



# **HUNGARIAN AGRICULTURAL- AND LIFE SCIENCES UNIVERSITY**

## **AN ANALYSIS OF LABOUR MARKET COMPETENCES IN THE HUNGARIAN PUBLIC AND COMPETITIVE SECTORS**

Theses for doctoral thesis (PhD)

**Katinka Bajkai-Tóth**

**Gödöllő**

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## **The doctoral school**

**Title:** Doctoral School of Economics and Regional Sciences

**discipline:** management and organisation sciences

**head of:** **Prof. Dr. habil. Zoltán Lakner DSc**  
Professor, Doctor of Sciences  
MATE, University of Agricultural and Life Sciences  
St Stephen's Campus  
Institute of Agricultural and Food Economics

**Thesis leader(s):** **Dr. habil. Ildikó Rudnák PhD**  
Associate Professor  
MATE, University of Agricultural and Life Sciences  
St Stephen's Campus  
Institute of Agricultural and Food Economics  
Institute of Agricultural Management and Leadership

.....  
Approval by the Head of School

.....  
Approval of the topic leader(s)

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# 1. INTRODUCTION AND OBJECTIVES

In today's globalised, fast-changing world, it is essential for people in society to keep up their skills and competences in order to remain competitive in the labour market and to enter the labour market. Acquiring and reinforcing labour market competences can greatly assist in finding the 'right' job for a worker when choosing or changing jobs (within or between jobs). Thus, the measurement of competences and the application of its results play an important role in job analysis and evaluation in shaping internal organisational conditions and in enhancing individual and organisational effectiveness.

The labour market characteristics, differences and similarities between the two segments (public and competitive) are a constant focus of interest, but there is also curiosity about which sector the free labour force will choose to work in. Consequently, an examination of the willingness to move between sectors, depending on certain factors such as age or job classification, may provide answers to a number of questions. I think it is important to identify the reasons why workers decide to switch from one sector to another, i.e. to start a new career in one sector and leave the other. Finding out is also interesting because the two sectors have different expectations and characteristics.

In my study, the public sector is represented by those who work as civil servants, civil servants or government officials (together: civil servants) in mayor's offices, government offices or ministries. I believe that the positions and occupants of this clerical segment of the public sector are most comparable to those of the market sector. The rationale behind the narrowing down was to be able to compare people in similar jobs to those in the competitive sector, so I have not looked at education, health and defence, for example.

On the other hand, there was also a criterion with regard to the competitive sector, here I am looking at the group of employees who work for a multinational company or a large Hungarian company, which I will refer to as the competitive sector in the following, using the terminology of the KSH.

My aim is to explore the two spheres in terms of career choices, to consider the advantages and disadvantages of the two types of labour market, to examine the competences required and the impact of possible multiculturalism and diversity.

It is essential to examine the advantages and disadvantages of cultural differences within the organisations of the two spheres, and my aim is to identify and focus on the development of those competences that are the cornerstones of integration, working together, adaptation, productivity and competitiveness, with less friction and conflict. Multiculturalism in the competitive sector is significant in everyday life, whereas in the public sector we can speak more of diversity, i.e. differences, by which diversity is meant characteristics such as gender, ethnic origin or colour, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin or association with a minority nationality.

In my research I sought answers to several questions, which are:

**Q1:** What are the advantages of the two spheres? What are the positives within each segment that keep workers there? What are the aspects that make them reluctant to move to the other sector?

**Q2:** What negative factors within the two segments do workers face that make them decide to switch? Of course, the decision to stay or leave depends on many factors, such as gender, age, marital status, job title, how many years in the sector, how satisfied they are, what competences they have, how much opportunity they have to work in the other segment.

**Q3:** Based on the competences given, how did the respondents rate themselves when they started their current job and how do they rate themselves now? Have there been any changes, improvements or regressions? Are they able to use the skills in which they think they are strong? This is actually feedback about themselves, where they self-report where they started and where they are now. Is there a waste of labour, i.e. do you have competences that you have but are not at all being used to a high level by employees? In this section we can find out how the employee side thinks.

**Q4:** How do employers assess the competences of their employees? What competences were expected on entry and currently? How much has the expectation from management changed during your time there? In which areas has there been more progress?

**Q5:** My analysis is based on multicultural differences in the competitive sector and other cultural differences in the public sector. The spread of multinational companies has led to the daily work of workers of different nationalities in the same place, who have to adapt to each other because of their different cultures. However, this adaptation does not always go smoothly.

Many misunderstandings, conflicts and problems can arise if employees are not properly prepared and trained to deal with them.

**Q6:** Frictions are also found in the public sector, because there are differences, so-called diversities. Employees who are sensitive or who are very concerned about who they work with may be affected in their work by factors such as having a colleague of a different gender, age, education, residential area, marital status, political or religious beliefs. I wondered whether the people who completed the questionnaire would prefer to work with a colleague who was similar to them or whether they were not influenced at all by these factors.

## 2. MATERIAL AND METHOD

### 2.1. Hypotheses

**H1: For workers, the attraction in the competitive sector is the career, while in the public sector it is the predictability.**

Among the various exclusive benefits provided by the state, perhaps the most important is career security (GYÖRGY 2018). Stability is still considered by public opinion as an important advantage of public service employment over the competitive sector (MERKOVITY 2019). When job stability and the regularity and predictability of working conditions are particularly important, choosing the public sector as a job can be an advantage (MOLNÁR & KAPITANY 2013). Specialist (2014) a significant proportion of public service workers prefer security, decent employment and a decent lifelong income.

More regulated working conditions, however, impose stronger constraints and less explicit incentives to perform, so that more career-oriented workers tend to be in the competitive sector (GREGORY & BORLAND 1999).

**H2: Employees in the competitive sector have more and more advanced competences, both at entry and later in life, than employees in the public sector, and are expected to have more and more advanced competences than public sector employers.**

The order of the competences expected by companies is: reliability, honesty, punctuality, performance, logical thinking, responsibility, precision, thoroughness, integrity, positive attitude to work (BÁRDOS et al. 2013) Business managers expect their staff to have a professional qualification, several years' professional experience, good communication skills, language skills and computer literacy (TÓTH 2005).

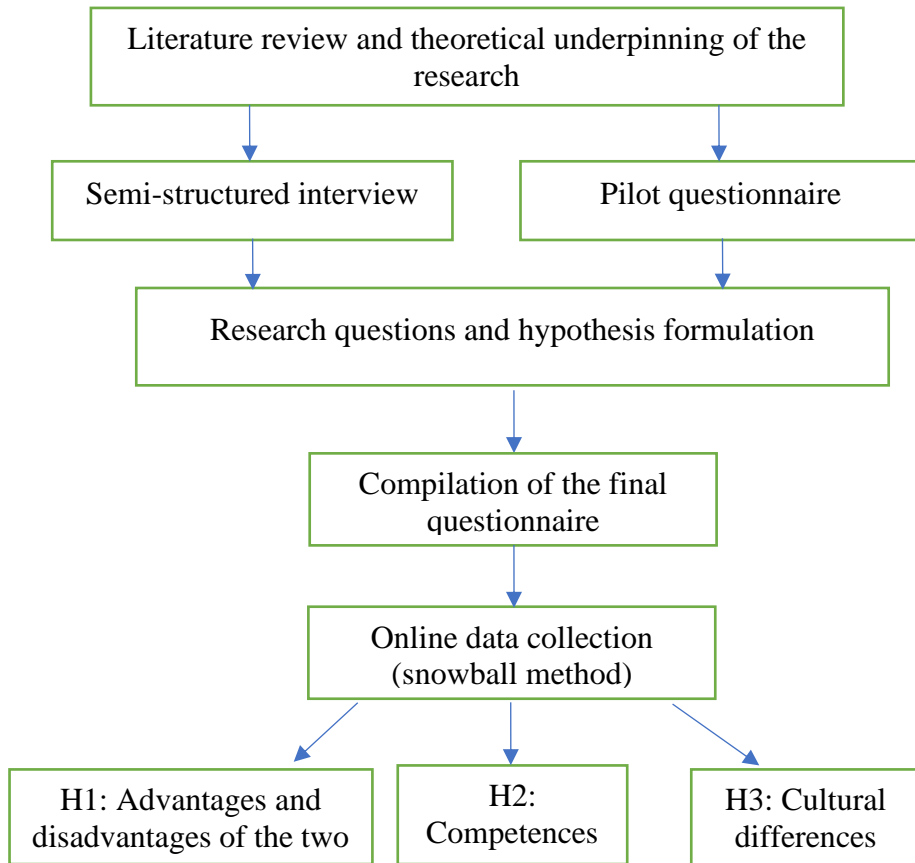
**H3: Dealing with cultural differences is part of the culture of both sectors, and employees are tolerant of each other.**

The advantage of the competitive sector is that the management of cultural differences has already become a practice (more than 30 years) for multinational companies emerging after the change of regime, and is embedded in the culture of the organisation. The problems that arise between nations, the differences of opinion, can be traced back to cultural differences (HOFSTEDE 1984).

Diversity can affect and influence workplace relations and developments (GONDA 2018).

## 2.2. Research method

*Fig. 1 : The research process. Source: own editing <sup>1</sup>*



My research explores three themes, outlined through a qualitative survey, i.e. semi-structured interviews. Based on this, I then designed a pilot questionnaire as a quantitative study, the lessons of which were used to design the final questionnaires for the public and competitive sectors. In choosing the research method, I took into account the types of market research methods.

Primary market research basically uses two methods: qualitative and quantitative research (SZILÁGYI & VERES 2007). In my research, I used qualitative and quantitative techniques, including semi-structured interviews and a pilot questionnaire survey based on these (**Hiba! A hivatkozási forrás nem található.**1.). After setting up the research questions and hypotheses, I

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<sup>1</sup> The other tables and figures in the thesis are all my own work.



compiled the final questionnaires and collected the responses using an online, snowball method, which I evaluated after aggregation.

### **2.2.1. Method of data collection**

The first qualitative data collection took place from 3-10 January 2020, when I conducted semi-structured interviews with 4 public sector and 4 competitive sector employees for about 2 weeks. The interviews were audio-recorded, for which their consent was sought beforehand.

The interviews provided a good basis for the development of my pilot questionnaire. Between March and June 2020, 150-150 people completed a quantitative questionnaire for the public and competitive sectors on Google's questionnaire system. After the questionnaires were closed, I recorded the responses and their correlations in an Excel spreadsheet and processed them in SPSS version 24. In the first part of the questionnaire, I asked sociodemographic questions to examine whether the answers to certain labour market questions were related to gender, age, residence, etc. The second part consisted of closed and open questions by topic. I used a Likert scale in several areas, where scores were measured from 1 to 5. Open questions are difficult to analyse statistically, so I converted them into closed questions in my final questionnaire, but I formulated the response options based on the answers I had already received. Therefore, I think that I have gained a lot of useful information from the pilot: which questions need to be improved and how they need to be further adapted.

### **2.2.2. Description of the main questionnaires**

To thoroughly assess the two sectors, I prepared separate questionnaires for public and private sector employees. The questions are completely identical, except for differences in the answers to some questions due to the different characteristics of the sectors.

In the first half of the questionnaire I started with demographic questions: gender, age, county of residence, type of municipality, education, language skills, type of organisation/sector, number of years in the sector, position.

In the second half, I asked questions related to my research topic. I wondered if they had ever considered working in the opposite segment. I asked them about the advantages and disadvantages of this particular sector in a series of multiple-choice questions. They rated themselves on a scale from 1 to 5 on the basis of the competences I listed for the job. I also asked about their skill level when they started work and their current skills level, and what competencies their employer expected of them when they started and now.

In a separate section, employees responded on cultural differences. I asked whether they were influenced in their work by factors such as having a colleague of a different gender or age, living in a different area, different educational background, marital status, religion, political affiliation, family values, culture/nationality, Hungarian or foreign.

## 2.3. Methodology used to process the questionnaire analysis

### *Statistical method*

The questionnaire was processed using the SPSS 24 software package. In addition to descriptive statistics, I used multivariate procedures such as factor analysis, cross-tabulation, T- and F-test, analysis of variance and Chi-square test according to the measurement levels to statistically test the hypothesized relationships.

Samples obtained from the questionnaires I used the statistical methods described in Table 1.

*Table 1: Statistical methods used to process the empirical research data*

<b>Investigation questions</b>	<b>Investigation objectives</b>	<b>Analysis method</b>
Presentation of the research sample	Grouping of respondents	Descriptive statistical methods
Public sector advantages, disadvantages; Competitive sector advantages, disadvantages	Frequency of responses to questions	Descriptive statistical methods
An analysis of the advantages and disadvantages of the public and competitive sectors based on demographic factors	Grouping values according to several criteria	Cross-tabs
Analysis of the advantages and disadvantages of the public and competitive sectors by age groups and positions	Analysis of differences between group means	Analysis of variance
Analysis of the advantages and disadvantages of the public and competitive sectors by age groups and positions	Post hoc analysis of differences in group means	Tukey post hoc test
Gender analysis of the advantages and disadvantages of the public and competitive sectors	Analysis of differences between group means	Two sample T-tests
Categorisation of advantages and disadvantages of spheres	Categorisation of advantages and disadvantages of spheres	Principal component analysis
Assessment, aggregation of competences	analysis of competence values by sector	Average calculation
Comparison of competence scores by sector, gender	Comparing the averages of two groups	Two sample T-tests

<b>Investigation questions</b>	<b>Investigation objectives</b>	<b>Analysis method</b>
Competency values at entry and current	Analysis of competence development by sector	Pair T-test
Staff preference questions	Frequency distribution	Histogram
Staff preference questions	Frequency distribution	pie chart
Examining cultural differences by other sociodemographic factors	Post hoc analysis of differences in group means	Tukey post hoc test

## 2.4. Presentation of samples

For my doctoral thesis I used data from two empirical (questionnaire) studies. A total of 617 responses were received.

*Table 2.: Total samples for the empirical study (n=617)*

	<b>Public sector (n=314)</b>	<b>in %</b>	<b>Competitive sector (n=303)</b>	<b>in %</b>
<b>Gender:</b>				
Women	218	69	185	61
Men	96	31	118	39
<b>Age groups:</b>				
21-25	39	12	64	21
26-30	54	17	73	24
31-34	25	8	44	15
35-39	37	11	40	13
40-45	56	18	33	11
46-50	56	18	27	9
50-	47	15	22	7
<b>Region:</b>				
Budapest	150	48	168	56
Pest county	67	21	55	18
Other	97	31	80	26
<b>Qualifications:</b>				
Baccalaureate/Secondary	73	23	90	30
Bachelor's degree (BA)	158	50	144	47
Master of Arts (MA)	71	23	63	21
Higher university education	12	4	6	2
<b>Position:</b>				
Staff member on secondment	196	62	168	55
Subordinate manager or key worker	68	22	68	23
Middle manager				
Top management	37	12	48	16
	13	4	19	6

Table 2. shows that the two sectors had almost similar numbers of respondents, 314 in the public sector and 303 in the private sector.

### 3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

#### 3.1. First hypothesis

**H1: For employees, the pull factor is career in the competitive sector and job security in the public sector.**

In the question asked, I asked respondents to select the statements that make them like working in the sector (advantages) and then, in another question, the statements that make them think about switching to another sector (disadvantages). table 3. I have highlighted in green those statements that were selected by nearly 50% or more of the respondents and in red those that were selected by few. Among the response options that I have highlighted, there was also a statement that I do NOT like my job, which has a negative connotation, in case someone no longer sees any benefits in their current job.

*table 3.: Benefits of the public sector (n=314)*

<b>Benefits of the public sector</b>	<b>in %</b>
I have a stable, long-term job	54%
I have predictable working hours	53%
good atmosphere	51%
I do useful things	49%
is close to where I live	41%
the value of my work	40%
I do responsible things	40%
I like dealing with people	40%
my personal and work life are compatible	37%
I have a fixed income, benefits and a pay rise based on progression	34%
I have more holidays in 1 year	32%
my work is interesting and varied	25%
I meet different people	22%
make the most of my knowledge	22%
I don't have to work overtime	22%
I am confident in my work	20%
I feel good about serving the public good	18%
I am not treated as an exploitative, savage capitalist manager at work	14%
I learn about cardinal changes earlier in my work	12%
6-hour working is possible	10%
<b>I do NOT like my job</b>	<b>5%</b>

table 3. shows that, in terms of %, stable, long-term work was the most frequently mentioned (54%), while more than half of the respondents highlighted predictable working hours (53%) and a good atmosphere (51%), and 49% also mentioned useful work.

*Table 4.: Benefits of competition (n=303)*

<b>The benefits of competition</b>	<b>in % in</b>
good team and atmosphere	63%
I can always improve professionally, so I gain marketable knowledge	59%
I can work independently, which motivates me	55%
the company has a solid background, so I can think long-term	52%
my useful work is recognised and appreciated	50%
I have a flexible, informal working schedule	49%
I can build relationships	48%
I have interesting, creative and challenging tasks and responsibilities	46%
I have a competitive income and other benefits that depend on performance, not time	45%
improve my language skills thanks to foreign partners	42%
I can develop my competences (mentoring is available)	35%
work in a multinational environment.	34%
low political influence	31%
participate in international projects	29%
I have a free hand to implement my innovative ideas	27%
I can help people	23%
planned career progression, career progression is ensured	16%
the energy invested pays off quickly	11%
I do NOT like working in the competitive sector	3%

A Table . shows the benefits of the competitive sector in order of the percentage of respondents who chose a particular definition. It turns out that the majority of respondents voted concentratedly for the benefits in the top positions. The highest proportion (63%) identified good team and atmosphere as an absolute advantage. Professional development and marketable skills ranked second with 59%, followed by autonomy as a motivating factor (55%), with a secure background also appearing here because the company is reliable and can be expected to survive in the long term (52%). Being recognised and considered useful and valued for their work was chosen by 50%. These are fully in favour of the competitive advantage.

### *Clustering the benefits of spheres using principal component analysis*

Another question on respondents' perceptions of the statements that characterise the public sector and the competitive sector resulted in the following findings. For this question, I combined the response options that were the same in both spheres and used principal component analysis to create 4 dimensions. The logical grouping of the statements, and the interrelationships between them, is Table can be seen in. I have marked each dimension in a different colour.

*Table 5.: Analysis of variance of principal components - Rotated component matrix (n=617)*

	Component			
	1	2	3	4
Opportunity to develop competences	0,833	0,072	0,105	-0,044
Opportunity to gain experience	0,784	0,089	-0,025	0,089
Building an effective network of contacts	0,783	0,170	0,071	0,099
Springboard to a better job	0,722	0,147	0,013	-0,023
Opportunity to work independently	0,688	0,125	0,147	-0,063
Go to	0,688	0,328	0,080	-0,153
Flexible working hours	0,648	0,007	-0,154	-0,402
Respected position	0,623	0,330	0,383	-0,056
Exemplary leaders	0,603	0,076	0,474	0,119
Vocation	0,492	0,178	0,358	0,372
Secure pension	0,213	0,746	0,163	0,219
Possibility of starting a family	0,257	0,710	0,251	0,084
The possibility of a secure livelihood	0,448	0,707	0,002	0,052
Job security	-0,001	0,639	0,372	0,217
A long-term career	0,114	0,551	0,468	0,108
Calm working	-0,070	0,323	0,754	0,001
Work-life balance	0,114	0,429	0,670	0,026
Opportunity to help people	0,369	-0,078	0,528	0,506
Strict rules to follow	-0,005	0,168	0,027	0,822
Monotonous work	-0,267	0,281	0,012	0,593

The Table 5. above shows that the claims are closely related.

#### **Names of main components:**

1. **Careers** - including: opportunities to develop skills, gain experience, build effective relationships, a stepping stone to a better job, the



- chance to work independently, career progression, flexible working hours, respected positions, role models and a sense of vocation.
2. **Security** - which includes: a secure pension, the possibility of starting a family, a secure livelihood, a secure job and a long-term career.
  3. **Balance** - which includes: working in peace, achieving work-life balance and being able to help people.
  4. **Compliance** - which included: following strict rules and working monotonously.

*Table 6.: Differences in means of sectoral characteristics (n=617)*

Sphere characteristics	Public sector	Competitive sector	Difference	p-value
Calm working	3,03	2,54	0,49	< 0,001
A long-term career	3,78	3,47	0,31	< 0,001
Go to	3,08	3,89	-0,81	< 0,001
Respected position	2,95	3,57	-0,62	< 0,001
Job security	3,87	3,36	0,51	< 0,001
Flexible working hours	1,00	3,72	-2,72	< 0,001
Vocation	3,48	3,57	-0,09	0,257
Opportunity to help people	3,59	3,40	0,18	0,044
The possibility of a secure livelihood	3,46	3,85	-0,38	< 0,001
The possibility of starting a family	3,57	3,59	-0,01	0,777
Secure pension	3,65	3,51	0,14	0,119
Work-life balance	3,43	3,11	0,32	< 0,001
Monotonous work	3,77	3,07	0,70	< 0,001
Opportunity to work independently	3,47	4,07	-0,59	< 0,001
Building an effective network of contacts	3,51	4,14	-0,64	< 0,001
Springboard to a better job	3,12	4,02	-0,91	< 0,001
Opportunity to gain experience	3,77	4,38	-0,61	< 0,001
Opportunity to develop competences	3,45	4,31	-0,86	< 0,001
Strict rules to follow	4,18	3,61	0,57	< 0,001
Exemplary leaders	3,10	3,57	-0,48	< 0,001

In Table . I have again highlighted significant differences in blue. Where differences in means have a positive sign, the statement is more representative of the public sector, while those with a negative sign are more representative of the competitive sector. The largest difference, 2.72, is in favour of the competitive sector in terms of flexible working hours, where employees have more flexibility in their working hours than in the public sector.

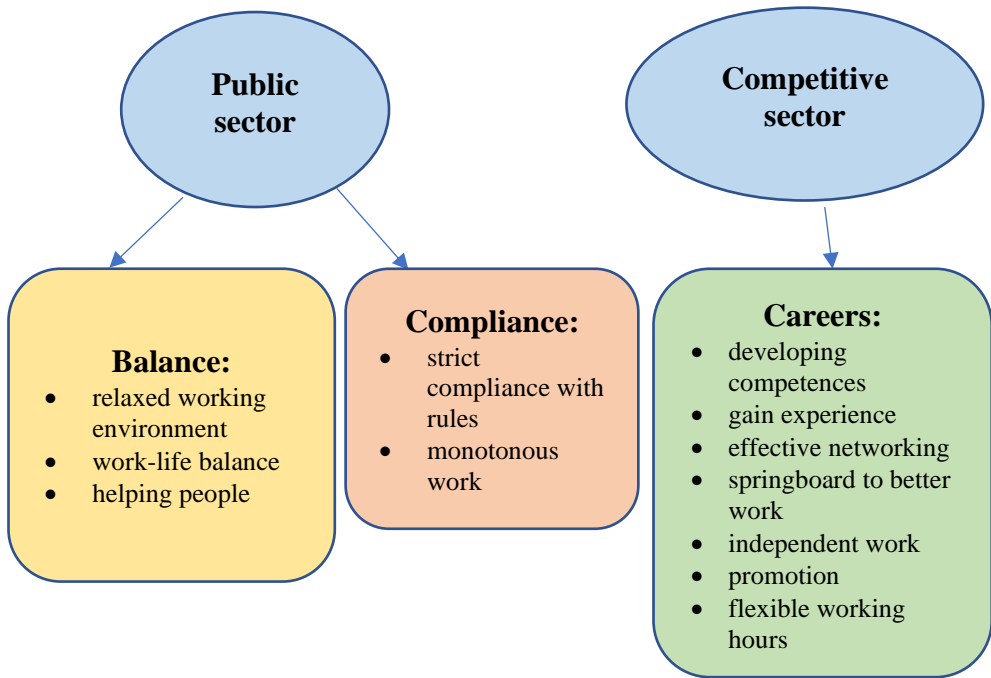
*Table 7.: Mean differences of dimensions by sector (n=617)*

<b>Sphere</b>	<b>Careers</b>	<b>Security</b>	<b>Balance</b>	<b>Compliance</b>
Public sector	3,1183	3,6572	3,2175	4,0094
Competitive sector	3,9635	3,5600	2,8090	3,3811
<b>Total</b>	3,5341	3,6094	3,0165	3,7003
<b>Average differences</b>	-0,8452	0,0972	0,4085	0,6283
<b>p-value</b>	0,000	0,147	0,000	0,000

In Table . it can be seen that the career dimension is more specific to the competitive sector, with all the statements falling into this dimension being much more prominent here than in the public sector. This suggests that everything that can be associated with a better position and a positive career path is found in the competitive sector. By contrast, the dimensions of security, balance and, most typically, compliance with rules, are strong in the public sector. On the security dimension, the difference between the two spheres is not significant, but it can be said that it is slightly higher on average, but more specific to the public sector.

### *Confirm/refute hypothesis H1*

For workers, the pull factor is career in the competitive sector and job security in the public sector. Fig. 2. shows the dimensions and their corresponding elements.



*Fig. 2.: Dimensions and their elements*

It was clearly confirmed that in the competitive sector, career is significantly more important for employees than balance and compliance in the public sector, thus confirming my hypothesis.

### **3.2. Second hypothesis**

**H2. Employees in the competitive sector have more competences than those in the public sector, both at the time of entry and later in life, and are expected by employers to have more and more advanced competences than those in the public sector.**

In order to be able to test this hypothesis properly and to draw the right conclusions, I looked at the results of the responses to the competences from several perspectives in the two spheres separately.

## *Examining changes in employee competences in the public sector*

*Table 8.: Changes in workforce competences in the public sector (n=314)*

<b>Employee competences</b>	<b>Accessed at Average</b>	<b>Currently Average</b>	<b>Difference</b>
Willingness to help	4,3	4,5	0,2
A positive attitude to work	4,1	4,0	-0,1
Problem-solving ability	4,0	4,4	0,4
Precision	4,0	4,3	0,3
Liability	4,0	4,4	0,4
Teamwork	4,0	4,3	0,3
Dedication	3,9	4,0	0,1
Focus on results	3,8	4,2	0,4
Communication skills	3,8	4,2	0,4
Organizational ability	3,8	4,2	0,4
Future orientation	3,8	4,0	0,2
Creativity	3,7	4,0	0,3
IT skills	3,7	4,0	0,3
Independent decision-making	3,6	4,1	0,5
Customer orientation	3,6	4,0	0,4
A critical approach	3,6	4,0	0,4
Monotony tolerance	3,5	3,7	0,2
Conflict resolution	3,4	4,1	0,7
Confidence	3,4	4,0	0,6
Performing ability	3,2	3,9	0,7

Table 8. shows a comparison of entry-level and current averages and, in the last column, the differences between them, i.e. how public sector workers have changed in the skills listed over time, based on their self-reported data.

## *Changes in employee competences in the competitive sector*

*Table 9.: Changes in employee competences in the competitive sector (n=303)*

<b>Employee competences</b>	<b>Accessed at Average</b>	<b>Currently Average</b>	<b>Difference</b>
Willingness to help	4,3	4,4	0,2
A positive attitude to work	4,1	4,1	0,0
Problem-solving ability	4,1	4,4	0,4
Precision	4,0	4,3	0,3
Focus on results	4,0	4,2	0,2
Teamwork	4,0	4,4	0,4
Liability	4,0	4,4	0,4
Dedication	3,9	4,1	0,2
Future orientation	3,8	4,1	0,3
A critical approach	3,7	4,1	0,4
Creativity	3,7	4,0	0,3
Organizational ability	3,7	4,2	0,5
Communication skills	3,7	4,2	0,6

Employee competences	Accessed at Average	Currently Average	Difference
Independent decision-making	3,6	4,3	0,7
IT skills	3,5	4,0	0,5
Customer orientation	3,5	4,1	0,6
Confidence	3,4	4,0	0,6
Conflict resolution	3,2	4,0	0,8
Monotony tolerance	3,2	3,5	0,3
Performing ability	3,0	3,7	0,7

Table 9. shows the changes that workers in the competitive sector have undergone in the last working period. In absolute terms, there have been only positive developments. They have become most confident in conflict management (0.8), which is likely to be due to the fact that they have encountered a number of problems and conflicts in their work which they have successfully resolved and managed, thus becoming more routine over the past years. They have also strengthened in independent decision making and presentation skills by 0.7.

### ***Skills development assessment by sector***

Using a paired T-test, I examined the development of competencies by sector, and found that in the public sector, only the competency of commitment did not differ significantly from the mean

And in the competitive sector, only the competence of positive attitude towards work did not show a significant difference in means

### ***Competency assessments of middle and senior managers in the sectors***

In order to get a complex picture of the competences expected by employers, I compared the managers' ratings with the subordinates' responses, from which I averaged the results. A total of 50 managers in the public sector completed the questionnaire, 16% of respondents. 67 managers in the competitive sector rated the questionnaire, 22% of respondents.

*Table 10.: Competences expected by managers on entry by sector (n=617)*

Competences	Public sector	Competitive sector	Difference
Conflict resolution	3,66	3,49	-0,17
Communication skills	4,02	4,06	0,04
Organizational ability	3,82	3,87	0,05
Performing ability	3,22	3,45	0,23
Customer orientation	3,80	4,07	0,27
Teamwork	4,24	4,16	-0,08
Confidence	3,64	3,96	0,32
Dedication	4,36	4,31	-0,05

Competences	Public sector	Competitive sector	Difference
Willingness to help	4,12	4,09	-0,03
Independent decision-making	3,46	3,84	0,38
IT skills	3,38	3,54	0,16
Creativity	3,26	3,40	0,14
Monotony tolerance	3,94	3,03	-0,91
Liability	4,24	4,03	-0,21
Precision	4,28	4,39	0,11
Future orientation	3,62	3,57	-0,05
Focus on results	4,18	4,27	0,09
A critical approach	3,48	3,36	-0,12
A positive attitude to work	4,40	4,31	-0,09
Problem-solving ability	4,26	4,33	0,07

Table 10. shows that there were relatively visible differences in the differences marked in blue, but that the only significant difference was in the monotony tolerance competence ( $p < 0.001$ ) in favour of the public sector. Appropriate conflict management and responsibility were more expected by managers of employees in the public sector than in the private sector. And presentation skills, customer orientation, confidence, independent decision-making and high IT skills were rated higher by managers in the competitive sector than in the public sector.

*Table 11.: Differences between the competences held by employees and those expected by managers at entry into the public sector (n=314)*

Competences on entry	Public sector		Difference
	Employees owned by	By managers expected	
Conflict resolution	3,57	3,66	0,09
Communication skills	4,00	4,02	0,02
Organizational ability	3,66	3,82	0,16
Performing ability	3,24	3,22	-0,02
Customer orientation	3,83	3,80	-0,03
Teamwork	4,22	4,24	0,02
Confidence	3,81	3,64	-0,17
Dedication	4,25	4,36	0,11
Willingness to help	4,18	4,12	-0,06
Independent decision-making	3,49	3,46	-0,03
IT skills	3,54	3,38	-0,16
Creativity	3,28	3,26	-0,02
Monotony tolerance	3,87	3,94	0,07
Liability	4,06	4,24	0,18
Precision	4,36	4,28	-0,08
Future orientation	3,52	3,62	0,10
Focus on results	3,93	4,18	0,25
A critical approach	3,29	3,48	0,19
A positive attitude to work	4,35	4,40	0,05

Competences on entry	Public sector		
	Employees owned by	By managers expected	Difference
Problem-solving ability	4,23	4,26	0,03

Table 11. shows the level of competences expected of the two labour market actors at the time of entering the labour market. It can be seen that managers' expectations were almost matched by the competence levels held by employees, i.e. there was no significant difference between the two sides.

*Table 12.: Difference between the competences held by employees and those expected by managers at entry into the competitive sector (n=303)*

Competences on entry	Competitive sector		
	Owned by the employee	By manager expected	Difference
Conflict resolution	3,39	3,49	0,10
Communication skills	4,03	4,06	0,03
Organizational ability	3,47	3,87	0,39
Performing ability	3,04	3,45	0,41
Customer orientation	3,85	4,07	0,23
Teamwork	4,29	4,16	-0,13
Confidence	3,83	3,96	0,12
Dedication	4,25	4,31	0,06
Willingness to help	4,13	4,09	-0,04
Independent decision-making	3,58	3,84	0,25
IT skills	3,61	3,54	-0,07
Creativity	3,32	3,40	0,09
Tolerance of monotony	3,50	3,03	-0,47
Liability	4,03	4,03	0,00
Precision	4,39	4,39	0,00
Future orientation	3,57	3,57	-0,01
Focus on results	4,10	4,27	0,17
A critical approach	3,31	3,36	0,05
A positive attitude to work	4,34	4,31	-0,02
Problem-solving ability	4,29	4,33	0,04

Table 12. shows that in contrast to the public sector, in the private sector there are already greater differences between the two groups. With these larger differences compared to the public sector, it can be assumed that they are still recruiting as they provide them with opportunities for development through various courses and training. Managers had higher expectations of employees in terms of organisational skills, presentation skills, customer orientation, autonomous decision-making and results orientation. On the other hand, the average for monotony tolerance was higher than expected.

*Table 13.: Current gap between the competences held by employees and those expected by managers in the public sector (n=314)*

Current competences	Public sector		
	Owned by employees	Expected by managers	Difference
Conflict resolution	4,28	4,42	0,14
Communication skills	4,44	4,50	0,06
Organizational ability	4,22	4,54	0,32
Performing ability	3,83	4,14	0,31
Customer orientation	4,23	4,34	0,11
Teamwork	4,46	4,40	-0,06
Confidence	4,28	4,32	0,04
Dedication	4,48	4,48	0,00
Willingness to help	4,47	4,42	-0,05
Independent decision-making	4,04	4,26	0,22
IT skills	3,95	3,88	-0,07
Creativity	3,70	3,94	0,24
Monotony tolerance	4,11	4,18	0,07
Liability	4,43	4,54	0,11
Precision	4,56	4,54	-0,02
Future orientation	3,87	4,02	0,15
Focus on results	4,27	4,42	0,15
A critical approach	3,62	3,94	0,32
A positive attitude to work	4,46	4,50	0,04
Problem-solving ability	4,53	4,58	0,05

Table 13. shows that the current management expectations in the public sector are already higher than at entry, with results more similar to the management expectations in the competitive sector at entry. In addition to these differences, there is no notable difference in the level of competencies held by employees that is significantly higher than expected. On the other hand, there were some differences in the competences expected by managers in the areas of organisational and presentation skills, independent decision-making and critical thinking.

*Table 14.: Current competences held by employees and expected by managers in the competitive sector (n=303)*

Current competences	Competitive sector		
	Employees owned by	Expected by managers	Difference
Conflict resolution	4,04	4,31	0,27
Communication skills	4,38	4,51	0,13
Organizational ability	4,09	4,42	0,33
Performing ability	3,57	4,03	0,46
Customer orientation	4,19	4,45	0,26
Teamwork	4,52	4,48	-0,04
Confidence	4,29	4,43	0,14
Dedication	4,51	4,60	0,09



Current competences	Competitive sector		Difference
	Employees owned by	Expected by managers	
Willingness to help	4,46	4,42	-0,04
Independent decision-making	4,23	4,52	0,29
IT skills	3,96	3,90	-0,06
Creativity	3,80	3,90	0,10
Tolerance of monotony	3,65	3,09	-0,56
Liability	4,45	4,63	0,18
Precision	4,58	4,63	0,05
Future orientation	4,01	4,16	0,15
Focus on results	4,42	4,61	0,20
A critical approach	3,78	4,01	0,24
A positive attitude to work	4,52	4,49	-0,03
Problem-solving ability	4,57	4,66	0,09

Table 14. shows that current employer expectations in the competitive sector are higher than those at entry and higher than those in the public sector.

*Table 15.: Current competences expected by managers by sector (n=617)*

Current expected competences	Public sector	Competitive sector	Difference	p-value
Conflict resolution	4,42	4,31	-0,11	0,526
Communication skills	4,50	4,51	0,01	0,960
Organizational ability	4,54	4,42	-0,12	0,453
Performing ability	4,14	4,03	-0,11	0,574
Customer orientation	4,34	4,45	0,11	0,524
Teamwork	4,40	4,48	0,08	0,637
Confidence	4,32	4,43	0,11	0,438
Dedication	4,48	4,60	0,12	0,398
Willingness to help	4,42	4,42	0,00	0,990
Independent decision-making	4,26	4,52	0,26	0,112
IT skills	3,88	3,90	0,02	0,931
Creativity	3,94	3,90	-0,04	0,825
Tolerance of monotony	4,18	3,09	-1,09	0,000
Liability	4,54	4,63	0,09	0,535
Precision	4,54	4,63	0,09	0,535
Future orientation	4,02	4,16	0,14	0,466
Focus on results	4,42	4,61	0,19	0,253
A critical approach	3,94	4,01	0,07	0,704
A positive attitude to work	4,50	4,49	-0,01	0,961
Problem-solving ability	4,58	4,66	0,08	0,613

Table 15. shows that there are very small differences in the current expectations of managers between the two sectors. The only significant difference was in the public sector in terms of monotony tolerance.

## Waste of skills in language learning

Table 16.: Position-specific findings by sector (n=617)

Position characteristics	Sphere		Difference
	Public sector Average	Competitive sector Average	
I can and like to present well at work.	3,11	3,08	-0,04
I have to sit in front of the computer all day.	4,07	3,81	-0,26
I spend a lot of time on professional oral communication at work.	3,42	3,67	0,26
I do creative things in my work.	2,65	3,30	0,65
I use my language skills constantly in my position.	1,82	3,20	1,37
Despite tight deadlines, I can always get my work done on time.	3,86	3,94	0,08
I am happy to take responsibility in my assignments.	4,04	4,20	0,16
I am encouraged by regular feedback on my work.	3,96	4,24	0,28
The evaluative feedback encourages further improvement.	3,96	4,17	0,21
I am motivated by the daily challenges.	3,60	3,85	0,25
I have to solve many conflicts and problems on a daily basis.	3,70	3,84	0,14

Table 16. shows the averages of the two sectors in terms of positions. Labour wastage is always an issue in the labour market, although it has never been shown in which field and to what extent. Language skills are known to be one of these competences that are not necessarily exploited in the public sector. In what follows, I have conducted a deeper investigation into the language proficiency and language use of the fillers in the two spheres, comparing the workers' declared language proficiency with the language use expected by their position.

Table 17.: Language proficiency level by sector (n=617)

Sphere	Language level
Public sector	2,61
Competitive sector	3,57
<b>Difference</b>	-0,95

Table . The language proficiency score is calculated by allowing people to indicate their level of proficiency in nine languages, where a score of 0 indicates no knowledge of the language and a score of 3 indicates an upper level. Here the highest score was 19 out of a possible 27. The difference

between the average level of language proficiency is almost a whole point. On the ANOVA table there is a significant difference between the values of the averages, which means that although the public sector already has a lower average level of language proficiency, the competence gap is significantly higher than in the competitive sector.

### ***Confirm/refute hypothesis H2***

My hypothesis that employees in the competitive sector have more competences at entry and currently, and are expected by managers to have more and more advanced competences at entry and currently, than in the public sector, has not been confirmed.

We could see that people with broadly the same skills go into the two sectors, but where there was a difference, it showed that people with higher skills tended to go into the public sector. Public sector workers self-reported significantly higher levels of competence on entry in conflict management, communication skills, presentation skills, tolerance of monotony and results orientation.

### 3.3. Third hypothesis

**H3: Dealing with cultural differences is part of the culture in both sectors, and employees are tolerant of each other.**

I used two types of questions to support the third hypothesis. In one, I asked what type of co-worker they prefer to work with. The questions included the gender of the co-worker, their age, where they live, their education level, and their marital status. The values obtained for the co-worker preference questions were plotted on a pie chart (Fig. 3. - Fig. 7.).

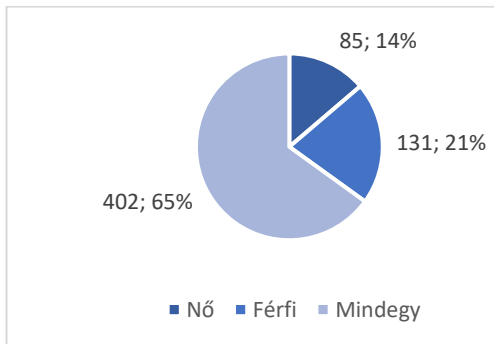


Fig. 3. : Which gender do you prefer to work with? (n=617)

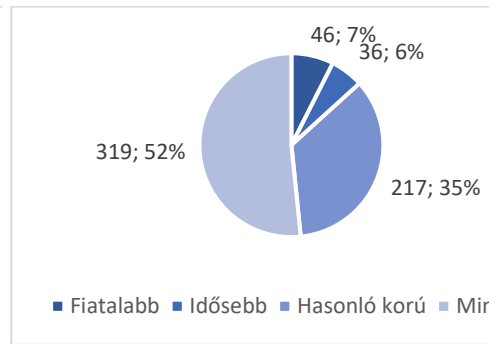


Fig. 4 What age do you prefer to work with? (n=617)

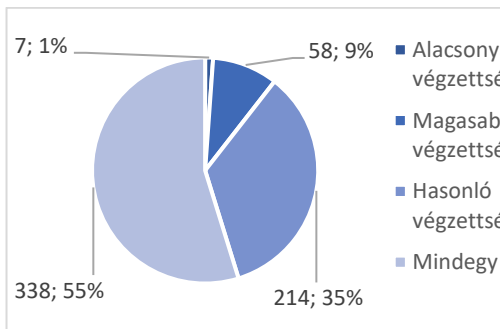


Fig. 5: Which colleagues do you prefer to work with, by educational level (n=617)

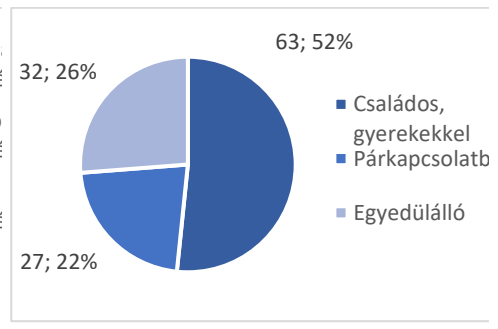


Fig. 6: Which co-worker do you prefer to work with based on marital status (n=617)

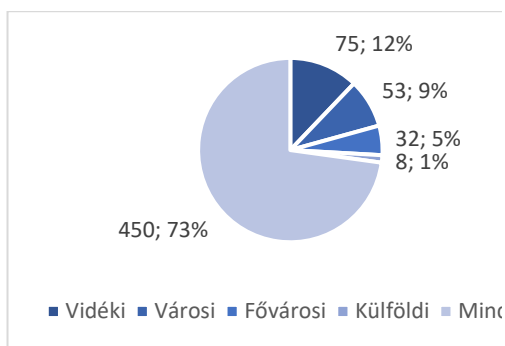


Fig. 7.: Which co-worker do you prefer to work with by area of residence (n=617)

Fig. 3. - Fig. 7. illustrate that the All category leads highly in the opinion of respondents, i.e. it is not so important to them that their co-worker has different characteristics, and the next most popular answer choice was the one with similar characteristics.

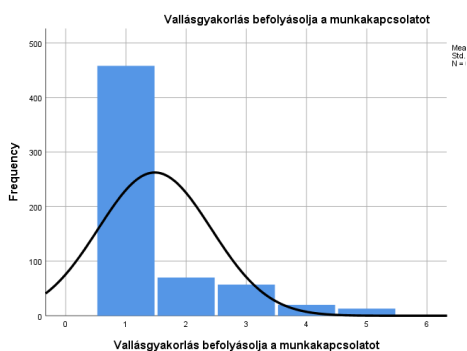


Fig. 8.: Do any of the following factors affect your working relationships? If your co-worker practices a religion different from yours (n=617)

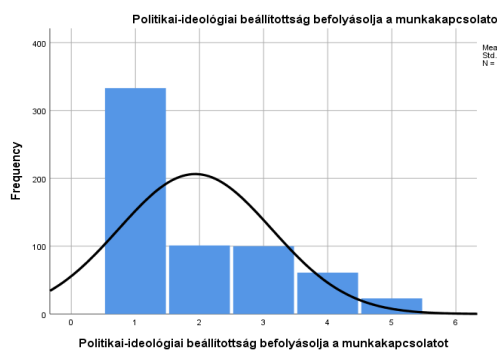


Fig. 9.: Do any of the following factors affect your working relationships? If your co-worker has a different political-ideological orientation than you (n=617)



Fig. 10: Do any of the following factors affect your working relationships? If your co-worker has family values different from yours (n=617)

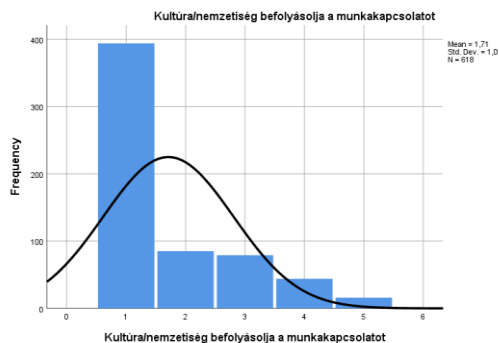


Fig. 11: Do any of the following factors affect your working relationships? If your colleague is of a different culture/ethnicity from you (n=617)

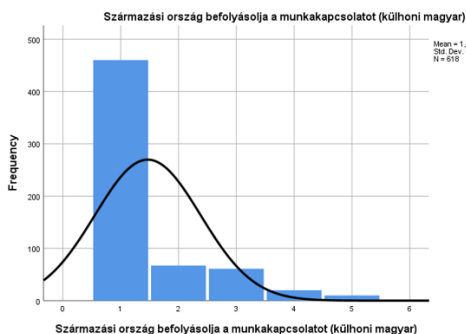


Fig. 12: Do any of the following factors affect your working relationships? If your co-worker is a Hungarian expatriate (n=617)



Fig. 13.: Do any of the following factors affect your working relationships? If your co-worker is a foreigner (n=617)

For the other type, I asked you to rate the different factors on a scale of 1 to 5. A value of 1 was No, not at all, and a value of 5 was Yes, completely. These included different religious beliefs, different political/ideological orientations, different family values, different culture/ethnicity, and whether the employee was Hungarian or foreign. The frequency distribution of responses to the different factors is shown in the following histograms (Fig. 8. - Fig. 13.):

Fig. 8. - Fig. 13. histograms also show the distribution of responses to the different questions. On a scale of 1 to 5, 1 means No, not at all influenced, and 5 means Yes, completely influenced by the respondent's attitude. It can be seen that the No influence category leads highly in each of the graphs and the others show a much lower, downward sloping trend. Fewer low columns are

observed for political-ideological and family values representation, but these categories do influence employees somewhat in their attitudes towards each other.

### ***Detecting cultural differences by sector based on preferences for different working relationships***

I asked respondents to rate on a scale of 1 to 5 the extent to which they were influenced by the different factors. These included different religious beliefs, different political-ideological orientations, different family values, different culture/ethnicity, whether the employee is Hungarian or foreign. Using analysis of variance, I obtained the following results.

*Table 18.: Factors influencing employment relations by sector (n=617)*

	<b>Religious beliefs influence the work-capacity plateau</b>	<b>Political-ideological orientation affects the work-relationship</b>	<b>Represented family values influence the working relationship</b>	<b>Culture/non-nationality influences work-life balance</b>	<b>Country of origin influences work-relationship (Hungarian expatriates)</b>	<b>Location influences work-rate (foreign)</b>
<b>Public sector</b>	1,52	2,06	2,38	1,78	1,51	1,60
<b>Competition-sphere</b>	1,44	1,80	2,13	1,63	1,43	1,64
<b>Specificity</b>	0,08	0,26	0,25	0,15	0,08	-0,04
<b>p-value</b>	0,320	0,007	0,023	0,092	0,285	0,649

In Table 18. it can be seen that the averages are inherently low, but significant differences between the two spheres are evident for political ideological orientation and represented family values in the public sector.

### ***Confirmation/rejection of hypothesis H3***

The above statistical results confirm my hypothesis, as respondents self-reported overall acceptance of their colleagues, and are not affected if their colleague has different socio-demographic characteristics or different thinking and attitudes.

## 4. CONCLUSIONS AND PROPOSALS

Based on the results, the hypotheses that I set out at the beginning of my research were confirmed or rejected as follows (Table 19.):

*Table 19.: Acceptance/rejection of hypotheses*

HIPOTHESIS	ACCEPT
<b>H1</b> For workers, the attraction is career in the competitive sector and predictability in the public sector.	✓
<b>H2</b> Employees in the competitive sector have more and more advanced competences, both at the time of entry into employment and later in life, than employees in the public sector, and are expected by employers to have more and more advanced competences than employees in the public sector.	X
<b>H3</b> Dealing with cultural differences is part of the culture in both sectors, and employees are tolerant of each other.	✓

**H1** *For workers, the attraction is career in the competitive sector and predictability in the public sector.*

From my questionnaire, based on the answers to the related questions, I used principal component analysis to develop four dimensions, named career, security, balance and following strict rules. The means of these principal components were compared across the two spheres. I used analysis of variance to check which dimensions showed significant differences. For the career dimension, there was a significant difference in favour of the competitive sector, while for balance and strict adherence to rules, which means predictability of the path, there was a significant difference in favour of the public sector.

**Proposal:** Employers should provide clearer and more attractive career paths, career progression and development opportunities for public sector employees, in order to close the gap between the public and competitive sectors and make employees happier and more motivated.

Developing and delivering a competence-based career path is a greater challenge for workers. Various training and mentoring programmes should be provided to develop skills and competences.

**H2** *Employees in the competitive sector have more and more advanced competences, both at the time of entry into employment and later in life, than*



*employees in the public sector, and are expected by employers to have more and more advanced competences than employees in the public sector.*

To test my hypothesis, I compared the existing competences of employees and the competences expected by managers at entry and in the current situation, where I found that neither at entry nor in the future, the competences of employees in the competitive sector are higher. In some cases, the level of competences (conflict management, communication skills, presentation skills and monotony tolerance) of public sector employees was higher at entry than in the competitive sector. In the current situation, only in two cases of performance and monotony tolerance is there still a significant difference between the two sectors in favour of the public sector.

Looking at the level of linguistic competence, I found that in the public sector, the language skills of employees are under-utilised, i.e. there is a waste of skills.

**Suggestion: which is** also the basis of this hypothesis that I have formulated, a kind of stereotype that higher levels of competence are expected in the competitive sector and that workers with higher levels of competence are more likely to be placed in this sector is not a good way of thinking and needs to be changed. More research and surveys need to be conducted in the labour market on this issue to change this negative perception.

Better use of language skills in the public sector. Employees with a high level of language skills should be employed in positions where they have greater opportunities to use a foreign language, such as in ministries or government offices. In such areas, public sector workers are increasingly encountering foreigners, as more and more foreign students are coming to universities to deal with various issues in public offices.

**H3** *Dealing with cultural differences is part of the culture in both sectors, and employees are tolerant of each other.*

Examining the factors that influence working relationships, the overall averages were low, so both sectors are accepting of employees who differ from them in some characteristics. There were two questions where there was a significant difference in means, with the public sector showing that different political-ideological orientations and family values were more important. These influence working relationships more in this segment than in the competitive sector.

**Suggestion: it** was seen that the level of acceptance, the number of people choosing all categories, was lower for age compared to other factors. My suggestion to employers is to pay close attention to equal opportunities at the recruitment stage. Sensitisation training can be used to prevent problems

arising from generational differences. Statistics show that older workers are discriminated against. As employees prefer to work with younger people or people of a similar age, workplaces are less likely to hire older people. This needs to be addressed because the experience and knowledge of older workers can be lost.

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