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**TOWARD A NEW WORK SOCIETY?  
PREDICTING OPINIONS ABOUT FLEXIBLE COMBINATIONS OF PAID AND  
UNPAID WORK AMONG FLEMISH RED CROSS VOLUNTEERS**

DRAFT VERSION

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## Toward A New Work Society? Predicting Opinions About Flexible Combinations Of Paid And Unpaid Work Among Flemish Red Cross Volunteers

### INTRODUCTION

The Western societies, in which we are living today, are experiencing a period of rapid, fundamental, and global social changes. During the past half-century, a wide-ranging set of societal dynamics has caused a steady restructuring of the once so robust social foundations of the industrial era. Highly industrialized, modern society, with its social class divisions, its clear occupational structure, its nuclear family with its gender specific roles, its national economy and factory-bound mass production and mass consumption, its sharp distinction between a primary, secondary and tertiary sector, its expanded system of welfare state provision, its utter belief in techno-scientific progress, its conception of a nation-based democracy, ... more and more resembles a relic of the past, whereas as yet, we only get a glimpse of the contours of the newly forming social configurations.

It consequently comes as no surprise that recently, there has been an exponential growth in sociological theories and concepts that pronounce the idea of a new, more advanced stage of social evolution within modernity. In highly varying terms, renowned social scientists herald the advent of a post-fordist society (Rifkin, 1995; Gorz, 1997), an information or network society (Castells, 1996, 1997, 1998), a post-traditional or post-modern society (Bauman, 1996), a late or high modern society (Giddens, 1990, 1991, 1994), a risk society (Beck, 1986/1992), an *'Erlebnisgesellschaft'* (Schultze, 1993), or a *'Multioptionsgesellschaft'* (Gross, 1994). Our society is characterized by an 'extended liberal modernity' that is changing place with the preceding 'organized modernity' (Wagner, 1994) or by a 'reflexive' or a second modernity that contrasts with a 'simple' or first modernity (Beck, 1986/1992).

Against the background of these broad sociological time diagnoses, this paper focuses more specifically on the fundamental restructuring of economy and labor market and its consequences for the role and meaning of paid work. It is argued that we are progressively moving away from full-time and lifelong mass employment, inducing prominent scholars to speak about "the end of work" (Rifkin, 1995), the specter of a "jobless society" (Castells, 1996), and the dawn of a "brave new world of work" (Beck, 1999a/2001). The implications of such observations reach well beyond the economic sphere, because "even outside work, industrial society is a *wage labor society through and through* in the plan of its life, in its joys and sorrows, in its concept of achievement, in its justification of inequality, in its social welfare laws, in its balance of power and in its politics and culture. If it is facing a systematic transformation of wage labor then it is facing a social

transformation” (Beck, 1992: 140 – emphasis in original). If, consequently, we may assume that a steady diminution of paid work is indeed taking place, this unavoidably implies that we are shifting to a society “based on non-market criteria for organizing social life” (Rifkin, 1995: 235). This basic insight into the gradual crumbling away of the “paid work centered, full-time employment society” (Mutz, 1999, 2002; Mutz et al., 2000) has fuelled the academic discussion about the renewed meaning and position of the Third Sector. In the wake of a structural crisis of fulltime and lifelong employment it is more particularly argued that “shifts are taking place in the role and potential of volunteering and the role of paid work, service to the community, and social responsibilities” (Anheier and Salamon, 1999: 47). Recently, there has been a loudening call for a redefinition of traditional forms of labor, elevating voluntary work to a status equal to paid work (ibid., see for example Beck, 2001; Rifkin, 1995). However, as yet, this ‘third sector-minded’ conceptualization of a ‘new work society’ is essentially tantamount to highly projective theorizing: “though there are some more tendentially visionary works, approaches and perspectives which are constituted by social-scientific and empirically grounded analyses are still lacking” (Mutz et al., 2000: 3).

In the research presented, we seek to address the seminal state of research into this highly innovative stream of theorizing. In the remainder of this paper, we will first provide a general description of recent changes in the economy and labor market. Secondly, we will have a closer look at the blurring boundaries between the realms of work and volunteering as a result of these changes. In the third part of the paper, finally, we will present some empirical research findings that are drawn from a face-to-face survey of a representative sample of Flemish Red Cross volunteers. The data concentrates on individual attitudes towards the decreasing centrality of paid work and more flexible combinations of paid and unpaid work. In a first step, a descriptive analysis is provided of the subjective reception of the aforementioned, somewhat visionary views on a more equal balance between remunerated and unremunerated activities. In a second step, an explanatory model is constructed in order to predict the attitudinal variations observed.

## THE DESTANDARDIZATION OF WORK AND EMPLOYMENT

The propounded transformation of economy, work and employment opens up a whole research field in itself, which we can impossibly encompass in the modest scheme of this research paper. We basically aim at understanding how people, in the course of their lives, are confronted with the consequences of these broader economic changes. Against the background of a much wider thematic landscape, we thus focus our attention to the individual as a member of the workforce. Two closely intertwined aspects are of core importance: the practical organization of the work (i.e., the mode of production or accumulation) and the concomitant forms of employment. One

does not have to be trained as a sociologist to know that ‘flexibilization’ is the current buzzword for interpreting recent transformations in the world of work.

Before discussing the development of flexible production and employment into further detail, it first of all is important to stress is that we to a large extent are dealing with *narratives* about the (future direction of) actual changes in economy, and more concretely with the narratives of post-industrialism, post-Fordism, and flexibility (Ransome, 1999: 52-87). In this respect, a distinction can be made between ‘*first-phase*’ theories of post-industrialism, which emerged during the 1960s and 1970s, and ‘*second-phase*’ narratives of post-Fordism and flexibility that were firstly pronounced during the 1980s (ibid.).

Two main ‘traditional’ theses on post-industrialism have been largely outdated, or further differentiated, through empirical verification (Ransome, 1999: 52-87; Castells, 2000b: 218-223). Firstly, the prediction that, in the new economy, the generation of knowledge would be the main source of productivity and that the importance of occupations with a high information and knowledge content in their activity would increase consequently. Secondly, the general statement that economic activity would shift from the production of goods to the delivery of services. The main objection with respect to the former assertion is that, since knowledge and information were also central to the industrial conceptions of production and productivity, “the appropriate distinction is not between an industrial and a post-industrial economy, but between two forms of knowledge-based industrial, agricultural, and services production” (Castells, 2000b: 219). What is most distinctive, in historical terms, between the economies of the first half and the second half of the twentieth century, is not the critical role of knowledge *in general*, but a new set of *technological innovations*, and in particular a true revolution in *information technology* (Ransome, 1999: 64; Castells, 2000a: 9-10, 2000b: 219). Castells (2000a&b) argues that through this new technological paradigm, which is centered around micro-electronics, information/communication technologies, and genetic engineering, we have entered a new economy that should be essentially understood as *informational, global, and networked*. Firstly it is informational in the sense that productivity and competitiveness are dependent on the capacity of generating and processing knowledge and information. Access to and control over accurate and up-to-date information, the capacity for instant data-analysis and for an instantaneous response to changes in exchange rates, fashions, and tastes have become key commodities (Harvey, 1990: 159). Secondly it is global because its core strategic activities (i.e., “financial markets, science and technology, international trade of goods and services, advanced business services, multinational production firms and their ancillary networks, communication media, and highly skilled speciality labor” – Castells, 2000a: 10) have the capacity to work as a global unit. Thirdly, the new economy is characterized by a new form of economic organization: the *network enterprise*. With this term, Castells refers to a network that consists of either firms or segments of firms, and/or of the internal segmentation of firms. Within such networks, strategic alliances and partnerships are forged on the basis of a project-, product- and process-specific sharing of information. Besides the undifferentiated

approach to types of knowledge, an additional major criticism regarding the first post-industrial claim is that the proliferation of information-rich occupations, such as managerial, professional, and technical positions, cannot be considered as the only effect of the informational revolution. The new occupational structure is also characterized by a substantial growth of low-skilled service occupations (Castells, 2000b: 221; van Hoof and Van Ruysseveldt, 1998: 268). The apparent polarization between an 'upgraded' top and a 'degraded', 'downgraded' or 'switched-off' bottom of the employment structure (Castells, 2000b: 266; Ransome, 1999: 73-74) is an issue we will come back to in further discussion.

In relation to the second prediction of the classical theory of post-industrialism, the idea of 'service sector employment' has been criticized for being far too blunt to grasp the highly diverging types of activities included in this category: "the only common feature of these service activities is what they are not" (Castells, 2000b: 221; compare Ransome, 1999: 56-57). Furthermore, the idea of a demise of manufacturing is highly misleading because it is based on an artificial separation between advanced economies and developing economies which, against the background of globalization, actually are part of the same productive structure. Castells (2000b: 220) consequently states that overall, the 'de-industrialization' of the developed world is largely compensated by new manufacturing jobs in the rest of the world.<sup>2</sup>

It is in the wake of these critical evaluations and reformulations of the classical theory of post-industrialism that the 'second-phase' accounts in terms of a shift from Fordism to post-Fordism are generated (see, among others, Amin, 1994; Gilbert et al., 1992; Jessop, 1992a&b; Harvey, 1990; Ransome, 1999). In general, the 'post-Fordism narrative' is not only concerned with a shift in type of production, but also concerns a reconfiguration of the broader socio-political framework, and even a shift in the "aesthetic of modernism – particularly the latter's penchant for functionality and efficiency" (Harvey, 1990: 136). The high days of postwar Fordism were based upon techniques of mass production supported by a mode of regulation consisting of mass consumption and an active (Keynesian) state intervention. The emergence of post-Fordism, then, may be conceptualized primarily in terms of a search for greater levels of economic flexibility, in terms of production techniques, differentiated consumption patterns, a restructured welfare state, deregulation, and a postmodernist aesthetic that celebrates difference and individuality, personalized lifestyles and ephemeral fashions (Gilbert et al., 1992; Harvey, 1990).

The core of the discussion however has mainly evolved around the exact consequences of the aforementioned revolution in (information) technology, and more specifically around the

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<sup>2</sup> In the 'post-industrial' period (1970-1990), Castells observes two different paths in the expansion of service employment: firstly, an Anglo-Saxon *service economy model*, characterized by a rapid phasing out of manufacturing, coupled with a strong expansion of employment in producer and social services; and secondly, a Japanese/German *industrial production model*, which, while also reducing the share of manufacturing employment, continues to keep it at a relatively high level in a much more gradual movement that allows for the restructuring of manufacturing activities into the new socio-technical paradigm (Castells, 2000b: 230-231 and 244-247). Castells critically remarks that "when societies massively destroy manufacturing jobs in a short period of time, instead of gradually phasing the industrial transformation, it is not necessarily because they are more advanced, but they follow specific policies and strategies that are based in their cultural, social, and political backdrop" (Castells, 2000b: 231 – emphasis added).

question whether these technological innovations have moved us irreversibly beyond the ‘Fordist’ mode of mechanized and semi-automated mass production, to an entirely new mode of ‘post-Fordist’ production on the basis of the key principle of flexibility (Ransome, 1999: 64-66; compare Gilbert et al., 1992).<sup>3</sup> Ransome (1999: 78-79) in this respect notes that the controversy is not about whether such change is actually taking place (i.e., all parties recognize that a process of change *is* occurring), but more about whether the technological paradigm of flexibility may be universally adopted as *the* new model for the labor process of the future – that is, the debate mainly concentrates on the exact *pace, extent, and scope* of change. Nevertheless, the empirical evidence as yet rather points “towards bits-and-pieces of change rather than towards a decisive split with the past, it is clearly necessary to see these developments as a continuation rather than transcendence of industrial capitalism. Post-Fordism is the latest phase of capitalist economic organization; it is not capitalism in an entirely different form” (Ransome (1999: 78).

According to Harvey (1990), the (provisional) contours of the post-Fordistic *flexible accumulation*<sup>4</sup> regime “rests on flexibility with respect to labor processes, labor markets, products, and patterns of consumption. It is characterized by the emergence of entirely new sectors of production, new ways of providing financial services, new markets, and, above all, greatly intensified rates of commercial, technological, and organizational innovation [...] Flexible accumulation appears to imply relatively high levels of ‘structural’ (as opposed to frictional) unemployment, rapid destruction and reconstruction of skills, modest (if any) gains in the real wage, and the roll-back of trade union power – one of the political pillars of the Fordist regime” (Harvey, 1990: 147&150). In a more narrow sense, that is, with regard to the practical organization of the work, Ransome (1999: 68-72) speaks of *flexible specialization*. This term more specifically refers to the displacement of ‘rigid’ automated mass production and product standardization by new craft-wise production techniques on the basis of easily (re)programmable technology, by means of which specialized goods can be supplied to increasingly fragmented and volatile consumer demands.

The advance of a post-Fordist flexible production mode (or, according to Castells, the rise of a new informational, global, and networked economy in general – Castells, 2000a&b) has important consequences for the organization and activities of the workforce itself. As already mentioned, the push towards more flexible working arrangements appears to touch the core of the transformation process (Castells, 2000a&b; Gilbert et al., 1992; Harvey, 1990; Ransome,

<sup>3</sup> In line with the broader theory of reflexive modernization, Beck (1992: 139-149) identifies the self-revolutionizing of the system of industrial society as the core mechanism of change. Not the technological innovations as such, but the fact, in the course of their development, the rationality of Fordistic mass production has become irrational leads to a modernization of the industrial mode of production (for a discussion about the specific rigidities of Fordistic production: see Gorz, 1997; Harvey, 1990; Reich, 1993).

<sup>4</sup> A ‘regime of accumulation’ is “a form of surplus value production and realization, supported by particular types of production and management technology... This includes investment and capital devaluation strategies, branch structure (in particular the ratio between the producer goods sector and the consumer goods sector), wage condition, consumer models and class structures, the relations between the capitalist and non-capitalist sectors of work in society and the mode of integration into the international market” (Esser and Hirsch, 1994 as quoted in Ransome, 1999: 66).

1999; van Hoof and Ruysseveldt, 1998). But although at the surface, the diagnosis sounds simple, it is hard to get a clear overall picture of what this flexibility exactly entails; for its very purpose is to satisfy the often highly specific needs of each firm (Harvey, 1990: 150; van Hoof and Ruysseveldt, 1998: 271), and because economies in various countries try different forms of flexibility in working arrangements, depending on their labor legislation, social security, and tax systems (Castells, 2000b: 285). Two strands of arguments can be identified nevertheless : first, an increasing dualization of the employment structure between a core and a periphery (Castel, 1995; Castells, 2000b; Gilbert et al., 1992; Harvey, 1990; Ransome, 1999), and second, a general *de*-standardization of work (Beck, 1992; Castells, 2000a&b).

Firstly, there appears to be a broad scholarly consensus about the growing bifurcation of the labor market structure between a functionally flexible and highly/multi-skilled core of workers on the one hand and a numerically flexible lower or unskilled periphery on the other.<sup>5</sup> At the core, the quality of employment in the sense of levels of skills, job responsibilities, and levels of pay and job security is considerably higher than at the margin. The core is made up of employees with a full time and permanent status and is central to the long-term future of the organization. Although the core workers usually enjoy greater job security, good promotion and re-skilling prospects, and a range of fringe benefit rights, this group is nevertheless expected to be adaptable, flexible, and if necessary geographically mobile (Harvey, 1999: 150). The peripheral workforce, on the other hand, tends to be less skilled than the core workers and subject to more unfavorable and insecure employment conditions. The periphery consists of two rather different sub-groups (ibid.). The first consists of full-time employees with skills that are readily available in the labor market, such as clerical, secretarial, routine and lesser skilled manual work with little access to career opportunities. The second group is most vulnerable to numerical flexibility and includes part-timers, casuals, fixed term contract staff, temporaries, sub-contractors and public subsidy trainees.<sup>6</sup>

The new paradigm of flexibility consequently is not only characterized by 'just-in-time production' (production without a stock of materials), but also 'just-in-time employment' (Rifkin, 1995: 191). The post-Fordist employment structure is buttressed by a (sharpening) contrast between a (decreasing) number of permanent 'core' workers and an (increasing) disposable labor force that can equally quickly and costlessly be hired and fired according to fluctuations in demand, or, if not directly employed by the firm, whose services can be bought-in on a contract

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<sup>5</sup> *Functional flexibility* refers to the ease with which workers can be redeployed to different tasks to meet changes in market demand, technology, and company policy; whereas *numerical flexibility* concerns the ability to change the size of the workforce quickly and easily in response to changes in demands. *Financial and pay flexibility* is a third form of flexibility to facilitate numerical, and especially, functional flexibility (Gilbert et al., 1992: 4).

<sup>6</sup> It should be noted that the idea of a dualization of the labor market along the lines of a core and periphery bears close resemblance to the ideal type of the '*flexible firm*' as developed by Atkinson and Meager (1986). This model however has been criticized because it would be premature to herald a decisive shift towards such a bifurcated functioning of firms (Ransome, 1999: 74-75). On the one hand, the increase in the use of insecure and marginal forms of employment is by no means universal and appears to be greater in some sectors than in others. On the other hand, evidence of a concentration of skills and a greater job security at the core is far from decisive.

basis (Castells, 2000b: 295-296; Harvey, 1990: 152; Ransome, 1999: 73; van Hoof and Van Ruysseveldt, 1998: 268). The value of the latter group to employers “rests primarily in their ‘willingness’ to be available and yet largely ‘indispensable’” (Ransome, 1999: 74). Castel (1995: 407-411) even announces a ‘new social question’ along the line of this dualization of the labor market, in which an increasing part of the working population have ‘precariousness as destination’, or even worse, appear to be ‘redundant’ in the new mode of production.

The second interpretation of the flexibility of working arrangements is expressed in terms of a *de*-standardization of work: “overall, the traditional form of work, based on full-time employment, clear-cut occupational assignments, and a career pattern over the life-cycle is being slowly but surely eroded away” (Castells, 2000b: 290; compare Beck, 1992: 139-149). Beck (1992: 142) starts from the observation that the three supporting pillars of industrial employment: labor contract, work site and working hours are progressively eroding. On the basis of Carnoy (2000), Castells (2000b: 282) discusses four dimensions in the trend toward non-standard or flexible forms of employment:

1. *Working time*: flexible work means work that is not constrained by the traditional pattern of 35-40 hours work per week in a full-time job.
2. *Job stability*: flexible work is task-oriented, and does not include a commitment to future employment.
3. *Location*: while the majority of workers still work regularly at the workplace of their company, an increasing proportion work outside their workplace for part or all of their working time, whether at home, on the move, or in a location of a different company for whom the worker’s company subcontracts.
4. *The social contract between employer and employee*: the traditional contract is/was based on commitment by the employer to workers’ well-defined rights, standardized level of compensation, options for training, social benefits, and a predictable career pattern (in some countries on the basis of seniority), while, on the employee’s side, it is/was expected that the employee would be loyal to the company, persevere in the job, and have a good disposition to work overtime if necessary – without compensation in the case of managers, with extra pay in the case of production workers.

It is important to emphasize that neither the assumed core nor the periphery of the labor market are spared of some form of flexibility in working arrangements. In this respect, van Hoof and Van Ruysseveldt, (1998: 265-267) note that in a flexible labor market environment, ‘employment security’ decreasingly equals ‘job security’, but increasingly means ‘*employability*’, referring to the broad availability of employees on the basis of a permanent training and varied work experience, and thus the ability to successfully change jobs or the ease with which one gets employed (Bundervoet, 1997: 40). The optimistic credo of flexibilization consequently announces a shift from full employment to full employability, or the challenging art of flexible ‘job hopping’ and

dynamic career planning. The boundary between being a ‘work entrepreneur’ and a ‘work floater’ however is precarious (van Hoof and Van Ruysseveldt, 1998: 270). The flexibilization of employment patterns (and its reverse, namely an *individualization* of work and work biography – see Castells, 2000b: 282; Beck, 1992: 92) also (mainly) implies growing employment insecurity and risks for unemployment. Through the advance of flexible working arrangements, many insecure and hybrid forms of work between employment and unemployment are emerging. Beck (1992: 143-144) announces the institutionalization of new system of flexible ‘*under-employment*’: “in this system, *unemployment in the guise of various forms of underemployment is ‘integrated’ into the employment system*, but in exchange for a *generalization of employment insecurity* that was not known in the ‘old’ uniform full-employment system of industrial society” (ibid. – emphasis added). Instead of the traditionally clear alternative between full employment and unemployment, this new system of under-employment threatens to impose employment insecurity as the new standard of the work biography.

#### THE BLURRING BOUNDARIES BETWEEN WORK AND VOLUNTEERING

With its roots in churches and associational life, volunteerism has traditionally been associated with a rather amateurish type of involvement based on good intentions and common sense (Wuthnow, 1998: 32). The expansion of the modern welfare state has reinforced this “do-gooder” image, defining the volunteer’s role as “a marginal one at best, that is, to supplement professionally planned and delivered services” (Anheier & Salamon: 1999: 43). The advance of the professional regime has widened the gap between professional experts and unqualified volunteers. Whereas qualified paid workers provide the lion’s share of the services, volunteers are saddled with auxiliary tasks. This preference for professional dominance and authority fits into the ‘paid work centered’ model of society (Beck, 2001; Mutz et al., 2000; Mutz, 2002).

Although volunteering always has been a matter of degree (Smith, 1981; compare Handy et al., 2000; Lyons, Wijkström, and Clary, 1998), and various intermediate positions between completely unpaid work and work paid at labor market prices exist (Anheier & Salamon, 1999: 51-52), there recently has been a growing conviction of a more structural blurring of the boundaries between volunteer activity and paid labor. A first indication is the pervasive professionalization of volunteer work. Sector blurring, or the increasing interdependence of the public, private, and nonprofit sectors, has forced voluntary organizations to function in a manner similar to large public agencies or private companies and to face increasing demands for accountability and efficiency (Gundelach and Torpe, 1997: 51). Moreover, the growing complexity and scope of social problems have raised awareness that special expertise is required instead of former “second-rate ways of serving the community” (Wuthnow, 1998: 42). As a result, community involvement is currently less seen in terms of membership than in terms of effectiveness and accomplishments (Wuthnow, 1998: 46; Dekker, 2002). Volunteers face increasing demands in

terms of professional expertise and specific skills. The image of the voluntary helper is interchanged with the voluntary expert (Hustinx and Lammertyn, 2001; Brömmer and Strasser, 2001). Volunteers are increasingly likely to operate in a professional organizational setting that can be characterized by the direct involvement of paid staff, active recruitment and screening, pre-service training, on-the-job training, ongoing supervision, clear task descriptions, acts of recognition and appreciation, and a specification of the volunteer's and organization's rights and duties (Cnaan and Amroffell, 1994: 346; Heinze and Olk, 1999: 94; Ilsey, 1990: 77-89). From the volunteer's side, however, this is not necessarily an unwelcome evolution. In the wake of processes of individualization, it is argued that volunteers today decreasingly participate for the sake of belonging and identity-creation, but instead are more pragmatically focused on the services offered or activities undertaken (Hustinx & Lammertyn, 2003; Meijs & Hoogstad, 2001; Wollebaek & Selle, 2002). A decoupling between membership and volunteering takes place (Wuthnow, 1998; Goss, 1999; Putnam, 2000). Dekker (2002) in this respect speaks of a shift 'from church to office': "People are busier, and more important, professional life has acquired such a high status that voluntary engagement is easily swallowed up in extra investments for one's job. People take up voluntary work which is in line with their professional skills, and people may tend to approach volunteering as if it were paid work: goal-oriented, efficient, business-like" (Dekker, 2002: xxx). In response to these functionally oriented and increasingly individualized volunteer dispositions, there recently has been a remarkable mushrooming of new institutional structures, initiated by volunteer organizations and governments alike, that are directed at tailoring volunteer activities to the private interests and preferences of the volunteers, instead of putting the organizational targets first (Anheier & Salamon, 1999; Beher et al., 2000; Wollebaek & Selle, 2002). Exemplary is the steep growth of a more 'work-like' mediation between specific demands of volunteers and activities offered by organizations through (regional and local) volunteer agencies. Another indicator of increasing professionalization is the recent emergence of 'corporate volunteering', which is explicitly aimed at creating synergetic effects between existing expertise and experiences of private and nonprofit sector (Janowicz et al., 2000).

At a more fundamental level, however, this blurring of boundaries may be indicative of the rise of a new societal configuration in which the meaning of work is extending beyond the contours of paid labor (Kühnlein and Mutz, 1999; Hacket and Mutz, 2002; Mutz, 2002). As argued above, structural developments on the labor market lead away from the traditional lifelong and full employment ideal. Under increasingly flexible and precarious labor market conditions the centrality of paid work is reduced. This does not imply a devaluation of work but a weakening of the previously strict separation between work and life (Mutz et al., 2000: 5). In this context, volunteering acquires a new role and potential. It is seen as a replacement for a lost embeddedness in traditional labor market institutions (Erlinghaven, 2000), or as an adequate answer to conditions and risks resulting from a discontinuous occupational biography with intermittent periods of (un)employment (Kühnlein and Mutz, 1999: 300-301).

Some authors consider civic work as a possible substitute for periods of unemployment, linked to the establishment of some form of social credit system assuring social benefits alongside monetary contributions to the social security system (see Beck's '*Modell Bürgerarbeit*' (1999b), or Rifkin (1995: 256-259) on 'shadow wages' and 'social wages'). However, by elevating voluntary work to a status equal to paid work, it risks to become a mere surrogate for structural unemployment (Erlinghaven, 2000; Beher et al., 2000). "In practice this may even lead to programs, in which the unemployed are required by social welfare law to take on forms of civic work by social legislation – which turns the voluntary character of community work into its contrary and leads to a distorted type of politically induced and forced social integration through (therefore low valued) work" (Mutz et al., 2000: 8). Alternatively, it is argued that, because citizen activities are essentially non-remunerated forms of work (i.e. not based on the necessity to earn an income), they can only *complement* paid work (Mutz et al., 2000: 9). In this view, the ongoing restructuring of the labor market may ideal-typically convert into a 'triad of work' in which paid employment, volunteer work and self initiated activities ('Eigenarbeit') are complementary and fields of activity (for an attempt to put these ideas into practice: see the *Munich model*. Mutz, 1998, 1999). In this 'new work society', individuals act as entrepreneurs in charge of their own labor activity (Kühnlein and Mutz, 1999: 296-301). An important characteristic feature is the flexible combination of different forms of work into a self-organized and self-determined 'work biography'. The 'triad of work' consequently opens opportunities for "dynamic unemployment" (Kühnlein and Mutz, 1999: 295) based on a redistribution of paid and unpaid work between employed and unemployed people. The 'paid-employment-centered' lifeworld is supplanted by a paradigm with more emphasis on (paid) work as a meaning system than on the necessity of securing an income. However, Erlinghaven (2000) finds that for the unemployed, volunteering does not serve the same function as paid employment does. The current trend towards professional volunteering has proved to be a new, substantial threshold for potential volunteer participation of lower educated and less qualified people. In contrast to the theoretical prognosis, recent specialized and increasingly *deinstitutionalized* voluntary initiatives are only accessible for citizens who bring along the qualifications required from successful participation in other areas of life (Erlinghaven, 2000; Brömme and Strasser, 2001). Furthermore, so far there is no empirical knowledge about the way in which new individual work configurations are constructed, or how transitions between different segments of activity occur. Changes in the occupational biography are presumably more a matter of pressure than of purposive choice. The flexible and self-determined design of dynamic 'work biographies' yet remains the privilege of only a few 'pioneers of flexibility' (Mutz et al., 2000: 9).

## RESEARCH PROCEDURES

### Sample and data collection

The data used in this study are drawn from a survey that consisted of 652 personal in-home interviews with a representative sample of volunteers from five different Flemish Red Cross units: the First Aid Unit, the Red Cross Youth, the Social Services Unit, the Training Unit, and the Unit for Psycho-Social Intervention in Disasters. In consultation with some key informants within Red Cross Flanders, these specific units were selected out of a wide variety of services in order to ensure a maximum variety of volunteer profiles.<sup>2</sup> The respondents were selected on the basis of a multi-stage sampling procedure from centrally kept volunteer records. In a first step, the sample was geographically limited by means of a random selection of 50 local branches of Red Cross Flanders (equally spread over the five Flemish provinces). Within these Red Cross chapters, a disproportional sample of volunteers was subsequently subtracted from the five selected units, under-representing units with large numbers of volunteers, and over-representing units with small numbers of volunteers (for a detailed discussion: see Hustinx, 2003: 120-124).

All volunteers in the sample were interviewed by means of a standardized face-to-face questionnaire in the spring of 2000. The questions focused on several attitudes and behaviors of Red Cross volunteers, and information was gathered on a number of economic, affective, social and cultural background indicators. By dividing the number of complete interviews by the number of potential respondents, we obtained a response rate of 79.3% among the selected volunteers (AAPOR's minimum response rate: see AAPOR, 2000: 23). This relatively low response rate mainly results from a large proportion of non-contacts (17.8% of the total number of contacts with potential respondents). Explicit refusals occurred in 2.3% of all contacts with potential respondents. Non-responders did not systematically differ from responders with regard to sex, age, and length of service. We consequently could conclude that the achieved sample was not substantially biased by non-response. The age and gender characteristics of the sample proved to be representative of the volunteer population studied. The length of service of the selected volunteers however appeared to be an inaccurate representation of the real population distribution. The weighting scheme '*unit\*age+length of service*' was deployed to perform an incomplete (i.e., marginal based) and multiplicative (i.e., iterative proportional fitting) population weighting adjustment of our sample (Janssens, 2003). We herewith also accounted for our disproportional sampling design (a further elaboration of these methodological issues is presented in Hustinx, 2003: 101-136).

Of the respondents, 50.6% were male and 49.4% were female. The age of the volunteers ranged from 15 to 81 years of age with a mean of 36.4 years, a median of 35 years, 25% younger than 24 years, and only 10% older than 57 years. Of the sample, 29.3% had an educational level not exceeding lower secondary school, and 32.8% had some higher education. The respondents predominantly lived with their spouse (50.6%) or with their parents or other family members

(33.3%). Alternative living arrangements, like cohabitation (6.7%) or persons who lived alone (9.3%), were less frequent. Four out of ten respondents had children in the household. The majority was employed full-time (48.4%), 10.1% had a part-time job, 13.9% were not active, and retirees and students represented respectively 7.8% and 19.8% of the sample. On average, the responding volunteers had served Red Cross Flanders for 8.3 years. Half of the volunteers had been involved for more than 5 years, one out of four for even more than 10 years. 30.9% of the sample had a length of service of maximum 3 years.

### Scope of research findings and research hypotheses

Focusing on an empirical assessment of opinions about the centrality of paid work in the volunteers' lives, and their support for more flexible combinations of paid work and volunteer work, we only look at those respondents who are either actively or passively related to the labor market. That is, the opinions of students, retirees, and people unable to work are not taken into account. This firstly implies that only 436 respondents are included in the analysis, which amounts to 66.9% of our sample. In addition, the scope of our research findings however is further reduced on the basis of the economic background characteristics of our respondents. The research population under investigation turns out to be a very homogeneous group with regard to their employment situation.<sup>7</sup> The widely heralded structural changes on the labor market are not reflected in the research sample at issue. 90.6% were employed (75.0% full-time employed, 15.6% part-time), 6.3% were unemployed, 2.4% were on a sick leave or maternal leave, and 0.7% were on a non-compensated leave or had interrupted their career. 74.0% enjoyed employment security in the form of a fixed contract, and only one fourth experienced some form of flexibility in working arrangements. Furthermore, 65.1% kept one and the same job in the three years preceding the interview, and 80.7% had never been unemployed during that same period.

Since the overall majority of our respondents are clearly not affected by the theoretically described labor market restructuring, it follows that we are unable to test the 'substitution thesis' in which volunteering is considered as a full alternative for disrupted work biographies and persistent unemployment. Conversely, the strong overrepresentation of fulltime employed in our research population does neither point to the presence of a widespread practice of flexibly combining paid work and volunteering. As already mentioned, the so-called 'pioneers of flexibility' are presumably a minority group that does not lend itself for large-scale survey research (for an excellent qualitative exploration, see for example: Neuteleers, 2001). Furthermore, dealing with a sample of people who actually volunteer, and of whom we consequently may assume that they embrace more positive attitudes towards volunteer work than people who do not volunteer, we evidently do not grasp the whole universe of possible opinions.

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<sup>7</sup> This could more or less be expected, since it is common knowledge that, more generally, people endowed with more cultural, economic, and social capital are more likely to (be asked to) volunteer (see for, instance, Wilson and Musick, 1997a&b, 1998; Wilson, 2000).

In spite of these caveats, it however is important to emphasize that the population under investigation should be considered as a kind of ‘convenience sample’ for a preliminary empirical exploration of the ongoing theoretical debate. Rather than the main focus of the Red Cross survey conducted, the research findings in this paper are based on an empirical sidetrack in the frame of a larger research project (Hustinx, 2003). As a result, only two basic questions were included in the questionnaire. So rather than an overall test of the theory (which would be a highly ambitious research program at any rate), the data presented serves no other goals than to get a provisional impression of the empirical bearing of the theoretical assumptions made and to possibly initiate further and more in-depth research into this matter.

In sum, instead of assessing the (changing) role of volunteering against the background of a *structural crisis* in the work society, the scope of our research findings remains mainly limited to an empirical evaluation of the concomitantly heralded *normative crisis* concerning the meaning of work (Mutz et al., 2000: 4). According to Mutz and colleagues, three different strands of interpretation are possible (ibid.: 5). Firstly, *a decrease in the centrality of work* would be plausible. Rather than a devaluation of paid work, it would result in the weakening of the traditionally clear boundaries between work and life. A second interpretation would be that individualization processes on the contrary lead to *an increase in the orientation towards paid work*, because “only the integration into the system of paid work renders an individualized way of life possible” (ibid.: 5, compare Beck, 1992: 129; Dekker, 2002). A third conceivable scenario is that *the centrality of paid work could decrease while job orientation would increase and simultaneously extend to areas of activity beyond paid work*. In the latter hypothetical configuration, new models of societal participation would develop that are not tailored to paid work. Against the background of these hypothetical projections, we derive three basic, and highly exploratory, research questions for the guidance of our analysis:

1. Is the centrality of paid work (paid work orientation) decreasing?
2. Is the support for flexible combinations of paid and unpaid activities increasing?
3. Which individual characteristics facilitate or hamper a decrease in paid work orientation on the one hand, and an increase in the support for flexible combinations of paid and unpaid work on the other hand?

The first two questions concern the descriptive part of the analysis, while the third question relates to the analytical part of the analysis. It should be noted that, since we are dealing with a cross-sectional research design, we at best may derive some indirect indications of possible changes in the meaning of work over time.

## RESEARCH FINDINGS

### Analysis part 1: Assessing opinions about flexible combinations of paid and unpaid work

As already mentioned, we can only rely on two survey questions to address the research questions formulated. The first question aimed at exploring empirically the permeability of the boundaries between paid work, family life, and volunteer work. We generated a battery of 10 evaluation items in order to gauge the propensity to combine more flexibly the different realms of life. The respondents could position themselves on the separate items by means of a Likert-type response format (1=totally disagree, 5=totally agree). In **table 1**, some descriptive statistics are presented for each of the items separately.

In general, the Red Cross volunteers under investigation take a rather hesitating stance towards the statements. The mean scores center around the midpoint of the 5-point response format, and the medians show that for most expressions, half of the respondents lean towards the disagreeing side of the scale. Overall strong agreement however exists regarding one particular item: no matter how important volunteer work is to the respondents, their regular job will always come first (V30\_8). Moreover, four out of 10 consider it normal that our society values paid work more highly than volunteering (V30\_2). It follows, conversely, that only a minority of respondents seem willing to cut back on their regular job (V30\_6), to reduce working hours between partners in a couple (V30\_10), or to alternate between longer periods of paid work and volunteering (V30\_5). Roughly half of the respondents indicate that financial reasons prevent them from cutting down on their job (V30\_3). Instead, flexible working hours appear to be a more desirable alternative to match paid work and volunteering more adequately (V30\_7, and to a lesser extent V30\_4).

Two items also refer to family life. The first item reveal that the respondents are almost equally divided between (totally) disagreeing and (totally) agreeing that job, family life, and volunteer work are hard to combine (V30\_1). Second, reducing working hours among partners in a couple appears to be considerably more acceptable if the extra time available is invested in the upbringing of children (V30\_9) rather than spending it on community involvement (V30\_10).

*Insert table 1 about here*

In order to search for relations of interdependence between the various items, an exploratory factor analysis was conducted. On the basis of an initial iterated principal factor analysis with squared multiple correlations as prior communality estimates, only one common factor with an *eigenvalue* greater than 1 could be identified. The final factor solution included 4 items (see below), and was based on maximum likelihood estimation. All items retained had factor loadings greater than .60. We proceeded with the analysis by constructing a factor-based scale score by adding together the respondent's responses on the items included in the factor solution. The cronbach's alpha of the scale equals .78, which indicates that we have produced a reliable measure.

Combining the contents of the meaning of the items selected, the attitudinal measure constructed may best be described as *the strength of the paid work orientation* of the respondents. Reversed item scores were calculated in order to interpret a high score on the Likert scale in terms of a strong paid work orientation. 13.7% of the respondents embrace a strong paid work orientation (scores 16-20), 36.7% score moderately positive (scores 12-15), 37.2% position themselves rather reserved (scores 8-11), and 12.4% have a very weak paid work orientation (scores 4-7). Adding scores, it thus appears that about half of the respondents score moderately to strongly positive on the constructed measure.

**Factor 1: 'Paid work orientation' ( $\alpha = .78$ , reversed item scores)**

- V30\_3 If I weren't financially dependent on my job, I would cut down and commit myself to more volunteer work.
- V30\_4 If I could freely determine my own work schedule, I would schedule it around my volunteer work.
- V30\_5 I would like to alternate longer periods of paid work with longer periods of volunteering.
- V30\_6 I would like to do more volunteer work cutting back on my regular job.

In addition to the set of evaluation items, a second question presented a series of 12 possible measures that would enable the respondents to spend more time volunteering. They were asked to indicate whether they would be prepared to take these measures or not with a simple 'yes' or 'no'. The results are shown in [table 2](#)

***Insert table 2 about here***

In line with the item evaluation in the first question, the response pattern in [table 2](#) suggests that the volunteers under investigation are not prepared to sacrifice pay for spending more time volunteering. An overall disagreement exists if the options proposed involve a certain loss of income (V31\_2, V31\_4), cutting down on paid work (V31\_7), a temporary interruption of the professional career (V31\_5), or additional expenses (V31\_8, V31\_9). And like in the previous question, although in general, the respondents are not willing to make financial sacrifices, it again appears that more flexible working hours could provide a valuable alternative (V31\_6). Moreover, almost 8 out of 10 respondents declare they would work less if they somehow would get compensated for it (V31\_1). [Table 2](#) furthermore indicates that almost half of the respondents would be prepared to invest some of their paid leave in their volunteer activities (V31\_3), but that more than 2 out of 3 nonetheless do not want to sacrifice other hobbies (V31\_12). Finally, although references to children do not apply for about one third of respondents, the data indicates that paying for a babysitter is out of the question (V31\_8). However, informal (mutual) childcare does not represent an attractive alternative to everyone (V31\_10, V31\_11). This presumably indicates that spending less time with one's children in favor of volunteering is the least negotiable option.

## Analysis part 2: Explaining variation in opinions about flexible combinations of paid and unpaid work

In this section, we shift from the descriptive to the analytical part of the analysis, that is, we aim to develop an explanatory model for understanding the observed variation in individual preferences for flexible combinations of paid and unpaid work among the Flemish Red Cross volunteers under investigation. We ran four different models with different dependent variables but the same set of predictors.

### *Dependent variables*

As dependent variables, we firstly used the summated rating scale assessing the strength of 'paid work orientation' of the respondents. Next, we also calculated three sum-scores on the battery of optional work-related actions one could take to create more space for volunteering – a general sum of 'yes'-answers (V31\_1-V31\_7), a separate sum of options with loss of income (V31\_2, V31\_4, V31\_5, V31\_7), and a separate sum of options without loss of income (V31\_1, V31\_3, V31\_6). It comes as no surprise that a strong negative correlation exists between paid work orientation and the propensity to cut back work in favor more time volunteering ( $r = -.48$ ). On the other hand, taking work-related measures without and with a loss of income correlate moderately positive ( $r = .38$ ) but are clearly not interchangeable.

### *Predictor variables*

To explain the observed variation in these dependent measures, four groups of independent variables were brought into play. Obviously, our primary predictors relate to the economic (dis)embedding of the respondents. We already mentioned their socio-economic position (fulltime employed, part-time employed, not active), their employment security in terms of the type of contract (fixed – temporary), the flexibility in working arrangements, the number of jobs during the three years preceding the interview, and the number of times unemployed during the same period. In addition, we also specify the socio-economic class of the volunteers by means of an abbreviated version of the EGP-classification (Erikson, Goldthorpe and Portocarero, 1979), which does not distinguish between self-employed with or without personnel (for we did not inform about the occupational status of the respondents in such a great detail). The five professional categories are (compare Erikson et al., 1979: 420): professionals (managerial and professional occupations), routine non-manual workers, self-employed workers, skilled workers and foremen, and semi- or unskilled workers.<sup>8</sup> In addition, we also look at the family source of income (two incomes, one income, replacement income). Finally, job characteristics were measured by means of two summated rating scales: the extent to which one performs executive work, and the level of dynamism in the job. A second series of predictor variables relates to the

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<sup>8</sup> We also measured the family income level of the respondents, a variable that is commonly used to measure socio-economic status. Due to a high number of missing values (12.3% among the working respondents, 20.3% for the total sample), we will not take this variable into account, as we suspect it to be unreliable.

family situation of the respondents. We firstly take into consideration the living arrangements of the respondents, that is, whether they live with their partner, live single, or live with their parents. Next, we include information about the respondents' parental status and family life course (pre-family life, family without children, family with young children, family with teenagers or young adolescents, empty-nest family). A third group of independent variables provides us with a cultural print of the volunteers by means of both a cognitive and attitudinal component. The cognitive component obviously includes the educational attainment of the volunteers. A division is made between respondents with no, primary or lower secondary education, respondents who completed their higher secondary education, and respondents who have received some form of higher (university) education. The cognitive abilities of the respondents however are also influenced by their age. But rather than examining the effects of age and education from a methodological survey perspective (e.g., Verbelen, 2002), we consider both variables as the key proxy indicators for an individualized or 'self-reflexive' monitoring of the individual life course – of which the theoretically conceived flexible and self-organized work biographies are presumably an essential component. We furthermore look for gender effects, and assess the bearing of traditional gender roles. Another set of cultural indicators is related to processes of 'secularization'. In addition to church practice, we include information about the religious belief of the volunteers. A distinction is made between respondents who embrace a religion and respondents who do not. Additionally, we aim to account for the strength of communal orientations of the volunteers by including a factor-based attitudinal scale that stands for strong feelings of solidarity. A last set of predictor variables maps the extent and nature of the social participation of the respondents. We will firstly assess the respondents' strength of integration in 'classical' organizations. We count the number of core or active associational memberships, and the number of volunteer commitments outside Red Cross Flanders. In addition, we aim at grasping the extent to which the respondents' broader participation networks are also characterized by more 'unconventional' forms of participation by means of two Likert-scales. The first groups a number of organizationally detached protest actions, whereas the second represents the extent to which the respondent participates in the 'vicarious' checkbook activism (Maloney and Jordan, 1997). On the basis of the survey conducted, we also dispose of a number of more detailed indicators of '*styles of volunteering*' among the Flemish Red Cross volunteers under investigation (for a comprehensive discussion, see Hustinx, 2003, 2004; Hustinx & Lammertyn, 2003, 2004). We opt to deploy indicators of the Red Cross volunteers' motivation to volunteer, as well as of differences in their modes of involvement. The motivation to volunteer is measured by means of three Likert-scales assessing the importance attached to recognition, satisfaction, and self-development derived through volunteering. In addition, we include three separate evaluation items that closely relate to the interaction between paid work and volunteering: 'So I can do things I'm good at and use my skills to their full extent', 'Because here I can find the satisfaction and the appreciation I can't find in my job', and 'Because it is a good addition to my job'. Next, the modes of involvement are measured using a single multivariate measure. This variable was

constructed by means of a latent class analysis on the basis of a number of behavioral volunteer measures (intensity and longevity of the volunteer commitment, to the choice of field of action, and the choice of volunteer activity)<sup>9</sup> and contains five latent classes that can broadly be referred to as supporting peripheral involvements, administrative intermediate involvements, supporting intermediate involvements, service-oriented core involvements and all-round core involvements (Hustinx, 2003: 223-232). These five latent classes were regrouped into ‘peripheral’, ‘intermediate’, and ‘core’ modes of involvement. An overview of all Likert scales used is presented in appendix 1.

Dealing with four continuous dependent variables, results were analyzed using multiple regression with a stepwise selection method. An overview of the different regression models is presented in **table 3**. No multicollinearity between the independent variables could be traced.

*Insert table 3 about here*

Across all models, the most important conclusion that may be drawn is that, contrary to our theoretical expectations, it is not the economic (dis)embedding of the respondents, but the extent and nature of their social participation that explains most of the variation in the four dependent variables. Broadly speaking, it appears that the more extensively *and* intensively the respondents are participating in associational life and various types of volunteering, the weaker their paid work orientation and the stronger their propensity to create more space for volunteering by reducing paid work or tailor it more flexibly to their volunteer work. However, there is an additional net effect of types of motivations that goes in two different directions. On the one hand, although higher levels of satisfaction with volunteering correlate with weaker paid work orientations, they have a negative influence on the tendency to change the balance between the realms of paid and unpaid work. In addition, if respondents consider volunteering a good addition to their job, they feel less inclined to give more weight to volunteering at the expense of their paid work. On the other hand, if respondents seek some form of self-development through volunteering, they are significantly more apt to balance paid and unpaid work more evenly. The opportunity volunteering provides to do things one is good at and to use one’s skills to their full extent produces a similar effect, be it to a much lesser extent. A bit surprising to note is that, if volunteering compensates for the lack of satisfaction and appreciation in one’s job, it goes together with a weaker paid work orientation but it has no effect on the volunteers’ propensity to take work-related actions in order to create more time for volunteering.

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<sup>9</sup> These dimensions were measured by asking the respondents to report the frequency of their volunteer efforts (categories ranging from ‘daily’ to ‘once a year’), the amount of time invested in their volunteer commitment (estimation in hours per month or per year), the length of their Red Cross involvement (in years), the kind of activities performed (meetings and decision-making, the organization of activities, providing assistance, administrative tasks, training and lecturing activities, funding activities, and doing chores), and whether they were a member of an executive volunteer board or not.

Examining the (generally subsidiary) net effects of the economic, affective, and cultural background characteristics of the respondents, the first regression model reveals that having received some form of higher education, doing executive work, and being in the pre-family stage of life increase the paid work orientation of the respondents. On the other hand, having strong communal orientations is negatively associated with the strength of paid work orientation. None of these predictor variables, however, exert any influence on the actual propensity to reduce paid work or change working arrangements as to spend more time volunteering. In the latter respect, the second model shows that women as compared to men are slightly less inclined to take a step back in their job in order to do more volunteer work. Next, respondents with a lot of dynamism in their job are also less keen on cutting down paid work in favor of volunteering. Finally, in comparison with families with young children, families without children are somewhat more receptive to give volunteering a more prominent place in comparison with their paid job. If we only consider work-related measures that imply a certain loss of income, a different combination of predictor variables enters the model. As age increases, respondents seem more willing to sacrifice pay, whereas lower education and being economically inactive temper respondents' enthusiasm for such measures. Furthermore, the more the respondents experienced periods of unemployment in the three years preceding the interview, the less importance they attach to a possible loss of income in support of more time volunteering. The negative effect of belief might be explained in terms of the religious importance attached to a work ethos (although it has no bearing on the paid work orientation of the respondents) or the fact that charity in terms of monetary donations on the one hand, and giving time on the other are traditionally clearly separated activities.

#### DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION: BEYOND A PAID WORK SOCIETY?

The scope of our research findings is limited for a number of reasons. First and foremost, the composition of our research sample does not allow us to draw conclusions about a *structurally induced pressure* to rebalance different forms of work, that is, as a result of the increasing destandardization of the work biography caused by a fundamental transformation of economy and labor market. Instead, the research findings presented in this paper concern the (changing) normative meaning of paid work, and more concrete a possible decrease in the central position paid employment traditionally occupies in relation to the organization of life. Secondly, relying on cross-sectional data, we are unable to draw conclusions regarding possible evolutions over time. Thirdly, the variation in attitudes and opinions observed does not reflect the full range of possible dispositions, since we are dealing with a population of volunteers. As a result, our research findings are presumably 'positively biased'.

Although we are dealing with a research population that actually performs volunteer work, the data provide evidence for the (continuing) existence of a strong paid work orientation. Firstly, the

overall majority of respondents state that no matter how important their volunteer work is, their regular job will always come first. Moreover, four out of ten consider it normal that our society values paid work more highly than volunteering. And about half of the respondents score moderately to strongly positive on the scale measuring their strength of paid work orientation. Secondly, the data reveals that the volunteers under investigation are not particularly inclined to cut back on their paid job or to sacrifice pay in order to spend more time volunteering. On the other hand, forms of monetary compensation or flexible working arrangements appear to be more appealing alternatives. From these observations, we may conclude that in general, and taking into consideration the particular composition of our sample, it still appears that a different value and importance is attached to both spheres of activity. The majority of volunteers under investigation does not allow volunteering to infringe upon their paid work – at least not if it involves a loss of income. The empirical boundary between paid and unpaid work may not be as permeable as theoretically hypothesized. In addition, on the basis of our data, the theoretically conceived extension of job orientation to areas of activity beyond paid work seems to be a marginal phenomenon at best, one that otherwise could use some publicly or privately financed encouragement as well (and this even among a group that already is involved in different types of activity).

The explanatory models however reveal some more varied mechanisms behind the general picture. Referring back to the three theoretical scenarios evolving from the heralded normative crisis in the meaning of work, it seems that, although the data does not provide us with evidence for a decrease in the centrality of paid work, we may have found some preliminary support for the other two strands of hypothesizing. On the one hand, we could argue in favor of the proposed link between individualization and stronger paid work orientation. The first regression model namely reveals that higher education, doing executive work, having no family obligations whatsoever, sharing weaker communal orientations, and having fewer and less intensive associational and volunteer involvements – variables that very cautiously may be associated with a more individualized disposition – substantially increase the paid work orientation of the volunteers. On the other hand, the seeds for an extending meaning of work are also present in the outcomes of our explanatory analysis. The data shows that the propensity to create more space for volunteering by taking work-related measures is the strongest if the volunteers value highly opportunities for self-development through volunteering and for using one's skills to their full extent, if they consider volunteering not just a good addition to their paid job, and if volunteering is not just a socially agreeable and satisfying thing to do. Furthermore, the strong positive bearing of core involvements suggests that the volunteer work has to be a fully-fledged activity, that is, encroaching substantially upon one's leisure time and involving considerable task responsibilities. In other words: it has to be 'serious leisure' (Stebbins, 1996) in which the volunteers contribute an extensive amount of time and effort to their unpaid work, and during which they come to see their volunteer activities as highly valuable for their self-development and

not just supplementing their paid job. As such, in spite of the limited scope of our research findings, we might have caught a glimpse of the routes that could lead us beyond the paid work society into a new work society with more fluid boundaries between different fields of activity and a more flexible and self-determined design of different forms of work.

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Table 1. Descriptive statistics on statements about the balance between paid work, family life, and volunteer work (N=436)

		N	MEAN	SD	MEDI AN	1	2	3	4	5
V30_1	I find it hard to combine my job, my family life and my volunteer work.	433	2.99	1.31	3	15.7	26.7	15.9	26.3	15.5
V30_2	I think it's normal that our society thinks more highly of a paid job than of volunteering.	432	3.07	1.33	3	15.9	21.7	20.6	23.3	18.4
V30_3	If I weren't financially dependent on my job, I would cut down and commit myself to more volunteer work.	425	3.21	1.16	3	8.6	21.9	23.3	32.1	14.1
V30_4	If I could freely determine my own work schedule, I would schedule it around my volunteer work.	424	3.11	1.12	3	8.5	23.1	28.8	28.3	11.3
V30_5	I would like to alternate longer periods of paid work with longer periods of volunteering.	419	2.61	1.01	3	13.4	35.9	30.4	16.2	3.6
V30_6	I would like to do more volunteer work cutting back on my regular job.	417	2.54	1.07	2	18.4	33.4	28.7	14.5	4.9
V30_7	Flexible work hours are a good way to combine paid work with volunteer work.	424	3.74	1.09	4	7.0	7.7	12.6	50.1	22.6
V30_8	No matter how important my volunteer work is to me, my regular job will always come first.	427	4.43	0.83	5	1.5	3.3	4.7	32.0	58.5
V30_9	Both partners in a parent couple should take a part-time job so they could spend an equal amount of time in the upbringing of their children.	410	3.28	1.45	3	7.5	20.4	23.9	33.0	15.1
V30_10	Both the partners in a relationship should work part-time so that they both have an equal amount of time to commit themselves to the community.	412	2.50	1.03	2	18.5	33.1	30.8	14.7	2.9

NOTE 1: 1 = totally disagree, 2 = rather disagree, 3 = neither disagree, nor agree, 4 = rather agree, 5 = totally agree.

NOTE 2: 'Paid work orientation'-scale consists of reversed items scores on V30\_3, V30\_4, V30\_5, and V30\_6.

*Table 2. Measure that volunteers could be prepared to take in order to be able to spend more time volunteering*

In order to spend more time on volunteering, would you be prepared to...	YES	NO	NO OPINIO N	NOT APPLIC ABLE	N
V31_1 Work one day less every week without loss of income (i.e. compensation by the company or the government)?	78.0	15.8	2.1	4.1	436
V31_2 Work one day less every week with loss of income?	8.2	86.8	1.9	3.1	436
V31_3 Take paid leave?	48.9	42.3	1.9	6.9	436
V31_4 Take non-compensated leave?	14.8	75.8	2.9	6.5	435
V31_5 Interrupt your career?	11.2	79.6	1.7	7.5	436
V31_6 Choose a flexible timetable?	54.9	33.2	2.8	9.0	436
V31_7 Choose a part-time job instead of a full-time job?	15.6	76.7	1.7	6.0	436
V31_8 Take a housekeeper?	8.8	82.9	0.5	7.9	433
V31_9 Pay for a babysitter?	12.3	59.7	0.5	27.5	434
V31_10 Ask family or friends to look after the children?	48.3	22.4	1.0	28.3	434
V31_11 Make an agreement with another volunteer to babysit the children every other time?	37.7	32.8	0.3	29.2	434
V31_12 Cut down on other hobbies?	20.2	68.8	2.3	8.7	436

Table 3. Net effects of economic, affective, cultural and social background indicators on variations in opinions about flexible combinations of paid and unpaid work (OLS regression, stepwise selection with selection entry = .15, standardized regression coefficients)

	Beta coefficients			
	$\beta$ (1)	$\beta$ (2)	$\beta$ (3)	$\beta$ (4)
<b>ECONOMIC INDICATORS</b>				
Socio-economic position				
Fulltime (DUMMY YES/NO)				
Socio-economic class				
Professional				
Routine non-manual				
Self-employed (REF)				
Worker				
Not working			-0.08	
Working conditions				
Flexible working hours (DUMMY YES/NO)				
Working overtime (DUMMY YES/NO)				
Employment security				
Fixed contract (DUMMY YES/NO)				
Number of jobs in past three years				
Number of times unemployed in past three years			0.13*	
Job characteristics				
Executive work	0.10			
Dynamic work		-0.07		
Family source of income				
Two incomes				
One income				
No / replacement income (REF)				
<b>FAMILY-RELATED INDICATORS</b>				
Living arrangements				
Couple				
Single				
Living with parents (REF)				
Parental status				
Children (DUMMY YES/NO)				
Family life course				
Pre-family life	0.08			
Family without children		0.08		
Family with young children (REF)				
Family with teenagers / young adolescents				
Empty-nest family				
<b>CULTURAL INDICATORS</b>				
Sex				
Male (REF)				
Female		-0.08		-0.11*
Age				
High			0.12*	
Middle (REF)				
Low			-0.09	
Traditional gender roles				
Solidarism	-0.15**			
Church practice				
No church (DUMMY YES/NO)				
Belief (DUMMY YES/NO)			-0.09	
<b>SOCIAL PARTICIPATION INDICATORS</b>				
Number of core/active associational memberships		0.10	0.09	0.12*
Number of volunteer involvements outside RCF	-0.10*	0.14*	0.16**	
Protest action	-0.16**	0.15**		0.18***
Checkbook activism		0.12*	0.15**	
Motivation to volunteer				
Satisfaction	-0.12*	-0.11	-0.13*	
Recognition				
Self-development		0.31***	0.19***	0.33***
Do things one is good at and use one's skills to their full extent		0.09		
Find the satisfaction and appreciation one cannot find in one's job	-0.13*			
Volunteering a good addition to one's job		-0.18**		-0.23***
Modes of Red Cross volunteering				
Peripheral (REF)				
Intermediate		0.13*	0.14*	
Core	-0.11*	0.27***	0.27***	0.15**
R-Square	0.19	0.21	0.17	0.16

Note: (1) paid work orientation, (2)-(4) propensity to take work-related measures to increase time for volunteering ((3): with loss of income, (4): without loss of income)

## APPENDIX 1: OVERVIEW OF LIKERT SCALES USED

### CENTRALITY OF PAID WORK

#### Paid work orientation ( $\alpha=.78$ , reversed item scores)

1. If I weren't financially dependent on my job, I would cut down and commit myself to more volunteer work
2. If I could freely determine my own work schedule, I would schedule it around my volunteer work
3. I would like to alternate longer periods of paid work with longer periods of volunteering.
4. I would like to do more volunteer work cutting back on my regular job.

### MOTIVATIONS TO VOLUNTEER

#### Satisfaction with volunteering ( $\alpha=.78$ )

5. Very good experiences with this kind of volunteer work
6. Good atmosphere in the group of volunteers
7. Really feeling at home in the Red Cross
8. The social contacts one has as a volunteer
9. Feeling good about doing it
10. A hobby, a relaxing way of spending time

#### Recognition through volunteering ( $\alpha=.78$ )

1. It gives prestige and a well-respected position in society
2. It gives the feeling that I'm needed, that I mean something to society
3. My direct environment highly values volunteer work
4. To belong somewhere, to be part of an important whole
5. The RC as an organization is well appreciated by society

#### Self-development through volunteering ( $\alpha=.72$ )

1. To do something about my own education and development
2. This kind of work always remains a challenge to me
3. It changes my perspective on things; it broadens my view on life
4. I get to know my stronger and weaker sides
5. To learn new skills that can be useful in my current or future profession

### CULTURAL ORIENTATIONS

#### Traditional gender roles ( $\alpha=.69$ )

1. For a girl it's not as important to get a good education as it is for a boy.
2. In general, one can be more liberal in bringing up a boy than in bringing up a girl.
3. It's against nature if women in a enterprise are in charge over men.
4. It's only natural that the man provides for and the woman takes care of the household and children.

#### Solidarism ( $\alpha=.65$ )

5. You can only be truly happy when you can do something for others every now and then without expecting anything in return.
6. I only feel good about myself when I can dedicate myself to a community cause
7. One can only be truly happy, when his fellow man is so too

### UNCONVENTIONAL FORMS OF PARTICIPATION

#### Protest action ( $\alpha=.67$ )

1. Taking part in a demonstration about general social problems or themes
2. Signing petitions, letters or postcards to pressure politicians, companies...
3. Taking initiatives to improve your living environment (i.e. a neighbourhood committee or a local protest group)
4. Participating a public debate by announcing your points of view in a letter to a newspaper or magazine
5. Informing people on the street and make them aware of an issue (i.e. distribution of flyers, convincing people personally)
6. Discussing social and political problems when you meet up with friends

**Checkbook activism ( $\alpha=.61$ )**

1. Buying postcards, stickers, candles and other gadgets for a good cause
2. Making a financial contribution to a good cause

**JOB CHARACTERISTICS**

**Executive work ( $\alpha=.66$ )**

1. Managing others
2. Financial aspects
3. Running the business, enterprise, or department
4. Research on new technologies and ideas

**Dynamism in job ( $\alpha=.67$ )**

1. My job doesn't require refresher courses / My work requires a lot of refresher courses
2. Routine tasks, always the same work / Creative tasks, I find a lot of variety in my job
3. My job always offers new challenges / My job is often boring