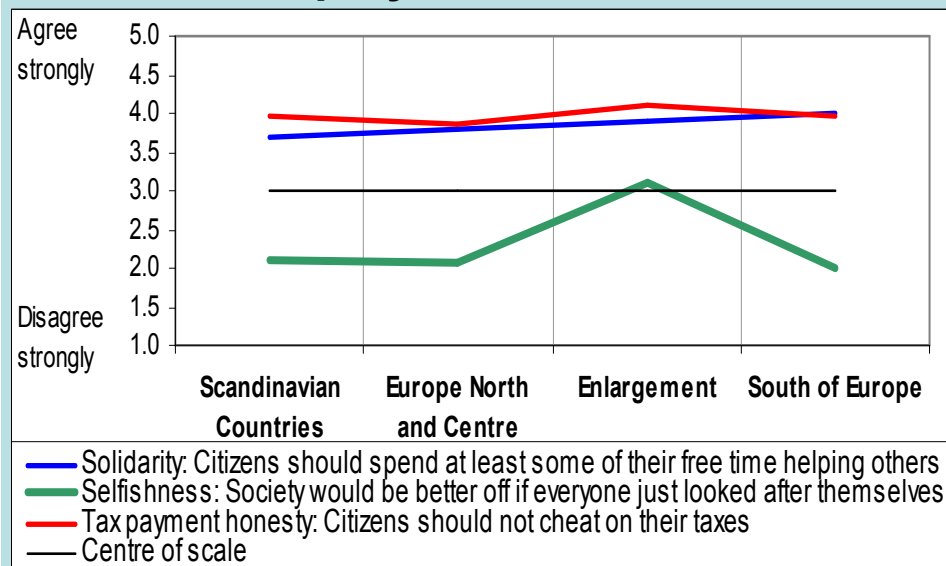
Source: ESS, round 2 (2004)

The two first indicators refer to the debate in modern societies, about social capital, individualism and fragmentation.

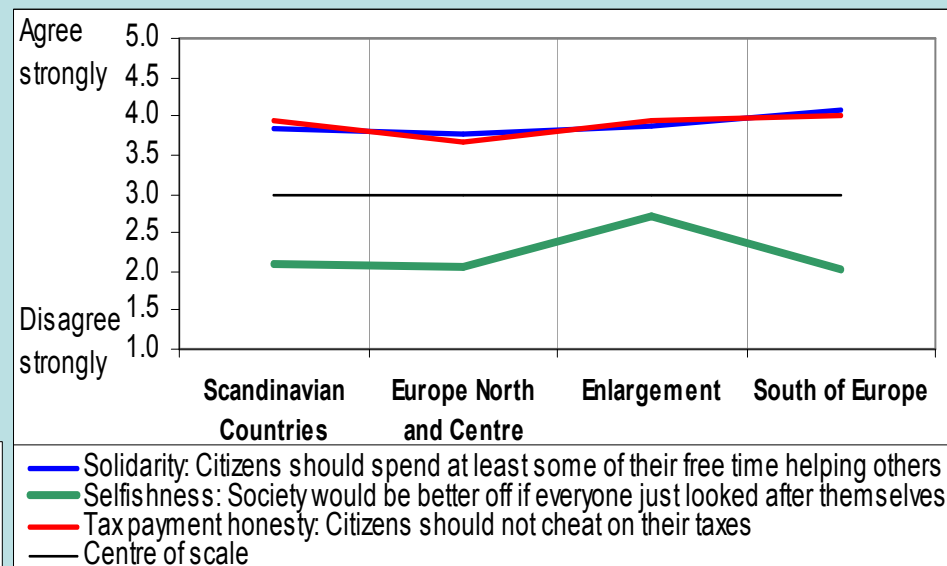
- Europeans are supportive and disagree of tax evasion.
- With exception Poland, Slovenia and Estonia, they don't consider themselves selfish.

Solidarity, selfishness, tax payment honesty, by social class and country groups (means)

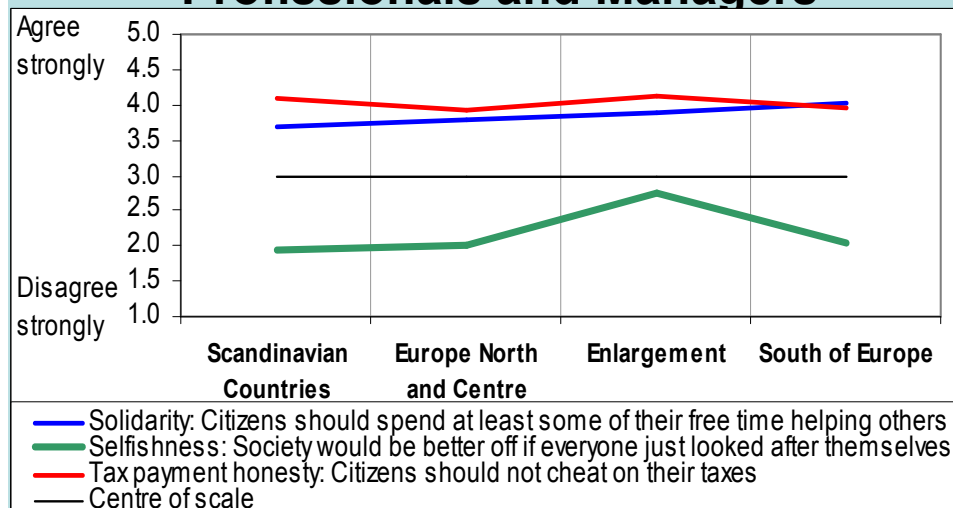
Employers and Executives



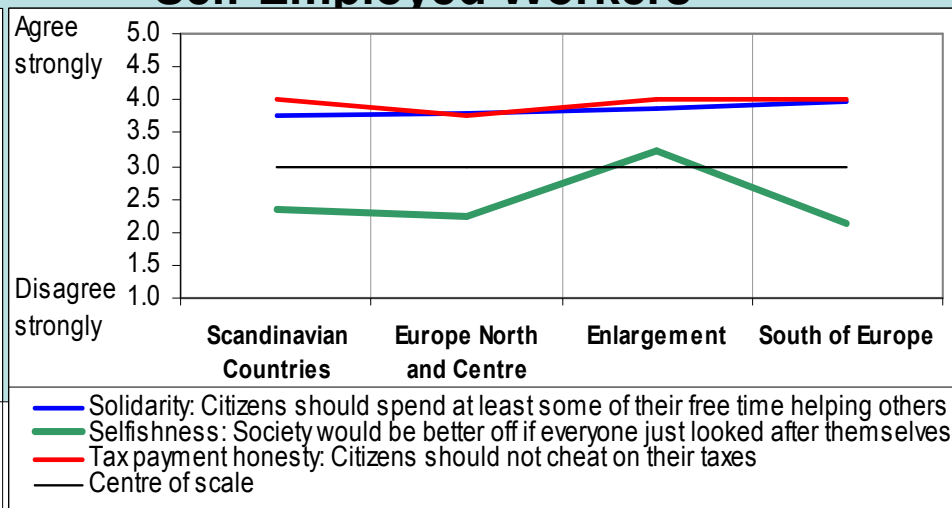
Private Professionals



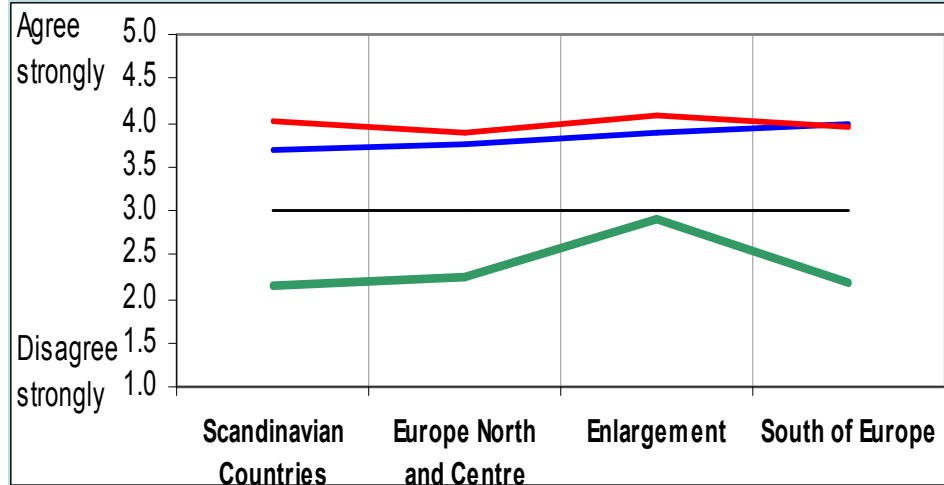
Professionals and Managers



Self-Employed Workers

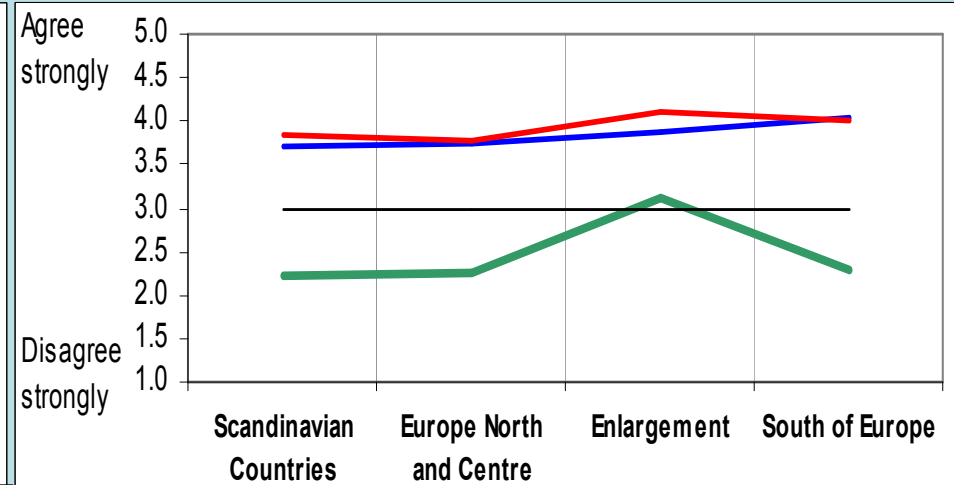


Routine Employees



— Solidarity: Citizens should spend at least some of their free time helping others
 — Selfishness: Society would be better off if everyone just looked after themselves
 — Tax payment honesty: Citizens should not cheat on their taxes
 — Centre of scale

Industrial Workers



— Solidarity: Citizens should spend at least some of their free time helping others
 — Selfishness: Society would be better off if everyone just looked after themselves
 — Tax payment honesty: Citizens should not cheat on their taxes
 — Centre of scale

Source: ESS, round 2 (2004)

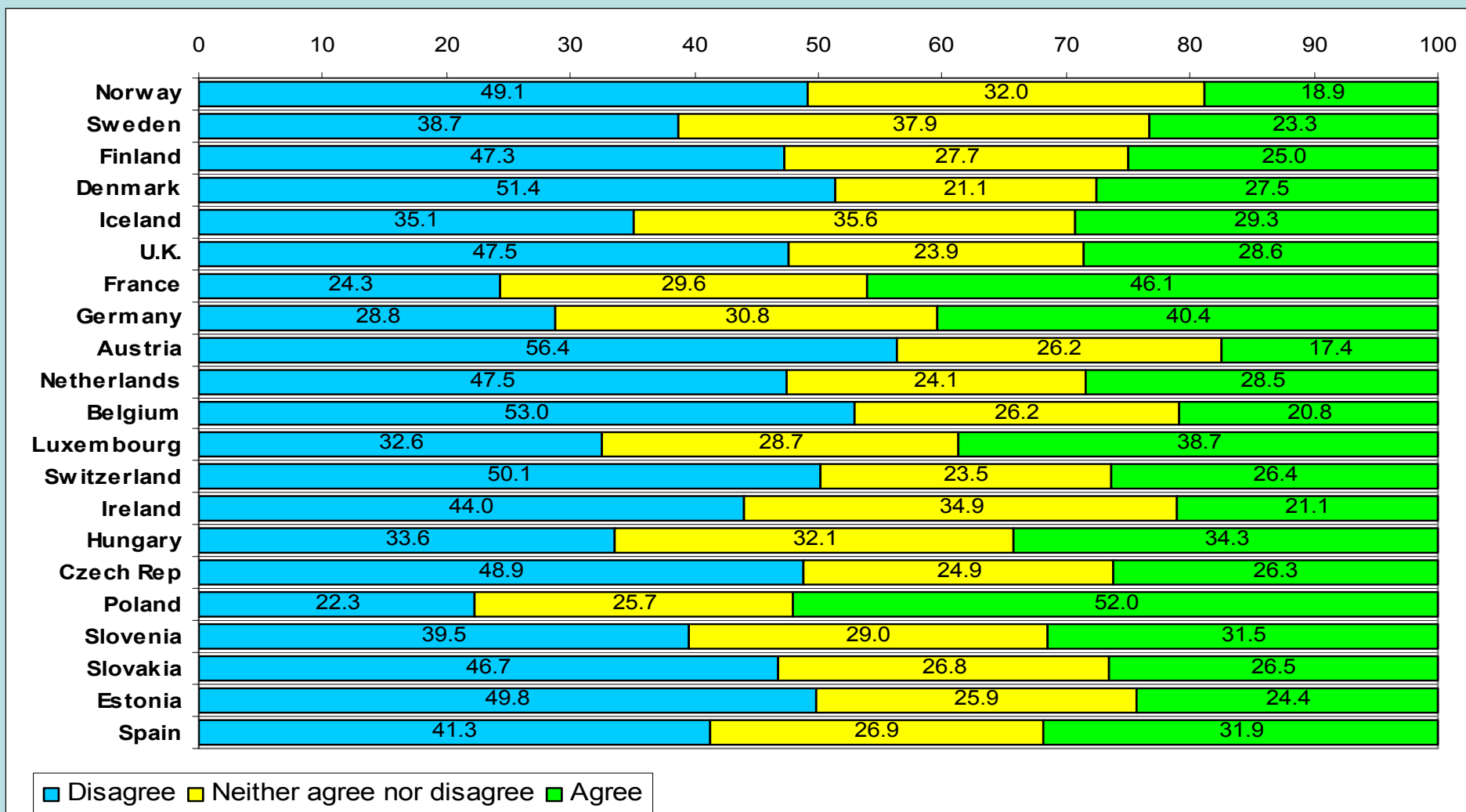
- In Scandinavian countries, Northern, Central and Southern Europe, all classes consider that we should be supportive, non selfish, and pay taxes.
- In Enlargement all classes value supportive and tax payment, but in what concerns selfishness, employers and executives, self-employed and industrial workers mostly agree that “society would be better off if everyone just looked after themselves.”

It is important to remind, anyway, that questions about behaviour ethics are the ones more prone to the “good answer”, that is, where it is more probable the distance from actual behaviour.

Europeans evaluation on state intervention in economy

The less that government intervenes in the economy, the better it is for the country

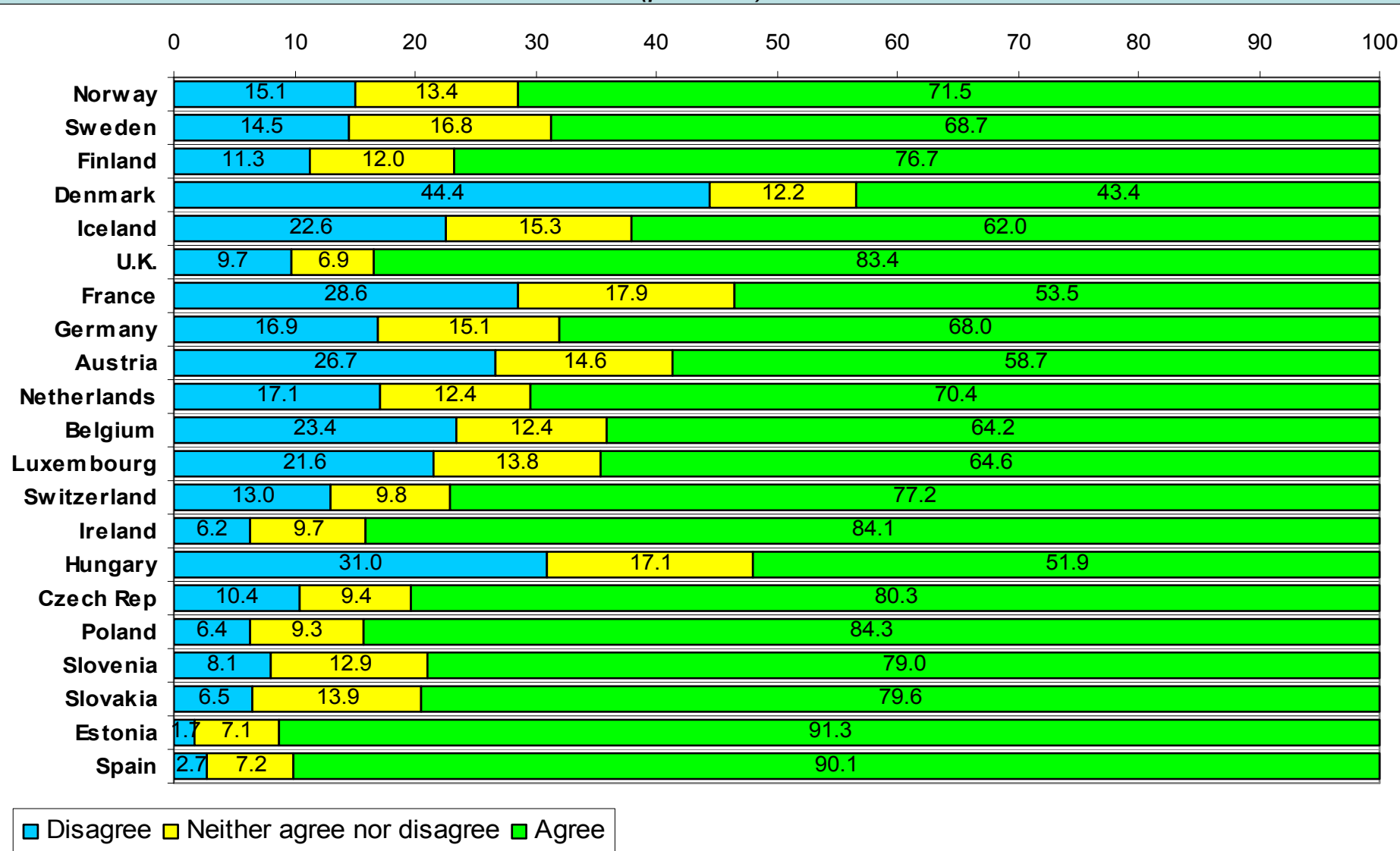
(percent)



Source: ESS, round 1 (2002)

The government should take measures to reduce differences in income levels

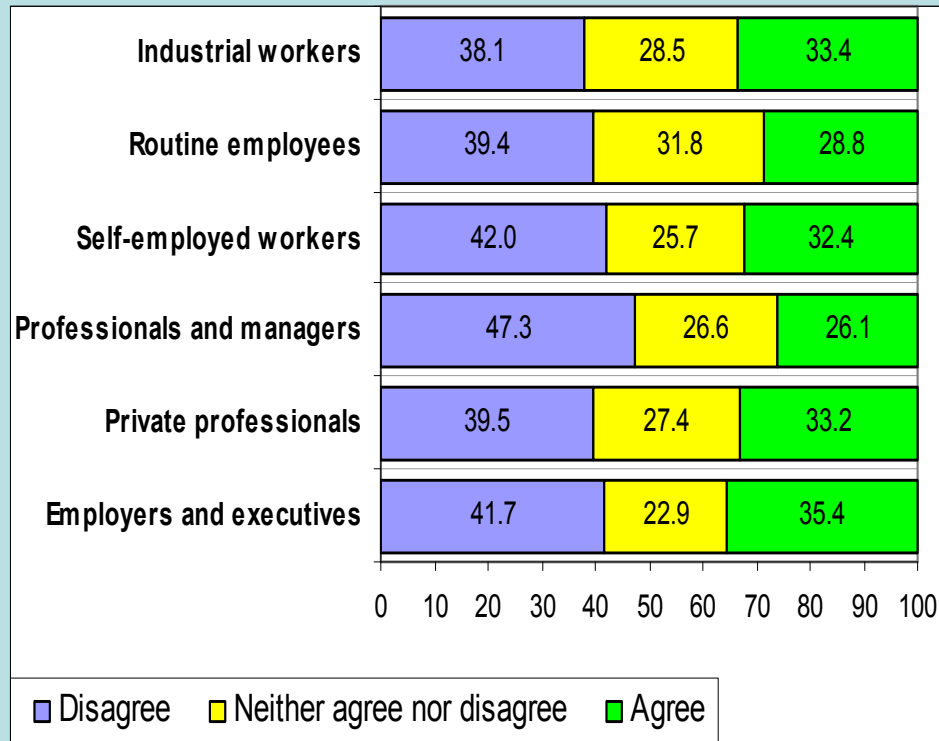
(percent)



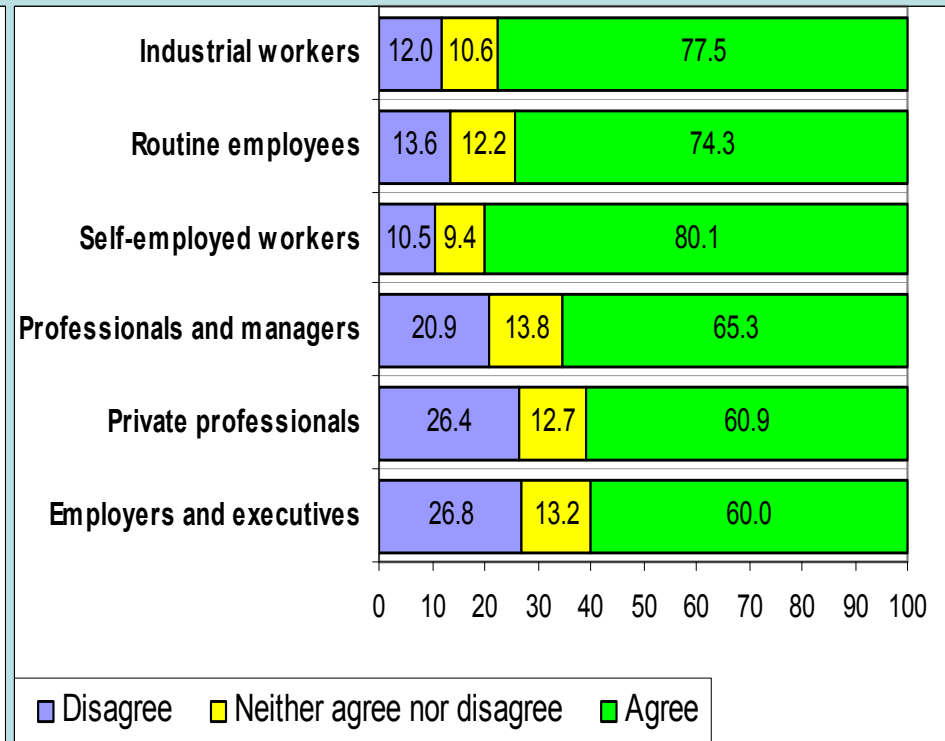
Source: ESS, round 1 (2002)

Government intervention in economy, by social class

The less that government intervenes in the economy, the better it is for the country



The government should take measures to reduce differences in income levels



Source: ESS, round 1 (2002)

- For the majority of the europeans, a interventionist role is expected from the State in the economy in general.
- When what is targeted is the reducing of inequalities, that intervention of the state is even much more desired, an mainly by classes with less capital.

That's all
Thank you for
your attention