

Job Quality, Wellbeing and the Global Economy

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Background

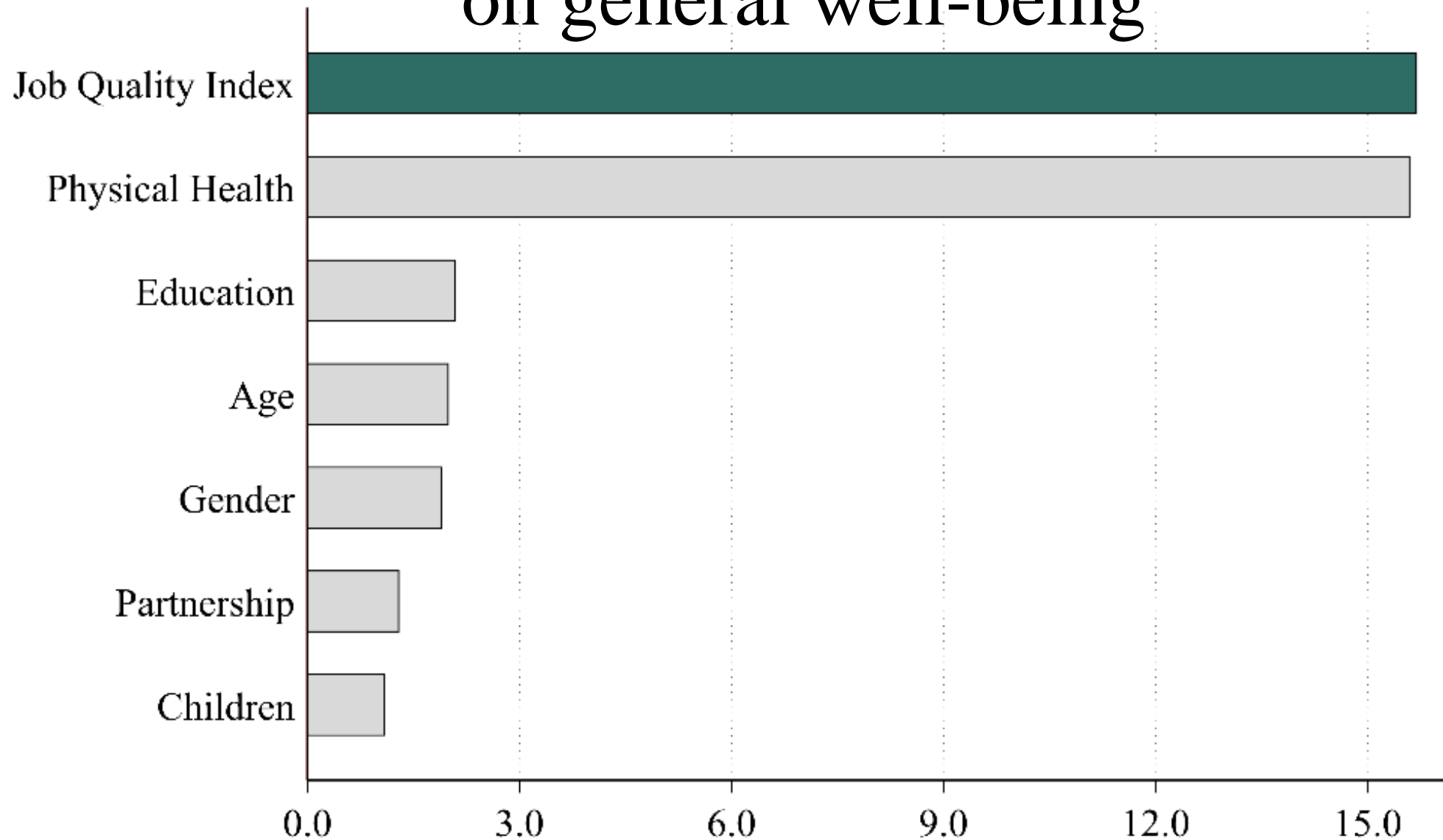
Expanding interest in job quality following 1999 ILO declaration for ‘**decent work**’ and OECD declaration for ‘**more and better work**’. Since:

- ❑ **Concept Clarification:** Objective; Job quality defined by association with wellbeing
- ❑ **Multidimensionality** recognised, pay not necessarily correlated with other domains
- ❑ **Indicator** development and data expansion
- ❑ **Rapidly growing evidence literature** on the relationships between job quality dimensions and well-being

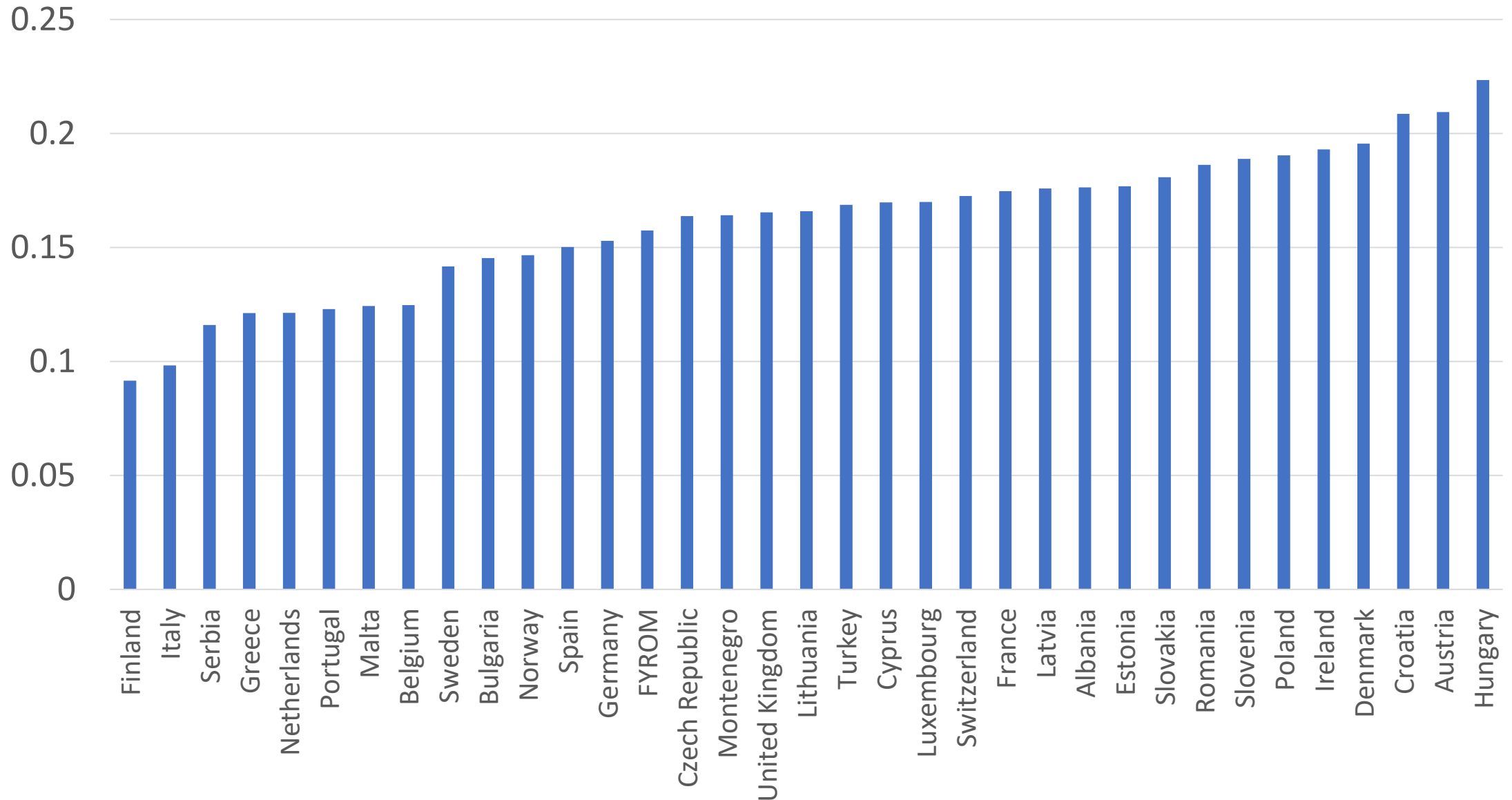
Dimensions of Job Quality



Effect sizes of job quality and other life domains on general well-being



R-squared for JQ and wellbeing across Europe



Overarching question

How has job quality been changing during the opening decades of the 21st century?

Factors shaping job quality

Multi-level drivers

- Economic growth
- Changing power resources
- Technological change
- Bosses and Managerial practices
- Country clusters of institutional factors

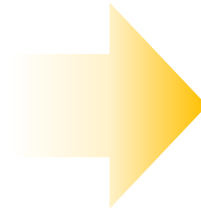
Understanding job quality changes

Questions:

- Are there predominant, or even ubiquitous trends in each of the dimensions of job quality

Are the trends coherent within countries?

Is there, in particular, a link with economic growth or HDI growth?



**Problem:
data scarcity!**

Data

The European Working Conditions Surveys (EWCS)

International Social Survey Programme (ISSP)

Country-specific surveys, including:

- **The US General Social Survey (GSS)**
- **Household Income and Labour Dynamics in Australia (HILDA)**
- **The Korean Working Conditions Surveys (KWCS)**
- **The UK Skills and Employment Surveys,**
- **Finnish Quality of Work Life surveys**

OECD Statistics

Heuristic Methods

For each Job Quality Dimension:

- ✓ **consultation of prior evidence**
- ✓ **new analysis of survey series data**
- ✓ **indices or elements for each dimension**
- ✓ **≥ 10 years since 2000**
- ✓ **1 = significant rise; 0 = no change; -1 = decline**

Summary of trends in job quality dimensions (provisional)

(Number of countries)

	Wages	Prospects	Working Time Quality	Autonomy and Skill	Social Environment	Work Intensity	Physical Environment
Improving	24	20	18	15	17	6	20
Deteriorating	0	5	2	4	8	17	2
No change	9	15	17	11	14	7	7

Correlation between trends in job quality dimensions, GDP & HDI

	Earnings	Prospects	Working Time Quality	Skills & Discretion	Social Environment	Work Intensity (reversed)	Physical Environment
Earnings (wages)	1						
Prospects	0.51	1					
Working Time Quality			1				
Skills & Discretion		0.38		1			
Social Environment					1		
Work Intensity (reversed)					-0.31	1	
Physical Environment					0.34		1
Real GDP pc Growth	0.77	0.40	0.32				
HDI growth	0.59	0.32					

Summary

Trends?

Wages; Physical env. :

- Predominantly Rising

Work intensity:

- Deteriorating

Other dimensions:

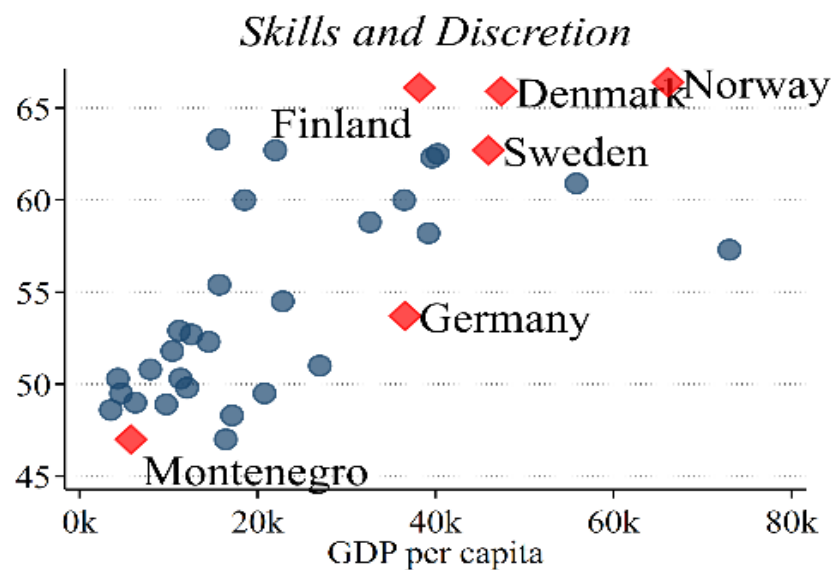
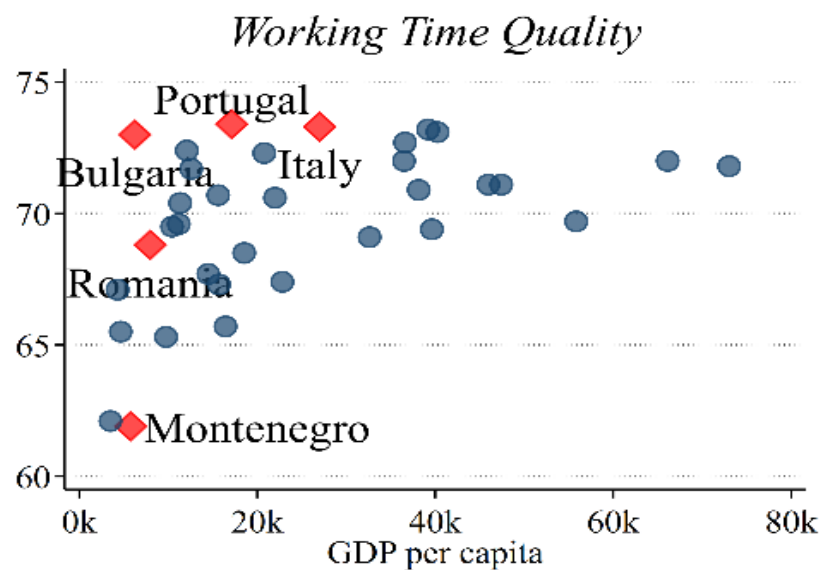
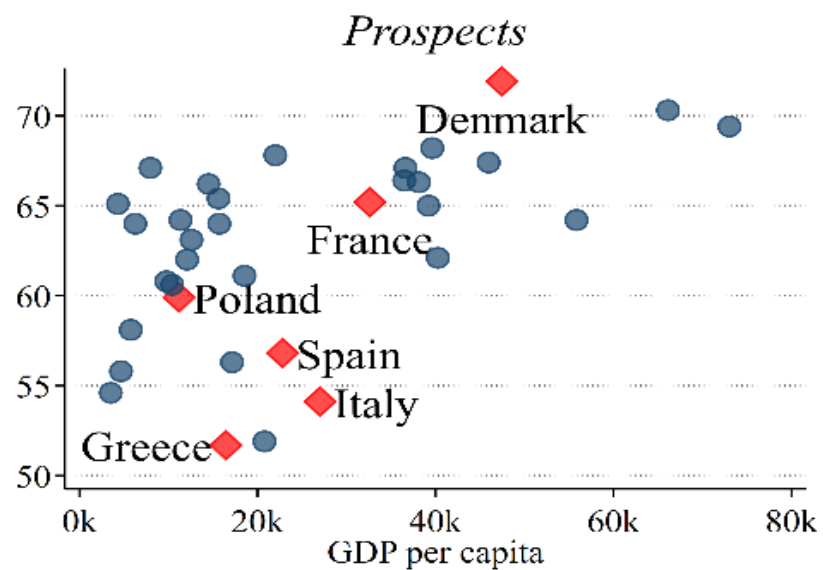
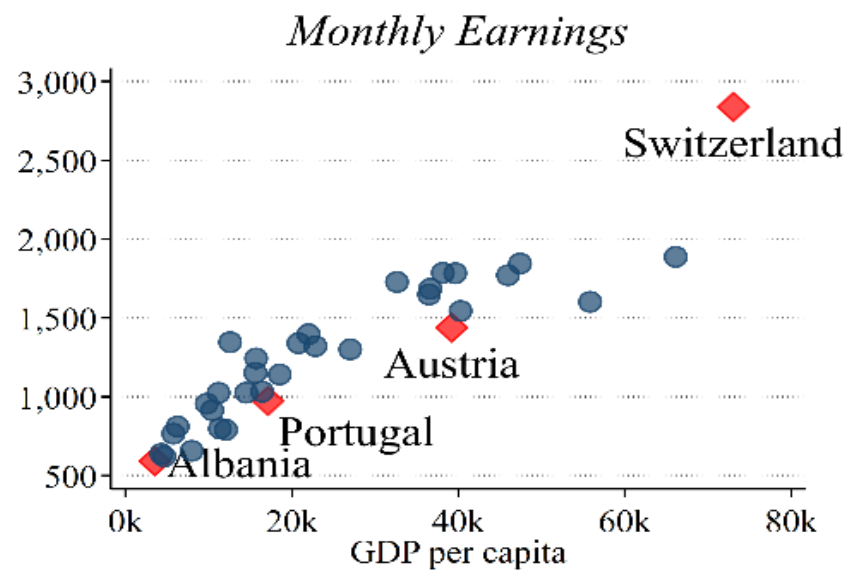
- Balance of improvers, but widespread stagnation

Coherent?

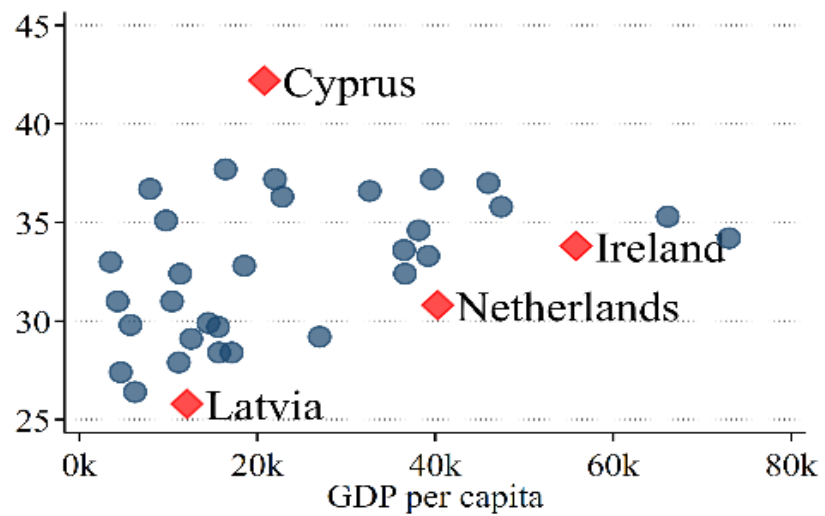
No

Affluence?

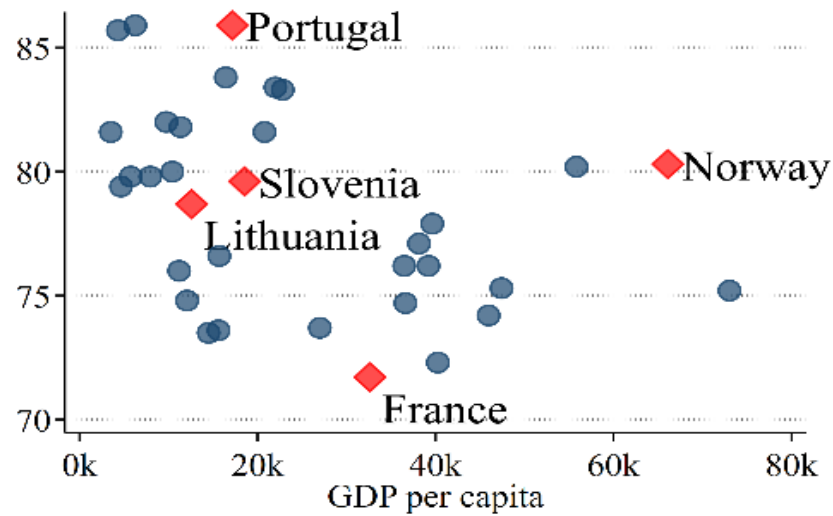
Variable



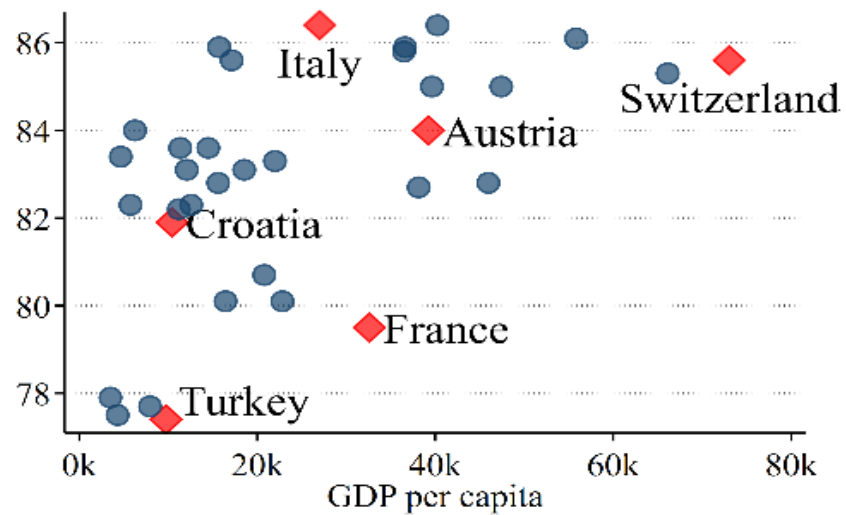
Work Intensity



Social Environment



Physical Environment



Implications

1

Absence of universal trends suggests:

- **No single universal factor is dominant**
 - **partial exception: wages and economic growth; (however, decoupling).**

2

Lack of predominant improvements

There is a need to track every dimension (not just wages);

The nascent sub-field of job quality science

1

- Theory and evidence about the effects of job quality dimensions on health and wellbeing
- Theory and evidence about the factors shaping job quality

2

- Active, but policy and science both need much more JQ data
- official stats
 - we need: a place for short-form job quality items in general social surveys

Forthcoming 2025



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Oxford University Press

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