

# Workplace for individuals in the context of recession

Mohammad Jaradat<sup>1</sup>, Cicioc Nicoleta<sup>2\*</sup>, Șerb Diana<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup>PhD Professor, University "Bogdan Vodă" Cluj-Napoca, Nr. 22, str. Brâncoveanu, 400467, ClujNapoca, Romania

<sup>2</sup>University Valahia Târgoviște, Nr 23, Valul lui Traian Baia Mare Maramures, Romania

<sup>3</sup> University Valahia Târgoviște, Nr. 190, Gheboieni, Dambovita, Romania

## Abstract

*Work has been and remains a topic of interest to specialists in the field, but also for labor market actors (bearers of demand and supply, and intermediates). In the present period of economic and financial crisis, the level of interest of many academics and practitioners increases on the analysis of this concept. The purpose of this article is to present the place occupied by work in people's lives. It includes some stages of knowledge and some applied stages. The first part deals with conceptual work and outlines its role in the opinion of specialists. The second part is a desk research based on the analysis of secondary sources, and it comprises two parts: a comparative analysis of the perception of residents of three states in terms of work (Romania, Australia and Germany) and the second part comprises the Europeans satisfaction on the job. Data was collected from two sites, one European (Eurofaund) and one international (World Values Survey) and processed in its own way with the help of Excel and SPSS. The central conclusion of the scientific endeavor is that regardless of nationality respondent acknowledges the place of work in his life.*

**Keywords:** *work, job, satisfaction*

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## 1. Knowledge stage

The meaning of work is profound, has a variety of descriptions and definitions given by specialists. Any human activity of whatever nature matters at work. The role of labor varies from one individual to another, and it generates a good understanding outlining goals, meanings and values in a person's life. Some people work for a living and others to achieve professional goals. The concept of work is widely debated and there are many definitions assigned in this regard. Work is a set of human activities, with different purposes, meanings and values. It is a process of transient behavior and procedure, not a static structure. Work is often partially shared (Attfield S, Blandford A, Dowell J, 2003).

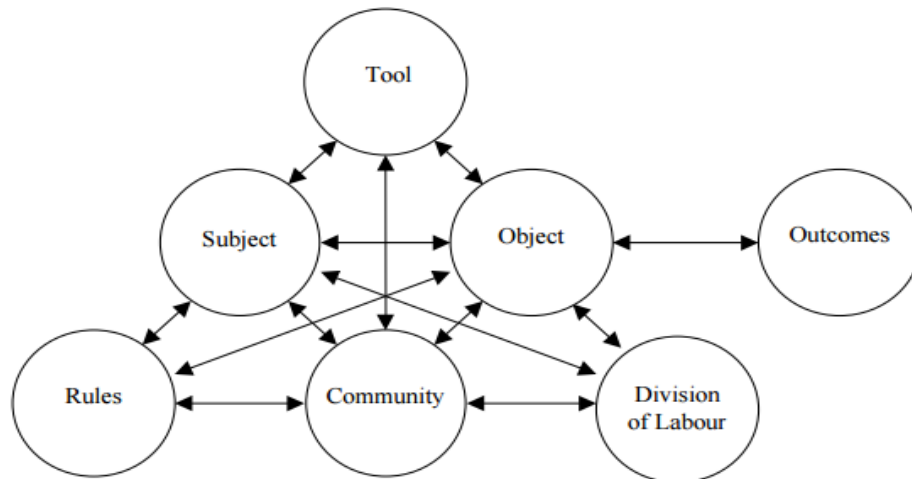
Work characteristics drawn as a result of the above definition are as follows:

1. Work is a group of closely related human activities,
2. Work is a process, behavior and transient procedure,
3. Work is a subjective concept,
4. Work is conceived as being in a permanent state of establishment and restoration of self.

Human resources management at the top level is focused on a specific task and should be based on sets of intuitive procedures that are known. The structure of human activity within an organization can be seen in the figure below:

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\* corresponding author email: ciciocn@yahoo.com



**Figure 1.** Structure of human activities

Source: Larkin P, Gould E, The definition of work roles within organisations , (Eds), Harrisburg, Pa. Idea Group Pub. 1995, p 45

Work is seen both in relation to family and individual life. The work / family factor has been mainly used in recent years. The current trend is to use the term work / life, offering many connotations of life or specific labeling that relate to areas of support (ie, quality of life, flexible working options, life balance)( Lambert S, 2000).

Not all employees maintain a balance between personal life and work. Wishing to surpass the individual wants to work as much as he can, implicitly wants to prove that he is able, and in this respect neglects their family.

Activities that take the form of paid work ensures the existence of the individual, and in this respect should not be neglected, nor lead to mental- exhaustion at work. The work involves a number of tasks. They provide control, progress and practical results. The working relationship is characterized by the tasks and duties that are incorporated in the work, incorporating work tasks, but not necessarily well defined (Byström K, Hansen P, 2005).

Support of human resource managers is beneficial both for the individual and for the organization. The experience and employer surveillance ability and support contribute to successfully achieving tasks at work. A labor resource operating in a balanced climate achieves performances(Bloom N, Kretschmer T, Van T, 2006).

## 2. Study regarding the work place in the lives of individuals

### 2.1. Research methodology

The method of gathering the information was -Analysis of secondary sources. A survey was conducted structured in two parts: an analysis of comparative perception of individuals with regard to the role of work in their lives (respondents were part of several countries among which is Romania) as well as an analysis of satisfaction of Europeans at work. This is a desk research based on secondary sources, the results obtained from the surveys conducted by: World Values Survey and Eurofound. Its role is to help scientists better understand a change in beliefs, values and motivations of people around the world. Since the last survey we selected relevant data applied on the job.

The survey conducted among Europeans by Eurofound. This site deals with issues related to quality of work. The topics: exposure to physical and psychosocial risks, duration and organization of working time, employment status and work contract, organization, the balance between work and personal life, consequences of work on personal life, training and learning, employee voice in the workplace, health and welfare, and income. From 1991 until 2015 the sample was increased.

The latest round of polling EWCS took place in 2015: survey of employees in the EU 28. The fifth EWCS took place in 2010: the workers interviewed were in the EU 27. Round number four EWCS took place in 2005:

EU 27 plus Norway, Croatia, Turkey and Switzerland. Round number two took place in 1995/1996: workers in the EU15. In the first round EWCS 1990/1991: workers in EC 12 were interviewed.

### Objectives:

1. Principal: - Knowledge of the role of labor respondents.
2. Derivatives:
  - a. Identification of choice,
  - b. Knowledge of independence offered by job,
  - c. Observing the share of respondents that are satisfied with the current job.

### Hypotheses:

1. Regardless of the state they're from, the majority of research participants believes that the work offers independence.
2. The decrease the importance of work in the lives of individuals contemporary society is not seen as a good thing for society.
3. Balance on the job is conditional on the involvement of the manager.

## 2.2. Research results

Data obtained from the research was structured on two levels: a comparative analysis of perceptions about the work role and job satisfaction. It starts through comparative analysis of respondents' perception of the states participating in research Australia, Germany and Romania.

### 1. Comparative analysis of the perception of the role of labor

#### The first question analyzed

Some people think they have total freedom of choice and control over their lives, and other people think everything they do it cannot influence what happens in life. Please use the following scale to indicate how much freedom of choice you think you have, giving a mark from 1 to 10, where 1 means "I have no freedom" and 10 that "I have complete freedom".

**Table 1.** I have full freedom

	Australia	Germany	Romania
No choice at all	0.8	1.6	2.5
2	1.1	1.3	0.9
3	2.4	4.3	1.6
4	3	4.7	2.7
5	7.5	14.9	8.6
6	6.7	13.7	8.6
7	15.7	20.8	10.5
8	25.6	18.8	15.7
9	15.7	6.4	11.9
A great deal of choice	20.4	13.2	35.6
SG: Missing; DE:Inapplicable; RU: Inappropriate response	0	0	0
No answer	1.2	0	0.2
Don't know	0	0.3	1.1
(N)	1.477	2.046	1.503

Source: <http://www.worldvaluessurvey.org/>

Regarding the respondents' perception of freedom of choice to decide it appears that in Australia the percentage of those showing agreeing attitude reaches 20%, Germany reaches 13% and in Romania's case the value is 35.6 %.

### Question number two:

**Having a job is the best way for a woman to be independent person year. To what extent do you agree?**

**Tabel 2.** The job is the best way for a woman to be independent

	Australia	Germany	Romania
Agree strongly	19.1	21.8	13.4
Agree	48	30.6	19
Disagree	25.9	31.3	33.3
Strongly disagree	6	11.7	28.3
No answer	1	0.1	0.9
Don't know	0	4.6	5.2
(N)	1.477	2.046	1.503

Source: <http://www.worldvaluessurvey.org/>

It was used as a scale method the Likert. Most respondents in each State agree that work gives an individual independence. In Romania and Germany the percentage of user reaches 70% and for Germany it reaches a value of 45%.

**Question number three**

„ Less importance placed on work in our lives"

**Tabel 3.** Place occupied by labor

	Australia	Germany	Romania
Good thing	39.1	41.9	11.5
Don't mind	40	17.8	12.3
Bad thing	18.2	37.9	72
Missing; RU,DE: Inappropriate response	0	1	0
No answer	2.6	0	0.9
Don't know	0	1.3	3.4
(N)	1.477	2.046	1.503

Source: <http://www.worldvaluessurvey.org/>

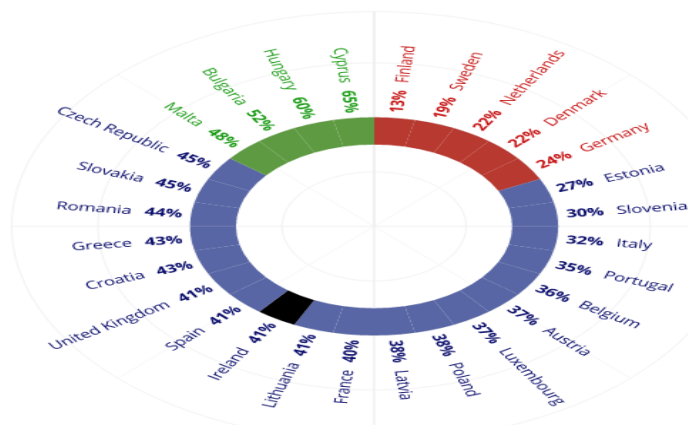
This question is designed to present the perception of respondents on easing the place occupied by labor in their lives. According to the answers of respondents: 40% of Australian participants show an indifferent attitude, 41% of Germans believe that it is a good thing, while 72% of Romanians participant believe that this is a bad thing.

**II. Job satisfaction study**

Research conducted in all EU countries.

**Question 4.**

Comfort at work depends on the involvement of the manager.



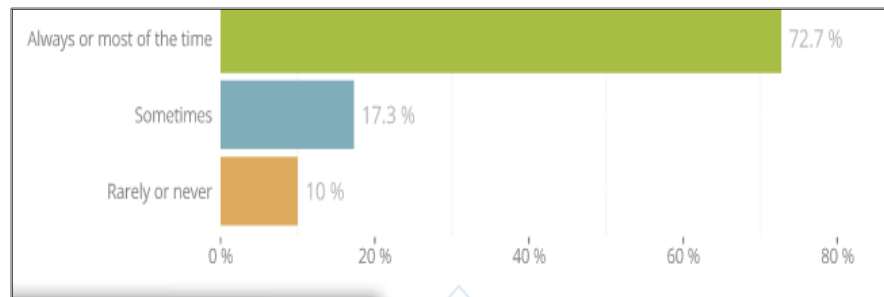
**Figure 1.** The role of Manager's involvement in ensuring balance in the workplace

Source: <http://www.eurofound.europa.eu/>

The percentage of Europeans who think that the balance in the workplace is conditioned by the involvement of the manager is as follows: 44% of Romanian, 65% of Cypriots, 60% of Hungarians, 36% of Belgians.

### Question 5.

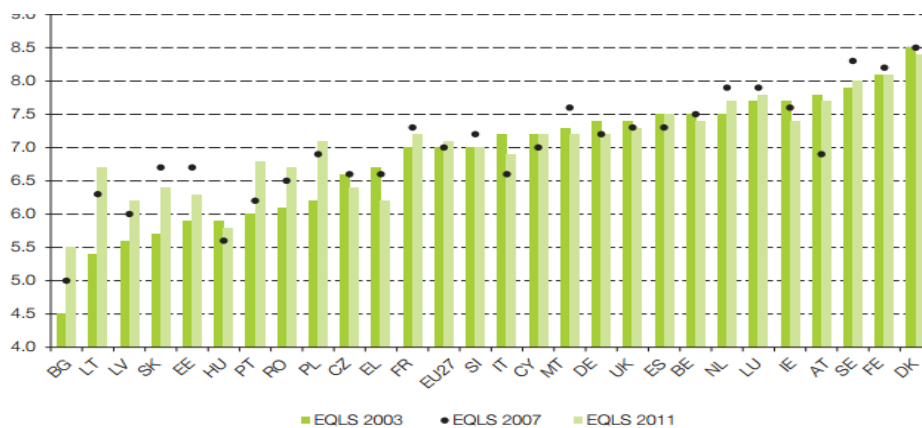
The time designated for the job tasks is enough for me



**Figure 2.** The time spent for job

Source: <http://www.eurofound.europa.eu/>

90% of European research participants believe that the time spent for job tasks is enough.



**Figure 3.** Satisfaction with current job

Source: <http://www.eurofound.europa.eu/>

We make a comparison of the level of satisfaction perceived by Europeans in the three rounds of this survey: 2003, 2007 and 2011.

In the case of Romania we see that in 2011 the perceived level of satisfaction is lower than in 2007.

### 3. Conclusions

Work has an important role for Europeans because on one hand it ensures money to fulfill the needs (food, clothing, travel, recreation), and on the other hand it gives the feeling of safety. Individuals who have a job feel independent and their self-esteem is increased. The majority of Europeans consider that the freedom to decide at the workplace ensures comfort and the intervention of Manager generates a poor climate. Studies conducted by the Eurofound showed that respondents in our country perceive a lower level of satisfaction at work by comparison with previous years.

The average level of satisfaction according to the survey of 2011 the Romanians reached a value of 6.5, while in 2007 it was 7. Comparing our country with the neighboring Bulgaria shows that Romanians are more satisfied than Bulgarians. Even though respondents in Germany, Romania and Australia are aware that work gives them independence, they show an attitude of disapproval on the fact that the best way to get independence is work, and according to their view the independence is made out of other aspects too.

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