



Hindrances to organizational learning

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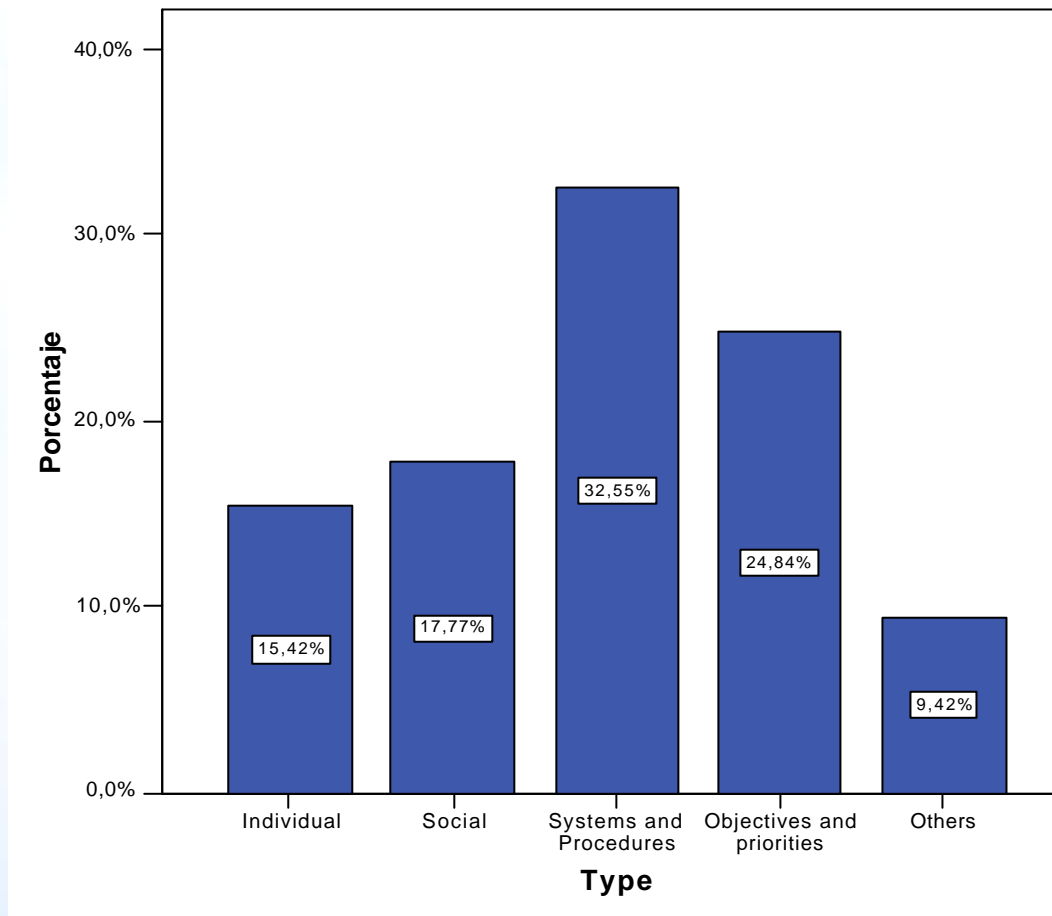
Learn Safe

Complutense University, Madrid

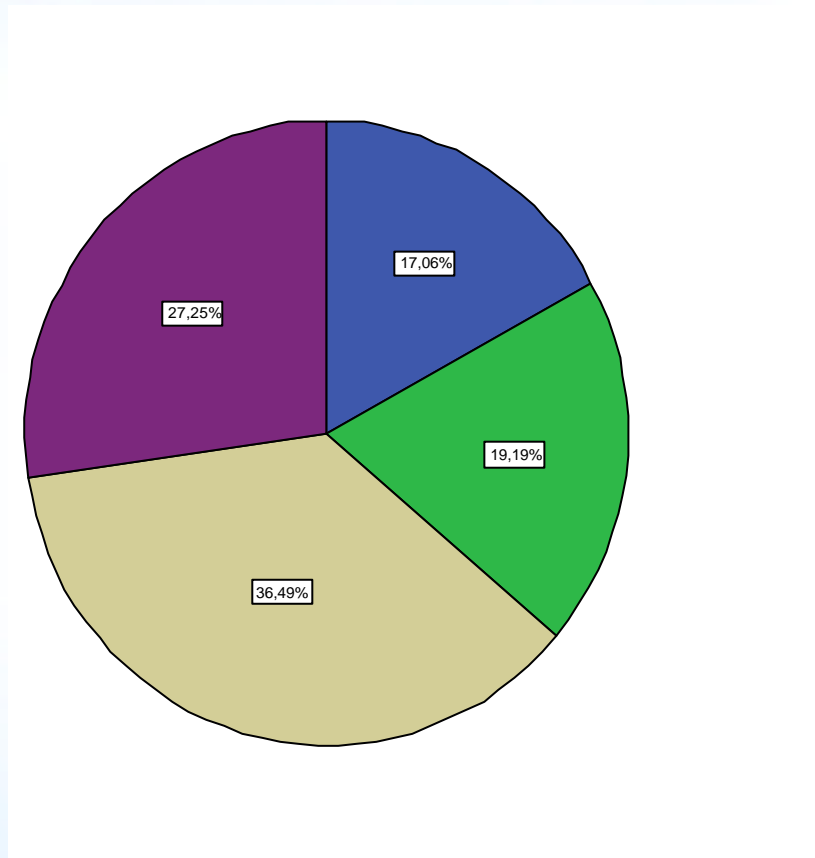
Background

- 468 descriptors of hindrances were identified
- 40 first order categories (FOC) considered suitable
- 4 second order categories (SOC) considered elucidatory
 - Focused on individuals 12 (FOC)
 - Focused on social patterns 8 (FOC)
 - Focused on systems and procedures 12 (FOC)
 - Focused on objectives and priorities 8 (FOC)

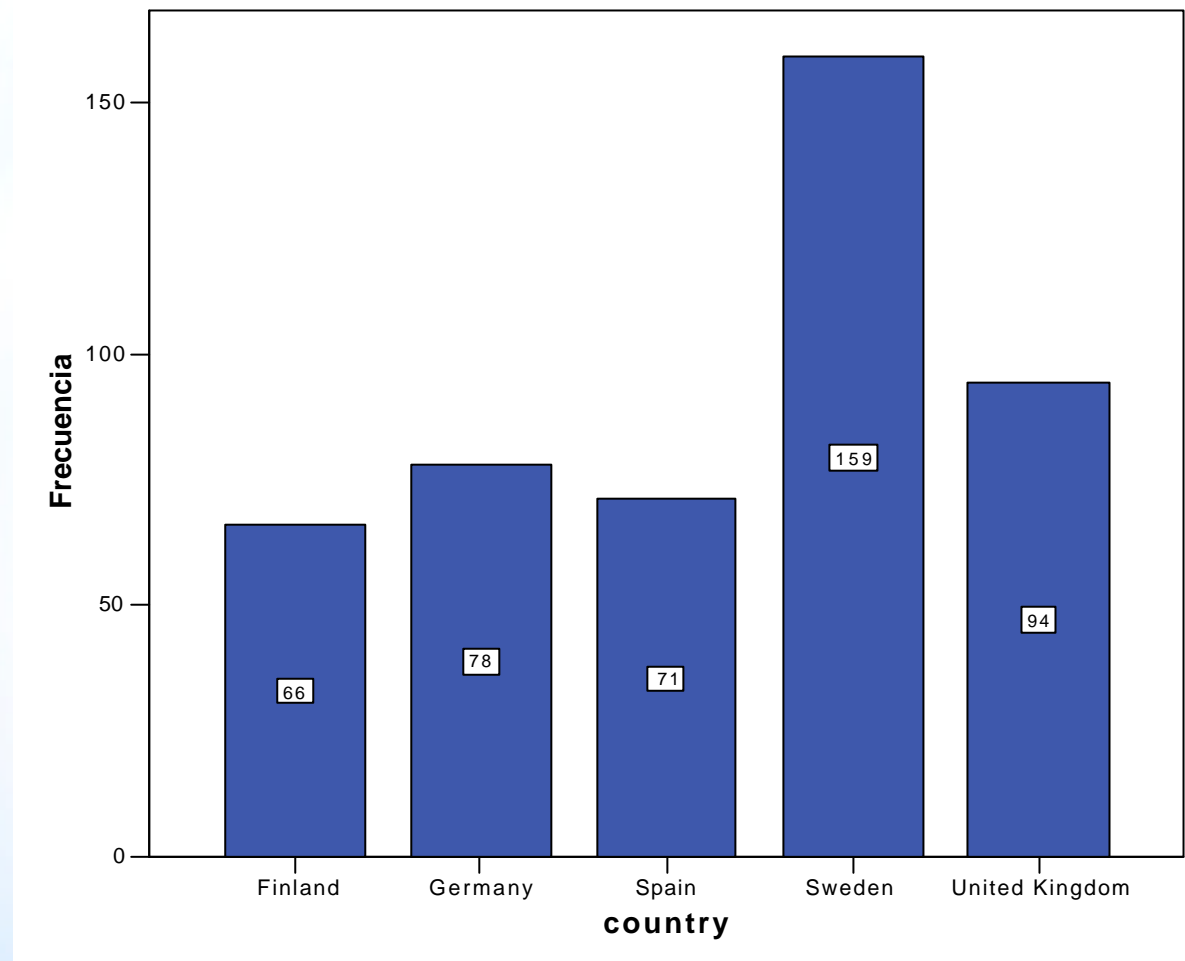
Hindrance types



Type of hindrance



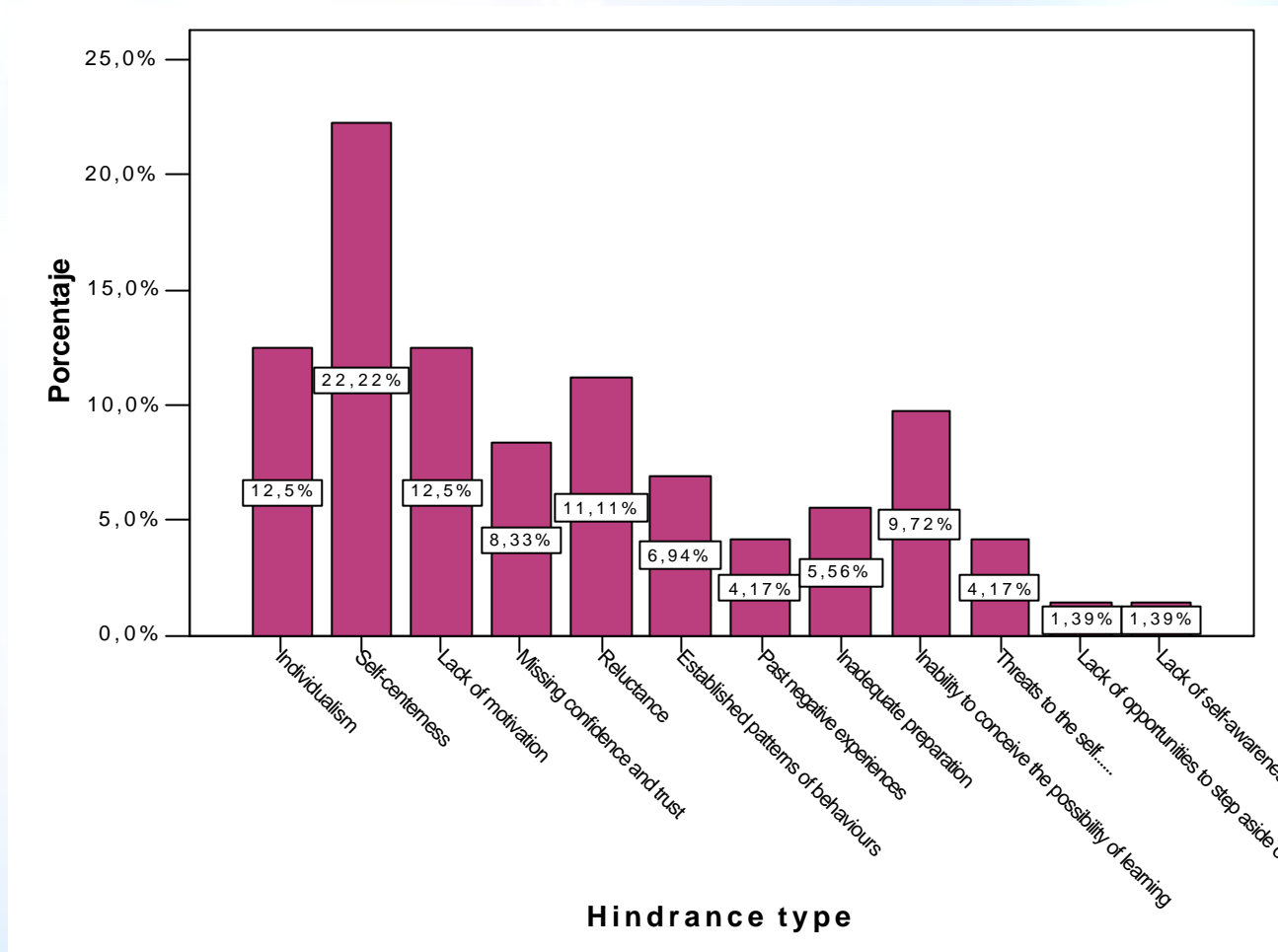
Number of hindrances by country



Focused on individual features

- Individualism
- Self-centeredness
- Lack of motivation
- Missing confidence & trust
- Reluctance
- Established behavior and accommodation
- Past negative experiences

Individual focus



Self-centeredness

- Focal point in self-image
- Lack of self-criticism
- Self indulgent attitudes
- Self-centered attitudes
- Self-conceit on many levels –Vanity-
- Self-conception of the employee
- Self-interested goals prevail over organizational goals
- Self-satisfaction
- Threats to the self, one's world view, or ways of behaving

Individualism

- Focus on individual rather than collective problems.
- Individual accommodativeness
- Individual obstinacy
- Individuals don't see the impact of their contribution to learning
- Negative individual attitudes
- Realization of individual needs

Lack of motivation

- Motivational decline
- The lack of explanations: de-motivation.
- Missing insight and willingness
- Willingness to learn destroyed in the education or training
- Unwillingness to accept new demands and changed conditions

Reluctance

- Reluctance for changes
- Reluctance to think in systems
- Reluctance to use someone else's processes

Missing confidence & trust

- Lack of self-confidence in their abilities and renewal.
- Fear of opening up own territory, people are not trusted
- Lack of trust in processes
- Mistrust or no trust in the organization

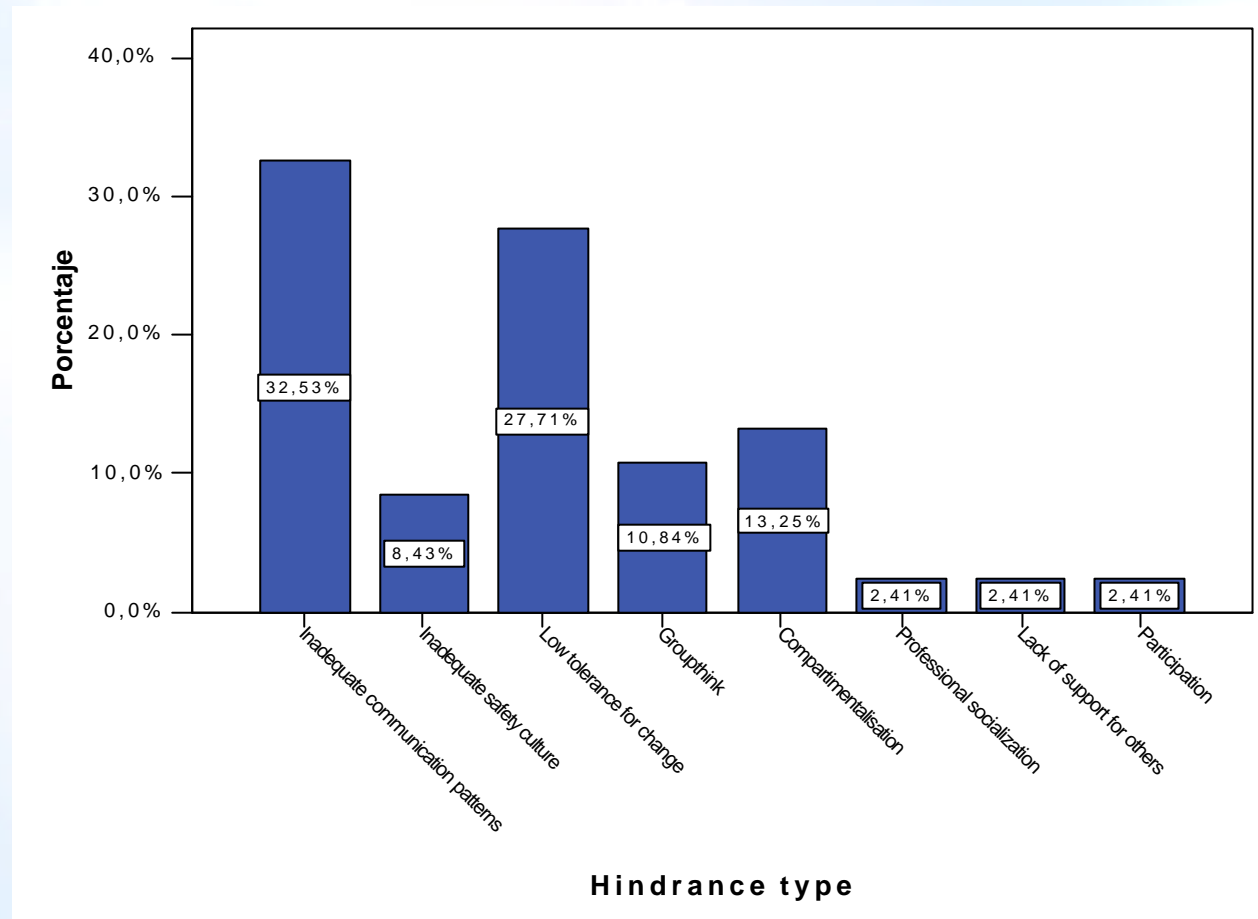
Established behavior

- Established behaviour,
- Established working practices
- Individual accommodativeness
- Lack of variation/variability
- Security in the existing.

Focused on social & group patterns

- Inadequate communication
- Safety culture
- Low tolerance to change
- Groupthink
- Compartmentalisation
- Professional socialization
- Lack of support from others
- Participation

Social focus



Inadequate communication

- Inadequate communication channels
- Too little talk to the papers
- Devious communication channels
- Diffuse/unclear communication structures
- Due to language, will, opportunities
- Between management and personnel: cast doubts on
- Measurement of wrong things leads to biased communication
- Misunderstandings in communication
- Unwillingness to communicate and provide feedback

Low tolerance to change

- Unwillingness to change
- We have always done it like this
- Little inputs, difficult during changes
- Changing things more difficult than drawing conclusions
- Human are basically lazy, creatures of habit
- Historically good performance let to competency
- Resistance to short term changing situations
- Things are as they are and cannot be changed
- Excessive rate of organizational changes

Compartmentalization

- Uniqueness of highly specific designs
- Competition between different parts of the organisation
- Guarding territory.
- Rigid common structures across diverse units (sites)
- Thinking in territories, pinching own information, desire for comfort.
- Difficulties to see the whole
- This is under my incumbency

Groupthink

- Faculty thinking and department egoism
- Functionalisation
- Cultural clashes generate unnecessary work.
- Group thinking/ organising in functions
- Insmoked culture.
- Them and Us

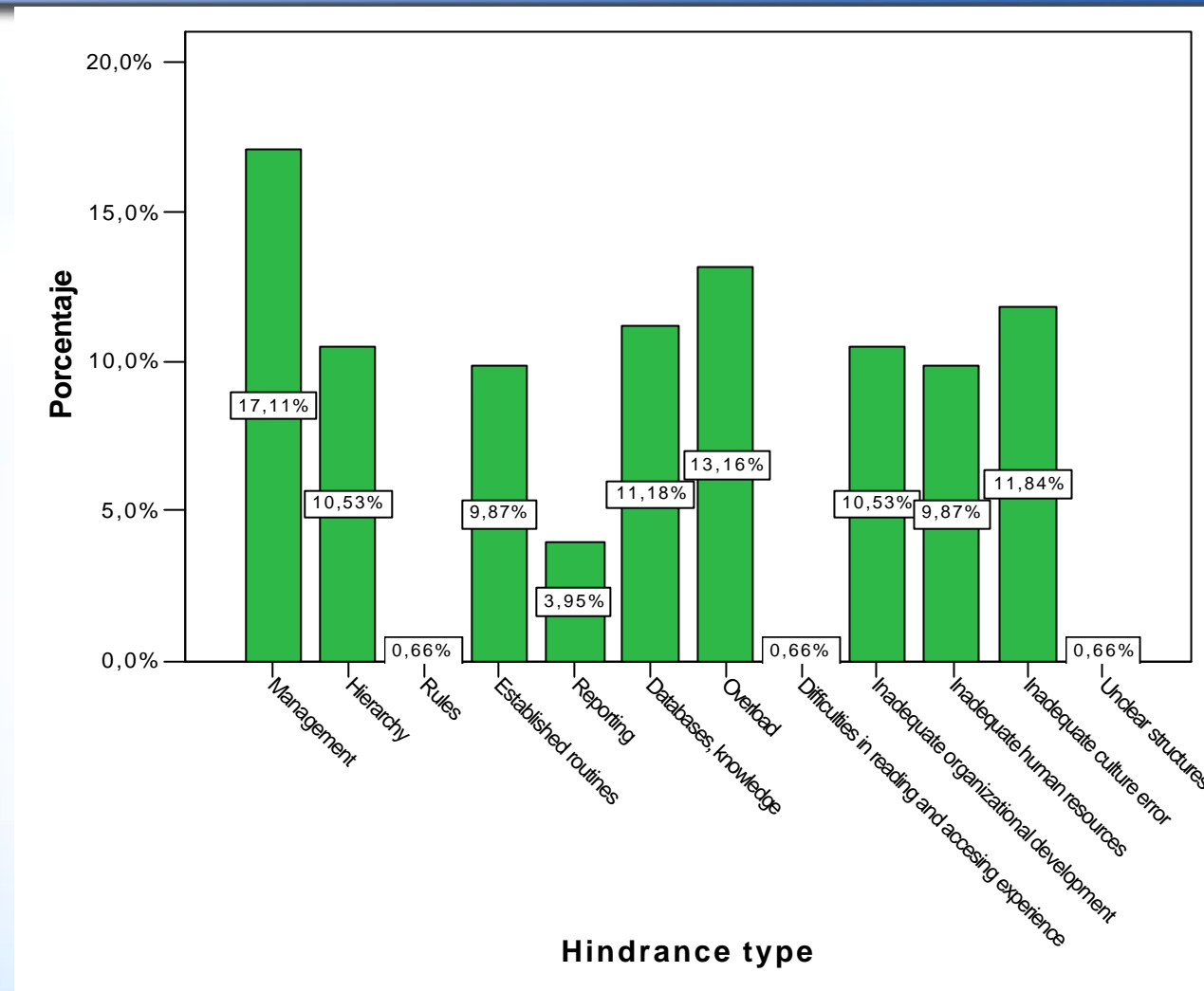
Inadequate safety culture

- Punishing culture
- Safety culture is not such an obvious goal
- The business culture has too much influence
- Maintaining a culture of continuous improvement is often easier said than done
- Insmoked culture
- Culture of ...yet another initiative!?
- A culture which do not allow criticism
- Contractors have their own cultures
- Contradictory individual cultures
- Culture of cut and paste engineering

Focused on system and procedures

- Management dilemmas
- Hierarchy
- Rules
- Established Routines
- Reporting
- Databases
- Overload
- Inadequate organizational development
- Inadequate error culture
- Inadequate human resources

Focused on systems and procedures



Management dilemmas

- Lack of management commitment
- Management maintains unstable criteria
- Poorly aware of their responsibilities for the competency
- Excessive dependence on managers
- Management maintains unstable criteria
- Managers are supposed to do everything
- Managers have time to concentrate
- Managers try to do the work themselves
- Them and Us: managers vs staff, trade unions and personnel
- Bottlenecks in middle management
- Management evidences short-term focus

Organizational Overload

- Change overload
- Information overload
- Everything is important.
- Too many formal meetings
- Huge number of methods
- Too many balls in the air
- Too many activities in parallel.

Inadequate error culture

- Misconception: good results consequence of good work
- A culture which do not allow criticism
- A high operative loading prevents a strategic outlook.
- Always the same target groups.
- An inadequate error culture was displayed as basic skid for organizational learning
- Critical thinking is not supported
- Defensive reaction to criticism
- Inadequate measures to evaluate experience
- Interest only to find weaknesses

Hierarchy

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Rules

- Unnecessary rules that are difficult to comprehend
- Hidden behind rules and regulations when it suits
- Ready made thinking models and rules
- The nuclear industry is very much rule based and compliance
- We are highly proceduralised

Established routines

- The inertia of activities
- Long list of routines
- Routine meetings: people know what is going on
- Done the same thing in the same way for many years
- Too much emphasis in routines

Reporting

- We fixed the problem, so why report it?
- huge amount of different forms for reports
- meeting minutes difficult to understand
- No assurance that information in memories systematically used

Databases

- Poor access to data bases
- Comparisons between plants constrain data collection
- Individual ability to receive data
- Mass of data causes problems with analyses
- Difficulties in recording and accessing to reported experiences
- Knowledge is person related

Inadequate organizational development

- Organizational indifference to bottom-up proposals
- Organizational structure affects knowledge findings
- Errors wander among employees, bosses do not take responsibility
- Everybody sitting at meetings, and too much talk
- Once initiatives achieve targets often pushed aside
- Excessively flat organisation
- Organisational changes take long time to carry out,
- Organizations exploit or discard insights made by persons,
- Poor occupational climate

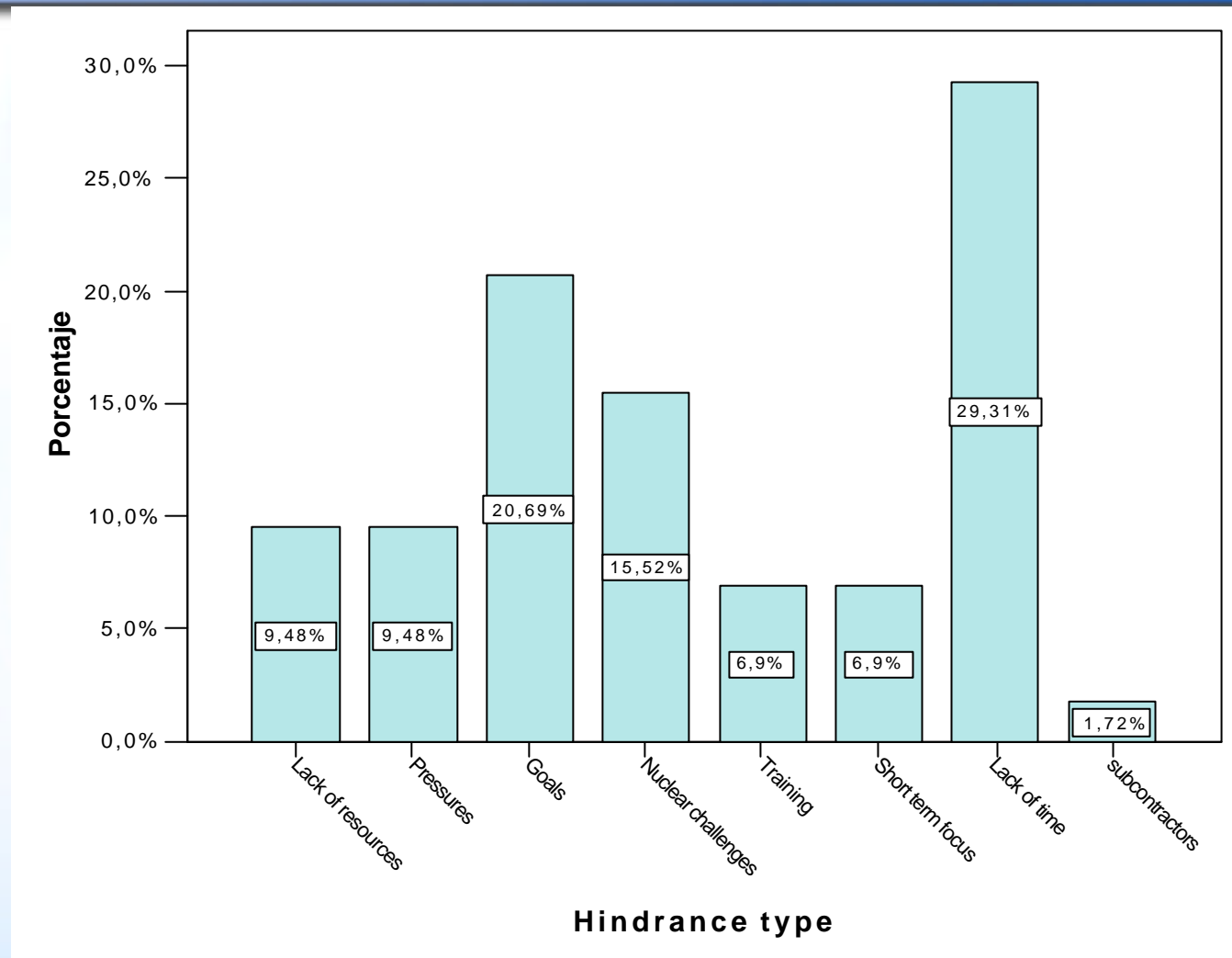
Inadequate human resources

- Insufficient human resources
- Low mobility in NPP
- Multifunctional mobility: rara avis
- Absence of staff turnover
- Age structure in the organisation
- Aged organization
- Cutbacks in nuclear workforce
- Inadequate personnel
- Maintaining unmotivated people due to closure programs

Focused on objectives & priorities

- Lack of resources
- Pressures
- Goals management
- Nuclear challenges
- Training
- Short-term focus
- Lack of time
- Subcontractors

Focused on objectives & priorities



Lack of time

- Missing time for reflection during workdays.
- Pressure of time
- Lack of time in a choked organization.
- Lack of time is partly dependent on an uneven loading and partly on difficulties
- Lack of time for optimizing the use of resources.
- Not enough time to learn
- Not enough time to analyze, and too many “must” under consideration
- Operating time: recharging times have been reduced
- Time for free thoughts is an article in short supply.
- Time is not taken to evaluate, follow up and feedback

Goal Management

- Fuzzy definition of goals
- Goals and guidance are shaky and unclear
- Problem solving different of goal attainment
- Safety culture is not such an obvious goal
- Self-interested goals prevail over organizational goals
- Contradictory, too abstract or conflicting goals
- Many interactions between goals and managerial activities
- Conflictive nexus between goals and media

Nuclear challenges

- Avoidance of jobs among university graduates in NPP
- Low mobility in NPP and the field
- Hostility towards nuclear energy
- In the nuclear it is not allowed to do experiments
- Negative aspects of nuclear energy emphasized regularly and rarely the positive side
- The nuclear field is getting thinner
- Nuclear industry highly based on rules and compliance

Lack of resources

- Cutbacks in the workforce
- Insufficient human resources
- Decisions seldom based on accurate assessment of resources
- It's not in the business plan ? No resources available
- Lack of economic resources
- No resources to develop/review changes/modifications
- Resources run short: requirements to the employees are rising
- Tasks can't be achieved due to shortage of resources
- Too little resources, but a question of priorities

Pressure

- Economic pressure (negative)
- External pressures and demands
- Pressure of competition
- Pressure of time
- Pressure to perform
- Social pressure (peer pressure, external pressure)
- Large pressure on middle management
- Unsupportive top priorities mediated by economic pressure
- Pressure on resources and time slots

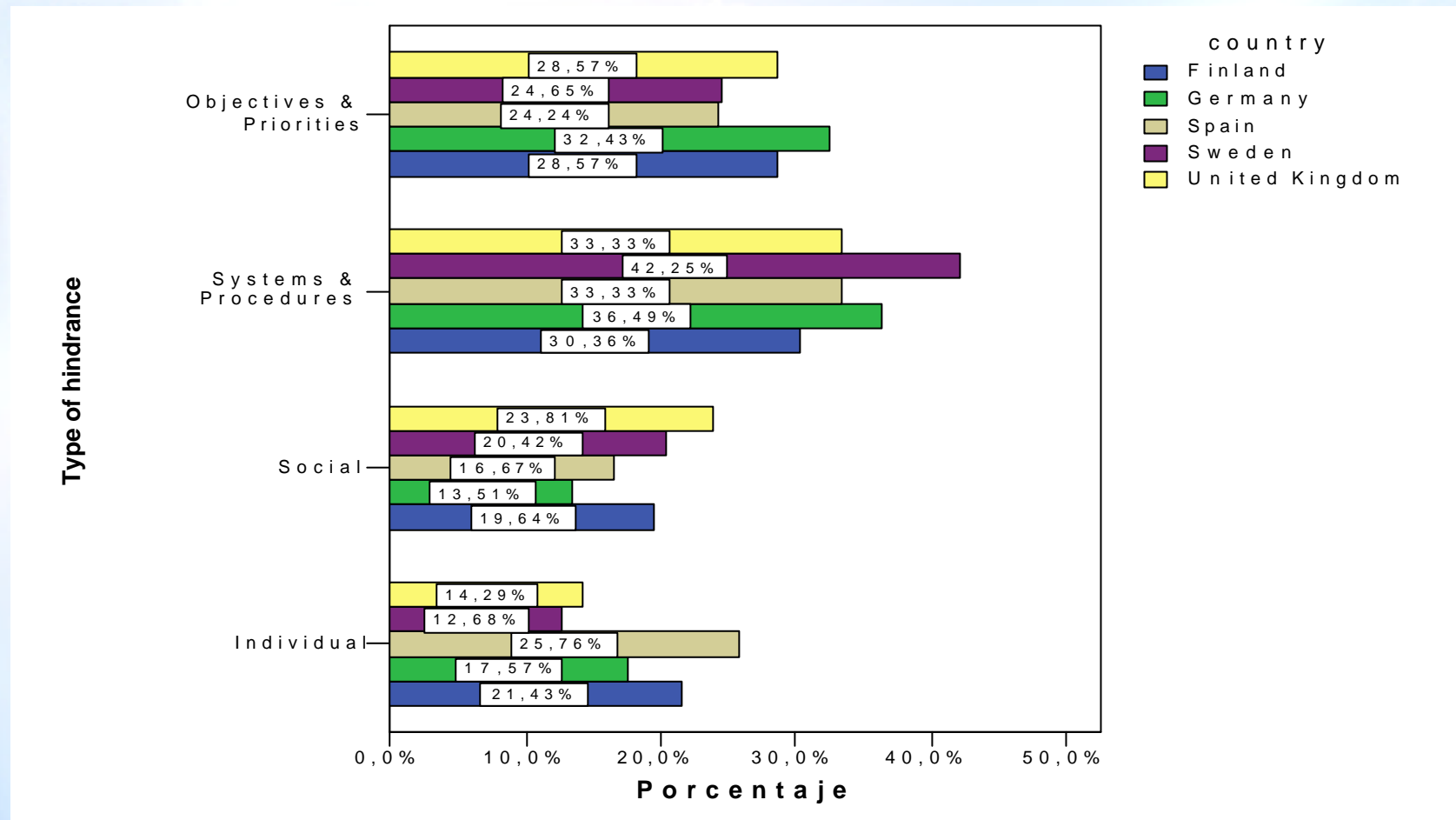
Training policies

- Inadequate trainings for specific groups
- Managers do not view training as valuable
- Willingness to learn is destroyed in the education or training
- Too much formal and informal training
- Training not suited to groups
- Trainings within the plant inefficient because of daily routines

Short-term focus

- Focus on today problems in the job
- Organizational practice stresses priority in short-sightedness
- Company management has a short-term focus
- Awareness to existing problems
- At a working level company favors fire fighting
- Do I have to solve this problem just now?

Hindrances by country



Final remarks

- There are no significant statistical differences among countries
- Individual hindrances prevail in Spain
- Social hindrances prevail in the UK
- Systems & procedures hindrances prevail in Sweden.
- Objectives & priorities prevail in Germany.
- Lack of time hindrance followed by inadequate communication, management-related dilemmas, and management of goals.