

Chapter 6

Communications In The Workplace

This chapter examines current levels of consultation, information and communication in the workplace. It outlines the type of information available in the workplace and the extent to which workers' views are considered and acted upon.

6.1 Introduction

In this chapter we turn our attention to several aspects of communications and consultation within the workplace. We begin in Section 6.2 by considering employees' perceptions of their single most useful source of information on issues concerning the workplace. In Section 6.3 we move on to discuss the perceived regularity or otherwise of information flow from management on a range of work-related topics. These include information provided on issues such as the level of competition faced by the employer; plans to change company structures, introduce technology, change the range of products or services provided; budgets etc. Section 6.4 focuses on the employee's perception of the regularity of consultation by management prior to decisions being taken in areas which affect their own jobs. Finally, Section 6.5 provides a brief summary of our main findings.

6.2 Most useful source of information

In the course of the survey respondents were asked to select from 4 pre-coded options the most useful source of information concerning their workplace. The results are presented in Table 6.1.

From the bottom row of the table one can see that, in aggregate terms, almost 70% of employees cite Management/Supervisors as their most useful source of information. A further 20% (as many as 1 in 5 workers) record "the grapevine" as their most important source of workplace information. The residual are fairly equally split as between the Union/Staff Association (6%) and miscellaneous "Other" sources (5%).

The detail of the table illustrates some variations according to the range of classificatory variables considered throughout the analysis. One can see, for example, from Section A of the table that substantially higher than average percentages of employees in three sectors, viz. Public Administration/Defence (13%); Education (11%) and Transport/Storage/Communications (10%) cite the Trade Union or Staff Association as the single most useful source of information in contrast to, for example, Management/Supervisors. All three sectors are largely characterised as being generally (though not exclusively) related to the public sector. This trend is confirmed in Section B of the table which clearly illustrates the relative importance of Trade Union/Staff Association channels among Public Sector employees at the expense of more management-oriented sources. One can see that only 58% of Public Sector employees cite management as being among the most important source of information. This compares with 72% among their private sector counterparts.

Size of establishment (numbers employed in the local unit) would appear to be related to perceived relative importance of the main source of information. In broad terms, as size of local unit increases the perceived relative importance of management sources seems to decline somewhat while the percentages citing both Trade Union and informal (grapevine) sources increase. It is not at all surprising that this should be so. In smaller enterprises contact and communication with proprietor managers may simply be a consequence of size.

Table 6.2 provides details on variations in perceived relative importance of information sources within the workplace according to characteristics of the employee, in contrast to characteristics of their workplace (as represented in Table 6.1). In general, the story told by these figures in Table 6.2 suggests that full-time/part-time work status; nature of tenure (permanent or temporary) and gender are not related to perceived importance of information sources within the workplace.

Table 6.1 Employees' perceptions of the most useful source of information concerning their workplace classified according to characteristics of the workplace

	Most Useful Source of Information				Total
	Management/ Supervisors	Union/Staff Association	The Grapevine	Other	
	%	%	%	%	
A. Economic Sector					
Manufacturing Industry & Primary	70.6	4.9	19.9	4.6	100.0
Construction	73.7	5.4	17.4	3.5	100.0
Wholesale/Retail	71.9	4.5	20.4	3.2	100.0
Hotels, Restaurants etc	72.7	1.8	21.7	3.8	100.0
Transport Storage Communications	61.3	9.5	25.1	4.2	100.0
Finance & Oth Business Services	72.6	2.7	19.5	5.2	100.0
Public Admin & Defence	61.4	13.2	17.9	7.5	100.0
Education	56.6	11.0	26.0	6.4	100.0
Health	65.5	7.9	22.7	4.0	100.0
Other Services	74.8	1.7	16.6	6.9	100.0
B. Public / Private Sector					
Public Sector	58.2	13.4	22.1	6.3	100.0
Private Sector/Comm Semi-State	71.5	4.0	20.2	4.3	100.0
C. Size of Local Unit					
1-4 employees	75.3	2.2	15.9	6.5	100.0
5-19 employees	73.4	2.9	18.7	5.0	100.0
20-99 employees	63.2	8.2	23.5	5.1	100.0
100+ employees	68.5	7.3	21.1	3.0	100.0
Total	69.2	5.7	20.4	4.7	100.0

Sections D and E indicate that age of employee and their length of tenure in current job are to some degree related to the importance assigned to the four sources of information. It would appear that the importance of formal management sources wanes slightly (but not substantially) with age while "Other" sources assume an increasing importance as the employee gets older. These miscellaneous "Other" sources include informal contacts outside the workplace; the media; industry groups

or representative bodies etc. Similarly, the importance of formal management sources declines somewhat with length of tenure in current job. This is paralleled by a commensurate increase in the relative importance of the Trade Union or Staff Association with length of service. This trend could, perhaps, reflect a tendency for employees to join the Trade Union or Staff Association after an initial settling-in period in their job.

Table 6.2 Employees' perceptions of the most useful source of information concerning their workplace classified according to characteristics of the employee

	Most Useful Source of Information				Total
	Management/ Supervisors	Union/Staff Association	The Grapevine	Other	
	%	%	%	%	
A. Full-Time/Part-Time					
Part-time (<30 hrs/wk)	67.9	5.5	22.0	4.7	100.0
Full-time (30+ hrs/wk)	69.2	5.9	20.3	4.7	100.0
B. Nature of Contract					
Permanent	68.8	6.3	20.1	4.8	100.0
Temporary/Casual	69.5	3.3	23.3	3.9	100.0
C. Gender					
Male	69.3	6.1	20.0	4.6	100.0
Female	68.5	5.5	21.2	4.8	100.0
D. Age					
< 25 years	73.1	5.2	19.5	2.2	100.0
25-39 years	69.0	5.9	20.7	4.4	100.0
40-54 years	66.6	6.1	21.8	5.5	100.0
55 years+	67.1	5.6	18.5	8.8	100.0
E. Tenure in Current Job					
< 1 year	74.7	3.0	18.9	3.4	100.0
1-5 years	71.8	4.4	19.9	3.9	100.0
5+ years	65.3	7.7	21.2	5.8	100.0
Total	69.2	5.7	20.4	4.7	100.0

6.3 Provision of information by management

In the course of the survey private sector employees (including those engaged in the commercial semi-state sector) were asked to record the regularity with which management provided them with information on 6 different aspects of their work as follows:

- The level of competition faced by their employer
- Plans to develop new products or services
- Plans to introduce new technology
- Plan to re-organise the company e.g. mergers; joint ventures; staff reductions etc.
- Plans to change work practices e.g. working in teams etc.
- Information on sales, profit, market share etc.

Given differences in the issues facing public and private sector organisations the areas presented to public sector employees varied somewhat from those presented to private sector respondents. Accordingly, public sector employees were asked to record the regularity with which they received information on the following:

- The budget of the organisation
- Plans to improve the service their organisation provides
- Plans to introduce new technology
- Plans to re-organise how public services are delivered
- Plans to change work practices e.g. working in teams.

All respondents (public and private sector) were asked to indicate whether they received information on each of the areas in question on a regular basis, occasional basis or hardly ever.¹

To present a summary measure of how regularly management informed its employees we assigned a score of “2” to each item if the respondent said he/she was informed on a “regular basis”; a score of “1” if he/she was informed “occasionally” and a score of “0” if he/she recorded that management “hardly ever” provided the information in question. The average score was then calculated for each respondent across the six relevant items of information for private sector respondents and across the five items of information for public sector employees. This means that each respondent had a potential average “information score” ranging from 2 in a situation where information on all relevant items was provided by management on a “regular basis” to 0 in situations where information on all items was “hardly ever” provided. The results are summarised in Table 6.3 below.

The authors point out that this is a simplified way of presenting the data. Nonetheless, it does provide a summary index whose construction is extremely transparent. We clearly do not claim that the set of pre-coded items presented to respondents was comprehensive or exhaustive of the full range of information which could be provided to employees by management. It does, however, cover the main areas which could potentially impact on the shape of the workplace of the future in the extent to which the items included address changes in strategy; the competitive environment within which the company operates; the general financial performance of the company and the way in which work is organised.

¹ See Qs 43a and 43b of Questionnaire, Appendix A.

Table 6.3 Mean scores on summary measures of information provided by management to public and private sector employees

	Private Sector	Public Sector
	Mean	Mean
A. Economic Sector		
Manufacturing Industry & Primary	0.9	1.1
Construction	0.6	0.5
Wholesale/Retail	0.9	-
Hotels, Restaurants etc	0.6	-
Transport Storage Communications	1.0	1.1
Finance & Other Business Services	1.1	1.5
Public Admin & Defence	-	1.2
Education	0.7	1.0
Health	0.6	0.9
Other Services	0.7	1.1
B. Size of Local Unit		
1-4 employees	0.7	0.9
5-19 employees	0.8	1.1
20-99 employee	0.8	1.0
100+ employees	1.1	1.1
Total	0.9	1.0

From the bottom line of Table 6.3 one can see that, in aggregate, public and private sector employees would appear to be equally informed by management with both groups having a mean score of 1.

Section A of the table provides details on variations in perceived levels of information from management according to industrial sector. The figures show, for example, that private sector employees involved in construction; hotel/restaurants etc.; education; health and other services indicate lower perceived levels of management information than their counterparts in other sectors. There would appear to be less overall variation among public sector employees with the exception of those in the construction sector where information levels are perceived to be particularly low.

Section B of the table would suggest that perceived levels of available management information do not seem to be substantially impacted upon by type of firm.

From Table 6.4 it would appear that full-time and permanent employees in both private and public sector organisations feel better informed by management than their part-time or temporary/-casual counterparts (Sections A and B of Table 6.4).

One can clearly see from the table that there is quite a strong relationship between receipt of information from management and level of educational attainment and also social class for both public and private sector employees. In the private sector the average for higher professional workers is 3.3 times that of unskilled manual workers. The comparable ratio in the public sector is 2.5. Similarly, the ratio

Table 6.4 Mean score on summary measures of information provided by management to public and private sector employees classified according to characteristics of the employee

	Private Sector	Public Sector
	Mean	Mean
A. Full-Time/Part-Time		
Part-time (<30 hrs/wk)	0.7	0.9
Full-time (30+ hrs/wk)	0.9	1.1
B. Nature of Contract		
Permanent	0.9	1.1
Temporary/Casual	0.5	0.8
C. Tenure in Current Job		
< 1 year	0.7	0.9
1-5 years	0.8	1.0
5+years	1.0	1.1
D. Educational Attainment		
Primary or less	0.6	0.5
Junior/Inter. Certificate	0.7	0.8
Leaving Certificate	0.9	1.1
Third level or equivalent	1.1	1.2
E. Social Class		
Higher Professional, Managers	1.4	1.4
Lower Prof, Managers, Proprietors	1.2	1.1
Other Non-Manual	0.9	1.1
Skilled Manual	0.7	0.7
Semi-Skilled manual	0.7	0.8
Unskilled Manual	0.4	0.6
Total	0.9	1.0

between those with third level qualifications and those with primary level or less is 1.9 times in the private and 2.5 times in the public sector. These trends with social class and level of attainment may, of course, reflect the level at which an employee is working in his/her organisation. They may also, at least to some degree, reflect their ability to assimilate and access information from management. In other words, the information may

actually be provided to all workers but those with lower levels of educational attainment or from lower social class categories may not be aware of its relevance or indeed may not want to access it. One can, of course, only surmise as to whether or not this is, in fact, the case.

An alternative way of considering trends in levels of information provided by management would be to focus on the responses to each of the individual pre-coded items presented to respondents in the course of the survey. Table 6.5 presents summary information on the percentage of employees who record that they “hardly ever” receive any information from management in the area in question. The reader is reminded that the respondent was given the three options of recording that he/she received the information on a:

- Regular basis
- Occasionally
- Hardly ever

The figures in Table 6.5 relate only to the percentages who recorded “hardly ever” and links this to personal characteristics.

Section A provided details in respect of the private sector while Section B provides information on the public sector. From the bottom row of Section A one can see that 36-42% of private sector employees record that they “hardly ever” receive information in areas such as the introduction of new products/ services; new technology; level of competition faced by the company and changes in work practices. At least three of these four issues have a very directly impact on the day-to-day work of respondents. Information on the level of competition faced by the employer is slightly different from the other three items in the sense that it does not directly impact on the day-to-day operational procedures of the work. The fact that well over one-third of all private sector employees feel that they are “hardly ever” given information on areas such as product innovation; new technology or work practices is somewhat disconcerting.

Table 6.5 | Percentage of private and public sector employees who record

	SECTION A:	
	Level of competition	Introducing new products/ services
B. Size of Local Unit		
1-4 employees	45.0	39.2
5-19 employees	44.8	40.0
20-99 employees	44.7	41.7
100+ employees	31.8	26.1
C. Full-Time/Part-Time		
Part-time (<30 hrs/wk)	51.8	43.6
Full-time (30+ hrs/wk)	39.1	35.1
D. Nature of Contract		
Permanent	37.5	33.8
Temporary/Casual	60.9	51.2
E. Tenure in Current Job		
< 1 year	55.5	46.5
1-<5 years	43.1	37.3
5+years	34.0	31.4
F. Union Membership		
Member	34.2	31.1
Non-Member	44.1	38.9
H. Age		
< 25 years	54.0	47.0
25-39 years	38.7	34.0
40-54 years	34.8	31.0
55 years+	38.3	37.8
I. Educational Attainment		
Primary or less	58.2	54.4
Junior/Inter. Cert.	45.9	45.5
Leaving Certificate	39.2	33.9
Third level or equivalent	30.9	23.4
J. Social Class		
Higher Professional, Managers	19.6	18.7
Lower Prof, Managers, Proprietors	27.8	21.1
Other Non-Manual	39.8	34.1
Skilled Manual	48.4	41.5
Semi-Skilled manual	45.8	41.4
Unskilled Manual	59.7	61.2
TOTAL	41.1	36.5

that they “hardly ever” receive information from management on a range of items regarding their company or organisation

PRIVATE SECTOR				SECTION B: PUBLIC SECTOR				
<i>Information on:</i>				<i>Information on:</i>				
Introducing new technology	Reorganise company	Changes in work practices	Sales profits etc.	Budget of organisation	Improve services provided	Introducing new technology	Reorganise service delivery	Changes in work practices
43.9	67.6	51.6	62.7	51.0	35.5	39.1	46.8	44.0
44.7	64.9	47.9	58.6	38.2	27.2	28.5	33.4	29.6
43.2	59.6	44.9	57.6	49.3	25.2	28.1	35.6	33.3
28.4	45.1	29.5	35.7	41.3	22.9	28.2	35.4	31.3
48.9	68.8	51.3	67.1	49.0	32.3	34.3	42.6	38.5
37.7	55.9	40.5	49.5	42.6	23.2	27.3	33.6	30.6
36.5	55.1	39.3	48.6	40.5	21.9	25.5	32.7	30.9
55.6	73.4	58.1	72.8	61.5	42.9	45.8	51.1	40.9
51.9	70.0	51.8	62.6	53.1	32.9	43.3	47.7	43.7
42.4	59.6	43.0	56.2	48.2	28.4	31.6	39.1	31.8
32.2	51.8	37.7	44.9	41.3	23.6	26.0	32.6	30.8
34.2	51.9	34.4	45.4	40.8	19.8	24.1	30.5	27.9
41.8	60.6	45.7	55.4	52.1	38.8	40.6	48.2	43.6
51.0	68.8	51.0	63.2	49.5	21.1	30.0	40.8	32.3
38.0	57.1	39.1	49.1	44.3	27.7	32.6	36.8	33.3
33.1	50.2	37.9	47.5	44.5	23.4	25.3	33.3	31.2
36.3	58.3	47.8	53.7	39.6	30.5	31.7	40.4	37.2
58.1	70.9	54.7	72.5	70.7	66.0	69.0	69.5	54.5
51.9	66.5	51.6	62.9	51.6	32.3	40.5	49.8	44.5
35.6	56.3	39.0	49.4	42.0	21.8	25.6	32.2	28.9
26.8	46.0	34.3	37.2	38.4	18.4	20.5	28.4	28.5
18.3	32.1	22.4	24.0	18.6	14.0	15.4	19.2	27.8
18.1	40.4	33.3	34.6	37.9	17.0	20.3	31.3	23.0
32.6	55.5	41.0	47.1	45.1	24.6	27.5	33.4	35.6
45.7	66.9	47.8	66.4	66.1	49.6	47.9	49.5	31.7
50.7	67.0	47.3	57.5	51.7	36.1	44.0	50.5	45.1
68.4	75.4	56.2	80.8	76.9	55.1	61.9	62.6	51.5
39.5	58.0	42.2	52.4	44.3	25.7	29.1	36.0	32.7

Table 6.6 Employees classified according to their perceived experience of consultation about decision making in their company or organisation

	Almost Always	Often	Sometimes	Rarely	Almost Never	Total
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Consulted before decisions which affect your work?	26.8	21.1	24.2	14.6	13.3	100.0
If changes occur, how often given the reason why?	35.9	20.6	21.8	12.4	9.3	100.0
If consulted before decisions, is attention paid to your views?	31.4	18.3	27.7	12.5	10.2	100.0

One can also see from the figures that even higher percentages of private sector employees record having hardly ever received information on sales or profits and also on company restructuring or re-organisation (52% and 58% respectively).

The detail of the table suggests that a reasonably consistent relationship holds for all 6 items of information with each of the main classificatory variables in the table. For example, one can see that provision of information² by management increases with size of establishment; it is much higher among full-time than part-time staff; among permanent than temporary staff and it increases with length of tenure, age, level of educational attainment and social class.

Comparable figures for public sector employees are outlined in Section B of the table. These suggest that somewhat, lower percentages of employees record that they are “hardly ever” provided with the relevant information by management. One can see that just over one-quarter record that they hardly ever receive information on improving the quality of services. Approximately, one-third (29–33%) record “hardly ever” receiving information on the

² From the table the provision of information can be taken as the obverse of the percentage recording that they ‘hardly ever’ receive the information in question.

introduction of new technology; re-organising of service delivery or changes to workplace practices. The area with the highest percentage of employees recording that they hardly ever receive information from management relates to issues of budget for the organisation in question. Although the percentages of persons who “hardly ever” receive the information in question are generally lower than among their private sector counterparts the relationship between perceived receipt of information and all of the classificatory variables contained in the table is entirely consistent with the trends displayed by private sector employees.

6.4 Consultations on decisions and change in the workplace

The final aspect of communications considered relates to the degree of prior consultation with employees before management decisions which affect their work are taken and the extent to which employees’ views or concerns are listened to within the workplace.

A total of three questions was asked of respondents, viz.

- How often are you and your colleagues consulted before decisions are taken that affect your work?
- If changes in your work occur, how often are you given the reason why?

- If you are consulted before decisions are made is any attention paid to your views (see Q44 of Questionnaire in Appendix A).

Respondents were asked to record whether or not each happened “almost always”; “often”; “sometimes”; “rarely” or “almost never”.

Table 6.6 provides information on the aggregate percentages of respondents falling into each of the response categories.

The figures show 28% of employees record that they are rarely or almost never consulted before decisions are taken which affect their work. Almost 22% feel that if changes occur in their work they are rarely or almost never given the reason for the changes. Just under one-quarter of respondents feel that if they are consulted prior to work-related decisions being made, attention is rarely or almost never paid to their views.

To summarise the results across the relevant questions a score was assigned to each of the response outcomes as follows:

Response Outcome	Score
Almost always	4
Often	3
Sometimes	2
Rarely	1
Almost never	0

The average score for each respondent across the three questions was then calculated. By definition this average score ran from a maximum of “4” for an employee who felt that he/she was “almost always” consulted by management to “0” for those who felt that they were “almost never” consulted prior to decisions which affected their job. The mean scores are presented in Table 6.7.

From the table one can see that the aggregate average score is 2.5. From Section A of the table one can see that there is some slight variation by industrial sector. Perceived consultation is lowest in the Hotel & Restaurant and also Transport, Storage, Communications sectors (2.3) rising to a maximum (2.7) in

Table 6.7 Average scores on summary measure of prior consultation

	Mean Score
A. Industrial Sector	
Manufacturing Industry & Primary	2.4
Construction	2.5
Wholesale/Retail	2.4
Hotels, Restaurants etc	2.3
Transport Storage Communications	2.3
Finance & Other Business Services	2.6
Public Admin & Defence	2.4
Education	2.7
Health	2.5
Other Services	2.6
B. Public/Private Sector	
Public	2.5
Private	2.5
C. Size of Local Unit	
1-4 employees	2.7
5-19 employees	2.5
20-99 employees	2.4
100+ employees	2.4
D. Tenure Status	
Permanent	2.5
Temporary/Casual	2.2
E. Gender	
Male	2.5
Female	2.4
F. Union Membership	
Yes	2.4
No	2.5
G. Educational Attainment	
Primary or less	2.1
Junior/Inter. Cert	2.3
Leaving Certificate	2.5
Third level or equivalent	2.7
H. Social Class	
Higher Professional, Managers	3.0
Lower Prof, Managers, Proprietors	2.7
Other Non-Manual	2.5
Skilled Manual	2.4
Semi-Skilled manual	2.2
Unskilled Manual	2.2
Total	2.5

Table 6.8 Results of multiple regression in estimating simultaneous effects on the level of information provided in the public and private sectors.

	Private Sector ¹	Public Sector ²
(Constant)	0.754 **	0.870
Construction	--	-0.239
Wholesale Retail	--	-0.006
Hotel Restaurants	--	-0.173
Transport & Communications	--	0.027
Finance & Other Business Services	--	-0.047
Public Admin & Defence	--	-0.060
Education	-0.094	-0.331 **
Health	-0.131	-0.308 **
Other Services	0.000	-0.266 **
5-19 employees	-0.047	-0.027
20-99 employees	-0.129	-0.040
100+ employees	-0.044	0.109
(Ref Cat: 1-4 Employees)		
Full-time	0.045	0.063
Male	0.005	0.043
1-5 years in job	0.090	0.064
5+ years in job	0.128 **	0.132
(Ref Cat: Less than 1 year in job)		
Junior Cert/Inter		
Leaving Certificate	0.278 **	0.001
Third Level	0.433 **	0.097 *
(Ref Cat: None/Primary)	0.429 **	0.151 **
Lower Professional & Managerial	-0.167 **	-0.106 *
Other Non-manual	-0.275 **	-0.242 **
Skilled Manual	-0.587 **	-0.495 **
Semi-skilled Manual	-0.413 **	-0.455 **
Unskilled Manual	-0.504 **	-0.594 **
(Ref Cat: Higher Professional)		
Number of jobs held last 3 years	0.003	0.003
Permanent	0.161 **	0.147 **
Union Member	0.003	0.091 **
Adjusted R ²	0.140	0.200

1. Reference category in Public Sector is Public Administration and Defence. Public Sector equation is restricted to those employed in Public Administration and Defence; Education; Health; and Other Services.

2. Reference category in Private Sector is Manufacturing and Primary Industry

* Significant at 90% confidence level. ** Significant at 95% confidence level.

the Education sector. One can see that there is very little variation in perceived consultation links in terms of public/private sector, gender or Trade Union membership. It is interesting, however, to note that although the differences between Union and non-union members are very small the perceived level of consultation prior to change is marginally lower among union members than non-members.

The table shows that perceived levels of prior consultation are differential according to size of local unit, tenure status and, most importantly, social class and level of educational attainment. The latter two classificatory variables clearly provide the greatest level of discrimination in terms of perceived levels of prior consultation. The higher the level of educational attainment and social class the higher is the perceived level of consultation.

6.5 Simultaneous effects of characteristics on information and consultation

The tables discussed above allow a one-dimensional consideration and interpretation of the factors influencing perceived levels of information flows or levels of communications within the workplace. Each table shows how perceived information flows or consultation is related to each variable or characteristic in isolation. As noted in our discussion of some of these tables it is possible that both information flows and levels of consultation may be subject to parallel or simultaneous influences of a number of factors. Some of this simultaneity is not immediately apparent in our discussion of the unidimensional tables.

To address this issue we present the results of a multiple regression approach to information flows in the workplace in Table 6.8 above. The dependent variable is the summary measure of information provided to workers as discussed in Table 6.3 above. The results in Table 6.8 assess how this measure varies relative to the simultaneous effects of the firm and individual-level variables outlined in the table. Results are presented separately for workers in the public and private sectors.

The most important message from Table 6.8 is that when one controls for the individual-level characteristics of education and social class the influence of other variables (both firm-level and industrial level) cease to be statistically significant. The over-riding importance of both education and class is clear from the table. One can see that sectoral employment effects in Education, Health and “Other Services” remain significant for private sector employees (though not for those in the public sector). Being a permanent (rather than temporary) staff employee also has a statistically significant effect.

Table 6.9 Results of multiple regression in estimating simultaneous effects on the extent of consultation in the workplace

	Equation 1	Equation 2
(Constant)	2.529 **	2.908 **
Construction	0.012	0.064
Wholesale Retail	-0.048	0.023
Hotel Restaurants	-0.202 **	-0.094
Transport & Communications	-0.194 **	-.227 **
Finance & Other Business Services	0.062	-.167 **
Pub Admin/ Defence	-0.058	-.101
Education	0.260 **	.111
Health	-0.055	-0.065
Other Services	0.016	-.103
(Ref Cat: Manufacturing & Primary)		
5-19 employees		-.156 **
20-99 employees		-0.306 **
100+ employees		-0.306 **
(Ref Cat: 1-4 employees)		
Full-time		-0.0446
Male		0.0634
Public Sector		-0.0437
1-5 years in job		-0.0713
5+ years in job		0.0111
(Ref Cat: Less 1 year in job)		
Junior Cert/Inter		.106
Leaving Certificate.		.226 **
Third level		.250 **
(Ref Cat None/Primary)		
Lower Professional & Managerial		-0.225 **
Other Non-manual		-0.431 **
Skilled Manual		-0.579 **
Semi-skilled Manual		-0.695 **
Unskilled Manual		-0.686 **
(Ref Cat: Higher Professional)		
Number of jobs held last 3 years		-0.008
Permanent		0.225 **
Union Member		-0.121 **
Adjusted R ²	0.013	0.071

** Significant at 95% confidence level.

In Table 6.9 we present a similar analysis of influences on our summary measure of consultation in the workplace. The first equation provides results based only on sector. One can see that significant effects are apparent in the Hotel/Restaurant, Transport/Construction and Education sectors. When one includes individual-level characteristics in the analysis, however, one can see that, as was the case with information flows discussed above, the overriding effect is education and social class. Other variables to remain statistically significant in this more expansive equation include number of employees, permanency of tenure and Union membership. It is notable that the sign on the Union membership variable is negative. This implies that, even when controlling for other firm and individual level characteristics members of Trade Unions have a slightly higher propensity than non-Union members to record a relative lack of consultation in the workplace.

6.6 Summary

In this chapter we considered various aspects of communications in the workplace. This ranged from sources of information, to levels of consultation prior to decisions being taken, to feedback on the reasons for decisions which had been taken.

In general we found that 70% of employees considered management the single most important source of information in the workplace, with 20% of employees citing “the grapevine” and 6% “the union”.

Public sector employees clearly saw the union as a relatively more important source of information than did their private sector counterparts. A total of 58% of public sector compared with 71% of private sector employees cited management as the single most useful source of workplace information. In contrast 13% of public sector workers cited the union or staff association compared with only 4% of private sector employees.

In general, surprisingly high percentages of employees seemed to feel that they were “hardly ever” provided with information in key areas such as product/service innovation; introduction of new technology; levels of competition; changes to work practices. As many as 36-42% of private sector employees felt that they “hardly ever” receive information in such areas. Even higher percentages of private sector employees recorded having “hardly ever” received information on areas such as sales; profits or re-organisation of the company. Provision of information by management to public sector employees was perceived to be somewhat better than among private sector workers. In general, the extent to which information was provided improved with size of establishment, with full-time (in contrast to part-time) status; length of tenure; age; education and social class.

In terms of prior consultation on major decisions regarding their work only 25% recorded that they were “almost always” consulted; 21% said they were consulted “sometimes” and as many as 27% of workers felt they were consulted “rarely” or “almost never”. We found relatively little variation in levels of consultation according to the standard set of classificatory variables used throughout the analysis.

As was the case with prior consultations we also found that surprisingly high levels of employees (22%) felt that they were “rarely” or “almost never” provided with feedback on why decisions were made. Finally, the same proportion of employees indicated that even when they were consulted prior to decisions being made, little attention was paid to the views expressed.

In general, when we considered a summary score of perceived levels of consultation we found that it was most strongly correlated with social class, level of educational attainment and tenure status within the workplace.

We saw in Section 6.5, however, that when we attempted to model the simultaneous effects of both firm and individual-level characteristics on perceived levels of information flows and consultation in the workplace that the main picture to emerge was the overwhelming influence of social class and level of educational attainment. Although a few other variables such as permanency of status and size of firm remain significant when the full set of individual-level variables is included in the analysis, the over-riding importance of education and social class was clearly apparent from the analysis.

One could clearly question the accuracy of the rather negative views held by relatively high proportions of employees regarding issues such as prior consultation, feedback and whether or not attention was paid to any views expressed. In many respects the factual accuracy of the views expressed is not of critical relevance. The important fact is that such high proportions of employees feel themselves to be excluded from the consultations or decision making within the workplace. This will clearly have important HR and other impacts on the shaping of the workplace in the future.

Chapter 7

Forms of Involvement: Partnership and Participation

In this chapter we examine the extent to which various aspects of partnership and participation are to be found in the workplace. We make a fundamental distinction between two types of worker involvement in the workplace. Partnership refers to collective organisation in which employee representatives work with management. Participation refers to modes of direct involvement and consultation over the way in which work is organised and carried out.

We operationalised the concept of **partnership** in the survey in the following question:

Some workplaces establish committees on which unions work with management to promote partnership and co-operation, or to improve the organisation's performance. Do union officers or shop stewards represent members on any such committees in your workplace?

The question was asked only of those who reported their employer recognised a trade union or staff association. Respondents who answered “yes” to the question on partnership committees were then asked whether they personally participated in such committees and a series of questions about their opinions as to what effects these types of bodies had on various aspects of their job and the workplace.

We operationalised the concept of **participation**, or direct involvement, in the survey in the following question:

In some workplaces employees are given a direct say in deciding the way in which work is actually carried out. This is done through what might be known as work teams; problem solving groups; project groups; quality circles; continuous improvement programmes or groups. Are there any arrangements in your workplace to involve staff directly in the way in which the work is carried out on a day to day basis?

Respondents who answered “yes” to this question were then asked whether they personally participated in such committees and a similar set of questions about their opinions as to what effects these types of bodies had on various aspects of their job and the workplace.

Overall, 23% of all employees responded that partnership committees exist at their workplaces. Among those that answered in the affirmative, about one-quarter of employees are personally involved in partnership committees.

About 38% of all employees responded that there are arrangements for direct participation in their workplaces. Within workplaces that implement arrangements for direct participation, the extent of employee involvement is high: over 70% of employees in such workplaces reported that they are personally involved in such participation groups.

7.1 The extent of partnership and participation

About 55% or more of respondents working in Public Administration and Defence responded that partnership arrangements existed in their workplaces. Partnership arrangements were also relatively common in Transport and Communications (37%), Education (31%), Health (32%). Outside these predominantly public sector industries formal partnership was much less prevalent particularly among employees in Hotels and Restaurants, Construction and “Other Services”.

Among those who reported the presence of partnership arrangements, about one-quarter were personally involved in partnership committees, although 43% of those in Other Services, and 37% in Education, were so involved. Less than 8% of employees in the small minority of workplaces in the Construction where partnership arrangements are found are personally involved in partnership committees.

Participation arrangements are most common in Education (52%), and in Public Administration and Defence (47%), and least common in Hotels and Restaurants (21%). However, within workplaces where participation structures are found, the extent to which employees are involved is high and widespread. In Construction 94% of employees in such workplaces report that they personally participate in such arrangements. The lowest incidence of personal involvement occurs in Other Services.

Table 7.1 | Extent of partnership and participation in workplaces

	Presence of Arrangement	Personally Involved
	%	%
Partnership	23.0	26.5
Participation	37.5	71.2

Table 7.2a | Incidence of partnership arrangements in the workplace and whether respondent is personally involved by sector

	Yes	Personally Involved
	%	%
Manufacturing Industry & Primary Sector	27.7	27.1
Construction	8.2	7.6
Wholesale & Retail	13.5	24.6
Hotels & Restaurants	3.9	30.0
Transport & Communications	36.8	28.0
Finance & Bus. Services	19.7	17.8
Public Admin & Defence	54.6	28.0
Education	30.5	36.8
Health	31.6	26.0
Other Services	7.5	42.9
All Sectors	23.0	26.4

Table 7.2b | Incidence of participation arrangements in the workplace and whether respondent is personally involved by sector

	Yes	Personally Involved
	%	%
Manufacturing Industry & Primary Sector	44.2	64.5
Construction	26.0	94.3
Wholesale & Retail	28.1	70.5
Hotels & Restaurants	20.8	78.9
Transport & Communications	42.1	70.9
Finance & Bus. Services	43.8	67.9
Public Admin & Defence	47.1	71.5
Education	51.8	77.7
Health	37.6	70.6
Other Services	24.8	65.2
All Sectors	37.5	71.2

Table 7.3a Incidence of partnership arrangements in the workplace and whether respondent is personally involved by public/private sector

	Yes	Personally Involved
	%	%
Public Sector	45.4	29.9
Private Sector	17.7	24.5
All	23.0	26.4

Table 7.3b Incidence of participation arrangements in the workplace and whether respondent is personally involved by public/private sector

	Yes	Personally Involved
	%	%
Public Sector	46.8	76.1
Private Sector	35.3	69.7
All	37.5	71.2

Employees in the public sector (45%) are much more likely than those in the private sector (18%) to report the presence of partnership arrangements, and there are similar proportions reporting that they do not know of such arrangements in the two sectors. Within establishments where partnership arrangements exist, a somewhat greater proportion is personally involved in the public sector.

Employees in the public sector (47%) are also more likely than those in the private sector (35%) to encounter arrangements for direct participation in their workplaces. Within establishments where participation structures are found, a somewhat greater proportion is personally involved in the public sector (76% versus 70%).

The incidence of partnership arrangements increases with establishment size. About 7% of workers in the smallest size workplace, with 1-4 employees, report the presence of partnership arrangements, compared to 39% of employees in the largest size

category, with 100 or more employees. Within workplaces with partnership committees, the frequency of personal involvement falls with firm size. This is presumably due to “economies of organisational scale”: the ratio of places on partnership committees to total staff numbers is likely to fall with establishment size, so the likelihood that any randomly selected individual employee will report participation in such a committee should also decline.

The incidence of participation structures also increases with establishment size. About 23% of workers in the smallest size workplace, with 1-4 employees, report the presence of participation structures, compared to 49% of employees in the largest size category, with 100 or more employees. Within workplaces with participation arrangements, the frequency of personal involvement falls with firm size, although not to the same extent as we find in relation to involvement in partnership, above.

Table 7.4a Incidence of partnership arrangements in the workplace and whether respondent is personally involved by establishment size

	Yes	Personally Involved
	%	%
1-4 employees	6.7	32.6
5-19 employees	13.1	34.2
20-99 employees	22.5	24.6
>100 employees	39.3	25.1
All	23.0	26.4

Table 7.4b Incidence of participation arrangements in the workplace and whether respondent is personally involved by establishment size

	Yes	Personally Involved
	%	%
1-4 employees	23.3	76.0
5-19 employees	33.9	77.4
20-99 employees	35.2	74.6
>100 employees	49.3	63.9
All	37.5	71.2

Table 7.5a Incidence of partnership arrangements in the workplace and whether respondent is personally involved by social class

	Yes	Personally Involved
	%	%
Higher Prof. & Managers	25.2	29.8
Lower Professional	34.3	36.0
Other Non-manual	25.2	18.5
Skilled Manual	18.7	29.1
Semi-skilled Manual	18.8	26.0
Unskilled Manual	11.9	18.5
All	23.0	26.4

Professionals and Managers and Other Non-manual workers are much more likely than manual workers to report the presence of partnership arrangements in their workplaces. On the other hand, Semi-skilled and Unskilled Manual workers are more likely to report that they do not know of such arrangements. Within workplaces with partnership arrangements, Lower Professionals are more likely to be personally involved in partnership committees than any other social class.

Professionals and Managers are much more likely than either Other Non-manual, or all manual workers, to report the presence of participation structures in their workplaces. Semi-skilled and Unskilled Manual workers are more likely to report that they do not know of such arrangements. Personal involvement is highest among Professionals and Managers, but there are high levels of involvement also among Skilled and Unskilled manual workers.

Full-time workers are more likely than part-timers to report that their workplace has partnership arrangements, although a greater proportion of part-timers do not know. Full-time workers are also more likely to be involved in partnership committees. A similar pattern is evident with respect to permanent employees, who are more likely than temporary employees to report partnership arrangements and to participate in committees.

Full-time workers are more likely than part-timers to report the presence of participation structures in their workplaces. Similarly, permanent workers are also more likely than temporary workers to encounter these forms of direct involvement. Within workplaces where participation arrangements are found, permanent and full time workers are more likely than either temporary or part-time workers to be personally involved.

Table 7.5b Incidence of participation arrangements in the workplace and whether respondent is personally involved by social class

	Yes	Personally Involved
	%	%
Higher Prof. & Managers	57.8	78.5
Lower Professional	51.4	79.7
Other Non-manual	38.0	68.7
Skilled Manual	33.1	70.0
Semi-skilled Manual	27.2	57.0
Unskilled Manual	19.8	74.7
All	37.5	71.2

Table 7.6a Incidence of partnership arrangements in the workplace and whether respondent is personally involved by nature of contract

	Yes	Personally Involved
	%	%
Part-time	16.7	21.2
Full-time	24.4	27.3
Permanent	24.9	27.9
Temporary	13.0	12.8
All	23.0	26.4

Table 7.6b Incidence of participation arrangements in the workplace and whether respondent is personally involved by nature of contract

	Yes	Personally Involved
	%	%
Part-time	29.4	63.2
Full-time	39.3	72.5
Permanent	40.2	72.4
Temporary	23.4	61.3
All	37.5	71.2

Table 7.7 Incidence of participation arrangements in the workplace and whether respondent is personally involved by union membership

	Yes	Personally Involved
	%	%
Union Member	46.4	69.4
Non-member	32.0	72.8
All	37.5	571.2

Table 7.8a Incidence of partnership arrangements in the workplace and whether respondent is personally involved by gender and age-group

	Yes	Personally Involved
	%	%
Men	24.0	30.0
Women	21.8	22.1
< 24 years of age	13.3	14.3
25-39 years of age	24.2	24.1
40-54 years of age	27.3	29.8
> 55 years of age	24.1	39.0
All	23.0	26.4

Table 7.8b Incidence of participation arrangements in the workplace and whether respondent is personally involved by gender and age-group

	Yes	Personally Involved
	%	%
Men	38.9	73.6
Women	35.8	68.2
< 24 years of age	29.5	65.3
25-39 years of age	39.3	69.9
40-54 years of age	40.3	76.4
> 55 years of age	37.1	68.7
All	37.5	71.2

Table 7.9a Incidence of partnership arrangements in the workplace and whether respondent is personally involved by education

	Yes	Personally Involved
	%	%
No Qualification	16.1	45.6
Junior Certificate	19.2	16.6
Leaving Certificate	23.0	22.9
Third Level	29.3	32.8
All	23.0	26.4

Table 7.9b Incidence of participation arrangements in the workplace and whether respondent is personally involved by education

	Yes	Personally Involved
	%	%
No Qualification	22.9	51.8
Junior Certificate	28.2	65.7
Leaving Certificate	37.5	69.3
Third Level	52.0	81.4
All	23.0	71.2

Union members are more likely to be employed in workplaces where participation arrangements are found (46% versus 32%). However, in workplaces where participation arrangements are present, a slightly greater proportion of non-members (73%) than members (69%) may be involved.¹

Men are slightly more likely than women to report the presence of partnership arrangements in their workplaces, and where such arrangements do exist, men are also more likely to be personally involved. Women are more likely to respond that they do not know about partnership arrangements. Men are also somewhat more likely than women to encounter participation arrangements in their workplaces. Where such participation structures are found, men are also more likely to be personally involved.

¹ We do not report a corresponding analysis of the relationship between union membership and partnership since, in measuring the incidence of partnership, the Questionnaire only asks questions about the presence of partnership institutions in relation to employers that recognise a trade union or staff association.

Workers in the 40-54 year age group are more likely than those in other age groups to report that there are partnership arrangements in their workplace. However, where partnership committees do exist, workers in the older age group, 50 or more years, are more likely to be personally involved. Younger workers, particularly those under age 25 are more likely to respond that they do not know of partnership arrangements in their workplaces.

Younger workers, aged less than 25 years, are less likely to report the presence of participation structures in their workplaces. Between 37% and 40% of workers in the older age groups report such structures. Where participation arrangements are in place, workers in the 40-54 year age group are most likely to be directly involved.

Those with higher levels of education are more likely to encounter partnership arrangements in their

Table 7.10a Respondents' opinions on the effects of partnership arrangements

	Positive Effect	No Effect	Negative Effect	Total
	%	%	%	%
Job satisfaction	71.8	24.9	3.3	100.0
Productivity or performance	67.2	28.6	4.2	100.0
Pay and conditions	71.2	25.2	3.6	100.0
Employment Security	70.2	26.8	3.0	100.0
Employees willingness to embrace change	73.2	20.4	6.3	100.0
Confidence with which employees co-operate with management	76.2	19.1	4.7	100.0

Table 7.10b Respondents' opinions on the effects of participation structures

	Positive Effect	No Effect	Negative Effect	Total
	%	%	%	%
Job satisfaction	91.0	8.2	0.8	100.0
Productivity or performance	89.2	10.1	0.7	100.0
Pay and conditions	51.9	45.0	3.1	100.0
Employment Security	56.8	40.4	2.8	100.0
Employees willingness to embrace change	86.4	12.1	1.4	100.0
Confidence with which employees co-operate with management	87.5	11.1	1.4	100.0

workplaces, and this is particularly true of those with a Leaving Certificate or higher qualification. However, within workplaces where partnership arrangements exist, those with no formal qualifications are much more likely than those with any higher level of education to participate in partnership committees.

The likelihood that employees report the presence of participation structures in their workplaces increases with educational attainment. Over half of all employees with third level qualifications report the existence of such structures. Personal involvement in participation structures also increases with education: over 80% of employees, in workplaces where such structures are present, report that they are personally involved in such direct participation.

7.2 The impact of partnership and participation

Respondents who reported the presence of either partnership or participation arrangements in their workplaces were asked their opinion as to the effects that such arrangements or structures had on various aspects of their jobs and their workplaces. Table 7.10a summarises the responses in respect of partnership.

In general, respondents perceive the effects of partnership arrangements in a very positive light. Two-thirds or more of respondents see partnership arrangements as having positive effects on issues

Table 7.11a Percentage of respondents in public and private sector that consider that partnership has positive effects

	Public Sector	Private Sector	All
	%	%	%
Job satisfaction	74.6	70.2	71.8
Productivity or performance	62.9	70.0	67.2
Pay and conditions	69.5	72.4	71.2
Employment Security	67.8	71.8	70.2
Employees' willingness to embrace change	77.2	70.9	73.2
Confidence with which employees co-operate with management	78.0	75.2	76.2

Table 7.11b Percentage of respondents' in public and private sectors that consider that participation has positive effects

	Public Sector	Private Sector	All
	%	%	%
Job satisfaction	88.9	91.7	91.0
Productivity or performance	85.8	90.3	89.2
Pay and conditions	40.6	55.7	51.9
Employment Security	40.4	62.3	56.8
Employees willingness to embrace change	87.5	86.1	86.4
Confidence with which employees co-operate with management	88.2	87.3	87.5

of direct interest to employees – job satisfaction, pay and conditions and employment security – as well as of importance to the organisation – performance, willingness to embrace change, and the confidence with which employees co-operate with management.

In general, the impact of participation structures is even more positive than that of partnership, particularly for organisational performance and functioning. About 89% of respondents consider that participation has a positive effect on productivity or performance, 88% that it has a positive

effect on the confidence with which employees co-operate with management, and 86% that it has a positive effect on willingness to embrace change. Respondents' subjective assessment of the impact of participation on their own jobs is more mixed. While 91% of respondents consider that participation has a positive effect on job satisfaction, only 57% consider that it has a positive effect on employment security, and only 51% that it has a positive effect on pay and conditions.

Table 7.12a Percentage of respondents in different workplace size-categories that consider that partnership has positive effects

	1 – 4 Employees	5-19 Employees	20-99 Employees	100+ Employees
	%	%	%	%
Job satisfaction	77.2	70.3	73.7	70.9
Productivity or performance	78.5	67.7	70.0	64.7
Pay and conditions	85.5	67.3	68.0	73.5
Employment Security	82.6	68.0	68.4	71.3
Employees willingness to embrace change	77.9	72.8	75.5	71.8
Confidence with which employees co-operate with management	81.2	78.2	76.3	75.4

Table 7.12b Percentage of respondents in different workplace size-categories that consider that participation has positive effects

	1 – 4 Employees	5-19 Employees	20-99 Employees	100+ Employees
	%	%	%	%
Job satisfaction	90.2	90.2	90.8	91.8
Productivity or performance	95.7	89.9	87.5	88.5
Pay and conditions	54.1	52.8	49.2	53.2
Employment Security	63.8	60.2	53.3	55.7
Employees willingness to embrace change	87.0	89.0	88.2	82.9
Confidence with which employees co-operate with management	85.2	89.0	87.6	87.0

In general there is little evidence to suggest that workers' assessments of the impact of partnership differ substantially between the public and private sectors. The principal exception to this relates to the impact on productivity and performance: 70% of workers in the private sector consider that partnership has a positive effect on productivity and performance, compared to 63% in the public sector. We did not find strong evidence of variation in these measures across economic sectors (results not tabulated here).

With regard to the participation structures, there are no substantial differences between public and private sector workers in their assessment of its impact on organisational performance, co-operation and willingness to embrace change. However, public sector workers are much less likely than private sector workers to consider that participation has a positive effect on either their pay and conditions or their job security. This is presumably because public sector workers consider that these issues are influenced by factors beyond the organisation of work in the workplace.

On first inspection it is difficult to detect a clear relationship between workplace size and employees' assessment of the influence of partnership. This is mainly due to the fact that the proportions assessing the influence as positive fluctuate in the middle size categories (5-19 and 20-99 employees). However, if we compare the smallest with the largest workplaces a general pattern does appear: workers in larger workplaces are less likely than their counterparts in very small workplaces to evaluate the impact of partnership positively across the entire range of issues, relating both to their own employment situation and to organisational functioning. This could be due to the possibility that partnership institutions are more remote from individual workers in larger organisations. This is an issue which warrants further investigation.

In contrast to the size-related pattern that we find in relation to the effects of partnership, there is little evidence to suggest that employees' assessments of the impact of direct participation

structures vary with workplace size. The main exception to this general pattern is that employees in large establishments, with 100 or more employees, are less likely to consider that participation has a positive effect on employment security than their counterparts in very small workplaces, with 1-4 employees (56% versus 64%).

7.3 Modes of employee involvement

Partnership and participation represent relatively formalised modes of employee involvement. Partnership entails formal institutionalised relationships with trade unions or staff associations. Direct participation in how work is actually carried out also entails some degree of formal organisation, for example in teams, groups or circles.

Employee involvement may also take the form of less formalised modes of consultation that may nevertheless have important implications for the functioning and performance of organisations. Chapter 6 presents information on the extent of consultation in relation to three separate questions:

- How often are you and your colleagues consulted before decisions are taken that affect your work?
- If changes in your work occur, how often are you given the reason why?
- If you are consulted before decisions are made is any attention paid to your views?

Respondents were asked to record whether or not each happened "almost always"; "often"; "sometimes"; "rarely" or "almost never".

Table 7.13 | Modes of employee involvement – percentage distribution of employees

		No Participation	Participation	All
		%	%	%
No Partnership	Low Consultation	38.7	12.9	51.6
	High Consultation	14.4	10.8	25.2
		53.1	23.7	76.8
Partnership	Low Consultation	7.3	8.0	15.2
	High Consultation	2.0	5.9	7.9
		9.3	13.9	23.2
All		62.4	37.6	100.0

In Chapters 8 and 9 we examine the impact of different modes of employment involvement on a number of important outcomes, including employees' job satisfaction, stress, and willingness to accept change at work. Table 7.13 looks at how three different modes of employee involvement are related. To facilitate the analysis we have dichotomised consultation. Consultation is considered "high" where the employee is "almost always" or "often" consulted before decisions are taken that affect her work, and is given the reason why changes occur, and attention is paid to his views. Less intensive levels of consultation are scored low for Table 7.13.²

A substantial minority of employees, 39%, report that they work in establishments in which there are no formal partnership institutions, no participation arrangements, and where there is low consultation. At the other extreme, just 6% of employees work in "high involvement" establishments which are characterised by the presence of all three modes of involvement. Some workplaces combine two forms of involvement. Just under 17% of all employees work in establishments that combine participation with high consultation. Another 14% work in establishments that combine partnership and participation. Just 8% are in workplaces combining partnership with high consultation.

2. In analysing the impact of Consultation in Chapters 8 and 9 we utilise the full variation in the scale, which can vary between 0 and 4, rather than the dichotomy in Table 7.13.

7.4 Summary

We have identified two different modes of employee involvement in the workplace. Partnership refers to collective organisation in which employee representatives work with management to promote partnership and co-operation, or to improve the organisation's performance. Participation refers to modes of direct involvement and consultation over the way in which work is organised and carried out in work teams, problem solving groups, project groups; quality circles; or continuous improvement programmes or groups.

Overall, 23% of all employees indicate that partnership committees involving management and unions exist at their workplaces. And among those employees that report the presence of partnership institutions, about one-quarter are personally involved in partnership committees.

About 38% of all employees report that there are arrangements for direct participation in their workplaces. Within workplaces that implement arrangements for direct participation, the extent of employee involvement is high: over 70% of employees in such workplaces indicate that they are personally involved in such participation groups.

Partnership institutions are much more common in the public sector: about 45% of workers in public sector organisations report the presence of partnership institutions in their workplaces, compared to 18% of those in the private sector. Participation arrangements are more widely dispersed: about 47% of workers in public sector organisations, and 35% of those in the private sector, report the presence of participation arrangements.

Both forms of employee involvement are more prevalent in large than in small organisations. They are both more likely to be encountered by full- rather than part-time workers, and by permanent, rather than temporary employees.

Both forms of employee involvement are also closely linked to social class: incumbents of higher social class positions are more likely to report that they work in an organisation where both such modes of employee involvement are present. For example, 25% of Higher Professionals and Managers report the presence of partnership arrangements in their workplaces, compared to about 12% of Unskilled Manual workers. Moreover, almost 30% of Higher Professionals and Managers are personally involved in partnership committees, compared to 19% of Unskilled Manual workers. Almost 60% of Higher Professionals and Managers report the presence of participation arrangements in their workplace, compared to less than 20% of Unskilled Manual workers. However, among those working in organisations where participation arrangements are present, personal involvement is widespread, irrespective of social class.

In general, respondents perceive the effects of partnership institutions in a very positive light. Two-thirds or more of respondents see partnership arrangements as having positive effects on issues of direct interest to employees – job satisfaction, pay and conditions and employment security – as well as of importance to the organisation – performance, willingness to embrace change, and the confidence with which employees co-operate with management.

The perceived impact of participation arrangements is even more positive than that of partnership, particularly for organisational performance and functioning. Over 85% of respondents consider that participation has a positive effect on productivity or performance, on the confidence with which employees co-operate with management, and on willingness to embrace change.

Respondents' subjective assessment of the impact of participation on their own jobs is more mixed. While the vast majority consider that participation has a positive effect on job satisfaction, only about half consider that it has a positive effect on employment security, and on pay and conditions.

Chapter 8

The Determinants of Work Stress and Job Satisfaction

In this chapter we focus on two key employee outcome measures – work stress and job satisfaction. We consider the central question of how the workplace practices, forms of employee involvement and organisational change outlined in previous chapters impact on employee satisfaction and stress.

In Chapter 3 we examined some of the individual and firm level factors that were associated with levels of stress and job satisfaction among employees. However, these relationships were examined at the bi-variate level, that is one at a time. While that analysis highlighted a number of important associations it could not take into account the complex inter-relationships between the explanatory variables. For example, the effect of trade union membership could not be separated from the sectoral distribution of union members, nor could the impact of gender be separated from the distinctive occupational distributions of men and women. Therefore in this chapter we adopt multi-variate modelling techniques, which allow us to test the impact of these factors simultaneously. This means that the independent impact of each firm or personal characteristic can be identified more clearly. The models also help to clarify the relative importance of different factors in explaining work stress and job satisfaction. The models also add to the analysis in Chapter 2 by examining some of the inter-relationships between job satisfaction and work stress, pressure and autonomy.

8.1 Work stress

The measure of work stress used here is constructed from respondents' answers to a set of five items. There are two general items "find work stressful" and "come home exhausted", and three items relating to the extent to which work impinges on life outside work. Details on these items and the composite scale are outlined in Chapter 2. It is important to reiterate that this measure is likely to capture general work stress and tensions associated with trying to maintain a balance between work and other commitments (particularly family commitments). This is an important policy concern at both national and EU level. For example the EU Employment Guidelines are committed to improving policies to reconciling family and working life. Reducing work stress is also central to the quality of work agenda. It is important that employment opportunities are not increased at the expense of creating a highly stressed workforce. Moreover, change in the workplace needs to be managed in a way that minimises stress for the workforce.

We begin by constructing a base model of the determinants of work stress drawing on many of the individual and firm level variables discussed in Chapter 2. We then develop the analysis by adding in 5 key sets of variables. These are: employee autonomy; patterns of worker involvement (partnership, participation and consultation); organisational change; flexible working arrangements; and new work practices (performance reviews, performance related pay, share options).

The basic model of work stress contains a set of individual and job factors found to be significant in the earlier analysis. However, a number of key differences emerge in the multivariate model. First, when other personal and job characteristics are controlled women are found to experience higher levels of work stress than men, which may reflect

gender differences in domestic responsibilities or gender differences in work experiences. Having a pre-school age child significantly increases stress. This effect was found to be the same for male and female employees (i.e. the interaction with gender was insignificant). The model includes a measure of the number of hours worked per week rather than a part-time/full-time dichotomy. The results show that each additional work hour increases work stress levels. Trade union membership is found to increase work stress even when occupation and sector is controlled. The sectoral results are similar to those found in the bivariate analysis with higher stress levels noted in the public sector and in the hotel/restaurant industry. The size of the local unit has a very strong impact on stress even when personal and other job factors are controlled, with stress increasing with organisational size. The social class variable shows that those in lower/professional managerial occupations and those in the skilled manual class experience higher levels of stress than those in unskilled manual occupations (the reference category). The insignificance of the highest class is due to inclusion of the variable measuring managerial/supervisory responsibilities. Finally involvement in employer sponsored training in the last two years has no effect on work stress.¹

Autonomy and work stress

While stress increases with occupational class and managerial responsibilities, which is consistent with the cliché of the stressed executive, stress is also associated with being in a job with low levels of control. The co-efficient for autonomy shows that each score on the autonomy scale reduces the level of work stress (the scale construction is described in Chapter 2).

¹. Note that tenure and contract status were removed from the model because they were insignificant. Education was also excluded because of the high correlation between education and occupation/social class.

Table 8.1 Models of work stress: Base model and full model

	Model 1		Model 2	
	B	Sig.	B	Sig.
(Constant)	.334	***	.763	***
25-39 years	.098	**	.111	**
40-54 years	.097	**	.133	***
55 years plus	-.007	n.s.	.036	n.s.
Female	.158	***	.166	***
Youngest Child under 5 years	.179	***	.183	***
Youngest child 5-17 years	.050	*	.055	*
Hours worked per week	.020	***	.020	***
Trade Union Member	.069	**	.022	n.s.
Public Sector	.109	**	.121	**
Construction	-.008	n.s.	.021	n.s.
Wholesale Retail	-.041	n.s.	-.015	n.s.
Hotels & Restaurants	.304	***	.319	***
Transport & Communications	.088	*	.066	n.s.
Finance & Other Business Services	.082	*	.045	n.s.
Public Administration & Defence	-.126	**	-.169	**
Education	.021	n.s.	.028	n.s.
Health	.107	**	.105	*
Other Services	.003	n.s.	.025	n.s.
5-19 employees	.129	***	.086	**
20-99 employees	.159	***	.081	**
100+ employees	.209	***	.117	**
Higher Professional & Manager	.068	n.s.	.136	**
Lower Professional	.179	***	.226	***
Other Non-manual	.013	n.s.	-.044	n.s.
Skilled Manual	.110	**	.132	**
Semi-skilled manual	.088	*	.074	n.s.
Senior Management	.237	***	.374	***
Middle Management	.152	***	.219	***
Supervisor	.095	**	.145	***
Training in last 2 years	-.025	n.s.	-.007	n.s.
Autonomy			-.109	***
Partnership			-.037	n.s.
Participation			-.026	n.s.
Consultation			-.135	***
Organisational Change			.089	***
Family-Friendly Policies			-.078	**
Work from Home			.134	**
Flexitime			-.054	*
Job Share			.088	**
Performance reviews			.056	**
Profit share/Share options			-.018	n.s.
Performance related pay			.047	n.s.
N	5110		4836	
Adjusted R²	.125		.181	

Reference categories: under 25 years, male, no children under 18, not member of TU or staff association, private sector, manufacturing/primary industry, <5 employees in local unit, unskilled occupations
 *** p < .001 ** p < .05 * p < .10, n.s. not significant.

Worker involvement

In the full model we also test the effect of different modes of worker involvement on work stress: formal partnership, informal participation and consultation. These forms of involvement are discussed in Chapter 7 above. The partnership and participation variables are dichotomous while the consultation measure is a scale based on responses to three questions about how often the respondent is consulted on decisions, work changes and has their views taken into account. The variables are not mutually exclusive i.e. a worker may have formal partnership, participation and consultation in their place of work. The results show that consultation has a significant impact on reducing work stress, while partnership and participation have no effect.

We also tested the impact of level of access to information, when this is included without controls for worker involvement it is found to have a negative impact on stress. In other words the greater the access to information the lower the stress. However, the measure is highly correlated with consultation and so is excluded from the model.

Organisational change

Employees were asked about four types of organisational change over the last two years – changes in ownership or management, introduction of new technology, new CEO and introduction of family-friendly policies. Given our focus on issues of work/family stresses the item on family-friendly policies was examined separately while the other three items were included in a scale (scoring three if the respondent had experienced all three types of change and zero if he/she had experienced none). The results from model 2 (Table 8.1) show that organisational change significantly increases work stress among employees. However, introducing family friendly policies has a countervailing effect – reducing stress among employees. This positive effect of family-friendly policies occurs even though the model controls for the personal uptake of flexible arrangements.

Workplace practices and work stress

The final set of variables added refer to a range of work practices that employees are personally involved in. Three are flexible work practices (working from home, flexitime and job share) which might be expected to help reduce stress arising from work/family conflicts. Flexitime works in the manner anticipated i.e. reducing stress (the effect is only of borderline statistical significance). In contrast, working from home increases stress levels. Rather than reconciling work and family demands, it appears that working from home increases those tensions, perhaps by impinging on family time and space. Those involved in job share also have somewhat higher levels of work stress. Since fewer hours of work are found to reduce stress, and this is already controlled in the model, there is something else about this particular arrangement that increases stress.

Regular performance reviews are found to increase stress levels of employees (although performance related pay is found to have no effect). This suggests that the positive benefits of these arrangements must be weighed against the negative impact on employee stress.

8.2 The determinants of job satisfaction

Respondent's satisfaction with their jobs was measured along a range of dimensions – physical working conditions, hours of work, commuting time, earnings, and interest. These together with a measure of overall job satisfaction were combined to form a satisfaction scale (see Chapter 2 for details). In addition to testing the independent effect of the personal and job characteristics studied in Chapter 2, we consider a number of new relationships, first the models examine the role of economic rewards in job satisfaction. Second, we test the impact of a number of measures of job quality (autonomy, stress and work pressure). Third we evaluate the impact of types of employee involvement. Fourth, we examine the impact of organisational change on job satisfaction, and finally we examine the effect of the six work practices described above (flexible and new working arrangements).

Base model

The base model for job satisfaction differs from that constructed to explain work stress. Family characteristics are dropped because they are insignificant. The effect of hours of work was also insignificant so we have reverted to the part-time/full-time distinction. Contract status (permanent v non-permanent), length of tenure and earnings are included in the base model since our own analysis (Chapter 2) or previous research has shown these to have a significant influence on job satisfaction (Guest, 2001). Only one of the variables, social class and education, are included because of problems of colinearity. We have also added a variable on management level and receipt of training.

Controlling for the core personal and job characteristics, age is found to have no independent effect on job satisfaction, but women are found to have higher levels of job satisfaction. Weekly earnings have a weak positive effect on satisfaction levels because the measurement unit of this variable is small (one euro) the co-efficient for earnings is small but it borders on statistical significance (at 10% level). Part-timers are more satisfied than full-time workers and non-permanent employees are less satisfied than permanent employees even when occupation level and sector are held constant. Trade union membership has no impact on satisfaction when job characteristics are controlled.

The sectoral effects are similar to those observed in Chapter 2. Employees in the hospitality industry (hotels/restaurants) are most dissatisfied even when factors such as wages and contract status are taken into account. Those in the education sector are significantly more satisfied than other employees even with these controls. The occupational/-social class effects are weaker in the multivariate models: only higher managers and professionals are significantly more satisfied than the unskilled manual group who make up the reference category. However, if we add an additional variable which provides additional details on management/-supervisory responsibilities, we find the effect of higher professional/ managerial class disappears but that senior managers and middle managers are more satisfied than “employees”.

Those who have received employer sponsored training during the last two years are more satisfied with their jobs, even when job level and other characteristics are controlled. This type of investment in employees therefore has positive returns in terms of worker satisfaction.

As in the model of work stress, organisational size is highly significant. Those in the smallest organisations (less than five people) are much more satisfied with their jobs than those in the other three organisational size categories. The negative effect increases with organisational size so that those in organisations with 100 or more employees are least satisfied.

Job quality scales

Once the base model is specified we test the effects of additional job quality and organisational variables. When autonomy and work stress are added we find that those with greater control over their job tasks and time are more satisfied with their jobs, while those who experience higher levels of work stress are less satisfied with their job. Both these variables are highly significant. This result suggests that measures that reduce stress, identified in the previous section, will also have a pay-off in terms of increasing worker satisfaction. Higher levels of work pressure were also found to be associated with lower levels of job satisfaction, however, it was not possible to estimate a model including both work stress and work pressure because of colinearity.³

It should be noted that the strength of association between these measures and job satisfaction may be somewhat overstated because they are all subjective measures. This means that responses to both the dependent and independent variables may be influenced by underlying personality characteristics. For example, some respondents may tend to high ratings while other may have a more negative outlook.

2. This was asked as two separate items for private sector workers but is combined into one item so that the scale has the same range for public and private sector workers.

Modes of worker involvement

Direct involvement of workers through regular consultation or through team working practices etc. (participation) are found to have a positive impact on job satisfaction. The positive effect is strongest for consultation. Indirect involvement through formal partnership has no effect on work satisfaction. Information exchange is also important for employee satisfaction, the more regularly an employee receives information on factors such as organisational plans and budget/sales/profits the higher the satisfaction levels recorded.

Organisational change

Recent organisational change (in the last two years) has a weak negative effect on satisfaction, while the introduction of family-friendly or flexible policies has a weak positive influence on satisfaction.

Work practices

Of the three flexible arrangements studied directly, only one is significant. Employees permitted to work from home have higher job satisfaction (although as we saw above this is coupled with higher levels of stress). Job sharing has a weak positive effect on satisfaction. It should be noted that part-time hours are insignificant in this final model.

Work practices that seek to link employee rewards to those of the company are found to have no positive (or negative) effect on employee satisfaction.

Table 8.3 | Regression models of job satisfaction

	B	Sig.	B	Sig.
(Constant)	.884	***	.809	***
25-39 years	-.015	n.s	-.012	n.s
40-54 years	.001	n.s	-.026	n.s
55 years plus	.046	n.s	-.008	n.s
Female	.044	**	.054	**
Weekly Earnings	.000	*	.000	n.s
Part-Time	.048	**	-.021	n.s
Temporary or casual	-.055	**	-.047	*
Tenure < 1 year	.006	n.s	-.030	n.s
Tenure 1-5 years	-.036	*	-.053	**
Trade Union Member	-.017	n.s	-.002	n.s
Public sector	-.019	n.s	.038	n.s
Construction	.045	n.s	.076	*
Wholesale Retail	.009	n.s	-.002	n.s
Hotels & Restaurants	-.087	**	.004	n.s
Transport & Communications	-.065	*	-.025	n.s
Finance & Other Business Services	-.007	n.s	.006	n.s
Pub Admin/ Defence	.066	n.s	.020	n.s
Education	.166	***	.119	**
Health	.003	n.s	.037	n.s
Other Services	.025	n.s	.045	n.s
5-19 employees	-.082	**	-.036	n.s
20-99 employees	-.111	***	-.026	n.s
100+ employees	-.145	***	-.058	*
Higher Prof and Manager	.047	n.s	-.061	n.s
Lower Professional	.013	n.s	-.043	n.s
Other Non-manual	.020	n.s	-.047	n.s
Skilled Manual	.027	n.s	.015	n.s
Semi-skilled manual	-.015	n.s	-.016	n.s
Senior Management	.113	**	.037	n.s
Middle Management	.052	*	.007	n.s
Supervisor	.015	n.s	-.024	n.s
Training in last 2 years	.110	***	.061	***
Autonomy score			.070	***
Work Stress Score			-.194	***
Partnership			.000	n.s
Participation			.051	**
Consultation			.094	***
Access to Information			.068	***
Organisational Change			-.016	*
Family friendly policies			.033	*
Work from Home			.084	**
Flexitime			-.007	n.s
Job share			.054	*
Performance reviews			.011	n.s
Share options/gain share			.020	n.s
Performance-related pay			.000	n.s
N	4552		4055	
Adjusted R²	0.04		.217	

Ref categories: under 25 years, male, over 5 yrs tenure, not member of TU, private sector, manufacturing/primary industry, <5 employees in local unit, unskilled occupations, no management/supervisory responsibilities, no recent training.

*** p < .001 ** p < .05 * p < .10, n.s. not significant.

8.3 Summary and conclusions

This chapter has focused on the determinants of work stress and job satisfaction, paying particular attention to the role of worker involvement, organisational change and new work practices in influencing or moderating these outcomes.

While some factors outside the workplace are important for determining work stress, for example family commitments and gender, it is clear that organisations can make a difference. The first area of organisational influence is in the arrangement of working hours. Increasing hours of work were clearly linked to greater stress even when a range of other job characteristics were controlled. Offering employees the opportunity of flexitime is also found to reduce stress but working from home and job sharing have the opposite impact (when hours are controlled). Introducing family-friendly policies also has a more general positive effect on employees' stress. This may reflect a greater understanding of employees' external commitments among employers who put such policies in place.

Giving workers greater control and discretion over their jobs is also a key way of reducing stress. Involvement of workers in decision making has a positive impact on work stress if this is done through direct and regular consultation. Sharing of information also has a positive effect of reducing stress.

Organisational practices are also found to influence employee satisfaction. Greater consultation or direct involvement through participatory work practices, regular information exchange, greater employee discretion (including working from home as an extension of this discretion), and the provision of training all increase employee satisfaction. Reducing work stress and work pressure also have a strong impact on satisfaction so the results relating to work stress are also crucial for employee satisfaction.

The positive impact of these communication and consultation strategies are especially important to organisations wishing to implement changes, since change is found to increase employee stress and dissatisfaction (even if this change has long-term benefits for employees). Keeping employees informed and participating in decisions that affect them is key to managing change in a positive way.

Chapter 9

Change in the Workplace

In this chapter we examine employees' experiences of and attitudes to change in the workplace. We begin by considering the extent to which employees have experienced change in the workplace in the relatively recent past. We turn then to look at changes at the level of the job, as distinct from changes at the level of the organisation. We then look at employees' assessments of their employers' responses to changes in the environment. Finally, we consider the extent to which employees indicate willingness to accept change in relation to their own jobs and develop a statistical model to examine the factors influencing openness to change in the workplace.

9.1 Organisational and management change

Tables 9.1a and 9.1b show the proportions of employees who respond that specific organisational or management changes have taken place at their workplace in the past two years for the private and public sectors, respectively. In the private sector, 13% of employees reported a change of ownership of the company. About one-third experienced a re-organisation of the company or its management, and 46% the introduction of substantial new technology. Just under one-quarter reported the appointment of a new chief executive, which seems implausibly high within a 2-year time frame. Another quarter reported the introduction of family-friendly or other flexible working arrangements. These data suggest a substantial frequency of change, particularly with respect to the introduction of new technology.

Change appears to be even more prevalent among public sector workers. Over 60% experienced the introduction of new technology, and 44% the re-organisation of the organisation or management. Over one-third report the appointment of a new chief executive, which is, again, implausible. Over 40% also experienced the introduction of family friendly or other flexible working arrangements.

There is substantial sectoral variation across the private sector in the extent to which employees report change. Transport and Communications appears to be undergoing substantial change along a range of dimensions: 31% of employees report a change of ownership, 54% experienced a re-organisation of the company or management, and almost half, the introduction of substantial new technology. Over 45% of employees in Transport and Communications report the appointment of a new chief executive.

Table 9.1a | Percentage reporting change at the workplace in the last two years, private sector

	Yes	No	Don't know/ Not applicable
	%	%	%
Change in ownership of organisation	13.2	83.9	2.9
Re-organisation of company or management	33.7	64.1	2.2
Introduction of substantial new technology	46.1	51.2	2.7
New Chief Executive	23.5	73.7	2.7
Introduction of family-friendly policies or increased flexibility	23.3	73.2	3.5

Table 9.1b | Percentage reporting change at the workplace in the last two years, public sector

	Yes	No	Don't know/ Not applicable
	%	%	%
Re-organisation of organisation or management	44.0	52.9	3.1
Introduction of substantial new technology	62.0	34.6	3.3
New Chief Executive	34.3	61.6	4.1
Introduction of family-friendly policies or increased flexibility	42.3	53.2	4.5

Table 9.2a | Percentage reporting change at the workplace in the last two years, private sector*

	Change in ownership	Re-organisation	New technology	New CEO	Flexible working
	%	%	%	%	%
Manufacturing Industry	13.5	38.5	56.5	26.9	26.7
Construction	7.5	21.3	30.5	10.5	14.0
Wholesale & Retail	10.3	31.4	48.4	20.0	23.6
Hotels & Restaurants	17.6	24.5	29.8	16.8	20.9
Transport & Communications	30.6	54.1	48.6	45.5	22.4
Finance & Bus. Services	14.3	43.0	54.4	31.6	30.8
Education	6.9	24.7	46.3	19.0	26.9
Health	8.7	20.4	38.0	12.8	17.8
Other Services	7.5	20.5	23.3	17.2	9.7
All Sectors	13.2	33.7	46.1	23.5	23.3

** Public Administration and Defence excluded because of small number of cases.*

Table 9.2b | Percentage reporting change at the workplace in the last two years, public sector*

	Re-organisation	New technology	New CEO	Flexible working
	%	%	%	%
Transport & Communications	34.3	53.5	29.5	9.9
Public Admin & Defence	53.0	69.5	44.1	49.3
Education	34.8	58.9	30.3	32.8
Health	43.6	56.7	29.7	44.3
Other Services	55.0	76.2	22.3	54.9
All Sectors	44.0	62.0	34.3	42.3

** Several sectors were excluded because of limited numbers of cases.*

Table 9.3a | Percentage reporting change at the workplace in the last two years by establishment size, private sector

	Change in ownership	Re-organisation	New technology	New CEO	Flexible working
	%	%	%	%	%
1-4 employees	8.1	11.5	28.3	7.8	16.0
5-19 employees	8.6	24.8	39.3	16.3	17.3
20-99 employees	15.6	36.8	48.5	24.5	22.4
>100 employees	17.2	49.2	58.4	36.6	33.1
All Sectors	13.2	33.7	46.1	23.5	23.3

Table 9.3b | Percentage reporting change at the workplace in the last two years by establishment size, public sector

	Re-organisation	New technology	New CEO	Flexible working
	%	%	%	%
1-4 employees	32.8	47.6	28.9	27.3
5-19 employees	39.4	58.3	29.8	40.5
20-99 employees	43.3	64.1	33.1	38.4
>100 employees	49.8	65.1	39.1	50.1
All Sectors	44.0	62.0	34.3	42.3

Several other sectors also experienced substantial change. About 57% of employees in Manufacturing report the introduction of new technology and 39% experienced a re-organisation of the company or management. In Finance and Business Services, 54% of employees report that new technology has been introduced at their workplace, and 43% report a corporate re-organisation. In contrast, there is much less evidence of change in Construction, Health and Other Services, across the range of dimensions of change considered here.

In the public sector, two sectors appear to be particularly prone to change: Public administration and Defence, and Other Services. In each of these sectors, over half of the employees report a re-organisation, and well over two-thirds report the introduction of new technology.

Tables 9.3a and 9.3b show the proportions of employees who respond that specific organisational or management changes have taken place at their workplace in the past two years, by size of local establishment, for the private and public sectors, respectively. The data show that the incidence of change increases steadily and consistently with size of establishment for each dimension of change in both the private and public sectors.

9.2 Change in the job

The previous section focused on organisational changes. In this section we turn to changes in aspects of respondents' own work. Table 9.4 shows the frequency with which respondents experienced various aspects of change in their own work over the past two years, as well as the direction of change, in cases where change was reported. Substantial proportions (37-40%) report that their levels of responsibility, work pressure, skill demands, and decision-making have changed, and in the vast majority of cases that change has entailed an increase. This pattern suggests that Irish workers have experienced some intensification of pace, pressure and responsibility at work in recent years. Less than 20% of employees registered a change in their own job security, and in three-quarters of those who did, they reported that their job security increased. Surprisingly, only 57% of employees respond that their hourly pay rate changed in the last 2 years, although almost 99% of them said that it increased. This is not entirely consistent with national trends in pay rates, which grew rapidly in the last few years (See e.g. ESRI, Quarterly Economic Commentary).

Table 9.4 | Percentage reporting change in aspects of own work, and direction of change, last two years

	Change in last 2 years	Increased	Decreased
	%	%	%
The responsibilities you have	42.0	95.7	4.3
The pressure you work under	38.1	93.0	7.0
The number of hours you work	21.8	75.6	24.4
The level of technology or computers in your work	36.3	97.6	2.4
Your job security	19.6	75.1	24.9
Your hourly pay rate	56.6	98.7	1.3
Level of skill necessary to carry out your work	37.0	97.8	2.2
Level of decision-making which you have in your day-to-day work	38.3	96.2	3.8

Table 9.5 | Summary index of changes in last two years, by economic sector

	Mean Number of Changes
Manufacturing Industry & Primary Sector	2.98
Construction	2.59
Wholesale & Retail	2.71
Hotels & Restaurants	2.40
Transport & Communications	3.10
Finance & Bus. Services	3.16
Public Admin & Defence	3.42
Education	2.85
Health	2.59
Other Services	2.20
Public Sector	3.08
Private Sector	2.77
All Sectors	2.83

Table 9.6 | Summary index of changes in last two years, by size

	Mean Number of Changes
1-4 employees	2.19
5-19 employees	2.77
20-99 employees	2.76
>100 employees	3.26
All Sectors	2.83

Table 9.7 | Percentage of employees who report change responding that they understand the reasons for change

	%
Public Sector	91.5
Private Sector	86.6
All Sectors	87.6

Table 9.8 | Increased supervision compared to 2 years ago, by public / private sector

	Yes	No
	%	%
Public Sector	16.3	83.7
Private Sector	18.6	80.8
All Sectors	18.6	81.3

Table 9.5 provides a summary index of changes to employees' jobs in the last 2 years by simply summing across the 8 change items reported in Table 9.4 above. The index can vary between 0, no change whatever, to 8 changes across each of the individual dimensions. Overall, employees experienced a mean of 2.83 changes in the past 2 years. As we have seen before, Public Administration and Defence is most prevalent to change, with an average score of 3.4 changes, closely followed by Finance and Business Services (3.2) and by Transport and Communications (3.1). Change in employees own jobs was least frequent in Other Services (average score of 2.2). Change was more frequent in the public than the private sector.

In general, the average number of changes in employees own jobs was greater in large establishments (with 100 or more employees) than in the very smallest, although there is little to distinguish between the two middle-size categories.

Those respondents who reported any change in their own jobs on any of the items listed in Table 9.4 above were also asked whether they understand the reasons for change. Almost 90% answer that they do understand the reasons for change, and the incidence of such understanding is somewhat higher in the public than the private sector.

Overall, about 19% of employees report that they are now more closely supervised at work than they were two years ago. Private sector workers are slightly more likely than their public sector counterparts to have experienced an increase in supervision.

Table 9.9a | Employees' assessment of employers' responses to change, private sector

	Yes	No	Don't know
	%	%	%
Introducing new technology	63.8	27.0	9.2
Developing new products or services	64.9	26.5	8.6
Cutting costs	53.6	39.9	6.5
Putting more pressure on employees to work harder	56.2	32.5	11.4
Increasing the level of skill to carry out the job	48.2	46.4	5.3
Introducing more flexible working times and practices	36.4	55.5	8.1

Table 9.9b | Employees' assessment of employers' responses to change, public sector

	Yes	No	Don't know
	%	%	%
Introducing new technology	74.6	17.0	8.4
Cutting costs	65.8	24.4	9.9
Putting more pressure on employees to work harder	56.2	39.0	4.8
Increasing the level of skill to carry out the job	61.0	34.2	4.8
Introducing more flexible working times and practices	50.0	43.9	6.0
Co-ordinating services with people working in different areas, office or departments	54.9	33.3	11.7

9.3 Employees' assessment of employer strategies

Given that different organisations may both experience and respond to change differently, we asked respondents how they felt that their employers were responding to changes in the environment in respect of a series of job and workplace related issues. Some of the items differ between the public and private sectors, so we report the responses separately.

Almost two-thirds of employees in private sector workplaces believe that their employers are responding to changes in the operating environment by introducing new technology and developing new products and services. Over half consider that they are responding to external change by cutting costs and putting more pressure on employees to work harder. Almost half believe that the employer response entails increasing the level of skill needed to carry out the job. Only 36% of employees consider that their employers are responding to the changing environment by introducing more flexible working times and practices (e.g. to accommodate childcare, commuting etc.).

Table 9.10 | Willingness to accept change in aspects of employment, next two years

	Willing	Neither willing/unwilling	Unwilling
	%	%	%
Increase in the responsibilities you have	73.8	11.9	14.4
Increase in the pressure you work under	44.3	19.0	36.6
Increase in technology involved in your work	75.3	14.9	9.7
Being more closely supervised/ managed	40.8	23.1	36.0
Increase in level of skill necessary to carry out your work	78.8	12.8	8.4
Having to work unsocial hours	30.9	18.1	50.9

In general, public sector workers are in broad agreement with their private sector counterparts with respect to how they see their employers responding to changes in the environment, although at higher frequency levels. Almost 75% of public sector workers believe that their employers are responding to change by introducing new technology, and 66% believe their employers are responding by cutting costs. Over 60% of public sector workers also consider that their employers are increasing skill levels, a substantially higher rate than was found among private sector workers (48%). This finding is also consistent with public sector workers willingness to accept increased skill levels in their jobs, discussed in Table 9.9 above.

Half of all public sector workers consider that their employers are responding to change by introducing more flexible working times and practices, substantially higher than in the private sector (36%). Finally, about 55% of workers in the public sector believe that their employers are responding to change by co-ordinating services with people working in other areas, office or departments.

9.4 Willingness to accept change

Table 9.10 shows responses to a series of questions designed to measure the extent to which employees are willing to accept change in the workplace over the next 2 years, in relation to 6 aspects of their work.

About three-quarters or more of all employees are willing to accept increased responsibilities in their jobs, increased technology or computers in their work, and increased skill needs to carry out their jobs. On the other hand, half of all employees are unwilling to accept unsocial hours. Other areas where workers have reservations about change include increased pressure (44% willing, 37% unwilling), and being more closely supervised or managed (41% willing, 36% unwilling).

Table 9.11 Willingness to accept change in aspects of employment, next 2 years, public versus private sector

	Public Sector		Private Sector	
	Willing	Unwilling	Willing	Unwilling
	%	%	%	%
Increase in the responsibilities you have	72.1	17.1	74.2	13.7
Increase the pressure you work under	35.5	47.2	46.4	34.2
Increase in technology involved in your work	78.0	10.0	74.7	9.7
Being more closely supervised/ managed	41.5	36.1	40.7	36.0
Increase in level of skill necessary to carry out your work	82.2	7.3	78.1	8.6
Having to work unsocial hours	30.9	52.5	31.0	50.6

Table 9.11 shows employees' willingness to change aspects of their jobs by public versus private sector. There are few marked differences between the sectors, although private sector workers are more willing to accept, and less resistant to, increased pressure at work, and, perhaps somewhat less willing to accept an increase in skill levels. This latter may reflect the greater frequency with which public sector workers have experienced change, discussed above.

Table 9.12 develops an OLS model of willingness to change, allowing us to ascertain the effects of variables of interest while controlling for the effects of other influential variables. The dependent variable in these models is a five-item scale constructed by calculating the mean value of the first 5 items in the list of aspects of change in Tables 9.10 and 9.11 above. The scale thus captures willingness to accept increased responsibility, pressure, technology, supervision and skill levels and varies from 0, unwilling to accept change, to 2, willing to accept change.¹

The first equation examines the impact of personal and job characteristics on willingness to accept change at work. Compared to the reference category – those aged less than 25 – older workers are less willing to accept change, and this pattern increases with age. Women are less open to change at work than men. The higher the level of educational attainment, the greater the willingness to accept

change at work. Social class is also influential: Higher Professionals and Other Non-manual workers are more likely to be willing to accept change than the reference category, Unskilled Workers. So also are Lower Professionals, although to a somewhat lesser extent, and Skilled and Semi-skilled Workers to a much lesser extent. In addition to the impact of social class, we also looked at the effects of exercising managerial or supervisory functions within organisations, but found no significant effects (results not tabulated here).

Weekly earnings are not related to willingness to change. Neither are various aspects of terms of employment, including temporary contracts, job-sharing or working from home. However part-time workers are less willing to accept change. Those working on flexitime are more willing to accept change. Compared to the reference category, those who have been employed by the same employer for more than 5 years, and those with shorter job tenure, are more willing to accept change. Finally, experience of change in the past two years, as summarised in a measure of the total number of changes experienced at work in the past two years (based on the items listed in Table 9.4), has no influence on willingness to accept change in the future.

¹ The final item, relating to working unsocial hours, was not included because a reliability test suggested that this latter item differed too greatly from the other items included in the scale, and that inclusion of this item would have generated a scale with a significantly lower alpha value.

Table 9.12 | OLS Model of Willingness to Accept Change, 5 Item Scale

	Coefficient	Coefficient	Coefficient
(Constant)	-1.712***	-1.642***	-1.812***
Age 25-39	-0.070**	-0.076**	-0.077**
Age 40-54	-0.136***	-0.140***	-0.145***
Age 55+	-0.212***	-0.216***	-0.225***
Female	-0.079***	-0.073***	-0.075***
Junior Certificate	0.090**	0.089**	0.096**
Leaving Certificate	0.100***	0.091**	0.089**
Third Level	0.123***	0.118***	0.120***
Higher Professional	0.208***	0.190***	0.139***
Lower Professional	0.164**	0.168***	0.125***
Other Non-manual	0.193**	0.180***	0.154***
Skilled Manual	0.094**	0.083**	0.072**
Semi-skilled Manual	0.094**	0.097**	0.081**
Weekly Earnings	0.000	0.000	0.000
Temporary Contract	-0.013	-0.007	0.005
Part-time	-0.048*	-0.038*	-0.045**
Work from Home	-0.016	-0.023	-0.018
Flexitime work	0.064***	0.059***	0.036**
Job-sharing	-0.011	-0.010	-0.012
LT 1 year in job	0.097***	0.102***	0.092***
1-5 years in job	0.059**	0.058**	0.057**
Number of job changes, last 2 years	0.000	-0.001	-0.004
Public sector organisation		-0.062**	-0.053*
Construction		-0.046	-0.065*
Retail		-0.030	-0.038
Hotel and Restaurants		-0.115**	-0.119***
Transport & Communications		-0.025	-0.010
Finance and Business		0.005	0.006
Public Administration		0.090*	0.089**
Education		0.009	-0.011
Health		-0.010	-0.012
Other Services		-0.084*	-0.087**
5-19 Employees in local unit		-0.033	-0.018
20-99 Employees in local unit		-0.071**	-0.043*
100+ Employees in local unit		-0.027	0.001
Received training in last 2 years		0.022	0.003
Organisational change in last 2 years			0.003
Family-friendly policy in last 2 years			0.037**
Union recognised, no partnership			0.016
Partnership Institutions			-0.010
Participation arrangements			-0.004
Consultation			0.084***
N of cases	4722	4734	4673
R²	0.061	0.070	0.105
Adjusted R²	0.057	0.063	0.098

* $p < .10$, ** $p < .05$, *** $p < .001$

The first equation examines the impact of personal and job characteristics on willingness to accept change at work. Compared to the reference category, those aged less than 25, older workers are less willing to accept change, and this pattern increases with age. Women are less open to change at work than men. The higher the level of educational attainment, the greater the willingness to accept change at work. Social class is also influential: Higher Professionals and Other Non-manual workers are more likely to be willing to accept change than the reference category, Unskilled Workers. So also are Lower Professionals, although to a somewhat lesser extent, and Skilled and Semi-skilled Workers to a much lesser extent. In addition to the impact of social class, we also looked at the effects of exercising managerial or supervisory functions within organisations, but found no significant effects (results not tabulated here).

The second equation adds organisational characteristics. Employees in public sector organisations are less willing to accept change in the workplace than their counterparts in the private sector. Compared to the reference category, Manufacturing, those in Hotels and Restaurants and in Other Services are less willing to accept change, while those in Public Administration are more willing. Workers in organisations with more than 5 employees appear to be less willing to accept change than those in small organisations with less than 5 employees, although this effect is statistically significant only in respect of those with 20-99 employees. Those who had received education or training sponsored by their employers were no less likely to be willing to embrace change than those who had not.

The final equation adds employee involvement and organisational change in the recent past. Experience of organisational change in the past two years, including organisational re-structuring, appointment of a new chief executive or adoption of new technology has no discernible influence on willingness to accept future change in the workplace. Introduction of family-friendly policies or increased flexibility in the last two years does, however, have a positive and significant impact on willingness to accept change.

The effects of employee involvement are mixed. As discussed in Chapter 8, organisations with formal partnership institutions represent a sub-set of all organisations in which trade unions or staff associations are recognised. To assess the impact of partnership and union organisation we specify 2 dummy variables representing respectively, organisations in which unions are recognised but partnership institutions do not exist, and organisations in which unions are recognised and involved in partnership institutions. The reference category, therefore, is organisations in which unions are not recognised by the employer. Compared to the reference category, with no union recognition, neither union recognition nor the presence of partnership institutions has any impact on willingness to change.

The presence of participation arrangements in deciding how work is actually carried out, such as in work teams, project or problem-solving groups, or quality circles, is also neutral with respect to employee's reported willingness to accept change in the workplace. However, the Consultation scale, measuring the extent to which employees are consulted and informed about decisions that affect their work, as well as the extent to which attention is paid to employees' views, is influential. Employees who report higher level of consultation relating to their jobs are more likely to be willing to accept change, even when other factors, including personal, job and organisational characteristics are taken into account. We experimented with alternative specifications of equation 3, specifying various interactions between the measures of employee involvement (results not tabulated). The reported specification is the most robust and parsimonious.

We also investigated the impact of several additional work practices, including performance appraisal, performance related pay, and profit or gain sharing or share options. However, none of these work practices had any discernible impact on openness to change (results not tabulated).

9.5 Summary and conclusions

This chapter has focused on experiences of, and attitudes to, change in the workplace.

The results suggest that there has been substantial organisational change in Irish workplaces in recent years. Change has been particularly frequent with respect to the introduction of new technology and appears to have been particularly prevalent in the public sector.

There has also been substantial change in aspects of workers' own jobs over the last two years, particularly with respect to increased responsibilities, pressure, use of technology and skill demands, but also increased rates of pay. Irish workers have experienced some intensification of pace, pressure and responsibility at work in recent years. When we measure change in terms of a summary index of changes in the past two years we find that public sector workers report higher rates of change in their own jobs than do private sector workers.

Job change also appears more prevalent in larger organisations.

Workers respond in a very nuanced manner to questions regarding their willingness to accept change at work over the next two years. About three-quarters of all employees are willing to accept increased responsibilities in their jobs, increased technology or computers in their work, and to increased skill needs to carry out their jobs. On the other hand, half of all employees are unwilling to accept unsocial hours. Other areas where workers have reservations about change include increased pressure, and being more closely supervised or managed.

Our model of willingness to change allows us to assess the factors that determine willingness to change while controlling for the effects of other influential variables. The model shows that males, younger workers, those with higher education, those in higher socio-economic classes, and those with shorter job tenure are more willing to accept change at work. Public sector employees and workers in Hotels and Restaurants and in Other Services are less willing to change, but workers in Public Administration are more open to change. The presence of formal partnership structures is neutral with respect to willingness to change. However, less formalised forms of employee partnership and involvement are influential. Employees who report higher levels of consultation relating to decisions that affect their work are more likely to be willing to accept change, even when other factors, including personal, job and organisational characteristics are taken into account.

Appendices



A. Methodology

In this section we discuss the methodology used in the employee attitude survey. We begin in Section 1 by detailing the sample, fieldwork and response rates. Section 2 discusses the questionnaire before moving on to consider re-weighting of the data in Section 3.

A.1 The sample, fieldwork and response rates

The fieldwork for the survey was carried out between June and early September 2003 using a telephone methodology. All questionnaires were completed with the respondent by interviewers from the ESRI's national panel. The questionnaire was carried out as a dedicated, single purpose survey for the National Centre for Partnership and Performance. It was not included as part of a larger omnibus or multi-purpose survey.

The sample was selected on a random basis from a total of 300 sampling points throughout the country. A set of 100 random telephone numbers was generated in each sampling part and these were used to generate a targeted 20 completed questionnaires from each cluster point. A total of 5,509 questionnaires was completed in the course of the survey. Of these 320 were unusable due to incomplete information and so were not included in the analysis. The current report is based on the analysis of 5,198 questionnaires.

One can see from Table 1.1 that these were generated from 11,716 phone calls to private households. This gives a response rate of 46.5%. In a further 50.6% of households the interview was refused; while in the remaining 2.9% of households the survey was partially completed or completed in such a way that it could not subsequently be used for analysis. The proportion of such surveys was unusually high in this survey. In general, in surveys of this nature partial completion of the questionnaire is close to zero.

Table A.1 Response rates from employee attitude survey

	n	%
Completed and used in analysis	5,198	46.5
Partially completed/unusable	320	2.9
Refusals	5,658	50.6
Sub-total	11,176	100.0
Invalid Calls:		
Not private household	5,510	
Non existent/no reply	16,158	
No employees in household	10,121	
Total	31,789	

The reader can see from Table 1.1 that not all calls made were to private households. Given the random nature of the phone numbers we do not know in advance whether or not the random number generated is a valid number for a household. In many cases it was not connected or non-existent; it was a business or fax number or it did not contain a valid member of the target population – in this case an employee. The inclusion of these invalid (or “deadwood”) numbers of the population does not adversely impact on the statistical nature of the sample. They are simply invalid numbers and can be discarded as such in calculating response rates.

A.2 The questionnaire

The survey instrument contained 8 sections as follows:

- A. Details on respondent's current labour market situation such as occupation; industrial sector; size of local unit and enterprise; number of hours worked; status of tenure; trade union membership.
- B. Attitudes to job, intensity and autonomy of the work. This section recorded level of agreement with a series of statements on job satisfaction, pressure, commitment, stress, autonomy etc.
- C. Change in the workplace – the incidence of structural re-organisation; change in Chief Executive; introduction of new work practices and changes over recent years in areas of responsibility, pressure worked under, employee's willingness to accept such change if it were to continue into the future etc.
- D. Skill levels and training provided by the employer over the 2 years preceding the survey.
- E. Communications – this section includes sources of information; perceptions on the adequacy or otherwise of information received from management and prior consultation regarding changes in areas affecting the respondent's job.
- F. Employee/employer relations – this section deals with relations between different groups of employees and also between management and employee.
- G. Partnership and Involvement – this section considers the extent of direct and also indirect participation by employees in decisions as to how the work is carried out.
- H. Background or classificatory variables. This included the standard set of classificatory variables used in analysis of the data. These include age, sex, marital status, number of dependent children, level of educational attainment etc.

The complete questionnaire is provided at the end of this chapter.

A.3 Sample weights

In line with all sample surveys the data collected had to be weighted or statistically adjusted prior to analysis. The purpose of this so-called re-weighting procedure is to compensate for any biases in the distribution of characteristics in the completed sample as compared to the population of interest – in this case the population of employees living in private households. The potential biases in question could derive either from the nature of the sampling frame used or from differential response rates within sub-groups of the population or the interaction of both effects.

Whatever the origin of the discrepancy between the sample and population distributions, we adjust the distributional characteristics of the sample in line with important analytical variables such as age, sex, level of educational attainment, social class, size of establishment, public/private sector etc. This is done by comparing the sample characteristics to external population controls. These latter came principally from the Quarterly National Household Survey (Q2 2002 and Q2 2003). The variables used in the weighting scheme were as follows:

- Gender
- NACE sector (11 categories)
- Age cohort (8 categories)
- Broad regional identifier (BMW vs. other)
- Number of employees in local unit (4 categories)
- Union membership (2 categories)
- Level of educational attainment (4 categories)
- Number of adults in the household (5 categories)
- Public/private sector (3 categories, private, commercial and non-commercial semi-state).

A total of 80 control variables was set up from the interactions of these variables. The weighting procedure used was based on a minimum distance algorithm which adjusts an initial weight in a regression-type framework such that the distribution of characteristics in the sample matches that of the set of control totals.

Table A2 outlines the complete list of population controls. Columns A and B shows the distribution for the population as a whole. Columns C and D presents the comparable distribution for the un-weighted sample. Columns E and F provide details on the weighted sample. Finally, column G provides details on the differences between the structure of the weighted sample and the population along the dimensions used in the re-weighting procedure. One can see that, in general terms, prior to weighting our sample was under-represented among persons with lower levels of educational attainment and younger persons. The sample weights connect for the sample distribution and provide a very close match to the population distributions (see Column G of Table A.2)

Table A.2 | Comparison of Population and Sample Distributions of Key Controls

		Population		Unweighted Sample		Weighted Sample		Differences Population and Weighted Sample (F-B)
		A	B	C	D	E	F	G
		Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	
Gender*NACE1	MALE_AB	18,500	1.3	33	0.6	18,658	1.3	0.0
	MALE_CDE	194,200	13.2	640	12.3	195,709	13.3	-0.1
	MALE_F	130,300	8.9	239	4.6	130,287	8.9	0.0
	MALE_G	96,700	6.6	287	5.5	97,528	6.6	-0.1
	MALE_H	39,600	2.7	113	2.2	39,887	2.7	0.0
	MALE_I	64,200	4.4	224	4.3	64,763	4.4	0.0
	MALE_JK	90,700	6.2	290	5.6	91,493	6.2	-0.1
	MALE_L	49,900	3.4	262	5.0	50,327	3.4	0.0
	MALE_M	32,900	2.2	161	3.1	33,182	2.3	0.0
	MALE_N	29,400	2.0	104	2.0	29,652	2.0	0.0
	MALE_O	30,600	2.1	59	1.1	30,862	2.1	0.0
	FMAL_AB	4,200	0.3	16	0.3	4,049	0.3	0.0
	FMAL_CDE	84,300	5.7	287	5.5	80,615	5.5	0.3
	FMAL_F	8,200	0.6	25	0.5	8,270	0.6	0.0
	FMAL_G	113,500	7.7	423	8.2	113,589	7.7	0.0
	FMAL_H	58,800	4.0	183	3.5	58,410	4.0	0.0
	FMAL_I	24,800	1.7	92	1.8	25,039	1.7	0.0
	FMAL_JK	104,000	7.1	399	7.7	101,633	6.9	0.2
	FMAL_L	40,300	2.7	243	4.7	40,870	2.8	0.0
	FMAL_M	77,500	5.3	409	7.9	78,163	5.3	0.0
FMAL_N	129,300	8.8	572	11.0	129,144	8.8	0.0	
FMAL_O	46,900	3.2	128	2.5	46,485	3.2	0.0	
Gender*Age	MAL1519	38,600	2.6	141	2.7	38,953	2.7	0.0
	MAL2024	117,300	8.0	270	5.2	118,304	8.1	-0.1
	MAL2534	237,100	16.1	475	9.2	237,788	16.2	0.0
	MAL3544	171,500	11.7	682	13.1	172,970	11.8	-0.1
	MAL4554	134,600	9.2	540	10.4	135,765	9.2	-0.1
	MAL5559	46,200	3.1	173	3.3	46,595	3.2	0.0
	MAL6064	25,500	1.7	111	2.1	25,718	1.8	0.0
	MAL65HI	6,200	0.4	20	0.4	6,253	0.4	0.0
	FML1519	31,000	2.1	133	2.6	31,333	2.1	0.0
	FML2024	108,200	7.4	309	6.0	106,371	7.2	0.1
	FML2534	216,600	14.7	642	12.4	209,617	14.3	0.5
	FML3544	162,000	11.0	858	16.5	163,364	11.1	-0.1
	FML4554	120,000	8.2	570	11.0	121,096	8.2	-0.1
	FML5559	34,900	2.4	177	3.4	35,209	2.4	0.0
	FML6064	11,300	0.8	68	1.3	11,410	0.8	0.0
	FML65HI	7,800	0.5	20	0.4	7,867	0.5	0.0
	Gender*Region	MALBMW	186,700	12.7	683	13.2	187,800	12.8
MALOTH		590,400	40.2	1,729	33.3	594,548	40.5	-0.3
FMLBMW		166,200	11.3	829	16.0	165,390	11.3	0.1
FMLOTH		525,500	35.8	1,948	37.5	520,878	35.5	0.3

Table A.2 | Continued

		Population		Unweighted Sample		Weighted Sample		Differences Population and Weighted Sample (F-B)
		A	B	C	D	E	F	G
		Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	
Gender*Size								
Local Unit	MAL19EMP	296,400	20.2	897	17.3	298,220	20.3	-0.1
	MAL49EMP	126,900	8.6	521	10.0	127,988	8.7	-0.1
	MAL50EMP	353,700	24.1	994	19.2	356,139	24.3	-0.2
	FML19EMP	263,900	18.0	1,204	23.2	264,945	18.0	-0.1
	FML49EMP	113,000	7.7	640	12.3	113,832	7.8	-0.1
	FML50EMP	314,900	21.4	933	18.0	307,491	20.9	0.5
Gender*Union								
M'ship	MAL34U	149,400	10.2	249	4.8	150,295	10.2	-0.1
	MAL34NU	243,600	16.6	637	12.3	244,750	16.7	-0.1
	MAL35U	145,900	9.9	817	15.7	147,164	10.0	-0.1
	MAL35NU	238,100	16.2	709	13.7	240,138	16.4	-0.1
	FML34U	135,200	9.2	300	5.8	127,766	8.7	0.5
	FML34NU	220,600	15.0	784	15.1	219,555	14.9	0.1
	FML35U	127,700	8.7	856	16.5	128,852	8.8	-0.1
	FML35NU	208,300	14.2	837	16.1	210,095	14.3	-0.1
Gender*Education								
	MAL34NO	45,200	3.1	41	0.8	44,629	3.0	0.0
	MAL34LW	65,100	4.4	143	2.8	65,657	4.5	0.0
	MAL34HI	209,000	14.2	349	6.7	210,405	14.3	-0.1
	MAL34DE	73,700	5.0	353	6.8	74,354	5.1	0.0
	MAL35NO	44,100	3.0	225	4.3	44,478	3.0	0.0
	MAL35LW	63,700	4.3	313	6.0	64,247	4.4	0.0
	MAL35HI	204,200	13.9	479	9.2	205,948	14.0	-0.1
	MAL35DE	72,000	4.9	509	9.8	72,630	4.9	0.0
	FML34NO	40,900	2.8	19	0.4	32,206	2.2	0.6
	FML34LW	59,000	4.0	86	1.7	57,486	3.9	0.1
	FML34HI	189,200	12.9	366	7.1	189,996	12.9	-0.1
	FML34DE	66,700	4.5	613	11.8	67,633	4.6	-0.1
	FML35NO	38,600	2.6	167	3.2	38,744	2.6	0.0
	FML35LW	55,700	3.8	227	4.4	56,177	3.8	0.0
	FML35HI	178,700	12.2	644	12.4	180,230	12.3	-0.1
	FML35DE	63,000	4.3	655	12.6	63,796	4.3	-0.1
No. of Adults								
in H'hold	ADULT1	130,723	8.9	564	10.9	128,487	8.7	0.2
	ADULT2	647,741	44.1	2,465	47.5	650,440	44.3	-0.2
	ADULT3	279,072	19.0	1,072	20.7	281,206	19.1	-0.1
	ADULT4	223,258	15.2	702	13.5	222,507	15.2	0.0
	ADULT5	188,006	12.8	386	7.4	185,975	12.7	0.1
Pub/Priv Sector								
	PUBLIC	278,100	18.9	1,636	31.5	280,306	19.1	-0.2
	PRIVATE	1,133,000	77.1	3,326	64.1	1,130,287	77.0	0.2
	COMSTATE	57,700	3.9	227	4.4	58,023	4.0	0.0

NACE SECTORS: A,B – Agriculture, Hunting, Forestry, Fishing; C,D,E – Mining, Quarrying, Manufacturing, Electricity, Gas, Water Supply; F – Construction; G – Wholesale/Retail; H – Hotels, Restaurants; I – Transport; J,K – Financial, Other Business; L – Public Administration; M – Education; N – Health and Social Work; O – Other.

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