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Article

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Sven Hauff, Stefan Kirchner*

Job quality between institutional differences and convergence**

Abstract – The alignment of workplace situation and work values is an important indicator of job quality. From an international comparative perspective, it can be assumed that countries differ regarding the respective mismatch levels owing to institutional differences. However, these differences may be dynamic, and globalization approaches posit a general trend towards convergence. This paper tests these assumptions by asking how countries differ in their mismatch levels and how these differences develop over time. The empirical analysis is based on employee data from 1989 and 2005 for the USA, Great Britain, West Germany, Norway, and Hungary. Findings show that in 1989, West Germany exhibited lower mismatch levels than the USA and Great Britain. In contrast, findings for Norway are mixed, while Hungary displays mostly higher mismatch levels. A partial convergence of job security and income mismatch levels has taken place between the USA, Great Britain, and West Germany. Moreover, our findings underline the persistence of institutional differences in job quality.

Arbeitsqualität zwischen institutionellen Differenzen und Konvergenz

Zusammenfassung – Die Übereinstimmung zwischen Arbeitsplatzsituation und arbeitsorientieren Werten stellt einen wichtigen Indikator der Arbeitsqualität dar. Aus einer international vergleichenden Perspektive kann angenommen werden, dass die entsprechenden Mismatch-Niveaus aufgrund institutioneller Differenzen unterschiedlich ausfallen. Diese Unterschiede können dynamisch sein, wobei Globalisierungsansätze von einem konvergierenden Trend ausgehen. Dieser Beitrag testet diese Annahmen und fragt, inwieweit sich Länder hinsichtlich ihrer Mismatch-Niveaus unterscheiden und wie sich diese Unterschiede im Laufe der Zeit verändern. Die empirische Analyse basiert auf Arbeitnehmerdaten aus den Jahren 1989 und 2005 für die USA, Großbritannien, Westdeutschland, Norwegen und Ungarn. Die Ergebnisse zeigen, dass in 1989 in Westdeutschland geringere Mismatch-Niveaus vorlagen als in den USA und Großbritannien. Im Gegenzug zeigen sich für Norwegen gemischte Befunde, während die Mismatch-Niveaus in Ungarn meist am höchsten sind. In Bezug auf Arbeitsplatzsicherheit und Einkommen findet eine partielle Konvergenz zwischen den USA, Großbritannien und Westdeutschland statt. Darüber hinaus unterstreichen die Ergebnisse allerdings eine Beständigkeit institutioneller Differenzen der Arbeitsqualität.

Key words: **job quality, workplace situation, work values, mismatch, cross-national differences, change, employment regime theory, varieties of capitalism** (JEL: J50, J81, O57, P52)

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1. Introduction

The alignment of workplace situation with employee work values is a key aspect of working life. It has been found to impact on employee job satisfaction (Kalleberg 2007; Hauff/Kirchner 2013) as well as on organizational commitment, job performance, and employee turnover (e.g., Hoffman/Woehr 2006; Kristof-Brown et al. 2005; Verquer et al. 2003). Therefore, a mismatch between workplace situation and work values provides an important indicator for job quality (Hauff/Kirchner 2013; Kalleberg 2007).

From an international comparative perspective, it can be assumed that countries differ concerning mismatch levels because of institutional differences. For instance, employment regime theory (Gallie 2007b, 2009; Holman 2013) highlights that the distribution of power resources between employers and employees differs across countries, which should influence employees' abilities to fulfill their aspirations. The varieties of capitalism approach (Hall/Soskice 2001) points to further institutional differences (e.g., the role of vocational training and education) that should influence mismatches between workplace situation and work values in a country and should thus contribute to cross-national differences. However, these differences do not have to be static. Globalization approaches (Tempel/Walgenbach 2007) assume a general convergence, which should also effect workplace situation and work values. As a result, cross-national differences in mismatches might disappear over time.

To date, research on cross-national differences and trends in job quality has largely focused on differences and trends regarding the workplace situation (e.g., Clark 2005; 2010; Gallie 2007a; 2007b; Holman 2013; Muñoz de Bustillo et al. 2011; Olsen et al. 2010). In contrast, the question of mismatch between workplace situation and work values has received little attention. Some researchers have analyzed the relationships and dynamics within countries (e.g., Hauff/Kirchner 2013; 2014; Kalleberg 2007, 2008). However, it is not yet clear how countries differ in their mismatch levels and how these differences develop over time. This article seeks to close this research gap.

To answer this research question, we first discuss the theoretical foundations for analyzing mismatch. Afterwards we consult existing approaches that help to theorize cross-national differences and dynamics and present hypotheses. These hypotheses are tested using employee data from 1989 and 2005, covering five countries, namely the USA, Great Britain, West Germany, Norway, and Hungary. The analysis considers mismatches in terms of job security, income, career, interesting job, and independence at work.

Findings reveal that in 1989 West Germany mostly exhibits better mismatch states than the USA and Great Britain. Norway displays mixed results that conflict with general theoretical assumptions, while Hungary's mismatch states are mostly inferior to other countries' mismatch states. Concerning developments over time, a partial convergence of job security and income mismatch states can be observed between the USA, Great Britain, and West Germany. Apart from these, no general convergence trend is found. Thus, our findings underline the resilience of institutional differences in job quality.

2. Mismatch between workplace situation and work values

2.1 The importance of work values

When analyzing cross-national differences and trends in job quality, authors usually investigate the shaping and development of workplace situations in different countries (e.g., Clark 2005; 2010; Gallie 2007a; 2007b; Holman 2013; Muñoz de Bustillo et al. 2011; Olsen et al. 2010). This seems most adequate for those work and employment conditions that directly relate to changes in job quality. For instance, when work becomes more dangerous, this directly affects job quality negatively. In other dimensions, however, observation of the subjective perception alone may not be sufficient, because employees have different demands of their workplace. Similar workplace situations can then be evaluated differently (Hauff/Kirchner 2013). This concerns the question of worker discretion, for instance. Whereas some employees will readily accept the offer of more independence and responsibility, because this corresponds with their interests, others may be unwilling or even unable to cope with such a situation. The same is true for job security, because different groups of employees may have different demands of their job's security. These examples illustrate that for, some dimensions, the assessment of job quality necessitates an evaluative perspective.

A crucial aspect of this evaluative perspective is the match between a workplace situation and work values (Hauff/Kirchner 2013). Work values signify what people desire from work and serve as points of reference to assess working conditions (e.g., Dose 1997; Ros et al. 1999; Bu/Mckeen 2001). 'Work values are beliefs pertaining to desirable end-states (e.g., high pay) or behavior (e.g., working with people) […]; they refer to what a person wants out of work in general, rather than to the narrowly defined outcomes of particular jobs' (Ros et al. 1999: 54). Since values in general can help one to assess the social world, work values are important for evaluating the workplace, attitudes to specific work situations, and behavioral responses (Ros et al. 1999; Gahan/Abeysekera 2009). In this perspective, whether or not a job is considered *good* or *bad* depends on the workplace situation *and* on individual work values at the same time.

This evaluative perspective proves especially necessary for an evaluation of cross-national differences and trends in job quality, since values and views concerning occupation and work differ between countries (e.g., Kaasa 2011). Further, work values seem to have fundamentally changed in the past few decades (Ester et al. 1994; Yankelovich et al. 1985). However, to date, only a few studies have taken a macro-economic perspective on mismatches between a workplace situation and work values. For instance, Kalleberg (2007, 2008) investigated changes in the match between people's jobs and their needs and wishes in the USA. Hauff and Kirchner (2013) investigated particular developments in Germany. Hauff and Kirchner (2014) analyzed the relationships and dynamics between a workplace situation and work values in different countries, namely the USA, Great Britain, Germany, Norway, and Hungary. However, none of these studies have investigated the mismatch level differences between countries and how these differences evolve over time.

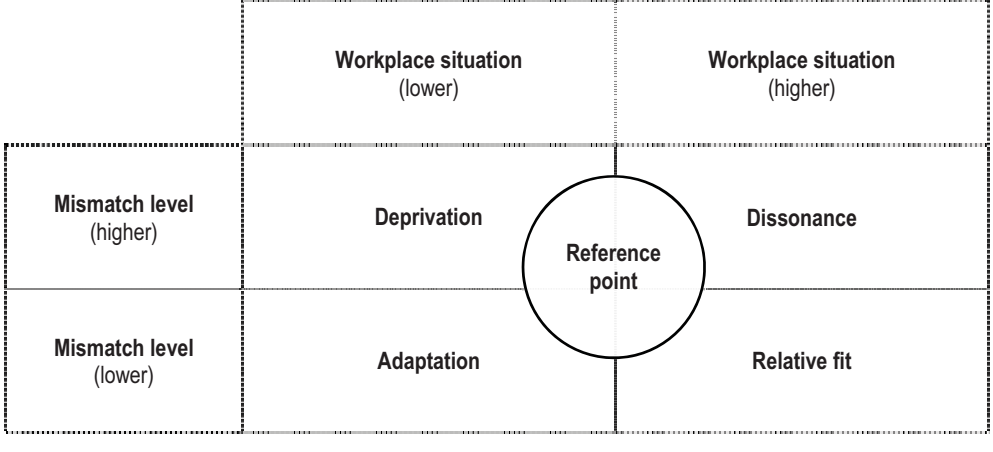
2.2 The challenge of analyzing mismatches

An analysis of mismatch involves a fundamental challenge. The easiest way to compare countries concerning their mismatch level would be to estimate the mismatch levels for each country and compare them. However, interpreting these mismatch levels can prove misleading, because similar mismatch levels can derive from different combinations of a situation and values. For instance, a match between a good workplace situation and high work values may equal a combination of bad workplace situation and low work values. Here, the mismatch levels in both examples are similar while the workplace situations are very different. Accordingly, the implications and interpretations of both mismatches would differ considerably.

Similar challenges have been described in quality of life studies that investigate the combination of good and bad living conditions with good and bad subjective perceptions of well-being. A combination of these two aspects creates four types of states, namely *deprivation*, *adaptation*, *well-being*, and *dissonance* (Rapley 2003; see Vesan/Bizzotto 2011). This general analytic scheme can be applied to the mismatch of a workplace situation and work values. Thereby, we understand a mismatch as a particular case of the more general interrelation of conditions and evaluations or aspirations.

Figure 1 represents our analytical scheme of the relationships between workplace situation (condition) and a mismatch between workplace situation and work values (evaluation). The combinations of these two aspects determine a particular mismatch state. Because both aspects represent relative dimensions they are depicted in terms of *lower* and *higher* compared to a reference point. Generally, this reference could be derived from many entities of interest, for instance, persons, regions, or occupational groups. In the following, this reference point represents a specific country's traits, because we are interested in the relationship between countries. Compared to this reference point other countries may be situated lower or higher in the dimensions of workplace situation and mismatch.

Figure 1: Analytic scheme of four mismatch states stemming from workplace situation and mismatch level



Our analytic scheme distinguishes four different mismatch states: In *deprivation*, workplace situation is lower and mismatch levels are higher than the reference. Despite a comparatively lower workplace situation, employees still have high aspirations for the respective aspects. In particular, this may be the case for extrinsic aspects of work life which, according to Maslow (1970), should become stronger if extrinsic workplace conditions are worsening (Johnson et al. 2012). *Adaptation* describes a mismatch state where a lower workplace situation is met by equally low mismatch levels. In this case, lower workplace situations coincide with lower aspirations. Such a reduction in work values can be explained through the fact that individuals are motivated to protect and enhance their self-esteem. Accordingly, people's work values adapt if they are not fulfilled (Johnson et al. 2012; Mortimer/Lorence 1979). A mismatch state of *relative fit* describes a state where a higher workplace situation level is met by a lower mismatch level. Here, employees are pretty much getting what they aspire to. Finally, *dissonance* describes a mismatch state wherein employees enjoy relatively high workplace situations levels yet aspire to even higher levels.

The presented analytical scheme allows for the assessment of different mismatch levels in relation to different workplace situation levels. Furthermore, a basic order of the different mismatch states can be derived, which allows us to compare the implications of these mismatch states for job quality in different countries. For this order, we assume that higher workplace situation levels are preferred over lower levels, whereas lower mismatch levels are preferred over higher levels. Thus, we consider situational difference first when determining the order of the different mismatch states. Accordingly, we assume that the mismatch state of *deprivation* is worse than *adaptation*, which is worse than *dissonance*, which is worse than *relative fit*.

3. Theorizing cross-national difference and dynamics of mismatch states

Several theoretical contributions provide a basis for the investigation of cross-national differences and dynamics. According to their primary focus, these theoretical contributions can be subdivided into a *static view* and a *dynamic view* of cross-national dynamics.

3.1 A static view: Institutional differences in mismatch

In the literature, there are several indications that the institutional context has major implications for job quality in a given country (Esser/Olsen 2012; Gallie 2007b; 2009; Holman 2013; Olsen et al. 2010). Correspondingly, it can be assumed that the institutional framework shapes the mismatch levels between workplace situation and work values. Two main approaches to institutional differences between countries are employment regime theory and the varieties of capitalism approach.

Employment regime theory (Gallie 2007b; 2009; Korpi 1978, 2006) is most closely related to the question of mismatch between a workplace situation and work values, because it focuses on the institutionalized role of organized labor. Within this framework, employment regimes are distinguished that differ systematically in terms of organized labor's involvement in decision-making, the principles underlying employment policy, the salience of quality of work-life programs, and the level of welfare protection offered

to the unemployed. According to the differences in organized labor, employment regime theory distinguishes these regime types: social democratic (e.g., Scandinavian countries), continental (e.g., Germany, France), liberal (e.g., the USA, Great Britain), southern European (e.g., Spain, Greece), and transitional regimes (e.g., Hungary) (Gallie 2007b; Holman 2013; Olsen et al. 2010). In social democratic (inclusive) employment regimes, work and employment rights are strong and extend throughout the entire workforce. In continental (dualist) regimes, strong rights are also guaranteed but only for the core of skilled and long-term employees, at the cost of outsiders. In liberal regimes, employment regulation is minimized, as is the capacity of organized labor to influence workplace conditions. Moreover, southern European and transitional regimes are also characterized as having relatively little state intervention and a weak influence of organized labor.

The *varieties of capitalism* approach provides another seminal theoretical contribution for comparing cross-national differences (Hall/Soskice 2001; for a detailed critique and related research on comparative capitalisms, see Amable 2003; Hauptmeier 2014; Jackson/Deeg 2008; Whitley 1999). Proponents of this approach argue that institutional settings of different national market economies foster particular economic activities, while others are impeded. In an ideal typical distinction, liberal market economies (LMEs) (e.g., the USA or Great Britain), rely on market mechanisms, a low labor regulation level, and relaxed employment protection. In contrast, Germany and the Scandinavian countries are examples of coordinated market economies (CMEs), which are characterized by a generally high regulation level and increased employment protection.

While these two approaches pose no explicit hypotheses about mismatches between workplace situation and work values, they nevertheless address different aspects (e.g., the positions of employees and their representatives) related to the question of mismatch. Thus, based on their insights, we can deduct several hypotheses about the mismatch states in different countries. As our empirical investigation focuses on mismatch states in selected countries, hypotheses are always formulated with reference to these countries. However, each of these countries represents a specific employment regime: the USA and Great Britain (GB) represent core *liberal employment regime* countries, while West Germany (DE) is considered a core *dualist employment regime* country, Norway (NO) is an *inclusive employment regime* country, and Hungary (HU) is a *transitional employment regime* country.

Employment regime theory highlights that organized labor's influence is rather low in liberal regimes. Here, employees are less able to enforce their interests. This view is supported by the varieties of capitalism approach. Countries such as Germany and Norway are more characterized by non-market arrangements, and also rely more on specific skills and experienced employees. The need for high skills enables not only more opportunities for learning and further skill development, but should also give employees more control over their work and should foster higher job security (Gallie 2007b). Therefore, workplace situation in Germany and Norway should generally be better and the mismatch levels should be lower. Accordingly, our first hypothesis is:

Hypothesis 1: The mismatch states of Norway and West Germany exceed the mismatch states of the USA and Great Britain.

The varieties of capitalism approach expects that Germany and the Scandinavian countries are more similar than Great Britain and the USA. In contrast, employment regime theory distinguishes between social democratic and continental regimes. This implies a difference between the two CME countries West Germany and Norway. By definition, only social democratic regimes seek to diminish differences between employee groups. These regimes also provide strong safety nets for marginalized employee groups such as temporary or part-time workers. In comparison, continental regimes provide strong employment protection and good employment conditions for only the core workforce. Accordingly, we would expect substantial differences between social democratic and continental regimes. Therefore, our second hypothesis is:

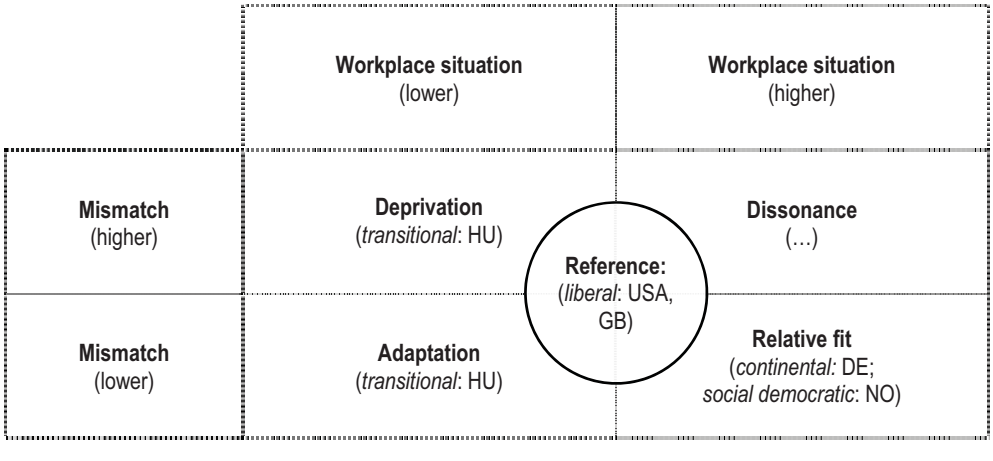
Hypothesis 2: The mismatch states of Norway exceed the mismatch states of West Germany.

Concerning transitional regimes, we assume that mismatch levels are highest owing to the lower influence of organized labor. Additionally, cheap labor cost is understood as a competitive strength of transitional countries in Eastern Europe (Nölke/Vliegenthart 2009). This implies that high skilled employees' job quality is not necessarily in companies' primary focus. Therefore, our third hypothesis is:

Hypothesis 3: Mismatch states of Hungary are inferior to the mismatch states of the USA and Great Britain.

Figure 2 summarizes the stated hypotheses by applying the above-mentioned analytical scheme for the interrelationships of workplace situation and mismatches. Here, the liberal regime countries the USA and Great Britain provide the reference. In relation to the two liberal regime countries, West Germany and Norway should fall in the area of *relative fit*. However, we expect that, in the area of *relative fit*, Norway – as a social democratic employment regime – displays better mismatch states. In contrast, we expect that transitional regimes display overall lower workplace situation levels. Accordingly, in Hungary the mismatch states should be characterized either by *adaptation* or *deprivation*.

Figure 2: Hypothesized mismatch states in different employment regimes and selected countries



3.2 A dynamic view: General convergence or resilient institutional differences in mismatch?

The varieties of capitalism approach and employment regime theory initially focused on categorical cross-national differences and thus describe static differences between countries. However, institutional transformations, especially liberalization processes, question static country categories. Thus, scholars of comparative capitalism and comparative employment relationships are increasingly engaged with cross-national dynamics and the subsequent changes within and between countries (Frege/Kelly 2013; Jackson/Deeg 2012; Schneider/Paunescu 2012; Thelen 2012). However, a clear-cut dynamic approach to comparative capitalism that is comparable to varieties of capitalism or employment regime theory has not yet emerged. Overall, there are two major perspectives:

One, globalization approaches expect a general convergence across time (Tempel/Walgenbach 2007; see also Gallie 2007b; Olsen et al. 2010). The underlying assumption is that internationalized markets force firms and countries to adopt similar logics. The pressure of technological change and international competition weakens the national institutional context's effects, since national welfare systems and production regimes compete with each other (Olsen et al. 2010). Thereby, especially multinational enterprises (MNE) are understood as powerful diffusion agents promoting universal management standards of work organization, causing a convergence towards the Anglo-Saxon model (e.g., Ferner/Quintanilla 1998; Morgan/Kristensen 2006; Iseke/Schneider 2012). This may not only effect a workplace situation, but also work values, as cultural change can be influenced by global economic and political forces (Eisenstadt 1973; Pascale 1980). In sum, globalization should lead to a general convergence of a workplace situation, work values, and – subsequently – mismatch states. Therefore, our fourth hypothesis reads:

Hypothesis 4: Mismatch states in all countries converge over time.

Two, several institutional scholars oppose the notion of a general global convergence trend. Instead, these scholars expect institutionally differentiated liberalization processes whereby country differences persist (Streeck/Thelen 2005). Several studies have highlighted country-specific developments. For instance, Streeck (1997) argued that globalization forces put pressure on the traditional models in Germany. It was later observed that especially Germany exhibits a growing dualization between core and periphery employees (Hall/Thelen 2009; Palier/Thelen 2010). This dualization leads to a declining workplace situation for peripheral workers. Viewed from an employment regime theory perspective, here, Germany increases the dualism and therefore further entrenches its dualist character. In contrast, for Hungary as a transitional country, liberalization is part of the transformation processes in a post-communist economy. In the course of the transformation processes Hungary has introduced only specific aspects of the liberal model (Martin 2008). A recent comparative analysis showed that Great Britain, Germany, and Sweden all underwent processes of liberalization (Thelen 2012). Each of the three countries represent a different employment regime therefore the national paths of transformation reflect their particular national institutional conditions.

Similarly, Jackson and Deeg (2012) reported a common trend in many European countries towards a more liberal capitalism. However, the authors also highlight country-specific effects of liberalization.

In sum, this segment of the institutional literature states that, while liberalization affects many countries, it does not lead to a general convergence towards a single pattern (i.e., a general liberal model). Therefore, our fifth hypothesis is:

Hypothesis 5: While mismatch states change over time, they do not converge.

4. Data, measures and methods

Our empirical analysis is based on data from the Work Orientation Modules of the International Social Survey Program (ISSP) from 1989 and 2005.[1] The ISSP is an international cooperation project that conducts attitude surveys on different topics. It is one of the few projects to gather representative data worldwide: using a multistage stratified random sample procedure for data collection, the ISSP dataset contains representative random samples of the adult population in each participating country.

The ISSP adheres to high quality standards. For instance, to minimize potential biases from different meanings and connotations of a specific concept in different countries, as well as to increase questionnaire validity, careful procedures have been implemented such as independent translation and thorough discussion of questionnaires (Scholz/Faaß 2007). To our best knowledge, no other research on the relationship between workplace situation and work values meets these criteria.

In the following analysis, we included all countries that took part in 1989 and 2005 and that can be assigned to a specific employment regime type:[2] the USA, Great Britain (GB), West Germany (DE), Norway (NO), and Hungary (HU). Our sample includes all salaried employees (full-time, part-time, less than part-time and helping family members) aged between 18 and 75. This amounts to a total n of 6,750 cases (1989: 3,842; 2005: 2,908).

Both ISSP datasets contain comparable items for work values and workplace situation. The work value dimensions are measured by the following items: importance of job security, high income, good opportunities for advancement (extrinsic aspects), an interesting job, and a job that allows one to work independently (intrinsic aspects). The items resemble the items used by Kraut and Ronen (1975) as well as Hofstede (1980; see also Hattrup et al. 2007). To measure the importance of these aspects, respondents were asked to use a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 = *not important* at all to 5 = *very important*. Accordingly, these measures fulfill the requirements for work values measures: 'an item belongs to the universe of work value items if its domain asks for an assessment of the importance of a goal in the work context and the range is ordered from very important to very unimportant' (Elizur 1984: 379).

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1 Another work orientation module was gathered in 1997. However, since we are interested in long-term developments, we have not integrated this module into our analysis.

2 Israel also took part in 1989 and 2005. However, we excluded it from the analysis because it is not captured within the current employment regime theory framework.

Complementing these work values, employees were also asked to evaluate the job aspects of their workplace situation. Interviewees indicated their agreement with statements such as *My job is secure*, and response categories ranged from 1 = *Strongly disagree* to 5 = *Strongly agree*.

To account for the interaction of work values and workplace situation, we computed five differential mismatch indices (for similar approaches, see Cennamo/Gardner 2008; Kristof 1996; Hult 2005). To provide a consistent interpretation, our analysis is limited to mismatch owing to undersupply (i.e., when the importance of a work value is not met by sufficient workplace situation standards). We coded the matches and the few oversupply cases (values -1 and below) as zero. The final mismatch indicator thus ranges from 0 to 4. The indicator accounts for the mismatch level owing to undersupply in a given aspect of work.

For our analysis, we computed separate OLS regression models for 1989 and 2005 to estimate country differences and development over time. These regression models use either the workplace situation or the mismatch as dependent variables. In all models, we chose the USA as the reference country. We included several control variables to account for basic socio-economic and demographic effects. These variables comprised work status (full-time, part-time, other work status), age, gender, and years of formal education. We harmonized the coding of variables between waves. We also used weighting factors where this procedure is advised for the ISSP dataset (see Scholz/Faaß 2007).

Figure 3: Formula for Geometric Distance between a Given Country and the USA

1. Step: Basic measure for distance approximation for a given year:

$$Distance_{\,year:\,country} = \sqrt[2]{(Coef.Mismatch_{\,USA\,vs.country})^2 + (Coef.Situation_{\,USA\,vs.country})^2}$$

[country = GB, DE, NO, HU]

2. Step: Basic measure of distance change:

$$Distance\ change_{\,country} = Distance_{2005:\,country} - Distance_{1989:\,country}$$

To support the interpretation of the developments between 1989 and 2005, we computed a basic *measure of distance change* between 1989 and 2005. The formulas are reported in Figure 3. We combined the estimates for a given country for workplace situation and mismatch. This combination accounts for the geometric distance between a given country and the reference country (the USA). We then subtracted the distance in 2005 by the distance in 1989. This procedure provides a basic estimate of whether the distance between the USA and a given country increased, decreased, or remained the same. A positive number indicates divergence, while a negative number represents convergence. In the following analysis, we only interpret differences that exceed a value of 0.1.

5. Results

Figure 4 visualizes the regressions results (full regression models are reported in the Appendix). In this figure, we applied the analytical scheme introduced above. The regression coefficients of country year dummies chart the differences in mismatch level and workplace situation in a scatter plot. The plot thus shows a given country's relative

mismatch states in a given year compared to the USA in that year.[3] In the following sections, we first assess the cross-national differences in 1989. Building on that, we evaluate the changes between 1989 and 2005.

5.1 Static view: Cross-national differences in 1989

Great Britain (GB): The results for Great Britain exhibit some similarities but also differences to the US. In 1989, the mismatches states are comparable for income and independent work. However, compared to the USA, the situations for security and career are lower, while only lower job security causes a higher mismatch level. For the interesting job dimensions, the regressions reveal a better situation but no effect on mismatch level.

West Germany (DE): In 1989, West Germany displayed substantial differences to the USA. Situation is mostly better (with the exception of the career dimension), and mismatch levels are mostly lower (with the exception of the independent work dimension). Accordingly, mismatch states are almost always located in the *relative fit* area in the figure. One exception is the independent work dimension, which is located in the *dissonance* area.

Norway (NO): Norway's mismatch states were surprising. There is no difference regarding the job security dimension compared to the USA. Concerning income and career opportunities, mismatch levels are lower but the situation is either comparable (income) or worse (career). Only for the dimensions of interesting job and independent work was a mismatch state of relative fit achieved.

Hungary (HU): In 1989, Hungary shows comparable mismatch states concerning job security, interesting job, and independent work. Concerning income and career opportunities, the perceived workplace situation is worse compared to the USA. However, only the income mismatch levels are higher.

5.2 Dynamic View: Relative Developments between 1989 and 2005

Going beyond the static view of cross-national differences we presented assumptions from a dynamic perspective. This dynamic perspective draws our attention to questions of convergence and divergence. For this analysis, Figure 5 depicts the basic measure of difference change per dimension and country. Here, a positive value indicates divergence and a negative value indicates convergence.

Great Britain (GB): Considering job security, Great Britain moved from a position of deprivation in 1989 towards the position of the USA. The findings for the income dimension reveal a certain extent of steady similarity with the USA. Concerning the career dimension, our results show a relative situational improvement. The career mismatch level declines and the mismatch situation slightly improves. In contrast, for interesting job, Great Britain has changed for the worse. It moves from relative fit in 1989 to deprivation in 2005. The mismatch state of independent job displays a comparably steady position in relative fit close to adaptation.

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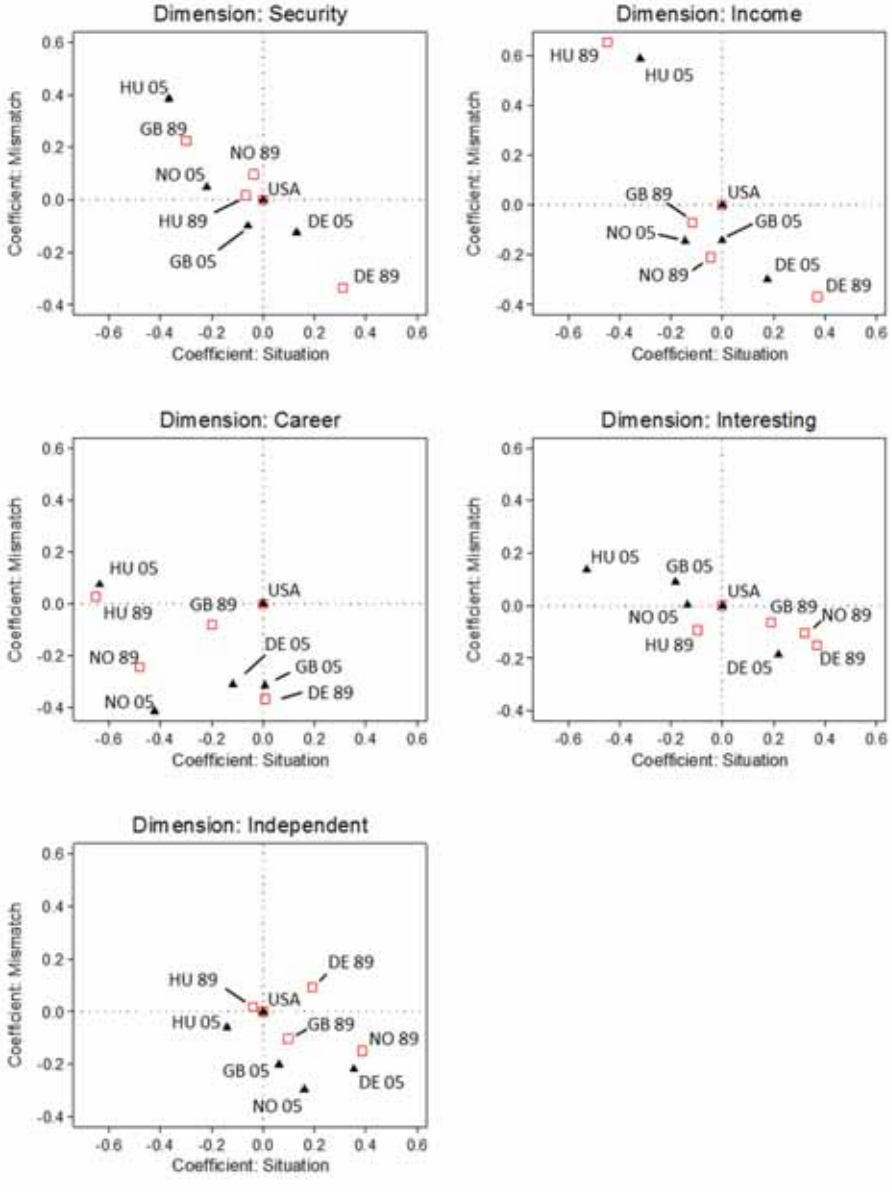
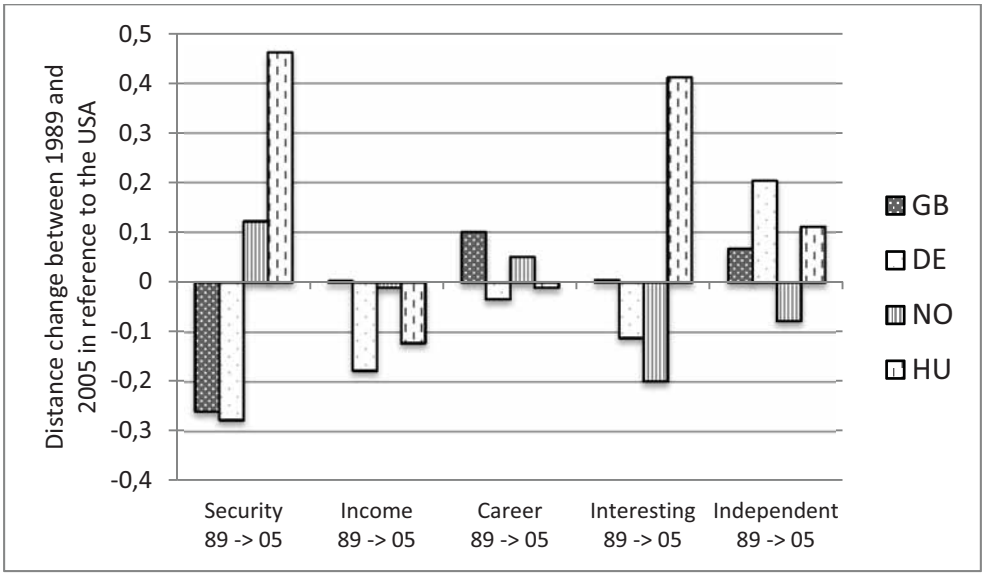
[3] Kindly note that the reference country USA might have also changed between 1989 and 2005. Accordingly, we understand the differences as relative characteristics of the investigated countries in relation to the USA.

Figure 4: Plots of coefficients for workplace situation and mismatch per dimensions



Note: Graphs display coefficients from pooled OLS regressions, including control variables in relation to the reference country (the USA, at x = 0, y = 0). The denomination of chart areas according to the scheme introduced above is: in the upper left area, *Deprivation*; in the lower left area, *Adaptation*; in the lower right area, *Relative fit*; in the upper right area, *Dissonance*. Source: ISSP dataset, own calculation and depiction.

Figure 5: Measure of distance change per country and dimension



Note: Change between 1989 and 2005 in relation to the USA. Source: ISSP dataset, own calculation and depiction.

West Germany (DE): The development of West German mismatch states in relation to the USA is characterized by a convergence trend in the dimensions of job security, income, and interesting job. While job security converges to USA levels, some relative difference remains in terms of income levels and interesting job. For career, results show a steady difference. At the same time, results reveal a relative divergence of independent work. This divergence trend changes the German mismatch state for the better and marks one of the few job quality improvements.

Norway (NO): The case of Norway provided some surprises. Concerning job security, Norway already appears to be at the USA level in 1989 and an even lower level in 2005. A similar development can be found for income. For career opportunities, Norway is clearly placed in adaptation, with minor situational improvements between 1989 and 2005. In terms of interesting job, Norwegian employees have lost their relative fit because, in 2005, workplace situation levels for interesting job are significantly below USA levels. The location in the dimension of independent work remained in the relative fit area. However, here, a situational decline took place.

Hungary (HU): The Hungarian development trajectories, in relation to the USA, show mostly a tendency of divergence – for job security, interesting job, and independent work – while the mismatch states have changed for the worse. Only concerning income can a slight convergence tendency be found, yet this occurs on a continuously high *deprivation* level. The career dimension remained steady in *adaptation*, close to *deprivation*.

In sum, our results provide partial support for our hypotheses. Owing to the very mixed findings between Germany and Norway, *Hypothesis 1* is only partially supported. Only the mismatch states of West Germany predominantly exceed the mismatch states

of the USA and Great Britain. However, for Norway, mismatch states are mostly not as hypothesized. These findings lead us to reject *Hypothesis 2*, because Norway does not exhibit better mismatch positions than West Germany. In contrast, in several mismatch dimensions, Norwegian employees are worse off than their German counterparts. Our findings support *Hypothesis 3*: Hungary displays mostly inferior mismatch states compared to the USA and Great Britain. Our results do not fully support *Hypothesis 4*. Only some mismatch dimensions converge, while others remain steady or diverge. The few instances of convergence only include selected countries. The most salient convergence trend is the convergence of mismatch states between the USA, Great Britain, and West Germany regarding job security. Germany and the USA further converge in terms of income. Another instance of partial convergence takes place between the USA, West Germany, and Norway regarding interesting job. Thus, the results also do not provide a consistent support for *Hypothesis 5*.

6. Discussion and conclusion

This article conceptually discussed and empirically analyzed cross-national differences and trends in mismatch between workplace situation and work values. Specifically, we investigated the potential dynamic towards an international convergence of mismatch states. We based our expectation on general implications from employment regime theory and the varieties of capitalism approach. Thereby, we adopted the static view of these approaches to understand cross-national differences. We further developed this perspective and introduced a dynamic view by drawing on current comparative capitalism literature and globalization approaches.

In a *static view*, our results show that the chosen theoretical frameworks can explain several cross-national differences in mismatch states in the year 1989. Compared to the USA, the mismatch states of Germany and Hungary mostly reflect the theoretical expectations made. Thus, in these cases, employment regime theory and the varieties of capitalism literature prove to be valuable sources to an investigation of mismatch states. However, the results for Norway did not fully fit our assumptions. A mismatch state of *relative fit* was only achieved for the dimension of interesting job and independent work, which reflects the long-standing tradition in advanced workplace designs in Nordic countries (NUTEK 1999). But concerning other job aspects, Norway shows either similar (security) of even worse mismatch states (income, career) compared to the USA This calls into question the general distinction between liberal regimes and coordinated market economies. In addition, the differentiations in employment regime theory are also called into question, since our expectation that Norway employees' mismatch states exceed those of German employees is also not fulfilled. In this regard, our findings echo studies that consider the Norwegian economy a hybrid regime (Schneider/Paunescu 2012).

The limited applicability of these rather static frameworks becomes further apparent in a *dynamic perspective*. In this perspective, our results do not show that Germany and the USA remain categorically dissimilar over time. Based on subjective assessments by employees, we found that the mismatch states in terms of income and job security are converging. This finding reflects the liberalization trend that has been emphasized by

recent contributions in the comparative capitalism literature (Hall/Thelen 2009; Jackson/Deeg 2012; Palier/Thelen 2010; Schneider/Paunescu 2012; Thelen 2012).

However, these instances of convergence should not lead us to wholly reject institutional approaches to mismatch. Instead, a closer look at the remaining mismatch states reveals a continuity of country-specific differences and even diverging developments. The results of two countries stand out here: First, West Germany is an exceptional case – a major improvement in a mismatch state occurs, namely in terms of independent work. This finding underlines the (still) relatively strong position of German employees even in periods of erosion. At the same time, this finding echoes a particular German aspect of workplace change: the so-called *subjectification of work* (see Baethge 1991; Heidenreich 1996; Moldaschl/Voß 2003; Hauff/Kirchner 2013), as a demand of employees for more independence at the workplace has remained a nation-specific development. Second, Hungary is an example of divergence, but for the worse. Here we see the developmental deficits of a post-communist country in transition. The worsening of job security mismatch states reflects the effects of liberalization processes. Since a fully-fledged institutional framework has not yet been completed, Hungarian employees have high mismatch levels on a very low workplace situation level. Time will tell whether job quality in Hungary and similar countries can be improved through institutional frameworks that secure high-quality employment and enable employee voice.

Taken together, these findings support the general belief that institutional structures matter for job quality and our specific view that institutional structures matter for mismatch states. Our findings underline the endurance of institutional differences in mismatch states between countries. These cross-national differences in mismatch states indicate substantial differences in job quality. Besides the few patterns of convergence and divergence of mismatch states, our findings indicate a high resilience of country-specific patterns. Thus, many cross-national differences remain. We therefore conclude that liberalization processes lead only to a partial convergence of mismatch states, while institutional forces still counteract general globalization trends of job quality. In turn, this leads us to reject simple explanations of globalization theories. Our results show that all observed mismatch states do not simply converge over time. Specific dimensions seem to resist convergence altogether. This is especially surprising, since it is often assumed that MNCs gradually transform workplace situations in all countries to match a common liberal template. This does not seem to be the case.

The presented results and conclusions should be seen against the background of certain limitations. The ISSP data allows a comprehensive analysis with representative data, but the data consists of self-reported measures, so that the results may suffer from common method bias. The empirical analysis uses only data from 1989 and 2005. However, the 1990s were a period of substantial economic and institutional transformation in many countries (Jackson/Deeg 2012). An investigation of these transformations necessitates data prior to and after the 1990s. The analysis is further based on data from only five countries. These countries represent different employment regimes, and especially the USA, Great Britain, and Germany are often named as core countries within these typologies. However, future studies should include a broader set of countries. Furthermore, the included working conditions represent perceived working conditions of the surveyed employees. There might be a difference between seemingly objective

conditions and subjective perceptions of these conditions (e.g., objective vs. subjective job insecurity). However, subjective experience is decisive for individual evaluations of job quality and related aspects such as job satisfaction or commitment. Finally, only a narrow set of work aspects has been surveyed within the ISSP Work Orientation Module. It remains an open question whether other workplace situations and other work values are also changing, including the importance of both qualification opportunities and work-life balance (Kalleberg 2007; 2008).

Our results have important implications for future research. The analysis has identified various shortcomings on the part of the conceptual frameworks: While globalization theories appear too broad to capture national dynamics, institutional approaches offer only limited theorems to account for regime-specific developments. Thus, the lack of suitable general theories and conceptual approaches is notable. Recently, proponents of comparative capitalism literature have begun to take up the challenge to capture institutional dynamics (see Jackson/Deeg 2008, 2012; Streeck/Thelen 2005; Thelen 2012). Our findings support these endeavors by highlighting a strong need for a dynamic theory of international comparative research that helps to conceptually frame and explain the empirically observed shifts.

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Appendix

A 1: Regression results of situation and mismatch per dimension and year

Models 1989	Model No.	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)
	dimension	Security	Security	Income	Income	Career	Career	Interesting	Interesting	Independent	Independent
	aspect	situation	mismatch	situation	mismatch	situation	mismatch	situation	mismatch	Situation	Mismatch
	USA	Ref.	Ref.	Ref.	Ref.	Ref.	Ref.	Ref.	Ref.	Ref.	Ref.
	GB 89	-0.30***	0.23***	-0.12	-0.07	-0.20***	-0.08	0.19***	-0.06	0.10	-0.10
	DE 89	0.31***	-0.33***	0.37***	-0.37***	0.01	-0.37***	0.37***	-0.15**	0.19***	0.09
	NO 89	-0.04	0.10	-0.05	-0.21***	-0.48***	-0.24***	0.32***	-0.10	0.39***	-0.15***
	HU 89	-0.07	0.02	-0.45***	0.65***	-0.65***	0.03	-0.10	-0.09	-0.04	0.02
	Age	0.00**	-0.00	0.01***	-0.01***	-0.01***	0.01***	0.01***	-0.01***	0.01***	-0.00***
	Male	-0.06	-0.02	0.23***	-0.15***	0.14***	-0.19***	-0.09**	0.03	0.01	-0.02
	Work status: 1	0.17	-0.15	0.12	-0.11	0.11	-0.10	0.12	-0.07	0.02	-0.07
	Work status: 2	0.08	-0.12	-0.10	0.01	-0.12	-0.03	-0.01	0.07	-0.02	-0.03
	Years of education	0.02**	-0.05***	0.04***	-0.07***	0.04***	-0.04***	0.08***	-0.03***	0.05***	-0.02**
	Constant	3.29***	1.58***	1.68***	2.78***	2.70***	1.79***	2.48***	1.35***	2.80***	0.84***
	N	3,335	3,320	3,354	3,315	3,318	3,276	3,384	3,356	3374	3348
	R^2	0.03	0.04	0.09	0.11	0.12	0.04	0.06	0.02	0.05	0.02

Models 2005	Model No.	(11)	(12)	(13)	(14)	(15)	(16)	(17)	(18)	(19)	(20)
	dimension	Security	Security	Income	Income	Career	Career	Interesting	Interesting	Independent	Independent
	aspect	situation	mismatch	situation	mismatch	situation	mismatch	situation	mismatch	Situation	Mismatch
	USA	Ref.	Ref.	Ref.	Ref.	Ref.	Ref.	Ref.	Ref.	Ref.	Ref.
	GB 05	-0.06	-0.10	-0.00	-0.14	0.01	-0.32***	-0.18**	0.09	0.06	-0.20***
	DE 05	0.13	-0.12	0.18**	-0.30***	-0.12	-0.31***	0.22***	-0.19***	0.35***	-0.22***
	NO 05	-0.22***	0.05	-0.15**	-0.14	-0.42***	-0.41***	-0.14**	0.00	0.16**	-0.30***
	HU 05	-0.37***	0.39***	-0.32***	0.59***	-0.64***	0.07	-0.53***	0.14	-0.14	-0.06
	Age	-0.00	0.00	0.00	-0.00	-0.02***	0.00	0.00	-0.01***	0.00	-0.00
	Male	-0.12**	0.06	0.30***	-0.27***	0.09	-0.08	-0.07	0.03	0.12**	-0.05
	Work status: 1	0.35	-0.26	-0.07	0.39	0.08	0.21	0.05	0.19	0.04	0.17
	Work status: 2	0.37	-0.36	-0.35	0.51	-0.15	0.22	-0.06	0.28	-0.05	0.23
	Years of education	0.04***	-0.05***	0.07***	-0.09***	0.03***	-0.04***	0.06***	-0.02**	0.03***	-0.02**
	Constant	3.15***	1.75***	1.66***	2.45***	3.04***	1.66***	3.05***	1.01***	3.19***	0.72***
	N	2,812	2,793	2,823	2,808	2,798	2,773	2,830	2,816	2827	2810
	R^2	0.04	0.05	0.09	0.13	0.10	0.05	0.09	0.03	0.04	0.04

Note: Levels of significance** p < 0.01; *** p < 0.001. Source: ISSP data, own calculation.