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European Working Life in 2015

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European policy

In March 2000, the Lisbon summit set out a 10-year strategy to make Europe 'the most dynamic and competitive and knowledge-based economy in the world

capable of sustainable growth, with more and better jobs and greater social cohesion',

The key ingredients are:

- Global competitiveness
- A knowledge-based economy
- More jobs
- Good (sustainable) jobs
- Social cohesion

Many of these goals are in tension with each other

The hype

| | |
|----------------|--------------|
| information | economy |
| knowledge | society |
| digital | work |
| tele- | commerce |
| virtual | organisation |
| weightless | enterprise |
| cyber | business |
| dematerialised | culture |
| flexible | trade |
| global | community |
| nomadic | employment |

Combine any two words for an instant book title!

The hype

It's a virtual world

The reality

There are more people than in any previous moment in human history working

in the manufacture of physical goods

World consumption of raw materials is rising at an unprecedented pace

The hype

We're all knowledge workers now

The reality

The majority of workers remain in 'rooted' jobs

Producing and delivering real goods and services to real people in real time and real space

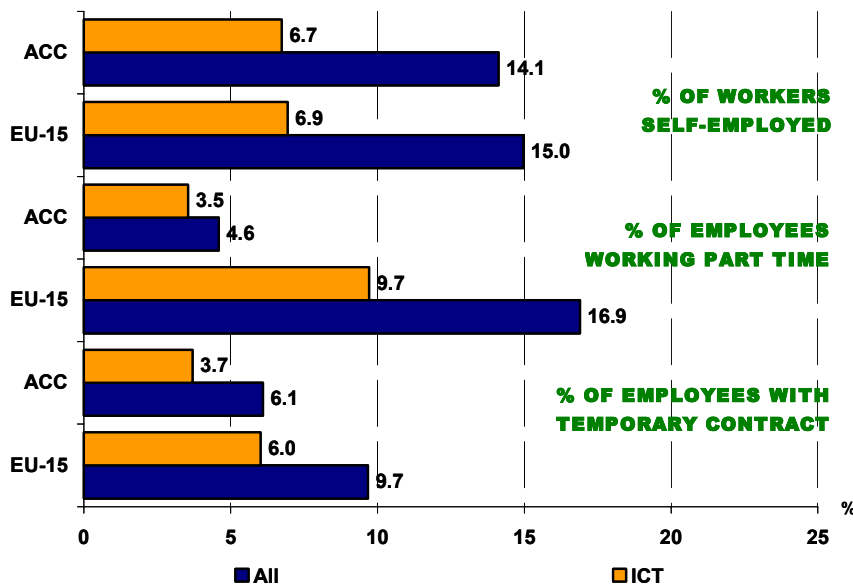
The fastest-growing occupations numerically in most developed countries are social care workers, cleaners and fast-food workers

NOT 'knowledge workers'

The hype

The knowledge economy needs a flexible workforce

The reality



compared with the total work-force ICT workers in the EU 15 & Accession States, in 2001 were

- Less likely to be self-employed
- Less likely to be on fixed-term contracts

Less likely to be working part-time

Nevertheless

The combination of telecommunications and computing (telematics) is bringing

about real changes in who does what work, where, when and how

There are new choices in the organisation of work in time and space open to employers and to (some) workers

Around the world there is now a new information-processing workforce

With similar or identical labour processes

Speaking the same global languages and often working for the same employers

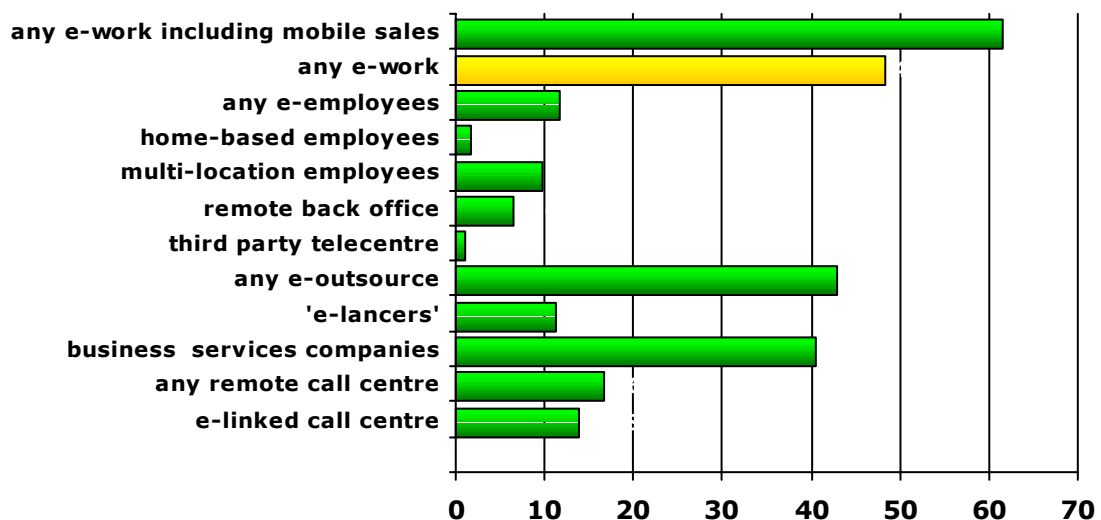
But utterly different working conditions, gender positions and places in the local social hierarchy

But what do we know about it?

- NO hard evidence on the extent and nature of 'offshore outsourcing'
- No clear definitions of sectors/occupations/business functions involved
- Very rapid speed of change
- A lot of anecdotal evidence
- A lot of wishful thinking
- Emotionally-charged public debates

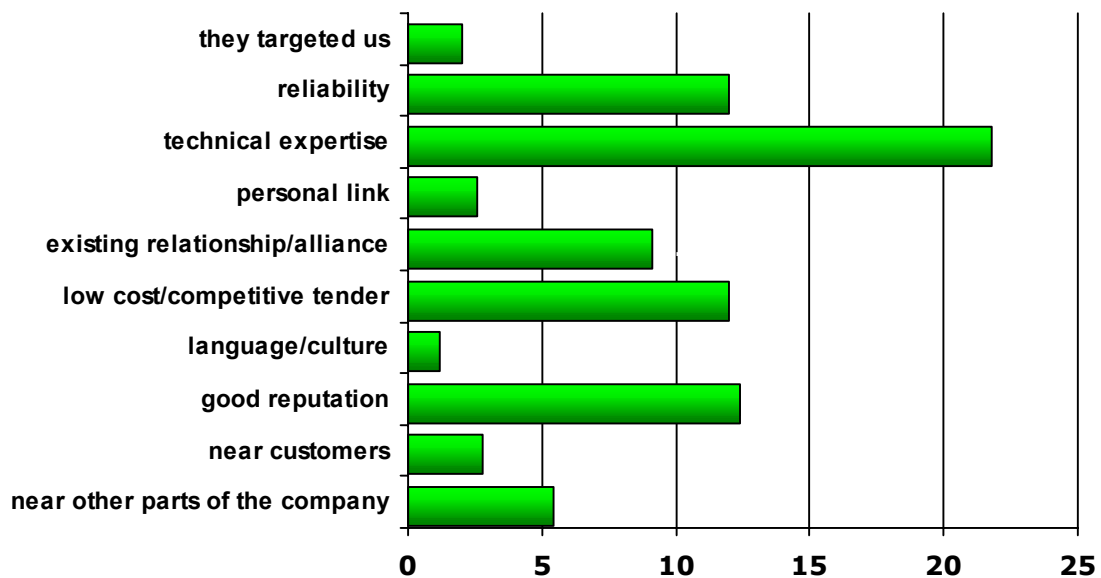
Some results from the EMERGENCE project

Source: EMERGENCE project, IES and NOP, 2000

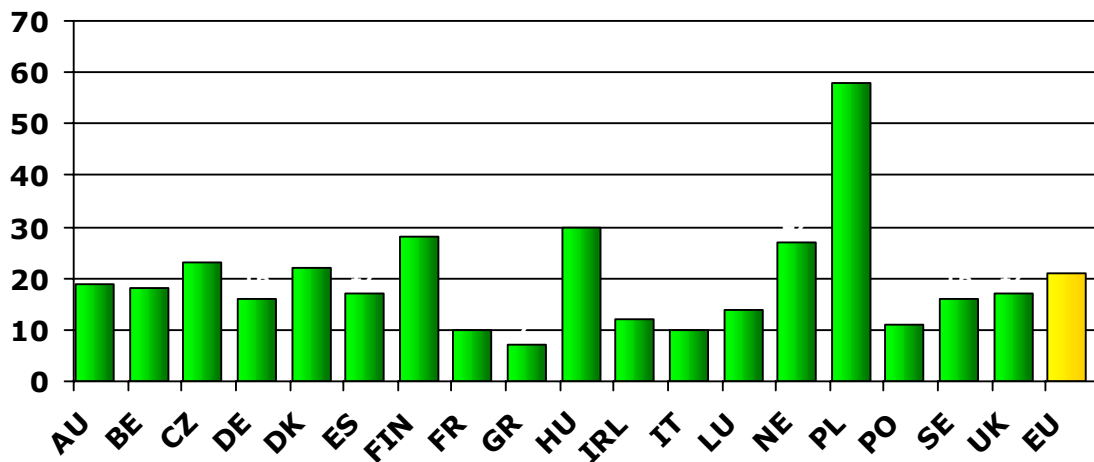


Demand for outsourced business services in Europe in 2000 by type of eWork

Reasons for eOutsourcing



eService supply in Europe by country in 2000 (% of establishments with >50 employees)

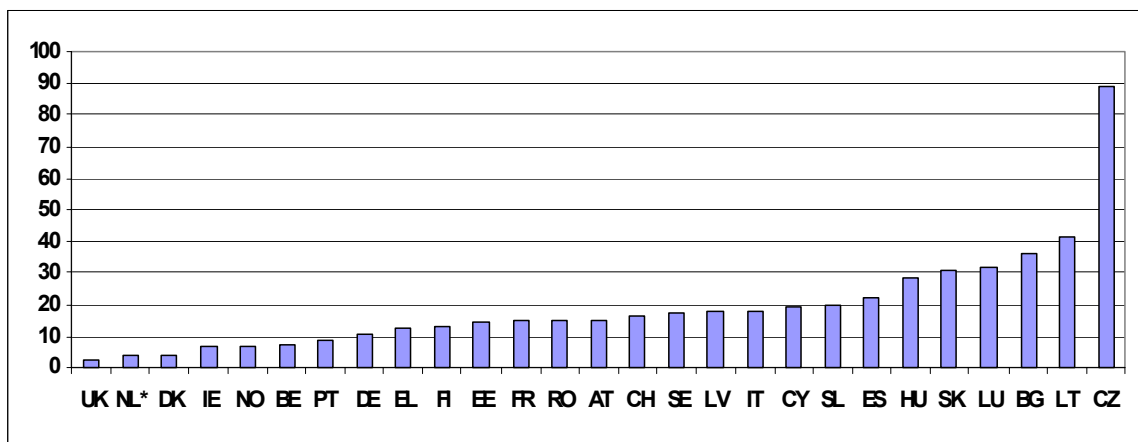


Trends since 2000

- Offshoring has shifted from a risky experiment to normal business practice
- Former colonial links still important but becoming less so as new players
- develop language skills to match customer requirements
- New destinations coming on the scene in Asia, Latin America and Africa; but
- some regions still excluded
- Likelihood of increasing regional differentiation

- Movement of jobs from large cities to smaller ones as infrastructure
- improves in early destinations (eg India)
- Explosive growth in China
- Increasing attractiveness of Central and Eastern Europe (including for
- Indian companies)
- Emergence of very large global business services suppliers with global
- sourcing strategies

Trends in business services employment in Europe, 2000-2003



Source: Analytica analysis of European Labour Force Survey

BUT the movement of jobs to people is not the whole story

We are also witnessing a major movement of people to jobs

Immigrants are usually at the bottom of the job hierarchy in Europe

Global forces - local consequences

- The run-down of European manufacturing industry is taking place simultaneously with an influx of people from the South
- Whilst in the South new technologies are also being superimposed onto traditional ways of life

The link between production and consumption

- Globalisation is about the search for new markets as well as the search for raw materials and new sources of labour
- Much of the 'new economy' is concerned with getting goods to customers
- Women form a crucial part of this interface - both as service workers and as
- the people most responsible for 'consumption work'

Working life in a global call centre

- Virtual identities
- Fractured time structure (working hours, holidays etc.)
- Continuous training and retraining in discrete 'skills' and 'competences'
- Standardised scripts make it impossible to solve problems creatively
- Feeding the knowledge bank (expropriation of tacit knowledge)
- Surveillance by unknown managers
- Negative construction of the 'other'
- 'and I'm really a..'
- Who should they negotiate with?

Working life as a consumption worker

- Waiting in a virtual line
- Passwords and pins
- Standardised scripts taylorise consumption processes too
- Unpaid time sacrificed to make paid workers more productive
- Never knowing where the buck stops
- Lack of human contact

A fracturing of the multidimensional relationships which make for real communication in real communities

The question is, how do we reintegrate them?

Some paradoxes to solve

- 'death of distance' leads to increasing importance of 'place'
- 'dematerialisation' leads to increasing material production
- more use of telecommunications leads to more travel
- More labour-saving technology leads to less leisure
- More 'choice' leads to more standardisation
- More global movements of jobs and people leads to more polarised societies
- in both developed and developing countries

Some hard questions

- How can we combine labour market flexibility with job security?
- How can we promote creative 'knowledge work' whilst ensuring that there are
- still jobs for those with learning challenges
- How can we protect cultural diversity whilst still surviving in a global

- economy?
- How can we respect cultural traditions whilst still welcoming strangers to
- our communities?
- How can we create a 24-hour society whilst still protecting private and
- family life?
- How can we make time for human interaction at the speed of the slowest

A quick plug!



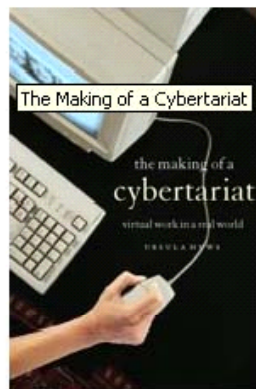
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