

Thematic Study on Policy Measures concerning Disadvantaged Youth

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(National Reports, Compendium of Good Practice, Validation)

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Austria

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Disadvantaged youth in Austria

This brief report is concerned with the problems of disadvantaged youth and the strategies and interventions applied in Austria. At first key indicators associated with constellations of disadvantage will be analysed and consequently an attempt of an explanation why Austria is in a comparatively privileged situation will be made. Nevertheless there are also specific challenges for Austria. There are diverse intervention strategies and measures targeted towards this challenges, which are stated and discussed on the focus of their success at last.

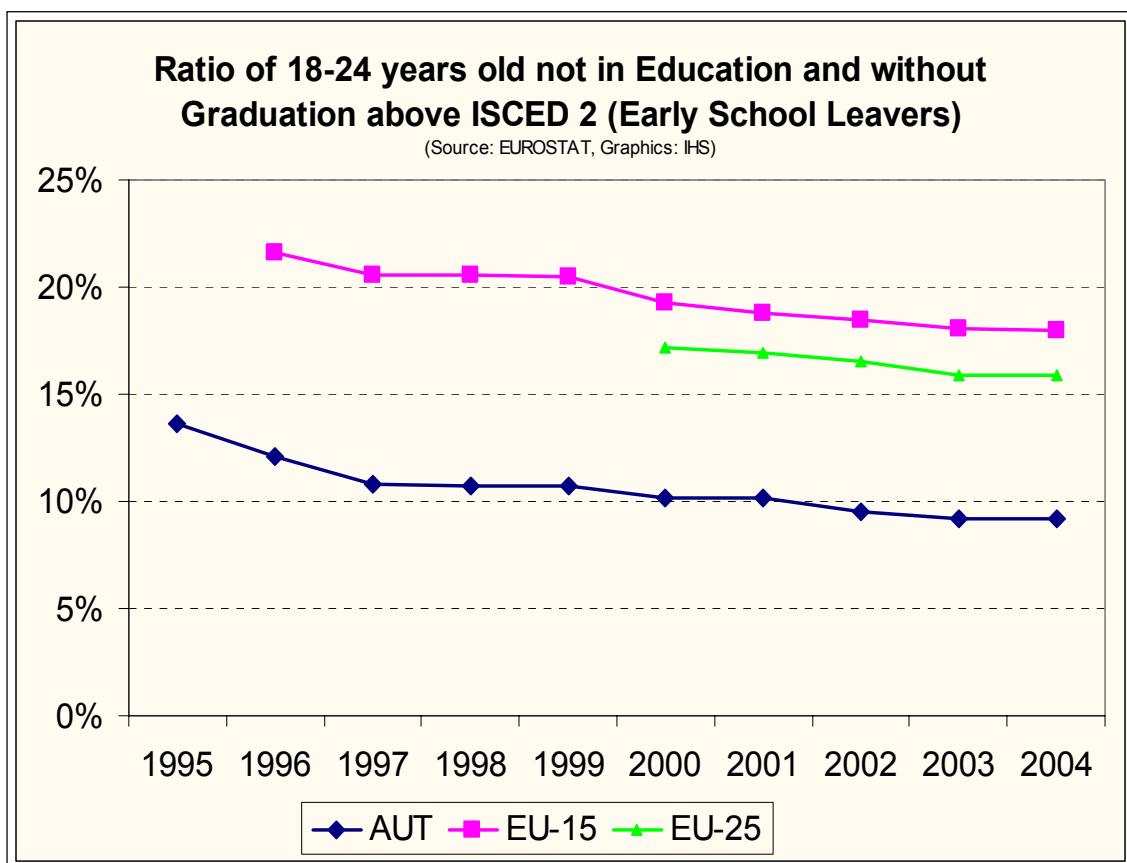
The results presented here on the one hand are built upon empirical and on structural analyses. Therefore in the context of this study a broad range of policy papers and evaluation studies available was analysed and calculations were made using the Eurostat Labour Force Survey (LFS) as well as national labour market and educational statistics. On the other hand side an expert discussion with representatives of relevant institutions in the context of disadvantaged youth forms an integral part in the methodological design of this study. Whenever the text refers to the ‘actor’s perspective’ the results of a discussion among representatives from institutions relevant in the context of disadvantaged youth are meant. Therefore a workshop at the Institute for Advanced Studies with experts was organised out to discuss the national and cross-national research findings as well as the specific situation in Austria concerning disadvantaged youth from their point of view.

1. Problem situation in a macro perspective

Concerning disadvantaged youth there are two EU key indicators, which demonstrate the extent of the problem, namely the ratio of early dropouts and the youth unemployment rate. Regarding the EU key indicator of early school leaving Austria has a ratio of 9,2% in the year 2004, which equals half of the European wide average (EU-15: 18%, EU25: 15,9%).

Regarding the periodic change of this ratio there has been an immense decrease in the mid 1990s and nearly a stagnation of the ratio at the end of the 1990s. Even though, since that time the ratio of early school leavers has been on a rather constant level, 9.000 young people leave the educational system without any adequate qualification every year.

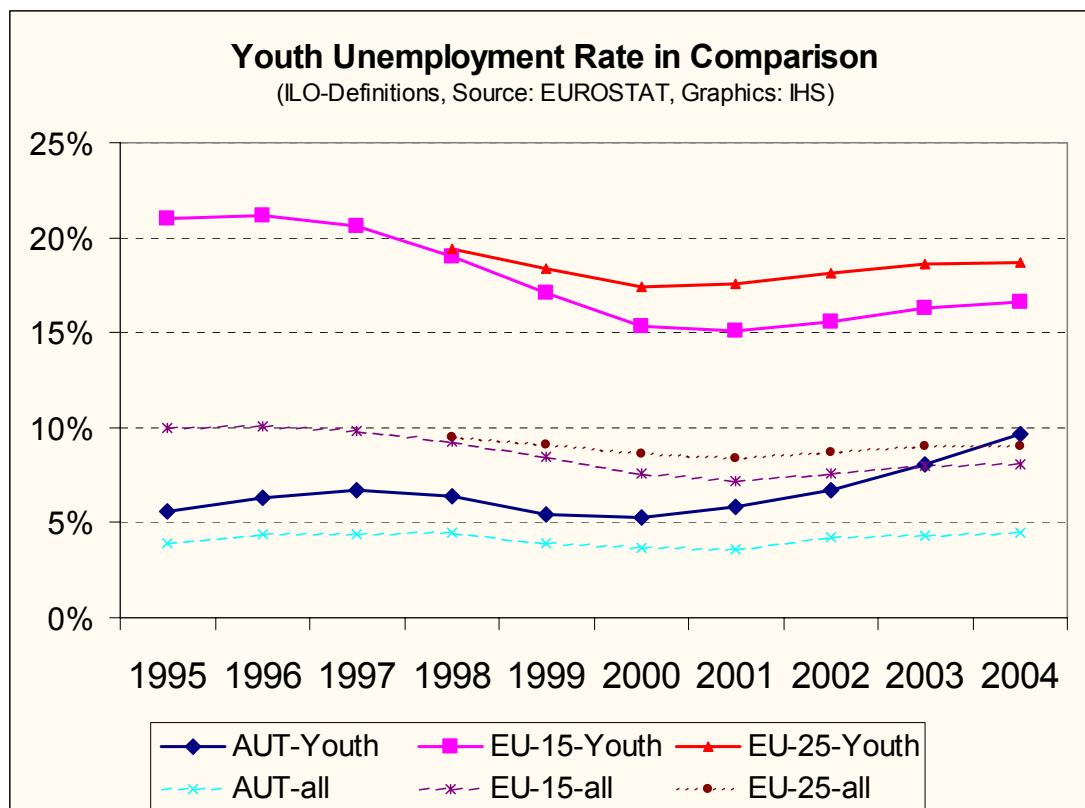
The development of this indicator over time is demonstrated in the following chart:



Immigrant youth are much more likely to drop out the school-system than Austrian pupils are. According to a study finished just recently (Steiner, 2005) the proportion of immigrant youth among early school leavers is three times higher than their proportion within the population of the same age.

The youth unemployment rate, which is the second indicator for analysing the scale of the problem concerning disadvantaged youth, implies the assumption that Austria is confronted with a lower level of problems. In 2004 the youth unemployment rate in Austria showed a value of 9,7% (youth unemployment ratio: 5,6%), while the value of the European mean amounted the double (EU-15: 16,6%, EU-25: 18,7%). The following chart clarifies that even in Austria the youth is indeed more affected by unemployment than the whole labour force, but the gap to the average is considerably lower than it is typical for Europe. Looking at the periodic change there has been a more intensive increase of youth unemployment in Austria than in the European average, therefore the gap closes and the specific situation in Austria is minimised. One reason for that can be found in the under average weak economic development in Austria. The strong rise of youth unemployment in Austria from 2003 to 2004 compared to a rather moderate rise in EU-average can hardly be interpreted because the concept of the LFS data collection in Austria was changed in the meantime.¹

¹ Kytir J., Stadler B. (2004): Die kontinuierliche Arbeitskräfteerhebung im Rahmen des neuen Mikrozensus. Vom 'alten' zum 'neuen' Mikrozensus, in: Statistische Nachrichten Nr. 6/2004, Wien.



There is empirical evidence that immigrant youth are most effected by youth unemployment but there is no reliable specific data available. However, as the overall unemployment rate of immigrants in Austria is more than double (13%) the average rate (5,6%)² it can be concluded that the situation for migrant youth is not significant different.

Despite of some indications of increasing problems concerning disadvantaged youth even in Austria, the extent of the problems is on a low level compared to Europe. Therefore Austria can be seen as a comparatively successful country in Europe. The following section is concerned with finding an explanation for this positioning of Austria.

2. Explanation approach for Austria's position

Structural aspects

Basic condition for a generally smooth transition from education to employment is doubtlessly a positive economic development in connection with an appropriate need for qualified labour force. Due to the fact that economic development in Austria is not that different to the European one the explanation for Austria's comparatively privileged position concerning disadvantaged youth has to be found in other domains.

Compared to the international level two aspects of the Austrian educational system seem to be relevant for the low ratio of early school leaving and the low youth unemployment rate. This

² Statistik Austria (2005): Arbeitsmarktstatistik 3. Quartal 2004. Mikrozensus Arbeitskräfteerhebung, Wien.

is the “dual system” – ergo the apprenticeship as a specific educational form – in connection with the demand-orientation of the vocational education and training system in Austria.

40% of the cohort choose an apprenticeship; therefore the apprenticeship is the most favoured educational form on post-compulsory level. This educational form has some interesting specifications, which are relevant in connection with early school leaving and youth unemployment:

First of all entrance requirements for this educational form are set on a low level at least in a formal perspective. The most important criteria to start an apprenticeship is the conclusion of a contract with a company providing an apprenticeship place, whereas there exist no educational entrance barriers like a positive compulsory school leaving certificate. However, while on the one hand the former educational success is not a definitive obstacle compared to other educational forms, on the other hand most companies in fact do select the apprentices on the basis of their qualification level and their productivity.

The apprenticeship system has a specific status within the educational system, because this form starts at the 10th level of education in contrast to other vocational education forms. Hence the “dual system” offers some kind of a safety net for those young people, who have chosen a secondary fulltime vocational school at the 9th level of education, but realize that this kind of vocational education and training does not fit them or is not what they expected. Instead of dropping out the educational system the apprenticeship offers them an alternative vocational education and training without any time loss because of the delayed start.

After all the character of the vocational training in form of the “dual system” is completely different compared to the fulltime vocational schools. 80% of the educational time is spent on practical tasks and only a fifth in the context of the formal school system. Therefore this form of education is an attractive alternative compared to fulltime vocational schools for a considerable part of the young people. In addition they get the early possibility of having an own income.

These three specifications of the dual system have a positive effect on the dropout rate. In addition it is possible to point out some characteristics of the Austrian educational system in general as well as some characteristics of the apprenticeship system in specific with a positive influence particularly on the youth unemployment rate:

Above all the dual system but also increasingly other forms of vocational education and training are strongly oriented on the demand of the labour market needs. Concerning the apprenticeship the orientation on the demand is evident and an integral part of the training. The fact, that 80% of the training is performed within the companies providing an apprenticeship place, offers the employers the possibility of training those qualifications which are relevant for the company. This could be an explanation why e.g. multinational companies are willing to train apprentices though the apprenticeship system is not known in the national context they come from. A successful example in this respect is the training profession “Systemgastronom”, which was developed due to the demand of only a few multinational fast-food companies.

This demand-orientation of vocational training is built upon the strong integration of the economy concerning the development of curricula and the arrangement of training processes. This again culminates in the dual system, where the “Bundesberufsausbildungsbeirat” (Federal Vocational Training Advisory Board) built mainly by the social partners is responsible for the steering of the whole system. The involvement of the social partners in general and the economy in specific in vocational education and training is another possible explanation for the low scale of youth unemployment in Austria.

Finally the dual system is an ideal example for the smooth transition from school to work for many young people. On the one hand the training is both, employment and qualification, on the other hand the apprenticeship offers the possibility for employers to observe potentially future employees over years to get an impression of their productivity. Therefore employers are often willing to offer an employment status after finishing apprenticeship.

Actors Perspective

There have been differences between the experts regarding the question whether Austria could be referred to as comparatively successful. Especially the social partners disagree on this question. The dual system has an important role regarding disadvantaged youth. Though in principle the success of the dual system in Austria is undisputable, deficits of the system arise in connection with disadvantaged youth. The question in the context of disadvantaged youth is, whether the dual system still is sufficient or whether there is a need for alternatives.

Besides the dual system other possible explanations have been worked out explaining why the situation in Austria is comparatively positive:

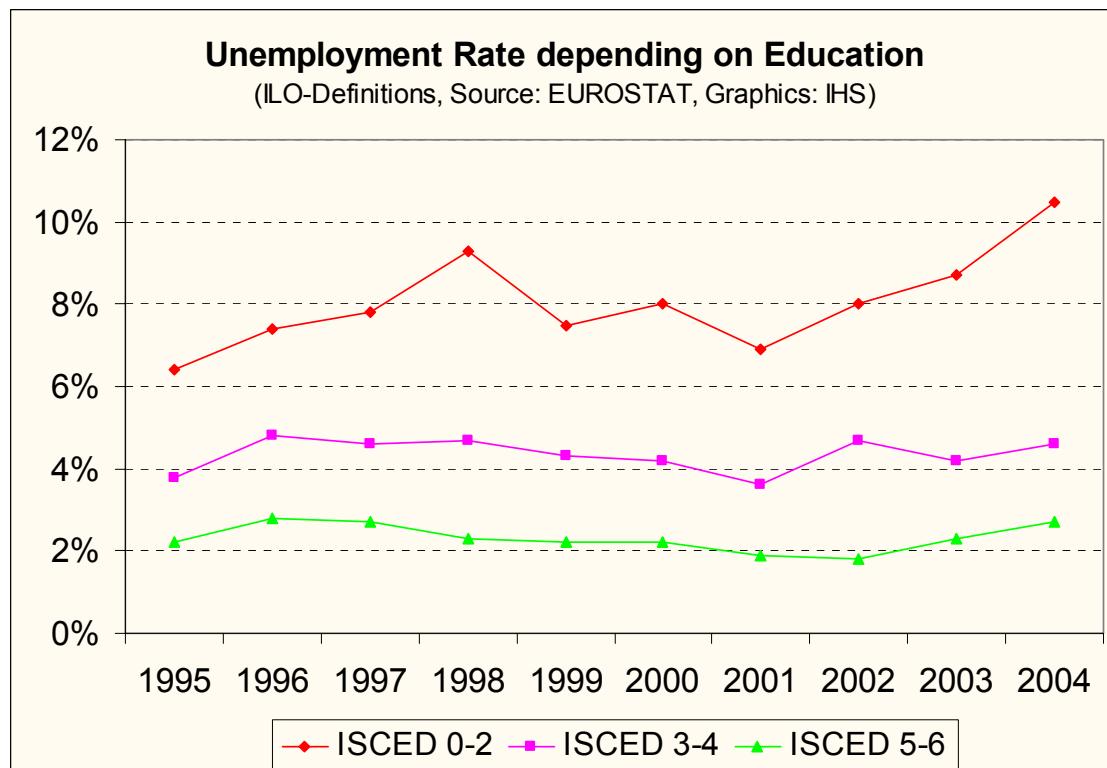
- The rural structure in Austria in combination with a multitude of SMEs is an advantage, because the willingness to assume social responsibility is significantly higher than in an urban or industrial context. This situation is advantageous for the integration of disadvantaged youth.
- In general the unemployment rate in Austria is comparatively low, this eases the integration of disadvantaged youth.
- Political interventions concerning the problem group of disadvantaged youth are discussed positively, because concepts as well as a number of measures and projects already exist. Like explicated before the lack of willingness for scientific analyses is criticised, thus more differentiated measures could be implemented.
- Several times the financial support from the Austrian state was mentioned positively, which has lead to positive results in the domain of disabled persons.
- The good supply of education in secondary vocational schools leads to a balance of qualification supply and demand on the labour market.
- Networking of institutions concerned with measures targeted on disadvantaged youth is good on the regional level.

3. Specific challenges

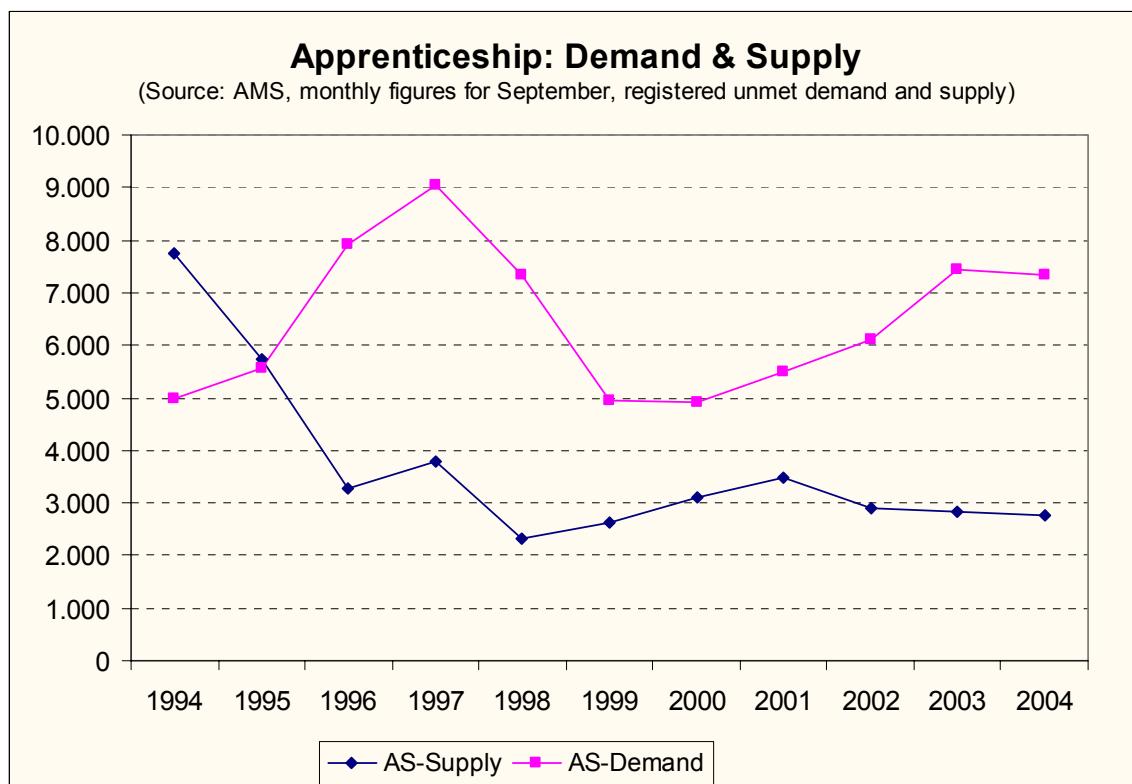
Empirical Evidence

Besides Austria's comparatively privileged position concerning early school leaving and youth unemployment the fact must not be ignored that even in Austria there are specific challenges and serious problems.

There is a risk of exclusion of young people who dropped out the educational system and who are confronted with difficulties entering the labour market particularly in systems with a low level of problems. Comparing the constellations of disadvantage across Europe a distinction can be made whether young people are disadvantaged, because they are unemployed or they are unemployed, because they are disadvantaged as a result of e.g. early school leaving (see Volume 1, Chapter 3). The latter interpretation fits for Austria. In many European countries unemployment is common status in the transition from school to work, therefore fluctuation from unemployment to the labour market is a common process after a while. But if a great ratio of the cohort – like in Austria – has no problems concerning the transition from school to work, there is a tendency of negative selection of disadvantaged youth. Consequently these young people have to overbear great difficulties entering the labour market. This presumption is approved reflecting the unemployment rate depending on the level of qualification like the following chart shows. In the year 2004 persons with a compulsory school-leaving certificate (ISCED 2) show an unemployment rate of 10,5% (according to the LFS-concept). The unemployment rate of this group is more than twice than the rate of persons having a school leaving certificate on ISCED 3-4 level (4,6%) and it is four times higher than the unemployment rate of persons having a certificate on the tertiary level (2,7%). These relations of inequality got worse since 2001 whereby the assumption of an intensified risk of exclusion gains ground particularly in periods of economically difficult developments.



Another challenge concerning disadvantaged youth is due to the fact that the number of apprenticeship places within the dual system heavily depends on the economic development. This means on the reverse that if the economic development gets worse there will be an increasing selection of the best whilst integration chances of disadvantaged youth will recede. The following chart points up to which extent the demand for apprenticeship places exceeds the supply.



Besides the overall economic development that is relevant concerning the total number of apprenticeship places available the ongoing specialisation of companies is an obstacle providing apprenticeship places. If companies specialise in a small segment they often are not able to cover a whole training profession. Therefore they are not allowed to train apprentices. Rather than a mismatch in training professions available and demanded there is evidence for a structural mismatch between the more broad educational requirements of an apprenticeship education and the parts of the curriculum an increasing number of companies can cover.

The empirical results point out that there is a particular problem concerning disadvantaged youth even in Austria. Consequently specific intervention strategies and measures are needed, which focus on the qualification of young people and their integration in the educational or occupational system. These strategies and measures will be discussed in the last chapter.

Actors Perspective

The problem group of disadvantaged youth is also existent in Austria, though it is less dramatical in comparison to the European average. The problem is even larger than it is shown if only relying on the EU-indicator regarding early school leaving, because one fifth of the young people does not reach a qualification level above compulsory school-leaving certificate, taking the group of the 20-29 year olds on the basis of the population census dates. Although a considerable number of young people does not reach a sufficient qualification level policy-makers are only partly interested in analysing the problem. An in depth analyses of the problem situation and the needs of the juveniles is needed in order to establish a typology of the target group which allows more need-oriented intervention strategies and

measures.

The insight into the importance of vocational education must be spread more widely, because education on a low level often means unemployment, and this nexus even will increase in future. Persons having a compulsory school-leaving certificate at most have severe difficulties to integrate into the labour market and their employment prospects are heavily dependent on the economic growth. This nexus is the basis for two conclusions:

- Basic qualifications and vocational education and training are similarly important
- Whenever possible approved and recognised educational certificates compared to partially qualifications are the better solution for disadvantaged youths.

The experts agree upon the statement that the dual system is in a structural crisis:

40% of the young people enter the labour market via the dual system; the others either pursue fulltime education or have no further education. The part of the young people not finding a place in the dual system forms the problem group consisting of different target groups (disabled youth: persons who could not fulfil the requirements of the apprenticeship contract because of physical or mental disabilities; juveniles with specific cultural or social problems etc.).

Reasons for dropping out on the one hand are the selectivity of the school system and the short duration of compulsory schooling, which enforce the disadvantages of young people instead of reducing them. On the other hand, competition on the apprenticeship market is high, because the supply of apprenticeship places is low. First of all, more and more companies find the effort and the responsibility for the apprenticeship too high. Companies are in an economic competition and have to act in a flexible way; therefore an apprenticeship lasting three years is too long. Simultaneously although there is a shortage it is easier to recruit skilled workers on the labour market than to train them through an apprenticeship. Additionally apprenticeship-training-premises close down increasingly in (former) public enterprises. Finally companies often complain that the low quality of compulsory schooling is not compatible with the growing skills-requirements of the economy.

Nowadays the companies providing an apprenticeship place bear a great part of the educational costs of the dual system. A way out of the structural crisis is seen in financing further educational forms besides the dual system through the state. It is important for young people, who could not get an apprenticeship place, not to loose time in senseless short-term measures, but to get high-quality vocational education and training. These further educational forms should maintain the dual aspect, but the administration effort of the companies has to be reduced and transmitted to supporting institutions. However the implementation of such a second apprenticeship market will lead to a competition with the first apprenticeship market, if the supply of apprenticeship places levels off. Consequently regular apprentices could be displaced.

4. Strategies of intervention and measures

Analytical Aspects

Most of the measures targeted at disadvantaged youth are included in European programmes such as the National action plan for employment (NAP), the National action plan for social inclusion (NAP-inclusion) or the ESF-Objective 3 interventions. There are no separated programs or policies for disadvantaged youth but the measures for this target group are part of mentioned programs. This situation secures more synergies than contradictions because disadvantaged young people also can be found in measures, which have not been designed just for them but also in general ones. All in all 250 Million € are spent annually and more than 50.000 young people are included in these measures. The spectrum and the intensity of the measures are very different and range from singular counselling and advice to intensive training.

Most of the labour market policies concerning young people are reactive to manifest problems and measures aiming at young people's employability are the dominant type. Nevertheless the focus of ESF-objective 3 on lifelong learning is more preventative in terms of aiming at creating opportunities. Orientation-measures for girls or the establishment of new educational tracks oriented towards promising job-fields (e.g. IT) but also the combination from almost all measures in this framework with train-the-trainer initiatives can be mentioned in this context.

It would go beyond the scope of this report to present all existing measures, hence only some important measures concerning early school leaving and/or youth unemployment are described in the following scheme for illustrating the dimensions and range of the measures. More in-depth information on the measures 'Vocational Preparation Courses' and 'Teamteaching for Immigrants in Commercial Schools' with regard to target groups, structures and success is provided in Annex IV of this Volume.

MEASURE	TARGET	Duration of individ. Partic.	Participants (03/04)	€ (03/04)	EVALUATION
Vocational preparation courses	Bridging apprenticeship training for unsuccessful apprenticeship seekers	12 months	6.800	71 Mio. €	67% in work 6 months after measure 21% unemployed (For more detailed information see best practice description)
Jobs4You(th)	Different qualification and occupational measures for young people	Diverse (from several weeks up to more than 1 year)	9.500	47 Mio. €	Part of Labour Market Monitoring (BMWA: 2004), depending on measure 60-80% in work 6 months after measure.
Clearing	Assistance for disadvantaged youth on the transition from school to work	6 months	2.500	4,8 Mio. €	Continuous monitoring, external evaluation commissioned, evaluation report expected 2006.
Job assistance (Arbeitsassistenz)	Assistance for the integration of disabled persons into the labour market	12 months	6.500	n.a.	Continuous monitoring, external evaluation commissioned, evaluation report expected 2006.
Integrative training (Integrative Berufsausbildung)	Forms of apprenticeship for disadvantaged/disabled youth	1 to several years	500	n.a.	Continuous monitoring, external evaluation commissioned, evaluation report expected 2006.
Teamteaching for Immigrants in Commercial Schools	Mother tongue instruction for immigrants by a second teacher	12 months	634	4 Mio. €	Continuous monitoring (For more detailed information see best practice description)
Preparatory courses for ISCED-Level-2 school-leaving certificate (Hauptschulabschluss)	Preparation for making up the compulsory school leaving certificate	12 months	1.200	2,1 Mio. €	Continuous monitoring (94% in apprenticeship/job after successful completion), external evaluation commissioned, evaluation report expected 2006.

Concerning anti-discrimination policies and measures within the programs mentioned (NAP, NAP-Inclusion, ESF-objective 3) more attention is paid to gender-aspects than to ethnic background. Within the programs mentioned several measures have been included targeting gender-discrimination but only a few can be found targeting problems of migrant youth. A target of all measures (and also realised in most cases) is a female participation of 50% at least. Concerning ethnic background no minimum requirement of participation has been defined, although 12,5% of the young people aged 19 years have a migrant background and although immigrants are much more effected by early school leaving and youth unemployment. Although for many measures no reliable data is available concerning the participation of migrant youth, the labour market monitoring report 2004 (BMWA) states that 18% of the participants in the ALMP measures within the Austrian NAP had a migrant family background. This means that compared to their share of population they are over-represented but they are under-represented in relation to the degree to which they are affected by unemployment and early school leaving.

Concerning the evaluation of the programmes and measures a differentiated approach has been established in Austria. On the one hand, the authorities responsible for the realization monitor the programmes and measures continuously. On the other hand the authorities responsible for the realization commission external evaluations in two different forms. So for all the programmes it is true, that they are evaluated on a program level. This means e.g. that the structure of targets is analysed on the background of the problem situation, means that the realization is monitored and compared to the targets set and it means that the effects are measured as a whole. On the level of concrete measures only a rather small number of evaluations can be found. A recommendation for Austria is to extend this kind of evaluation to get more detailed insight to the effects of single intervention strategies.

In order to develop factors for success on the basis of the range of measures implemented the specific Austrian situation has to be remembered at first. The assumption was made that because of the comparably low level of problems regarding early school leaving and youth unemployment there is a high risk of negative selection and exclusion of disadvantaged youth. As a result the priority of intervention strategies has to be laid on *building bridges* for disadvantaged youth to get back into the educational and occupational system. These bridges should guarantee that young people, who have dropped out of the system, can overcome the high entrance barriers. For example, the main objective of the *Vocational Preparation Courses* is building bridges and it can be seen as a factor of its success (see Annex IV in this Volume).

If otherwise the aim is to build bridges for disadvantaged youth to minimize their risk of an everlasting exclusion, the measures and strategies will have to focus on the needs and requirements of the target group facing different integration barriers, in a sensible way. This means that individual support and assistance is a factor for success in integrating disadvantaged youth. This target-group-sensible approach can e.g. be found in the measure Job Assistance (see table above).

In conclusion comparing Austria's and Europe's intervention strategies a gap particularly in motivating measures turns out. Closing that gap seems to be urgent, because it can be

assumed that due to the described mechanisms of selection disadvantaged youths have accumulated a range of disappointments trying to return or stay in the system. Therefore they need specific assistance and motivation to start a new attempt of integration. In this respect mentoring could be an option. In Austria mentoring has been established as an instrument in the context of gender mainstreaming. Transferring it to intervention strategies in favour of disadvantaged youth would be an innovative approach in the Austrian context.

Actors Perspective

Following the experts the intervention strategies and measures for disadvantaged youth in Austria all in all can be seen as successful. Good-Practice examples are:

The dual system itself can be seen as a good-practice example and particularly modern training professions are successful on the labour market.

The development of customized measures for specific target groups can be recognized as a good example for Austrian intervention strategies, putting forward especially measures for disabled and disadvantaged youth like Integrative training, Clearing or Job Assistance.

Apart from that there are numerous important and successful measures like for example the Vocational Preparation Courses within the scope of the Youth Training Consolidation Act (JASG), the possibility of making up educational certificates (lower secondary school-leaving certificate, apprenticeship certificate, vocational certificates entitling for university studies) as well as employment schemes.

Besides, the experts see the necessity of a wide range of improving concerning existing structures as well as of developing new structures. Concerning the existing structures improvements are necessary in the field of the dual system, in the field of measures for disadvantaged youth and in the field of compulsory schooling:

Improvement of existing structures

a.) Dual system

Proposals for the improvement of the dual system have been put forward hardly in the discussion. The lack of apprenticeship places declared by all participants is accepted as a fact dependent on the economic development.

- Recommendations for *the improvement of the dual system* consist of
- Apprenticeship education networks between companies (Lehrausbildungsverbünde)
- Offensive public relations activities to informing the enterprises
- Extending the financial support of apprenticeship places

For *improving the situation of disadvantaged youth in the dual system* the dropout rate in the corresponding vocational schools (Berufsschulen) should be reduced. This could be achieved for example by combining vocational education with support for personal development or the extension of the apprenticeship-training-assistance existing presently in specific measures to

all apprentices. In spite of all efforts improving the dual system not all young people could get an apprenticeship place. These young people, who are “not ready” for the dual system because of several reasons, should be offered alternative forms of education within active labour market policy.

b.) Measures for disadvantaged youth

Main focus of the discussion about measures and strategies needed concentrated on the improvement of existing measures complementing the dual system. These improvements focus on:

- The *extension of measures*, like for example expansion of measures for making up educational or apprentice certificates as well as intensified support of young people with a migrant background.
- Proposals for *improving measures* on the one hand concentrate on enforced *orientation on the target group*, for example with the help of
- new didactical concepts in educational forms targeting not the deficits but the potentials of the youth, the qualification of teachers, trainers and advisers as well as the inclusion of social work assistance,
- or with the help of better adjustment of measures to the needs of disadvantaged youth and/or more participation of the target group in designing the measures.
- On the other hand improvement should be enforced regarding the requirements and demand of the economy, particularly the partner companies within the scope of the practical education measures.

Finally the recommendations aim at the improvement of *organisational conditions*, for example the networking of involved actors (educational institutions, third sector organisations carrying out measures, institutions of social work...) on the regional and local level for ensuring an effective procedure. Furthermore an extended time for preparation as well as generally prolonged running times of measures are suggested for assuring reliable planning and qualification of the teaching staff. Moreover additional resources for administration and implementation of the measures at vocational schools (Berufsschulen) are needed. These could consist of additional staff for designing the curriculum for the target group, carrying out the school enrolment of disadvantaged youths as well as their integration in everyday school life.

c.) Compulsory education

The experts several times stressed the argument, that in order to minimize dropout rates it is more effective to implement measures in compulsory schooling institutions than designing reparation measures for people who have already dropped out the educational system.

Therefore the high selectivity of the Austrian school system intensifying the disadvantage instead of supporting the affected juveniles has to be reconsidered. The proposed measures are different in their extension:

On the one hand a better *preparation of the youth for the later (working) life* is put forward. Thus the experts demand intensified supporting structures particularly in an individualised form for example through weaknesses-/ strengths analysis and socio-pedagogical assistance. Additionally occupational orientation should be institutionalised for example in form of an obligatory subject for improving the young peoples perception of the labour market.

On the other hand deep structural changes like for example an obligatory preschool-year, a common form of education for pupils aged 10-14, an extension of compulsory schooling or the cancellation of barriers like the repetition of school years are proposed

Development of new structures

a. The experts underlined the need of *new educational structures* as well as of *projects and measures* wherefore single examples can be found in Austria and Europe:

- Models of education, which are open for all young people, where third sector organisations take over administration and theoretical education and partner companies are responsible for practical training.
- Modularised forms of education allowing certificates also for basic vocational qualifications.
- Models of integrated measures including social work in vocational education.
- Mentoring programmes may integrate persons who faced similar problems situation in the past but have improved their situation in the meantime. These persons know and understand the problems of the target group because of their own experience and therefore could find better access to the target group.

b. A second domain of measures, which should be extended compared to the current situation are institutionalised forms of *information and counselling* oriented towards the following target groups: young people themselves and their parents, who are involved in educational decisions, the teachers, who should be able to support the educational decisions of the young people in an adequate way, the companies providing training that should be encouraged to make use of support facilities. Counselling should be provided by specific information centres, by staff of the Public Employment Services (AMS) being exclusively responsible for young people, by the Federal Social Welfare Institutions as well as by socio-pedagogically skilled and social work oriented persons in schools.

Recommendations for European intervention strategies

The conclusion drawn from the comparison of intervention strategies across Europe in the international part of the thematic study on disadvantaged youth has to be supported: youth mainstreaming is one of the most central recommendations. Therefore a coordination of all relevant political domains concerning the target group is needed and all strategies and measures have to be checked for their impacts on young people.

- Directly connected to youth mainstreaming is the recommendation that intervention

strategies and measures need an intensified orientation toward their target group. New didactical concepts in measures are required targeting not only the deficits, but also the potentials of the young people. An adjustment of the measures to the needs of disadvantaged youths as well as their participation in designing the measure is needed.

- The educational system as a whole has to be adjusted to the demands of the economy as well as measures of active labour-market policy have to be adjusted to the requests of their partner companies within the scope of practical training or training of unemployed and/or disadvantaged.
- Networking of the participating actors (educational institutions, third sector organisations carrying out measures, institutions of social work) is needed on a regional and local level for ensuring an effective approach.
- Only sufficient time for the preparation as well as generally prolonged running times of measures – thinking of perennial planning horizons – secure a reliable conceptual design of measures and ensure corresponding qualification of trainers, teachers and advisers.
- A good preparation of young people for working life is needed by intensifying personalised supporting structures, for example in form of a weaknesses-/strengths analysis and socio-pedagogical support. Additionally occupational orientation should become an obligatory subject in school. Moreover not only the target group, but also parents, teachers and companies need intensified information and counselling.
- Models of vocational education and training open for all young people have to be established within active labour market policy for disadvantaged youth. These models should provide a dual education, run by third sector organisations taking over administration and theoretical education and partner companies arranging practical training. These measures should offer modularised forms of education allowing certificates also for basic vocational qualifications. Moreover support by social workers should represent an integral part of the measures.

All these recommendations are on a rather general level because single measures cannot easily be transferred from one country to another. Measures in most cases are tailored to the specific national situation and can be expected to be successful within a specific framework of institutions and national preconditions. In Austria where the level of problems concerning disadvantaged youth is comparably low measures building bridges back to the system are essential. This is the level of recommendations useful for an international discussion and should be the level of discussion about transferability. The ‘vocational preparation courses’ are good practice in Austria but this measure cannot be transferred unless there is an apprenticeship system established. Also the apprenticeship system itself can be seen as good practice but its transfer will fail if there is no tradition of employer’s engagement in the education and training of pupils and employees. Therefore the lessons that can be learned from the Austrian intervention strategy concerning disadvantaged youth mostly are its bridging-approach and its attempts for demand-tailored measures.

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This brief national report is based on a much longer national report devised along a common framework as part of the thematic study on policy measures concerning disadvantaged youth. Its aim is to outline the specific problems in young people's transitions from school to work in Bulgaria and their support schemes and to compare them to the situation in Europe. The national report made use of four main sources of information: statistical data provided by the National Statistical Institute and Eurostat (The Labour Force Survey); official documents of the Ministry of Education, Ministry of Labour and Social Policy, Ministry of Youth and Sports, and Ministry of Finance; research reports and publications of national and international sociological agencies; and expert consultations, including a seminar discussion with representatives of the academic community, policy makers, and national stake holders (see Annex I). The report, first, summarises the constellations of disadvantage in youth passages to adulthood in Bulgaria in a comparative perspective and, second, explores the main policy approaches in support of disadvantaged youth presenting the factors of their success and failure.

1. Structures of disadvantage in Bulgaria

One of the achievements of youth policies in Bulgaria in the recent years has been recognising youth as a group in a disadvantaged position in the labour market. After the noticeable participation of young people in the mass demonstrations and student strikes at the beginning of the transition period, youth became invisible on the political scene in the country and other groups were defined as vulnerable and in need of social support. In the 15 years of market reforms the Bulgarian society matured enough to notice the high youth unemployment, the increasing group of school drop-outs, the mismatch between the educational qualifications received and the job skills demanded at the market for labour. Today we can define the dominating approach in Bulgaria with regards to the problems of youth integration as a *structural approach* that recognizes the existence of structures which put youth in disadvantage instead of treating young people as personally responsible for their situation.

The barriers to social inclusion of young people in European societies are multifaceted and are being produced and reproduced by structural, institutional and individual deficits. The factors for disadvantage (conceptualised as unequal opportunities and risks of social exclusion) act in complex interrelationships creating different patterns in different countries. These specific clusters are understood as constellations of disadvantage in youth transitions from education to employment. Focusing on constellations of disadvantage rather than problem groups helps to avoid neglecting structural problems and presenting them as individual deficits (see Volume 1, Chapter 4).

The perspective on constellations of disadvantage allows us to examine the clusters of early

school leaving, unemployment and precarious employment, prevalent in the social context of present-day Bulgaria.

Constellations of early school leaving

The educational system in Bulgaria is open and not rigidly selective. Despite that, the system's reach of young people is fairly small according to operating European indicators.

Table 1. Young people's enrolment in the educational system (%)

Age groups	Bulgaria	European Union (25)
5-14-year olds	98.0	99.2
15-19-year olds	70.5	81.3
20-29-year olds	15.2	22.2

Source: Ministry of Finance 2005.

While Bulgaria unlike other post-communist countries managed to preserve its network of public child care facilities and to make the preschool year mandatory to be spent in kindergarten (in 2004), the country is falling behind Europe in the numbers of young people it reaches as early as secondary school level. The existing normative base for the exams after seventh grade increases the selectivity of the secondary education and generates a considerable interdependence between parents' income and children's selection. There is also a noticeable lapse in the number of young people reached on the next educational level where the higher professional qualifications are acquired.

Early school leavers in Europe are considered youth aged 18-24 with highest qualifications ISCED level 2, that is, completed basic education. According to Eurostat in Bulgaria in 2004 21.4% of young people fall under this category. For comparison, the Scandinavian countries, Poland, Slovakia, the Czech Republic; Slovenia, Lithuania have shares of early school leavers below 10%. A problem that becomes all the more pressing in Bulgaria is the youth dropping out of school in the first few years of schooling. Very recently the National Statistical Institute (NSI, 2004a: 15) started publishing data on this process – in 2003 about 3% of the first-to-fourth grade students leave school, 3.2% of the fifth-eighth grade students and 3% of the ninth-thirteenth grade students. First among the indicated 'reasons' for leaving school is the category "family matters" which hides poverty, ethnic prejudices, bad transportation links and a multitude of other institutional disadvantages. There is still no official data on the number of children who have never started school but we can assume with a high degree of certainty that their number is increasing.

Flaws of the system of vocational education and training

Major problems in the social integration of young people in the country are caused by the state of vocational education and training. The achievements of the reform in this sphere are the new legal base, the broader institutional network with numerous state and private schools, the decentralization of management, the efforts towards cooperation between the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy. Even though the system offers education in a multitude of forms: vocational studies in the basic school after the sixth grade, secondary four-year vocational-technical schools, colleges and technical institutes as well as shorter courses in centres for vocational training, it still has not overcome many of its flaws.

We consider the most important reason for this state to be the fact that the vocational training is conducted in schools without adequate technical equipment and not in a real business milieu. There is no system for cooperation between vocational schools and firms in the real economy. As a result such training remains mostly theoretic with an emphasis on information instead of skills and qualifications and young people graduate without experience in working with modern technology. The state of higher education is similar as professional internships are offered very rarely and such internships are most often just nominal and do not equip young people with professional work experience (MBMD, 2005). A major research conducted by the National Statistical Institute (2004b) on the continuing vocational training in the country during 2004 established that only 2.6% of the firms had conducted introductory training (of young people without previous work experience) during the past year. There is a mismatch between the mostly industrial specializations offered in the vocational schools in the country and the orientation of the Bulgarian economy towards dominating development of the services sector. What is lacking is an established system for research and monitoring of the qualifications needs of the state, private and non-governmental sectors.

Gender

Gender inequalities in Bulgaria are not as strongly present as in countries with conservative socio-political regimes. As in other countries in Europe, Bulgarian women have a lower share among the early school leavers than men. In the recent years young women in the country have been achieving higher educational levels than men: women comprise 57% of the student body in colleges that give a diploma for a “specialist”, 52.2% of the student body among those studying for a bachelor’s and master’s degree and 51% among the Ph.D. students (NSI, 2004a). These data, however, do not mean that gender does not create disadvantages among youth in the country during their integration into the labour market. Young women comprise only 38.2% of the student body in vocational schools which limits their opportunities for finding a job after graduation. Women concentrate in specific occupations and specific sectors in the labour market and this phenomenon is linked with their lower pay and their circumscribed career development. According to JAP (2002) there is a significant gender pay gap - women earned 28% less than men in 1997. Young women are also underprivileged in their access to continuing vocational education and training given the lack of support for reconciliation of paid employment and child care for working mothers and the prevalent gendered division of household labour.

Ethnicity

Among the categories status that shape the particular constellations of disadvantage in different European countries, ethnicity has the greatest influence on the opportunities for social integration of youth in Bulgaria. Most disadvantaged are young people coming from families of ethnic Roma (estimations ranging between 4% and 10% of the population) and ethnic Turks (around 9.4%). Belonging to such a group means several times higher risks for early school leaving, long term unemployment and poverty (JIM, 2005). While more than half of the ethnic Bulgarians have secondary education and a fourth of them higher education, only a fourth of ethnic Turks have secondary education and higher education is completed by only 3% of them. For the Roma group less than one out of ten has completed education higher than basic (secondary and higher combined).

Table 2. Economically active population according to educational level, based on the census in 2001(%)

Completed education	Bulgarians	Turks	Roma
Basic	20.7	53.0	44.9
Secondary	53.0	23.7	7.2
Higher	23.7	2.7	

Source: JIM, 2004.

The illiteracy rate shows the same tendency – 0.4% among Bulgarians, 3.5% among Turks and 12.7% among Roma whose share has increased by 50% between the two censuses. According to expert estimates cited in JAP (2002) half of Roma youth of compulsory schooling age have never been to school. The opportunities for finding work for young Roma and Turks in Bulgaria are also severely limited. In 2003 unemployed were 17.3% of ethnic Bulgarians, 48.4% of ethnic Turks and 52.9% of ethnic Roma. The World Bank (2002) data on poverty rates in 2002 defines as poor 5.6% of Bulgarians, 20.9% of Turks and 61.8% of Roma. The accumulation of disadvantage in the transition from school to work of minority youth in Bulgaria has structural and institutional reasons among which discrimination plays a significant role as shown by research reports (ASA, 2003; Mitev, 2002).

Regional differences

Differences among the regions in the country also affect the educational achievements and employment prospects of youth. Children from rural areas leave the educational system on average three years earlier than their counterparts growing up in urban areas. Among the six regions in the country the most undeveloped is South-central, followed by North central and Northwest (JIM, 2005). The coefficient of economic activity is lowest in the Northwest - 41.9% and highest in the Southwest where it is 54.0%. Even greater differences exist among the separate areas and among the municipalities within one area. In 2004 the level of youth unemployment is in the range from 20% in Gabrovo to 33% in Stara Zagora and Smolian (Ministry of Labour and Social Policy, 2005). Regional differences in educational and employment prospects for the young are particularly important in Bulgaria in view of the low geographical mobility inside the country – the share of young people who have never been out of their own settlement is increasing (JAP, 2002; MBMD, 2005). The young in Bulgaria in search of a job are more inclined to leave their home country and go abroad than to move to another region inside the country with better economic prospects (Mitev and Matev, 2005). This is largely due to the high housing costs which young people have to bear outside of their parental home in comparison with the low remuneration of jobs available to the young in the labour market in Bulgaria. The total emigration flow out of the country for the period of social transition since 1989 has been estimated at 10% of the labour force (JIM, 2005) and the emigration intensity has been the strongest in the age groups 15-19 and 20-29.

Segmentation of the formal labour market

Young people aged 16-24 are as a whole disadvantaged on the labour market in Bulgaria. Among the employed, young people are overrepresented in the low-paid and low qualified

jobs and elementary occupations. According to MLSP (2003) the highest share of young people are those employed in the industry – 24.7%, trade and repairs – 21.8% and hotels and catering – 13%. In the hierarchy of occupational groups starting highest with managerial positions and ending lowest with low-skilled workers, young people are concentrated in the groups of low skilled employees in the service sector, as guards and in trade (27.4%) and as low-skilled workers (18%). The report of the group of experts (Damgor, 2002) established that the demand of youth labour force (aged 18-29) was greatest for sales workers and demonstrators; waiters and bartenders; and operators of sewing and embroidering machines. According to their employment status most young people were employed in the private sector (83.1% of all employed youth), then those employed in the state sector (15.9%); self-employed are 6.7% of young men and 1.6% of young women; employers are 1% of young men and only 0.3% of young women. Significant is the share of young people working as unpaid family workers – 4.6% (Ibid.).

Constellations of unemployment

In Bulgaria like most other European countries unemployment is predominantly a youth phenomenon going along with education. According to Eurostat data from the Labour Force Survey in 2004 the youth unemployment rate (the %age of the 15-24 year old labour force) was 24.4% and the rate was higher for young men (24.9%) than for young women (23.8%). The youth unemployment ratio (the %age of the 15-24 year old population) in 2004 was 7.5% (8.6% among men and 6.3% among women). Compared to other European countries Bulgaria has the specificity of combining lower youth unemployment ratio (EU25=7.5%) with considerably higher youth unemployment rate (EU25 = 18.6%). This signifies a low activity rate among young people in Bulgaria which can be attributed to the unfriendly labour market, discriminating against the young.

Another specific feature of youth unemployment in the country is that young men are more often unemployed than young women. This is in contrast with the model in the South European countries where unemployment among young women is considerably higher than among young men. Especially disadvantaged are the young who are *looking for a job for the first time*. According to the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy (2003) employers in the country are unwilling to hire workers and employees without work experience and to invest in their training. Characteristic feature of the model of youth unemployment that has been established in the labour market in Bulgaria is its *long term character*. Among the unemployed youth in Bulgaria 65% have been unemployed for over one year – the highest share compared to the other European countries according to Eurostat data. Especially high is the share of the young unemployed with low education (in 2004 over 65% of the young unemployed were young people with elementary or lower education) and without any previous work experience. The unemployment rate among youth with higher education is not that high in Bulgaria as it is among this youth group in Portugal or Spain for instance. Nevertheless there is no official data on how many of those with university degrees are employed in the field of their specialty and how many of them work in low-skilled jobs in trade, services or as private guards.

Status0 group

There is a considerable youth group being formed in the country that comprises of young

people with *undefined status (status0)* who are not part of the regular education system, do not attend courses for additional qualification, do not have a job and are not registered as unemployed in the labour offices. We can deduce the size of this group of young people indirectly from the mismatch between the data of the Labour Force Survey conducted by the National Statistical Institute and the data from the register of the Employment Agency.

Table 3. Unemployed youth according to the Employment Agency (EA) and the National Statistical Institute (NSI)

2004	NSI	EA	Difference
I quarter	79100	75907	3193
II quarter	76600	66116	10484
III quarter	77200	63639	13561
IV quarter	84000	61921	22079

Sources: www.nsi.bg/Labour/Labour.htm;
Employment Agency 2004 Monthly Statistical Forms.

During the fourth quarter of the past year there were 22,000 young people who were integrated neither into the educational system nor into the institutions of the labour market. Surveys on young people show that factors for shunning registration at the labour bureaus are the required long period of previous work experience during which one must have made deposits in the state insurance fund, the small sums of unemployment benefit and the lack of trust that the labour offices offer good job positions (Kovacheva, 1999, MBMD, 2005).

Constellations of precariousness

Other directions of segmentation of the labour market are the precariousness of employment in the form of temporary labour contracts and part-time jobs. Even though young people in the country are easier to find in the forms of insecure employment than other age groups, on the whole such flexible forms of labour are underrepresented in Bulgaria according to the data from Eurostat (2004) Labour Force Survey.

The typical pattern of precariousness in Bulgaria, similar to the situation in some of the post-communist countries, as well as in Greece and Italy, is the concentration of young people in the sector of undeclared work. The informal employment consists of numerous forms among which the most wide spread are the unpaid work in a family business, work with an employment contract albeit with false contents which means that social insurance is paid on a small part of the stipulated wage and the rest of the wage is paid in cash (according to MBMD this concerns about 25% of young people), and most commonly work without a labour contract. Hidden employment has been identified in the JAP (2002) as a significant problem of the established structure of the labour market in Bulgaria, estimated to account for 20% to 36% of the GDP in 2000, placing the workforce in precarious low productivity jobs, without employment protection. According to the Labour Force Survey in the forth quarter of 2004 about 10% of young people are employed without a labour contract while Vitosha Research (2004) determines their share to be 17% in 2004. When we add the students combining studies and work, and the agricultural workers, (as both groups work mostly without a written

contract), the real share probably will turn out to be twice as big. These forms of employment in a state of high unemployment rate and poverty not only provide income for young people but allow them to gather skills and social contacts which can serve them in their transition to the formal economy. Nevertheless, there is a danger that this hidden employment will be a trap that young people will not be able to escape from for their entire career because the acquired skills are not recognized officially during the search of a new job and the lack of social insurance payments prevents the young from accessing the system of social support.

In Bulgaria as in the other European countries we can witness the extreme consequences of putting young people in a disadvantaged position at the labour market – most of all these are poverty and multiple disadvantages of vulnerable groups.

Poverty

Data from Eurostat (2004) show poverty (measured by income below 60% of the average income in the country after tax and social support payments) among the age group 16-24 in the European Union to be 15% while for youth in Bulgaria it is 13%. Young people in Greece, Spain, Italy and Portugal and in the East European countries of Slovakia and Romania are much more disadvantaged compared to the other age groups in the population of the respective country. In Bulgaria young people are protected from this extreme consequence of unemployment mainly by the generous parental support rather than by the state financial assistance. School and university graduates without any work experience are not eligible to receive unemployment benefits as first job seekers. There is no official statistical information in our country on what share of the young people receive social support for poverty but according to experts from the Agency of Social Assistance very few young people rely on state aid. There is also no official data on the average age for leaving the parental home but it can be claimed that in case of financial difficulties young people continue living with their parents both before and after forming their own families thus reducing their housing and food expenses and therefore, reducing the risk of falling into poverty.

Multiple disadvantage

The weak support from the state against the risks of youth transitions creates a strong dependence of young people on their parents and an intergenerational reproduction and transmitting of disadvantage. When the parents themselves are poor and lack resources to assist the next generation, then the young people encounter greater risks. Roma youth in our country are such a disadvantaged group in which poverty as well as early school leaving, lack of professional qualification, informal labour, bad health, early pregnancy and other problems pile up creating high barriers in front of a successful integration into society (Mitev, 2002). Other groups that suffer multiple disadvantages are young people who are disabled physically, have mental health problems, live in social care centres, or come from single parent families. The homeless, those addicted to drugs and the victims of forced prostitution or trafficking abroad form especially vulnerable groups in present day Bulgarian society (JIM, 2004).

2. Policy approaches

The constellations of disadvantage in young people's transitions to adulthood are dealt with a multiplicity of strategies, programmes and measures in each country, which are referred to as policy mixes in this study. The two main axes differentiating between the national strategies devised to create employment pathways for the young are individualising versus structure-related and preventive versus compensatory. The key policy dilemmas are whether to focus on strategies adapting individuals to the demands of education, training and labour market or on reforms oriented toward making structural opportunities more accessible and appropriate to young people's preferences, and whether to develop preventive measures addressing risk factors or give preference to solutions trying to alleviate accumulated problems.

In Bulgaria while there is a structure-related understanding of youth disadvantage, the policy is not consistently built upon such an approach and it is mixed with an individualising methodology, that is, measures which place the blame for educational or labour market failure upon the individual. The youth policy in the country is combining both preventive and compensatory strategies with the latter taking a dominance. While preventive, structure related approaches are more suited to the situation of accumulating disadvantages in youth transitions, we consider that individualised and compensatory solutions are also necessary for those young people who fall through the net of preventive and structure-transforming measures.

The choice of the policy approaches is obviously dependent on funding among other factors. An effective preventive policy requires more resources than remedial measures. In Bulgaria the range of programs and measures is severely limited by the financial resources that are available to the state as well as the general economic conditions and unfavourable structure of the labour market. In terms of GDP shares of expenditure on education and active labour market policies (ALMP) Bulgaria belongs to the group of countries with low resources provided for education (3,57% of GDP in 2002) while performing better in terms of resources for ALMP (0,56%; Eurostat; see Volume 1, Chapters 4, 5 and 6).

A significant flaw of the Bulgarian model for assisting youth transitions is the lack of systematic monitoring and assessment of the strategy and the applied programmes and measures. The active policy of the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy is in the process of assessment in 2004-2005 while the Ministry of Youth and Sport and the Ministry of Education and Science are still on the stage of developing a system of indicators for such assessment. Consequently, the programmes to which we point as 'good practices' in this paper are not selected as such on the basis of results from their systematic assessment and evaluation but on rather arbitrary judgement after consultations with experts.

a. Increasing human capital

Considerable limitations can be found in the sphere of policies for creating and amassing human capital in Bulgaria. What this policy field is lacking are structure-related reforms to widen the access of young people to quality education and making it more flexible and relevant to their varied types of motivation and de-standardised transitions. In view of the rising need for a flexibility of the system of education, the neglect of non-formal education is highly unsuitable. There are not enough efforts and programs for stimulating more young

people to stay at school longer and achieve vocational qualifications. There have been attempts for introducing financial stimuli such as offering free snacks at school and free textbooks to elementary school children but these are not enough to reduce the impact of social inequality and prevent dropping out. The educational system in Bulgaria does not provide counselling directed at early identification of problems and influencing young people's educational decisions such as the 'total counselling' in Slovenia (See Annex IV in this Volume).

A positive tendency is the strategy for integrating the children with special needs and children from ethnic minorities into the comprehensive school system in which assistant teachers are employed to help these children. The reforms, nevertheless, are far from meeting the needs of society to intervene and reverse the process of increasing illiteracy and early school leaving. The general quality of education is falling which is measured by the decrease in the achievements of Bulgarian students in the European studies PISA. There is a lack of a system of monitoring the quality of education as well as a system which identifies in due time the students at risk of dropping out of school and providing them with specialized help in the form of the resources such students need. The Ministry of Labour and Social Policy is striving to compensate for the inadequacies of the educational system by instituting a program for those youth who drop out of school. The program aims to teach them literacy, offer professional training and provide employment but it has too small a scope to cover the deficiencies of the educational system.

The programs in Bulgaria aimed at offering vocational training are also not able to overcome the mismatch between the qualifications demanded and the qualifications supplied especially in terms of skills for the labour market. Employers do not have enough incentives or experience in offering internship positions to young people while they are still in school or immediately after graduation. There is also no established system for support and control over employers and interns. As with the general education, the system of vocational training is highly inflexible and does not ensure the participation of the curriculum development of state and private employers and non-governmental organizations from the third sector, besides the educational experts. In our country educational institutions like vocational schools and universities are noticeably withdrawing from their responsibilities for young people. The Ministry of Labour and Social Policy has engaged itself with offering measures to augment the skills of young people and their aptitude for employment. In this effort we consider successful the following measure which is an example of compensatory policy:

The program "*Computer literacy of young people*" improves the access to information and communication technologies through acquiring skills and knowledge in this field. The target group of the programme are young people with secondary and university education registered as unemployed in the labour offices. They enrol in training courses and then for the top ten per cent the labour offices provide placement as 'trainees' with employers in the real economy. The training of the unemployed young people is conducted according to a curriculum based on the modern accomplishments in the field of information and communication technologies in cooperation with Microsoft and the Bulgarian-German centres for vocational training based in Bulgaria. The program can serve as an example of "good practice" in terms of having youth participation rate of 121% higher than planned and of

providing the involvement and coordination of activities of 13 institutions in the program realization (for a more in-depth description see Annex IV of this Volume).

b. Increasing the access to the labour market

In the field of strategies combating unemployment, the policy in Bulgaria relies on a combination of active labour market policies (ALMP) and compensatory measures, mostly associated with benefits. While in some countries unemployment benefits are universal, in Bulgaria they are linked only to previous employment period with paid social security benefits while excluding first-job seekers and youth who have worked without a registered employment contract. The JAP (2002) assesses the current system of unemployment benefits as not ensuring a sufficient coverage of the unemployed, among which young people are among the most underprivileged. An advantage of the employment policy in Bulgaria is the trend toward increasing the funding for ALMP since 2000 which has already resulted in reducing the unemployment rate, both general and youth. Among the ALMP the focus is on company based training directed to registered unemployed youth and on subsidies for employers for hiring young people without work experience. Job creation and self-employment schemes are also available although not particularly targeting the young. Less focus is placed on measures directed toward deregulation of labour market entry thus reducing the costs of hiring young people or on antidiscrimination policies aiming at lifting barriers for ethnic minority youth. High interest among young people is seen in the following programs and measures which again have not been formally assessed to now:

“*Career Start*” (Program for employment of youth with higher education in the public administration) provides a smooth transition from educational institutions to professional life to young people. Immediately upon completion of university studies, the program offers young graduates temporary jobs in ministries and agencies in regional and municipal administrations where they can get their first work experience. The young people enrol into the program for 9 months but if there is an opportunity in the respective administration they are allowed to stay on the job permanently. The programme tries to compensate for a significant deficit of the system of higher education - the insufficient access for university students to opportunities for training in real-work settings.

The measure “*Encouragement of employers to create new jobs for training in order to acquire professional qualifications and/or internships for unemployed young people below 29 years of age*” (Para 41 from the Law of Employment) gives financial resources for wages and bonuses and pays social security benefits that are employer’s responsibility as well as covers expenses for vocational training for 6 months (for more details see Annex IV, Chapter 4 in this volume). The growth of the number of young people training or interning (three times as big in 2004 as it was in 2003) is indicative of the popularity of the program among young people and employers as it is an opportunity to increase the competitiveness of businesses and to improve employees’ career prospects.

Insufficient efforts are made to increase the access to employment for such a disadvantaged group as the young Roma. The JIM (2005) underlines that the elimination of discrimination on ethnic grounds (especially discrimination against Roma) should be one of the main priorities of the Bulgarian government. Several programmes have been devised in this

direction: The Framework Programme for Equal Integration of Roma into Bulgarian Society and the National Action Plan for its implementation, The Minority Integration Section of the Government Management Programme and the creation of the National Council on Ethnic and Demographic Issues (NCEDI) and Regional Councils on Ethnic and Demographic Issues in 2003. Effective since 1 January 2004 is the Protection against Discrimination Act which incorporates European directives and establishes mechanisms for protection. However, the NCEDI does not have real power to fully influence decision-making processes, nor administrative and financial capacity to successfully fulfil its mission (JIM 2005). The first conference on the Roma Inclusion Decade 2005-2015 in Sofia in the spring of 2005 has not yet had a sizable effect in the development of effective programmes for social integration.

c. Encouraging the individual capacity for decision making – empowering the individual

This direction of transition policies is still undeveloped in Bulgaria. The country shares the all-European trend toward activation of young people, that is, mobilizing individuals to engage more actively in the process of their own labour market integration and wider social inclusion. However, the approach that the country applies to the key mechanism of activation policies, the individual action plan (IAP), is very narrow. It limits activation to labour market integration only and relies mostly on negative incentives and young people's extrinsic motivation. Restricted benefit entitlements and removal from register are directed to prevent long-term unemployment, while IAPs in Denmark, Finland and Slovenia are based on offering a wide range of educational and training options and individual counselling and rely on positive incentives and intrinsic motivation.

Individual orientation and counselling for young people are not a major activity of the labour offices. Individual plans for action are being introduced for each young person but the measure does not take into account the inexperience of the staff with working with young people or their enormous workload – for instance, there is no statistics how many individual plans each staff member has to prepare together with the young person and how many meetings between them are needed for this purpose. As the JAP (2002) pointed out, there is a need for a change of the dominant culture in the public employment services – from a widely administrative approach to a client oriented approach. Besides, there is no established system for cooperative work in creating IAPs together with other expert institutions and specialists – educational, social, medical or other. In the activities of the institutions we have not yet emphasized the recognition of individual needs and opportunities in order to motivate young people to participate in the preparation and execution of these individual plans for action. As a result, the possible unintended 'side effects' pushing young people into inactivity are not taken into consideration. Limiting activation to job placements and measuring its success by the increase in the numbers of young unemployed who have taken a job does not account for the duration of the employment gained, nor for the personal satisfaction with the income and working conditions. Under the conditions of a significant spread of informal and undeclared work, such activation policy might lead to de-motivation and disengagement.

d. Coordination of policies

There have been attempts in this sphere to raise the level of cooperation between the different institutions whose aim it is to facilitate youth transitions. The role of a coordinator of the

youth policy in the country is played by the Agency (former Ministry) of Youth and Sport which is trying to coordinate the activities of 14 ministries based on the Strategy for National Youth Policy for the period 2003-2007. In the first Annual Youth Report developed in 2004 with the objective to present the latest state of youth, the main priorities of state youth policy, the accomplishments so far and the future activities concerning youth in Bulgaria, what has been emphasized is the activities of the state institutions but there is no systematic effort towards cooperation with the civil sector. The agency does not have enough personnel and authority for effective work. What is needed is a capacity for institutional flexibility and reflexivity as well as a greater level of decentralization and autonomy of the staff who work on youth policy. It is not noticeable that there are any efforts to achieve the engagement of the financial and economic policy on national, regional and local level with the social support for youth transitions. The potential of youth organisations and the voluntary sector as a whole is not taken into consideration as a resource of youth policy.

In Bulgaria tripartism is the legal principle of the employment policy and the vocational education and training policy. Various tripartite councils function at the national, regional and levels but their activities are far from reaching an effective model of integrated activities based on the involvement of different types of actors (from the state, market and civil society), and in different policy sectors (not only employment and training, but also social protection, health, housing). Even in the field of vocational training, where the need of communication and integration of different actors seems self-evident, the created networks remain rather formal and do not provide the effective restructuring of the system. Thus the JAP (2002) identified an acute need for developing a strategy for continuing training in close cooperation with the social partners in order to ensure curricula tailored to companies' needs, as well as raise the employers' awareness of the importance of training.

3. Conclusions

In the course of Bulgaria's transition from the centrally planned to a market economy young people as a whole turned to be a vulnerable group in the newly formed labour market. A comprehensive policy aiming to enhance the social integration of young people should address the problems which young people face in a holistic way, integrating approaches across different sectors. To prevent poverty and social exclusion among the young, the country's youth policy still needs to find the appropriate mix of social protection and assistance measures with education, training and employment policies. A lot of the specific disadvantages of young people in Bulgaria are caused by the particular economic situation in the country, the slow development of the service sector, the lack of investments and job creation. Assessing policies for disadvantaged youth in Bulgaria requires taking into account the importance of the integration of economic and youth policies if they are to have a sustainable effect on youth social inclusion. Inclusion has to become a hard criterion in national, regional and local economic policies in the same way as policies for disadvantaged youth aim at economic effect among others.

In our opinion the main flaws in the system for supporting youth transitions in Bulgaria are

the following:

- Lack of preventative policy against dropping out of school and leaving the educational system without acquiring qualifications,
- Lack of a system for training and apprenticeship in a real setting with modern equipment,
- Lack of a system for monitoring the qualification demands of the real economy (state, private and nongovernmental sector),
- Lack of individualised counselling for young people with complex needs, which to build upon their own perspectives and motivation,
- Lack of a system of assessment and monitoring according to established and socially approved indicators of the programs and measures in the educational, labour, housing and family policies that target young people.

Major accomplishments of the youth policy in the country are:

- The chosen structural approach towards youth disadvantage,
- The wide range of programs and measures addressing specific groups among young people (even though their reach is very small),
- Some of the programs like the ones described in this report are very popular among young people and can be considered good practices on a European level.

From a researcher's standpoint in order to have a more complete scientific founding of youth policy in Bulgaria we need to:

- Gather comparative statistical data which to allow systematic monitoring of the tendencies in the transitions of young people,
- Conduct regular research directed by independent experts on the flaws and good practices of the functioning programs and measures with the goal of raising their efficiency,
- Cast to light the values, aspirations and life plans of young people as well as their expectations and satisfaction from the programs and measures of youth policy.

Focusing on disadvantaged youth in this study does not mean to neglect young people's potential for personal development and societal innovation. Young people's attitudes and expectations have to be made visible and taken into account in devising and evaluating policies. Youth policies can be effective when built upon the active participation of young people in the sense of choice and decision-making.

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Denmark

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Introduction

This report documents the information gathered with regard to constellations of disadvantage in youth transitions in Denmark and the policy measures adopted by the Danish government. The report is based on national statistics, evaluation reports and research literature. Additionally, a range of local and national policy makers and experts were consulted.³

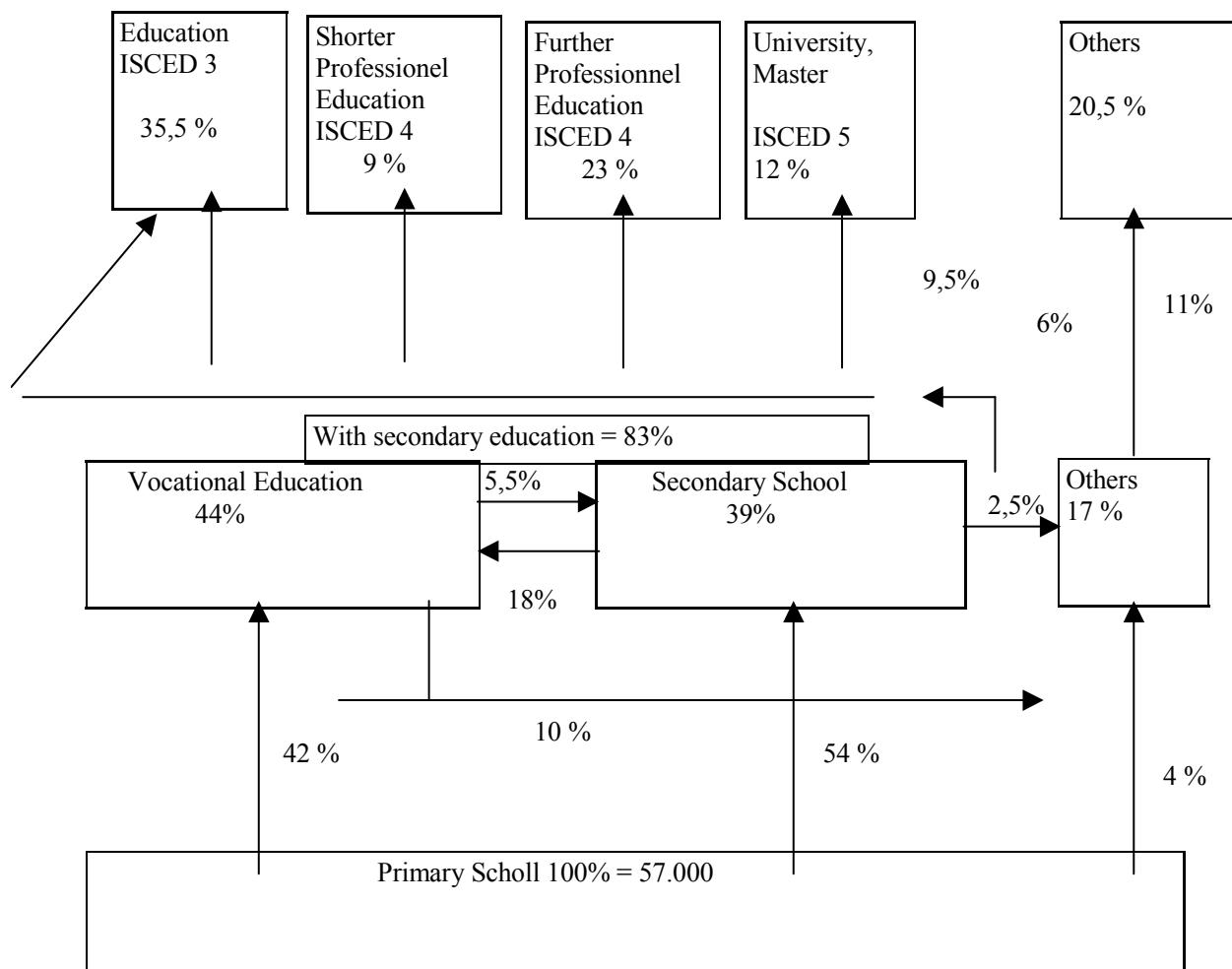
Disadvantaged in Denmark

Whether young people become disadvantaged in Denmark depends on how they are able to handle the increasing individualised demands. Young people with few resources often fail, and personal, educational, social and economic factors are all important in terms of whether one becomes disadvantaged or not.

- The key indicator for disadvantaged youth in Denmark is education.
- Denmark is a society based on knowledge and it is therefore essential to **at least achieve a secondary school degree**. Today 83% of the population achieve a secondary education and in the government platform 2005 it is formulated that at least 85% should successfully complete secondary school in 2010 and 95% in 2015.

³ Initially it was planned to join and discuss the draft national report during a pre-arranged internal meeting between the Ministry of Social Affairs, the Ministry of Family and Consumerism, the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Refugees, Immigrants and Integration, the Ministry of Justice and the Ministry of Finance on the issue of social heritage and disadvantaged people in Denmark (Kommisoriuum til opfølgning på regeringsgrundlag: Bekæmpelse af negativ social arv, Ministry of Social Affairs, 10 marts 2005). Unfortunately this meeting was cancelled at a point where organising an alternative was too late and other options had to be made. Therefore personal and/or written contact was made with the different parties to get their reactions and comments to the National briefing paper (see Annex I to Volume 1 for a list of persons consulted).

Figure 1: Pathways and destinations of young people through the Danish transition system



The profile of the youth leaving compulsory education in the year 2000
 (Source: Danmarks Statistik & UNI_C Statistik og Analyse)

Figure 1 shows that 79,5 % of youth who left compulsory education in 2000 achieve or will achieve a recognised post-compulsory qualification.

- In both the scientific literature and public debate increasingly attention has focused on the fact that the challenge in this respect is more **maintenance** rather than recruitment⁴. The main problem is not primarily to get young people to start an education, but to keep them from dropping out of the education system before completing the respective course. This is reflected in policies such as the counselling and guidance reform⁵. (see below and also Annex IV)
- In spite of the fact that young people in general could be said to have more opportunities and resources today, the **increasing expectations and demands in the education system**

⁴ “frafald til fastholdelse” (Dropout for Containment) published by the Ministry of Education, 2005
pub.uvm.dk/2005/frafald

⁵ Lov om vejledning om valg af uddannelse og erhverv, LOV nr. 298 af 30/04/2003

and the labour market (i.e. the gymnasium reform, individualised action plans) increase the disadvantage of young people who lack resources (social/cultural or intellectual).⁶

The result is an increasing **polarisation between weak and strong youth** which means that the disadvantaged become more disadvantaged whereas young people with academic skills are given priority. It is estimated that 20% of the youth generation is at risk of becoming disadvantaged.⁷

- In Denmark **social heritage** still plays an important role regarding the ability to be successfully integrated in the education system and the labour market, especially in terms of young people with ‘other’ ethnic origin.⁸

The percentage of early school leaving and youth unemployment are higher among young people with ‘other’ ethnic origin. Twice as many young people with ‘other’ ethnic origin drop out of secondary school.⁹ Social and cultural background seems to play an important role on whether the individual can meet the increasing demands and expectations of the education system and the labour market.¹⁰

- In Denmark factors such as **geography** seem to play a minimal role as an indicator of disadvantaged youth. Being a small country, most young people leaving compulsory school either travel on a daily basis or move to a nearby region to study further. The only exceptions are the more isolated Islands (e.g. Bornholm) from where, young people seeking education after secondary school may have to move in order to participate.

Youth unemployment.

Youth Unemployment in Denmark: Percentage of unemployed workforce (Rate)

	Total	Men	Women
2003	9,9	10,7	9,1
2004	8,2	8,8	7,5

Source: Eurostat

Youth Unemployment in Denmark: Percentage of unemployed population (Ratio)

	Total	Men	Women
2003	6	6,2	5,9
2004	5,6	6,2	4,9

Source: Eurostat

⁶ Lov nr. 95 af 18/02/2004 and “Hvad Virker”, (“What works”) Published by the Ministry of Education in 1999 www.pub.uvm.dk/1999/hvadvirker/1.htm

⁷ Koch I. & Bechmann Jensen T: "Anonym Rådgivning af børn og Unge" (Anonymous Counselling of children and Young people), Sikon, Cph. 1999

⁸ www.social.dk/det_sociale_system/forskning/Forskning_om_negativ_social_arv.html

⁹ “En ny chance til alle”, (New Chance for everyone) published by The Ministry of Integration, 2005 www.inm.dk/publikationer/En_ny_chance_til_alle/index.htm and the NAP Denmark 2004

¹⁰ www.social.dk/det_sociale_system/forskning/Forskning_om_negativ_social_arv.html (Research on negative Social Heritage)

Unemployment rates (15-24 years) by highest level of education attained in 2003 (3rd quarter)

	Male	Female	Total
ISCED 0-2	13,2	9,4	11,5
ISCED 3-4	7,0	9,1	8,1
Total	10,8	9,8	10,3

Source: Eurostat

Unemployment rates (15-24 years) by highest level of education attained in 2004 (3rd quarter)

	Male	Female	Total
ISCED 0-2	9,0	7,0 u	8,2
ISCED 3-4	9,0	7,9	8,4
Total	10,5	7,5	9,1

Source: Eurostat. U= Uncertain data (see Eurostat for further explanation).

The main focus in Denmark is not youth unemployment but young people without education.

- **The demand for un-skilled labour is decreasing** and the level of education seems to be the most important aspect in predicting subsequent labour market integration in Denmark.
- The **change of work forms** also creates a risk of becoming disadvantaged. Various forms of non-standard work such as part-time jobs and contract work are replacing full-time jobs.
- Many people especially the young have difficulties in integrating the labour market in the form of full-time employment, but are instead hired in non-standard jobs characterised by insecurity and lower salaries.
- In Denmark there is no definition of a **youth labour market**, but some sectors of the economy are more likely to employ young people. In hotels and restaurants more than 50% of the employees are under the age of 30.¹¹

Policies regarding disadvantaged youth

Education is the crucial a factor in entering the labour market. Therefore **most policies concerning disadvantaged youth are aimed at school and education**. (see also Annex IV, Chapter 1 in this volume)

Everyone regardless of his or her social and economic heritage should have the opportunity for education.¹²

This education policy must be seen in a global context, where education and knowledge play a dominant role according to competitive power regarding national interests. But the increasing tendency to individualisation involves a dilemma, when the increasing struggle for competitive power not only results in differentiation but also marginalization.¹³

¹¹ Danmarks Statistik (Statistics of Denmark)

¹² www.social.dk/det_sociale_system/forskning/Forskning_om_negativ_social_arv.html

¹³ Retention in Vocational Education in Denmark -A best practice study published by The Ministry of Education 2005 pub.uvm.dk/2005/retention/

Secondary education (general):

- **Decentralisation of secondary education** – decentralisation in this context applies to both the use of grants and also to the establishment of the contents of the secondary education programmes. It is the aim of this decentralisation to make the education system more flexible, to improve the quality of the programmes and support an optimal resource allocation.
- **A common structure** for ordinary secondary education and vocational education has been introduced to make it possible to **transfer credits** for parts completed in one programme to other programme(s).¹⁴ This can be seen within a European context, in which a system of combining modules of education makes it possible to change directions and to build ones own education. One problem arising from this is, that learning is split up into more specialised courses - not necessarily containing competencies in general except competencies in certain fields or themes, which are individually organised.
- Introduction of general **reforms** within secondary education.¹⁵

“The gymnasium reform: The gymnasium reform will to a greater extent individualise secondary education and the focus will be on individual learning processes, project work, and less collective classroom-teaching. The question is what consequences will this have for disadvantaged youth. Finally the HF-reform will make these education programmes more oriented towards practical issues”. (*Lars Bo Henriksen, Office of Youth Education, The County of Copenhagen*)

Vocational education:

The Danish vocational education system alternates between school education and vocational training, which means that there is no distinctive form of vocational training¹⁶.

Vocational education is in general organised in one of the following two ways:

- School-based: In which education starts in school. After 1/2 to 2 years the pupil applies for apprenticeship in a company and finishes the education in the company¹⁷.
- Practice-based: The student signs a contract with a company before attending school education and after this is completed education alternates between practice and academic education¹⁸.

¹⁴ Retention in Vocational Education in Denmark -A best practice study published by The Ministry of Education 2005 pub.uvm.dk/2005/retention/

¹⁵ LOV nr. 95 af 18/02/2004

¹⁶ Retention in Vocational Education in Denmark -A best practice study published by The Ministry of Education 2005 pub.uvm.dk/2005/retention

¹⁷ Retention in Vocational Education in Denmark -A best practice study published by The Ministry of Education 2005 pub.uvm.dk/2005/retention

¹⁸ Retention in Vocational Education in Denmark -A best practice study published by The Ministry of Education 2005 pub.uvm.dk/2005/retention

The total number of students who were enrolled in vocational education was 97.496 in 2004 whereas the majority chose the school-route¹⁹. There are approximately 44% of a year group that chooses a vocational education²⁰.

To ease the transition from vocational school to labour market, **initiatives considering apprenticeship** have been established. These initiatives were introduced as some students, especially students who are from an immigrant background, have difficulties in finding an apprentice place. This represents a problem because apprenticeship is an important and integrated part of the education. Because of the limited access to apprenticeships, students drop out of education. The aim is therefore to create a dialogue with employers to create more new places. Finally in those cases where the demands for apprenticeships are greater than the supply, workshops in the schools have been established to replace company-based apprenticeships.²¹

The problem is that the number of apprenticeship-placements is dropping. There are 9000 fewer apprenticeships in 2005 than was the case in 2001²² and the numbers of apprenticeships based within schools are increasing:

Development in vocational education; number of pupils.

Year	1998	2004
School-based	25.712	17.775
Practise-based	57.506	71.974
School-based apprenticeships	1.524	7.747

Source: Danmarks Statistik

The government intends to **reintroduce vocational training i.e. apprenticeship without academic education** in order to minimise dropout especially among ethnic minority youth who represent a large percentage of drop outs.²³ 60 % immigrants drop out, whereas the percentage for Danes is 32 %. As highlighted above, this is mainly due to the problems in providing apprenticeship placements for young immigrants. The willingness to work for integration of immigrants in Danish companies is doubtful. However the problems also have to do with a lack of motivation or even trust in the system of placement among young immigrants. They seem to give up in advance, as they know from peers and others the difficulties they are likely to face.²⁴ Another possible explanation could be the lack of support from families and a desire to earn money as soon as possible, with involvement in legal or illegal businesses.

Education Allowance Scheme:

A key pillar of the Danish education system is the scheme of education allowances. The education grant and loan scheme is based on the principle that everybody regardless disabilities, economic and social situation will be given equal opportunities for education and

¹⁹ Danmarks Statistik

²⁰ Ministry of Education.

²¹ Ministry of Education.

²² Danmarks Statistik

²³ The Government Platform 2005

²⁴ Ungdomsforskning årg. 3, nr. 3 & 4, Dec. 2004; Unge i tal og tekst

that everybody over 18 years of age is entitled to financial support. The scheme is split in two strands:

a) Students enrolled in post-compulsory education receive a grant which until the student reaches 20 years of age is means-tested. Depending upon parental income grants are reduced on a sliding scale, ending in a minimum grant.

b) Students enrolled in higher education are entitled to a number of monthly grants corresponding to the prescribed duration of the chosen study plus 12 months (within the maximum of 70 grants students can change from one course to another).

Over 300.000 students that is two thirds of those in post-compulsory and higher education benefit from these two types of support every year with an annual budget of ca. 1,5 Billion € (ca. 0.8 % of GDP)

Guidance reform, individual action plans and tests.²⁵

- **A new guidance reform** came into force on the 1st of August 2004. The primary reason for this initiative is to make it easier to find and chose education courses and employment. The main target group for this reform is disadvantaged youth. This is because of the acknowledgement that young people with few or fewer resources, need help to a greater extend in navigating the increasingly individualised education system. Ideally the Danish education system represents a democratic system where everything is possible for everybody, but in practice it seems that the individualised education system de-motivates young people with few resources. Whereby the range of existing possibilities and demands can overwhelm these young people²⁶ or alternatively because the individual possibilities appear to contradict how they perceive how the better opportunities are actually distributed, in other words, cultural and social background still plays a major role. The extensive guidance provided is therefore intended to guide the student through education which seems to be a necessary prerequisite in order to become a full member and participant in Danish society.

In accordance with the regulations²⁷ disadvantaged youth is defined as young people between 18 and 25 years old, who are not in education or in job. Young people whose life situation suddenly changes, young people with physically or psychological handicaps, people who attend special classes or receive special education, people with multiple social problems and not least ethnic minority youth, especially 2nd generation immigrants.

Because the reform is new, there are no statistics considering the distribution of the different groups in the counselling system except for the distribution of ethnic minority youth. Figures from Copenhagen Youth Counselling show that ethnic minority youth account for 26,8 % of the distribution in Copenhagen. However it must be taken into account that ethnic minority youth represent a larger percentage of youth in general in Copenhagen, which of course to

²⁵ See also Annex IV, Chapter 5 in this volume.

²⁶ "De skal selv finde ud af det, og det er der mange der ikke magter - om udsatte unge i en individualiseret tid" (It is up to themselves to find out – on youth at risk in times of individualisation) (2005), Noemi Katzenelson

²⁷ Lov om vejledning om valg af uddannelse og erhverv, LOV nr. 298 af 30/04/2003

some extent distorts the overall picture. Another explanation for the apparently large number could be the fact that the new guidance reform is specifically targeted towards disadvantaged youth, among these ethnic minorities, and therefore one could argue, that the measure has worked for this particular group. In continuation of this argument different initiatives illustrate that much has been done to reach ethnic minority youth in terms of counselling.

In many municipalities there exist specialised counselling centres for ethnic minority youth. Here, counsellors of ethnic minority background often manage the counselling, which promotes a better understanding of life conditions etc. There is also much web-based guidance specifically targeted at ethnic minority youth. In spite of this wide range of counselling and guidance opportunities ethnic youth still represent the group with the highest drop out rate – especially within vocational education structures.²⁸

The problem in most cases is that the guidance offers only reach those pupils who by themselves actively seek information and counselling, i.e. more strong pupils/youngsters, both socially and academic, and it can therefore be questioned whether ethnic minority youth really have an educational choice. It certainly depends on their individual competencies and their readiness to seek advice.

- In some municipalities this **guidance obligation has been exceeded**. There are municipalities, which provide active out-reach counselling on further education possibilities, and the labour market situation up to two years after the pupil has left primary education. In addition young people who face special difficulties in their transition from primary school are offered a more personally organised counselling. Counselling is offered until the student has reached a 'gratifying' situation.²⁹ 'Gratifying' is the official term, but this of course can be interpreted in different ways. Optimally, it means that both the counsellor and the young person are satisfied with the pathway and means chosen, but formally any placement whether relevant or irrelevant to the young person's interests could be seen as "gratifying/satisfying" from a bureaucratic point of view.
- The increasingly de-standardised transition from education to labour market results in increased individualisation, where more and more personal decisions have to be taken alone. The strong focus on responsibility for ones own learning disregards the need for strong social and cultural ballast in order to deal with this level of responsibility that exists within individualised educational structures. **This individualisation is reflected in the implementation and use of individualised action plans.** In general individualised action plans are implemented in many contexts, within compulsory school settings, under guidance settings both at the local and regional level, and within the employment service. The competencies of the pupil in question are outlined and individual aims are developed. Therefore it should be possible to identify weak and strong aspects of the pupil at an early stage and find ways and methods to act upon these.
- The government (inspired by the PISA results) intends to introduce more **tests** in primary education in order to identify academic weak pupils at as early a stage as possible.

²⁸ "udsatte unge i erhvervsuddannelserne" (Youth at risk in Vocational training) (2005), Noemi Katzenelson

²⁹ Ungdommens Uddannelsesvejledning, (Educational guidance of Youth) Silkeborg Kommune.

"The question is whether these test actually tell us something about the competencies of the pupil or simply tells us something about the pupils skills in test-taking". *Jette Bælum (Counsellor of children and young people, Municipality of Taastrup)*

- Disadvantaged youth, i.e. young people without a secondary education or without any contact with the labour market, can be activated through an education course in a **production school**.³⁰ Young people below the age of 25 regardless of whether or not they receive unemployment benefits from the state or activation benefits from the local authorities can be activated after a period of three months of unemployment. 30 hours per week are offered, however the education provided at production schools does not lead to formal qualifications in terms of employment or further education, but instead gives the pupil alternative learning experiences (see Annex IV, Chapter 1 in this volume).³¹

Activation:

A special programme focused on disadvantaged youth in terms of activation came into force the 1st of January 1999.³² (see Annex IV, Chapter 6 in this volume) Young people without qualifying education are activated much earlier than previously, and the activation profit is halved in order to motivate the young people to (re)-enter education or the labour market. This programme seems to have worked, in statistical terms but not necessarily at the individual level. The number of unemployed young people has decreased. Following this new legislative reformulation more young people on welfare benefits have re-entered the education system or the labour market and the number of young people on activation welfare has declined:

Number of unemployed aged 18- 29:

Year	1984	2004
Men	66.006	17.710
Female	55.836	33.563
Total	121.842	51.273

Source: Danmarks statistik

Even though the amount of unemployed young people seems to have dropped dramatically, it has to be considered that the overall number of people aged 18-29 has also decreased significantly over the past 20 years. There are approximately 20 % less people in the age group in 2004. (Source: Danmarks Statistik.)

- The activation of unemployed young people started in the late eighties as the 'Youth Effort' and special policies for people under 30 still exist, but the policies had such a huge impact on the unemployment rate that activation policies now exist for all unemployed. In general many people who are activated express anger or at least scepticism towards the activation-policy. For a number of years it was in everyday language referred to as "stupid at work" instead of the official name "young at work" (young and stupid are close in pronunciation in Danish). This scepticism stems from the attitude, that people activated often

³⁰ See Annex IV, Chapter 1 in this volume

³¹ "Produktionsskolerne i Danmark – et resume", (Productionschools in Denmark - a resumé)
www.undervisningsministeriet.dk and Annex IV in this report.

³² Arbejdsmarkedsreformens 3. fase, (Labourmarket Reform, 3 rd. fase) jf. Ministry of Employment and
www.ams.dk/publikationer

feel forced into irrelevant employment or schemes, that are not taken seriously and do not lead to real opportunities for integration in ordinary work/education. Officially the activation policy is regarded as successful and those who are activated do not count in the calculation of unemployment statistics.

- One can argue that the Danish activation policy is successful due to the extent of implementation. But when quality is evaluated instead of looking at the quantitative indicators, it is questionable whether activation can be evaluated as successful when it is used as a **coercive measure**. Therefore different (often local) initiatives are established which aim to turn the activation effort into a **participation** process. This means that the activated to a greater extent have influence over their activation course (see Annex IV).

Conclusion

The recently formed Government has published their Government platform 2005, which include several reforms concerning education and therefore also youth unemployment. The major goal is that everyone should finish a secondary education. The government will accomplish this by:

- Creating more placements (apprenticeships, løntilskud XXX)
- Reward firms, who create extra placements (apprenticeships)
- Reintroduce Practice Apprenticeship (where schooling can take place within the firm).
- Reduce school leaving, especially in vocational schools
- Focus on the responsibilities of the parents
- Increase the responsibilities of the municipality
- The unemployed shall be referred to education provision or to employment instead of unemployment benefits (activation)
- Increase the possibilities to achieve qualifications in vocational schools for young immigrants
- 10th. Grade shall be targeted to qualify disadvantaged pupils in their transition to secondary education (young people in general should move on to a youth education after finishing 9th. grade)

In the implementation and update report on the NAP for Inclusion³³ as well as in the Government platform many initiatives are designed as either "sticks or carrots", this means for instance that benefits are cut or the tolerance of letting pupils stay in school (10th.grade) or young people in education is lowered. Young people are activated earlier than before and pupils/young people are obliged to make action plans from primary school and onwards. On the other hand more opportunities for counselling, guidance and the freedom to choose educational pathways have been provided.

The main concern regarding education is focused on both providing enough opportunities for young people to get an education at the same time as trying to speed up the amount of time spent within the education system.

³³The NAP/Inclusion 2003-2005 Denmark June 2005

As “sticks” and “carrots” are often used at the same time, it is hard to be certain of the impact of a single initiative and the overall picture is easily blurred in a way, which makes adjustments difficult.

Even though within the Government Platform and the NAP for inclusion, intentions are good regarding the further inclusion of disadvantaged people - a number of points could be mentioned, regarding the possible implicit problems.

Denmark has a fairly long tradition of trying to implement the idea of Life long Learning as well as trying to tailor education program to individuals for both young people and adults³⁴. There have been many social and cultural projects, among the former ‘Open Youth Education’, and the Production schools and the implementation of a pedagogy involving non-formal learning and increased participation from pupils/students (see Annex IV in this volume). This approach has to be seen as a result of a longer-term development.

During the past 5-7 years and in particular after the new liberal government came into power in 2001, this perspective is mixed with a more radical view highlighting the need for society for more young people to be formally educated and qualified in a shorter period of time. As future demographic projections highlight larger proportions of the population will reach the age of pension and withdraw from the labour market, whilst at the same time the number of young people entering the labour market will decrease³⁵, this appears to have led to a panic seem within the administration.

A number of school forms have been put under pressure such as continuation schools (which young people attend after finishing compulsory school for one year and live together with peers within the school), 10th Grade in primary school, and alternative ("free") schools etc. As these types of school have non-formal learning curricula and serve to create space for personal and social development without providing formal qualifications, they are regarded as an extra service, which is not efficient enough.

It is felt that only disadvantaged young people should enter these alternative practices, whereby the often very successful combination of disadvantaged youth and youth with more promising futures is being eroded or at least harder to maintain.

Regarding ethnic minority youth, the challenge of education and employment seems difficult to cope with. Many males and females dropout of the education system, but this is particularly the case among young females with an ethnic background other than Danish.

For many ethnic minority youth no problems arise, but for a large proportion there seems to be a mismatch of the educational system and both the ethnic background of people as well as in their (both among young people and their parents) trust in the efforts of society.

In many respects Denmark increasingly holds a very strict attitude towards immigrants regarding both entering Denmark and regulating behaviour once they have entered. Even though the amount of immigrants in Denmark is not very high in comparison to a number of other European Countries and even though the Danish education system is known for

³⁴ National actions to implement Lifelong Learning in Europe, Eurydice 2001

³⁵ The NAP 2004 and Government Platform 2005

displaying tolerance - integrating ethnic minority youth represents a significant challenge to society.

The dialogue with young people and understanding of the situation in which ethnic minority youth are confronted seems to be increasingly less of a priority. Instead increasing demands are also put on ethnic minority youth to enter and complete a qualifying education and assimilate to a Danish reality (labour market demands as well as social behaviour). Employers are more reluctant to employ ethnic minority youth both in general as well as in terms of apprenticeship places. In Public Schools in Copenhagen a proportion of ethnic minority youth are transferred to other schools to lower the percentage of pupils of an ethnic origin than Danish - which heavily contradicts the principle of having a free choice of public school. Limits are put on housing companies regarding the percentage of 'foreign people' living in certain buildings etc. The threat of punishing people (and in some respects even their families) with other ethnic origin for acts of criminal behaviour through sending them back to their country of origin are aspects of the ongoing public debate among politicians.

Individual considerations appear to be seen as less important in terms of ethnic minority youth compared to youth in general. Ethnic minority youth therefore can be seen as caught up between the wishes and aspirations of parents, peers and society pointing in different directions.

In Denmark, both ethnic minority and disadvantaged youth in general are facing a political atmosphere, which is changing its direction towards one where more demands put on the individual in order to achieve a positive outcome.

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This report is based on Finnish national data that have been collected through a standardised questionnaire as well as on research, national statistics, policy documents, the interim summary report of the co-ordinator, and reflections and supplements from the national referee group which gathered during a national workshop and continued to collaborate also after this (see below).

1. On defining disadvantage and early school leaving in a Finnish context

The discussion about excluded youth remaining outside of education and working life emerged during the 1980s in Finland, although already in the 1970s there was a discussion about young people's inactivity (Järvinen & Jahnukainen 2001). There is however, no fixed codification for disadvantaged youth and definitions vary in research. As such the idea of disadvantaged youth is used very widely. For example, in research it addresses those who are at risk of exclusion (marginalisation risk), inasmuch as future potential problems can already be anticipated. A model of hierarchy (Jahnukainen 2001; Takala 1992) is often referred to when talking about youth at risk: Stage 1: Problems at school and/or at home, Stage 2: Failure at school and dropping out of school (educational exclusion), Stage 3: Poor status on the labour market (exclusion from work), Stage 4: Being part of a deviant sub-culture (uneducated, unemployed, poor), Stage 5: Being part of a deviant sub-culture (criminals, alcoholics, drug addicts: placed in prison or other institutions).

Although it is important to differentiate between the different stages, this kind of hierarchy suggests a rather destructive pattern. The Finnish National Action Plan for Inclusion 2003 defines exclusion as a process in which the impact of deprivation comes to be reflected in various areas of life (NAPIncl, 2003). At the same time as acknowledging the process of marginalisation, it is as important to stress both the structural and individual factors when addressing disadvantage among youth. We also need to distinguish a number of dimensions that are in play: 1) A socio-economic dimension comprising questions of class, group, gender and ethnicity. 2) A time and place dimension with geographical disparities and legislative restructuring. 3) A dimension related to various settings where considerations at the macro, meso and micro level must be specified at each level (Breedgard & Jorgensen 2000). Disadvantage consequently means that key prerequisites for a standard biographical transition process are lacking (see Volume 1, Chapter 3).

According to the implementation report of the National Action Plan against Exclusion and Poverty from 2005 (NAPIncl, 2005) there have been no major changes in the various risk dimensions of social exclusion in recent years. However, the fact that problems tend to persist

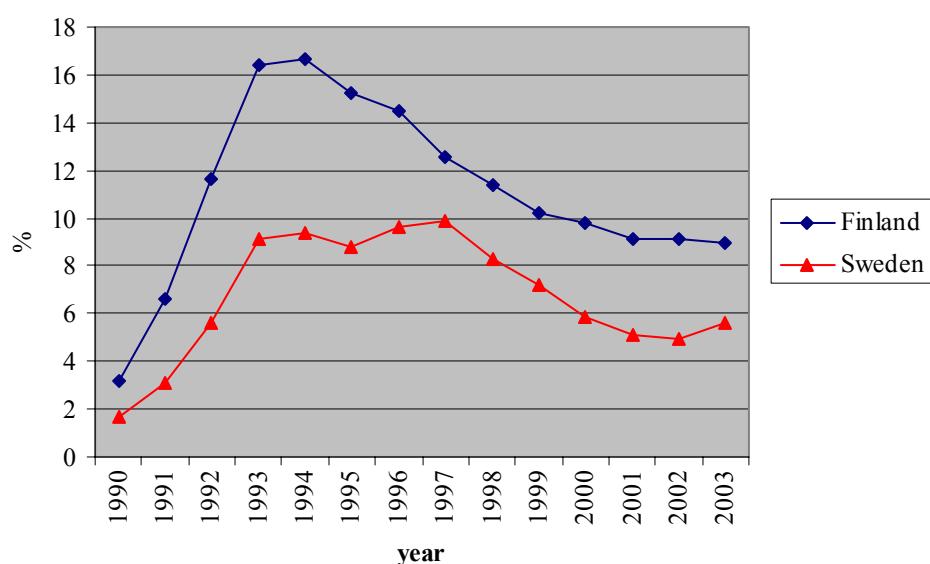
and that there is an increase of problems due to increasing substance abuse and in the number of children places in care outside the home, has given rise to alarm.

2. Youth unemployment and early school leaving—background indicators and consequences

After a period of strong economic growth, Finland experienced a sharp economic downturn in the beginning of the 1990s, with rapidly rising unemployment rates. Due to its specific economic situation strongly affected by the transformation in the former Soviet Union, the change in Finland was dramatic, as unemployment increased from 3% in 1990 to 17% in 1994. Even if the peak was reached in 1994, unemployment has remained high compared to the situation of the late 1980s and early 1990s. Despite a small decrease in recent years, unemployment is still substantially higher (see Figure 1) than in the other Scandinavian and EU countries and equal to the average level of unemployment in OECD countries (OECD 2004; cf. Eurostat LFS).

In November 2004 the overall unemployment rate was 8.1% (Statistics Finland 2004). The situation among young people has been even more difficult and in 2003 youth unemployment was still 22% and 20.7% in 2004, although it has decreased from the peak in 1994, when it was 31% (Malmberg-Heimonen 2005). In Finland in the 1990s, youth unemployment rose at a higher rate than was average across the EU countries, the OECD countries or Nordic Countries. It has remained at a high level since. The unemployment rate of 20% is 4% higher than that of other EU countries and 10% higher than among the average OECD country.

Figure 1. Unemployment in Finland and Sweden (15–64), 1990–2003 (OECD 2004)



This corresponds to a *youth unemployment ratio* which in the recent years has been around 10% (Eurostat LFS; NAP 2004). The high level can partly be explained by the fact that a

large share of full-time students participate in the labour force and actively search for jobs, which is also reflected by studies taking longer and longer. Youth unemployment is 80% comprised of "newcomers", which means that breaking into the labour market is the main problem. School dropouts are one reason for youth unemployment. The unemployment rate among young women is slightly higher than among men, but long-term unemployment is more usual among men.

Even though the unemployment rate is higher among youth, the long-term unemployment rate is lower. Long-term unemployment among the youth is, at 11%, lower than the average across Europe (cf. NAP, 2004).

With regard to education, in Finland high participation rates are common, although there are differences across different population groups (Järvinen & Vanttaja 2004). In 2003, 92% of 18-year-old Finns compared to an average of 77% of EU-25 were full-time or part-time students (Eurostat).

Young people enter the labour market relatively late in Finland. This is due to delays in beginning studies and to long study times (NAPIcl, 2005). The increase in education standards has confirmed the assimilation between the educational degree and labour-market opportunities. During the 1990s and onwards it has been almost impossible to get a job without some sort of education certificate. Gradually we have arrived at a situation where education has become almost inescapable, but it is still, however, not sufficient for what is needed for entry into the labour market (e.g. the need for work experience) – especially among youth. Vanttaja & Järvinen (2004) explain this by means of job competition theory. Firstly, the certificate is a signal of the educability of the individual: the capability to learn new things and information. Secondly, the more of an education the job seeker has, the less the employer needs to educate at their own expense.

Regional differences of health and well-being have always been significant in Finland. The gap is the widest between sparsely-populated areas and urban centres. However studies have found out that young people do not reflect the same area-related urban-rural differences that appear among adult population. Even though children grow up in very different circumstances the school-system prevents exclusion and health disparities among the young, at least to same extent (Paju 2004) Today the unemployment rate in some regions of northern and eastern Finland is more than three times higher than that of growth regions. The regional disparities among youth unemployment (15–24) are almost the same as the overall unemployment.

Finland has few *immigrants* and few statistics on young people of non-Finnish origin. There are several deficits when it comes to registering immigrants. Official statistics only record citizenship, language, and country of origin. These items are not detailed enough to build an accurate picture of immigrants in the country (Forsander 2004). Nevertheless it enables some kind of estimation. By the end of 2003, about 2.2% of the population had foreign citizenship and an estimate of immigrant unemployment on basis of labour force statistics was 29% (cf. NAP, 2004; NAPIcl, 2005). According to a study (Järvinen 1999) 7% of the young who are outside the labour market and educational programs are children to parents who are born in a country other than Finland. Only about 40% proceeded to post-compulsory education and 25% of these dropped out of school. Key problems included a lack of knowledge of

educational options, changes in life, and language difficulties. Unemployment among ethnic minorities still varies. A recent study (Hämäläinen et al. 2005) differentiated between countries of origin and grouped them into four categories: OECD, neighbouring countries Russia and Estonia, YIIS (Yugoslavia, Iran, Iraq and Somalia), and the remaining other countries. The main finding was that unemployment varies but that employment among immigrants greatly increases in proportion to the years stayed in Finland. Immigrant employment is hindered by language difficulties, problems in identifying professional competence, the lack of supplementary studies, and in some cases, low levels of education. The attitudes of the majority population and the problems that immigrants face in adapting to a new culture also make it difficult for immigrants to find employment (NAPIncl, 2003).

The prevalence of *poverty* and particularly long-term poverty has increased in recent years. The level of most minimum and family benefits has fallen behind general income development, while long-term unemployment remains common and many unemployed rely solely on basic unemployment security (National Action Plan 2005). Reports show also that *poverty* among young people has increased during the last decade. This has partly to do with the expansion of higher education, but also with the high rate of unemployment. Most young people have not been able to build up insurance rights, and this has lead to increasing numbers having to rely on means-tested assistance and also on their families. Further, there has been an increase in the numbers of *working poor*. According to a recent study about 5% of the working population is poor. The poverty risk is highest among women, young people, and those with less education (Kauhanen 2005). A recent study (Moisio 2005) has also shown that poverty among children has increased.

Early school leaving

In a European perspective Finland belongs to those countries that have low early school leaving, with over 90% of young people obtaining post-compulsory qualifications. Finland also has a comprehensive school system, training is mainly based in schools but linked to the labour market and there is only a weak effect from parent's low educational level (see Volume 1, Chapter 4).

In Finland in 2004, 10% of 16-year-olds did not continue with their education. In 1995 the school leaving rate was at its highest, at over 15%. In practice almost everyone finishes compulsory education in Finland, with only about one hundred per year leave before getting the exam. In post-compulsory education some will already leave school in the beginning of the program and some later. About 7–8% does not continue directly after the compulsory education to post-compulsory. The drop-out rate has fallen in both secondary vocational training and at polytechnics. About 12 per cent of students drop out of secondary vocational education and 7 per cent from polytechnics every year. The drop put rate is lower at upper secondary school and universities. Some of the dropouts go directly to studies in other fields, while some find work and continue their studies at a later date. (NAPIncl, 2005).

Low early school leaving correlates with the comprehensive school systems, training is largely school based but also has relevant practical elements taking place in companies; links to the labour market are close or at least becoming closer. Social inequality is relatively low while the connection between the education of the parents and that of the children is less

strong compared to other countries. Katja Komonen (2001), one of the foremost researchers on school leavers in Finland, emphasises that dropping out from school has often been seen as being related to educational or social exclusion, or exclusion from the labour market. However it needs to be emphasized that dropping out of post-compulsory education doesn't always mean dropping out from all kinds of education; usually it means a change of path.

In terms of early school leaving, *location* is a structural factor of disadvantage. The school leaving problem is greater in the metropolitan areas and new forms of multiple disadvantages are found. The increase of youth with multiple problems creates additional demands on existing multi-professional work (Karjalainen & Blomgren 2004). There also seems to be a tendency to exclude more problematic groups from schools, even though the official aim is to integrate everyone into mainstream schools. Cuts in the welfare system have lead to a lack of resources in the education system (e.g. educational support) and excessive class sizes. The metropolitan areas have typically exhibited problems in collaboration between different sectors and a lack of functional mainstream systems. Nevertheless, many structural reforms and projects have been developed in Finland.

Vanttaja & Järvinen (2004) have studied whether dropout from education and work, in the age range of 16–18, is related to future education, socio-economic position, income level, and family life. Their study showed that those who are not in education or work do not find themselves in that position by chance alone. There are many individual factors related to life-history and childhood that result in a lack of education and unemployment. These can be risks in the early childhood environment (the parent's mental health and alcohol problems and child-abuse) and in the child's behaviour (aggressive). In the research of Vanttaja & Järvinen (2004), the connections between *family background* and dropping out are clear. The youth of the target group were mostly from low-income families, less educated, and - from a labour-market perspective - in a weaker position than the population on average. The risk of drop out of children born to higher educated people seems to be much lower. It has also been shown that home and social backgrounds affect on the choice of later careers.

3. Key problems in transition from school to work

In practice almost everyone finishes the compulsory education in Finland, as only about one hundred per year leave before getting the exam. About 8% do not continue directly after compulsory education to post-compulsory. A recent study (Jahnukainen 2001) has shown that dropping out of further education in Finland is not a big problem in general; it is far more typical of students with special needs (e.g. behavioural problems). Nevertheless, the drop out phenomena and exclusion from the school system is problematic both from the individual and the social perspective (Veijola 2003).

The *level of education* among the population of Finland is high and the *quality of basic education* is good according to international comparisons. Finnish students have generally a good standard of knowledge when considering the results of the OECD's PISA-study. This is in large part due to a comprehensive and equal school and day-care system, but also to the high qualifications of teachers. According to a recent evaluation (Koulutuksen

arvointineuvoston julkaisuja 2005) the equality in basic education has strengthened and differences among schools have diminished. Basic education offers the majority a safe learning environment and working conditions are generally good. However, research from the late 1990s claims that the youth in Finland enjoy school less than in other Nordic Countries or in the United States. WHO research from 2004 has paid attention to the negative attitudes among Finnish young 11–15-year-olds compared to other countries (Järvinen & Vanttaja 2004).

Gender differences are evident. The modern school favours girls to some extent and there is a need for different learning methods particularly in regard to boys. There are also criticisms of the compulsory school because it does not sufficiently support young people who have special needs or who need special education or some extra counselling. The *transitional stages*, such as at the end of the compulsory school, are very critical and there is still a lack of emphasis during these phases. However, the differences between women and men appear to be very clear after upper secondary schooling, both in terms of the labour-market situation and salary incomes. Women more often continue their studies after the upper secondary school but men usually obtain a "higher" position and receive a higher salary further down the career path. Exclusion risks are also more prevalent among men than women (NAPIncl, 2005).

Young people *enter the labour market* relatively late in Finland. This is due to delays in beginning studies and to long study times (Finland's National Action Plan 2005). The increase in education standards has confirmed the assimilation between the educational degree and labour-market opportunities. Young people face still enormous problems in entering the labour market. A lack of working experiences makes it harder to find a job. In the labour market during the past 15 years, *fixed term contracts* have become much more common among young people than among the rest of the population. This is especially a problem among women (Järvinen & Vanttaja 2004, Nyyssölä 2002). In a European perspective Finnish young people aged 18–24 more often work in a non-standard job (Harslöf 2003). In 2003, 44% of women (aged 15–29) and 31% of the men (aged 15–29) were employed on fixed-term contracts. In 2003 a further 16% of men (15–29) and 33% of women (15–29) worked part-time (Vanttaja & Järvinen 2004). The rate of self-employment among 15–24-year-olds is very low (under 2%).

Research points out many of the young people today are satisfied to work part-time for many reasons, such as studying, taking care of children or not wanting a full-time job. According to the study of Järvinen and Vanttaja (2004), quite few work part-time because of the lack of availability of full-time work. At the same time as atypical work can give young people the opportunity of different work experience, there are also several problems with this type of employment, including low pay, non-existent unemployment benefits or health insurance, and dangerous working conditions. These types of employment can be a step towards social exclusion and labour force marginalisation (Hammer 2003). This has been further corroborated in another recent study (Moisio 2005).

Financial problems and poverty are strongly related to unemployment. Only around 25% of the young unemployed receive income-related unemployment benefits. The biggest problem is precarious careers (e.g. fixed-term contracts and part-time work). According to Moisio

(2005), poverty among children has grown during the last ten years. This is related to the economic recession and the young age group who entered the labour market in the 1990s. A total of 12% of children is regarded as living in poverty and their proportion has grown more than among the adult population.

Young people can fall off the administrative landscape and are not registered as unemployed or/and do not start any further education. There has been a growing awareness of this *hidden unemployment* particularly among the young age groups, though there have been no definitive statistical evidence of this phenomenon.

4. Labour market policies and measures for inclusion

The 2000s has been a period of many reforms concerning youth unemployment and school leaving. For instance, the Act on Rehabilitative Work Experience (2001), the Early Rehabilitation Trial for Adolescents (2001–2003), the Youth participation program (2002), and recently the Youth Society Guarantee (2005) have all aimed at finding solutions for disadvantaged youth. The National Action Plan for Employment for 2004 (NAP 2004) prioritises an increase of the activation rate to 25% in 2005. Measures that have been put forward include an integrating of services, offering young people activity or rehabilitation plans, career plans, training, guidance, and work projects. Supportive measures for growth in the demand for labour are still lacking. For instance, the evaluation of the Act on Rehabilitative Work Experience showed that only half of those who took part in the activity plans eventually found a job.

Preventing early school leaving

In relation to early school leaving, Finland has met the *overall* EU target for 2010 except for males. Finland has reduced an already low rate of early school leaving by modernising vocational training, improving access to these and intensifying *counselling and co-operation* between and within schools. Furthermore, there has been a focus on intensifying local and regional co-operation and increasing collaboration between administrative bodies. The reduction of school drop-outs has been accelerated as the educational institutions have changed over to performance-based financing in vocational education (NAPIcl, 2005).

Currently school leaving is high on the political agenda and there are different plans of intensifying special support systems in school. The political target is that at least 96% of those leaving comprehensive school in 2008 will begin general upper secondary school, vocational education and training, or voluntary additional basic education during the same year (education guarantee). The figure for 2003 was 94.5%. Measures include increasing remedial teaching, special needs education, guidance counselling and pupil/student welfare services, developing immigrant education and training and realising the education and training guarantee.

There are, however, no comprehensive national policies for practice against early school leaving. Various projects have been tried out and developed during recent years. They are funded either by the European Social Fund (ESF) and/or administrated by the National Board

of Education. Their aim is to prevent early school leaving and search for practices that give best results and could therefore become permanent.

The school supports the students in formal learning in many ways. *Special education*, remedial education, student counselling and student care is provided. However, according to the recent evaluation of basic education (cf. Koulutuksen arvointineuvoston julkaisuja 2005) the need for special education is much greater than the schools have been able to offer. During the period 1997–2004 the number of pupils in special education has doubled. In 2004, altogether 7% of children were in special education, of which 69% were boys. Part-time special education was received by 21% of pupils and remedial education by 15%. There is also a need for more *non-formal learning*, where practice is more integrated and this concerns particularly boys.

Workshop activities to reduce early school leaving have been very successful. The workshops are cross-sectoral activities, which at their best also cover the grey zones, those areas that fall between administrative sectors. They make use of the special expertise of each sector—youth, education, social affairs and labour—combining them in a new way for the good of the client.

The students have learned to take care of themselves and their studies and to become enthusiastic about their studies and future when regular work and routines have been established. Young people were motivated by the opportunity to concentrate on a profession that interested them (Liimatainen-Lamberg, 1996)

There is a need to develop a systematic monitoring system for comprehensive schools. The *preventive measures in the employment administration* are broader in Finland than in the rest of the Nordic countries. Different forms of guidance services and follow-up services are developed—including individual careers guidance services—as well as web-based information on vocational, educational and training options and support for career decision-making. Young people's transitions between different education levels are accelerated, for example, by a single web-based application system for upper secondary school, initial vocational education and training as well as polytechnics. However, there is a need to intensify collaboration inside the school and between different schools (for example compulsory and vocational education), with the families, with other authorities like child welfare and youth centres (Linnakangas & Suikkanen 2004).

There are various measures to reduce drop-out-rates in general upper secondary education as well as in higher education (universities and polytechnics) and to hasten the completion of studies. For example, application for higher education is to be made more preferential for those who have graduated from high school in the same year. However, this can be counterproductive for those marginalised young people who have already fallen out of the labour force and are not already pursuing further education.

Preventing youth unemployment

In a comparative context, the percentage used for active rather than passive labour market policies is especially low in Finland (33% compared to 57% in Sweden). While this can be explained by the higher level of unemployment corresponding to higher expenses for unemployment benefits this is also reflected by the governments aim of increasing the

activation rate among the unemployed in general and the young unemployed in particular (NAP 2004). Statistical information (Finnish Ministry of Labour 2003) shows a decrease in all sub-categories of active labour market policy during this period (i.e. public employment services, labour market training, subsidised employment, measures for people who are disabled), except for early retirement, which has increased owing to the influence of labour market factors. The share used for active labour market policies actually decreased in Finland between 1985 and 2002, whereas there has been an increase in the share of active labour market policy in central and southern European countries.

The last decade has been a period of special labour and social measures for young people in Finland. Activation is seen as another form a way to prevent the exclusion of youth (Veijola 2003). Counselling and guidance are part of the public service for unemployed young people. This includes vocational and personal guidance, which involves drawing up of educational and employment plans. Individual action plans are also emphasised in the active rehabilitative work. The unemployed person and the authority will together review the work/education history and then concentrate on the actual current situation. It results in a plan or an agreement with agreement on the aim and actions towards increasing employability. One new aspect with the *Act of Rehabilitative Work* (2001) is that the unemployed are obliged to participate in an individual service process, not only simply an education- or job-offer as has been the case (Ala-Kauhaluoma et al. 2004). The Act is part of an active social policy reform in which the right to a minimum security is linked more closely to work (see Annex IV, Chapter 6 in this volume).

However, despite more favourable economic conditions, unemployment in Finland has remained high, increasing the need to strengthen the active labour market policy line. Extensive labour market reforms carried out in 1998 and 2001 have led to a decrease in youth unemployment rates. The reform of 1998 was based on statistical information and the argument of policymakers that the present labour-market policy increased passivity among unemployed workers and that the employment offices only dealt with a small percentage of the workplaces available (Skog and Räisänen 1997). The reform also sought to reduce the worrying level of long-term unemployment, which had decreased more slowly than overall unemployment. As a consequence, a new emphasis was made on individual activation plans, follow-up interviews with unemployed persons, delivering of job search programmes and increased conditionality regarding the receipt of unemployment benefits.

To increase labour market participation among the more vulnerable unemployed groups, this policy approach was further strengthened as a part of the new active social policy in 2001. The purpose of the *Act of Rehabilitative Work* is to improve the prospects of the long-term unemployed who are receiving labour market support or social assistance to find work and to promote their chances of participating in training and to benefit from other measures that promote employment. The goal of the reform is to promote employment and prevent exclusion through a closer co-operation between the labour and social welfare authorities, and through obligations and measures designed to activate the unemployed.

The activating effect of the Act has focused on both the service system and on activation of jobseekers. The added value of the legislation was the new kind of co-operation established in

dealing with long-term unemployment between employment and social welfare offices. Experiences of this co-operation were largely positive. The Act has improved the operating of the service system and standardized local activation practices. The basic idea behind the service centres is to harness the common interest among the different authorities who share the same customer. It is often the case that an unemployed person receiving labour market support is also a beneficiary of municipal social assistance and/or housing allowance. That being the case, a benefit dependency can easily develop that can be caused by other than direct labour market reasons. Many people can benefit from rehabilitation of either a vocational or medical kind and some can benefit from an upgrading or refreshing of work skills. Due to the Act, a new activating model has been introduced that has on the whole proved functional. Activation plans provide an opportunity to deal with employment obstacles and to seek concrete solutions through co-operation between different authorities. Although the activation plan was regarded as a functional tool, it was still considered time-consuming and bureaucratic (NAP, 2004).

The implementation of the Act has been slow and there are large regional differences. The evaluation study (Ala-Kauhaluoma et al. 2004) suggests that a major problem has been the large number of people entitled to the service and insufficient employee resources. In 2004, 23 600 activation plans were drawn up, of which only 5770 were for individuals under 25. This was contrary to the objectives of the Act, which were to specifically target people under 25. The objective to draw up an activation plan for all those who are entitled has not been realised. In general, it has been claimed that the reform has been encouraging from the standpoint of preventing exclusion, but there has also been little information on the large proportion of drop-outs. In addition the act has not been successful in increasing employment (Ala-Kauhaluoma et al. 2004, Malmberg-Heimonen 2005).

The evaluation of the act has been made by the National Research and Development Centre for Welfare and Health (STAKES). An extensive part of the research examined how the activation measures in the Act affect the labour-market status and welfare resources of the unemployed. A slow start was made in implementing the Act and local differences in implementation were great. The main problem in the implementation was the large number of unemployed persons eligible for an activation plan and the limited number of personnel available to actually set up the plans. The effectiveness of the rehabilitative work experience varied. Results were encouraging, especially with respect to the prevention of exclusion (Ala-Kauhaluoma et al. 2004).

Further measures in order to decrease the overall structural unemployment, especially long-term unemployment and youth unemployment, were introduced as part of the Employment Programme launched by the Government for the period 2003–2007 (NAP, 2004). The programme agreed an *educational and social guarantee for young people*. According to the guarantee, every unemployed young person is offered a training/trainee work or a workshop place after 3-months of job seeking. The measures provided should focus on individual job-seeking plans. The target of the Ministry of Labour for 2006 is that individual job-seeking plans are being made for 90% of the young unemployed before the 3-month point of unemployment. In 2003, the respective rate was only 13%. The Government has decided to allocate EUR 50 million for the activation of the young unemployed in the context of the

State budget for 2006.

One strategic aim of the Ministry of Labour and the Employment programme has been to decrease structural unemployment by 100 000 by 2010. This requires that both long-term unemployment and the inflow into long-term unemployment should decline. Thus, the target of the State budget proposal for 2006 is to decrease the inflow into 6-month unemployment from 140 700 persons in 2004 to 100 000 persons by 2006. As regards youth unemployment, the inflow into 3-month unemployment is to fall from 45 000 persons in 2004 to 25 000 by 2006. An important part of the Employment Programme is the *structural reform of the public employment service* in 2004–2006. The services and resources of those who are most difficult to employ are collected in the one-stop shop service centres. They are an extensive network of in-house and external experts from various authorities and other service producers at the regional and local levels. The aim is to establish 40 centres by 2006. At the same time, the action and service models of the employment offices are developed in order to solve problems regarding the matching and availability of labour, and to organize better employer and jobseeker services.

Another aim is to prepare for a future scarcity of labour. It will be necessary to prolong work careers, for example, by accelerating the transfer of young people to education and working life. Work productivity and well-being at work will be promoted by upgrading the skill of the adult population and by means of working life programmes. Policy challenges include raising the level of education among the whole population, enhancing the quality and effectiveness of education and training, the prevention of social exclusion among young people and reducing differences in the level of education between age groups. Maybe this relates to previous measures that might be counterproductive. In addition, internationalisation and changes in social and cultural environments also entail renewal of the education and training system.

5. Examples of practice towards inclusion among youth

With regard to selecting good practice from the Finnish context we have focused on examples of both preventing youth unemployment as well as school drop-out, especially on more structural long-lasting reforms. For some of these evaluation is still not yet completed.

Nevertheless structural reforms are not often mentioned when it comes to good practices even though structural reforms are necessary elements in enabling developments of good practices. In a Finnish context one structural reform needs to be emphasized before going into good practices, namely the *Youth Society Guarantee*. Examples of good practices are the *Early Rehabilitation Trial for Young People*, *Joint Labour Force Service Centres* and the *Youth Participation Project* (see also Annex IV in volume).

The *Youth Society Guarantee*, which aimed at reducing and preventing youth unemployment, was introduced as part of the Employment Programme launched by the Government for the period 2003–2007. In this inter-sectoral employment programme, the labour authorities have the principal responsibility for implementing the society guarantee for unemployed young people while the education authorities are responsible for the education and training

guarantee. The Youth Society Guarantee is composed of intensified labour services, inter-sectoral service co-operation, labour market measures and programmes for young people. The guidelines for the services were approved by the Ministry of Labour in December 2004. The main target group is young people (< 25 years) who have been unemployed for three months. (In 2005 16.8% of young people <20 years had an unemployment that lasted over 3 months, while the equivalent was 35,1% for young in the age of 20-24). The main aim of the guarantee is that every young unemployed person should be offered a place in further education, practical training, or a workshop activity after a period of three months unemployment. It is hoped that the transition to further education will be more effective, the application system will be easier, student- and vocational counselling will be intensified, and more practical information about working life will be made available. The aim is for 96% of those who finish compulsory education to continue in upper secondary education and for the workshop-activities to be permanent, both by 2008. The society guarantee includes intensified co-operation between education and employment, the school, and the labour market. The educational authorities are responsible for the education and for the transition from education to employment by e.g. developing student and education counselling. The labour authorities are responsible for the whole youth society guarantee. Young unemployed under 25 are the participants of the project. The youth society guarantee should offer youth services that focus not only on employment but also on multi-professional services. Employment agencies are meant to employ youth counsellors and establish a youth-team. The measures provided focus on individual job-seeking plans and the target is that individual job-seeking plans are being made for 90% of the young unemployed before the 3-month point of unemployment. In 2003, the respective rate was only 13%. The evaluation of the youth guarantee service will be monitored by the employment agency every third year. In 2006 the Ministry of Labour and different regional offices will evaluate the youth unemployment situation and the implementation of the youth society guarantee.

Early Rehabilitation Trial for young people: The Working group on Active Social Policy proposed in its memorandum a three-year trial early rehabilitation for 15–17-year-olds at serious risk of social exclusion. The Social Insurance Institution (SII) working together with municipal education, the employment, social and health, and youth administrations have put the proposal into effect by arranging a rehabilitation trial for adolescents (2001–2003) involving 18 projects. The target group of the trial was young people who had dropped out of comprehensive school or vocational education or who were likely to drop their studies or end their comprehensive school early because of low grades. One objective of the trial was to develop and disseminate good models of co-operation and action. The trial aimed to 1) survey the need for legislative reforms in operations and financing, and 2) to create a permanent service model for young people at risk of social exclusion. The trial showed that there existed professional skills that there exist professional skills and a strong endeavour in municipalities to support young people at risk of exclusion. There were good prerequisites for cross-sectoral co-operation. However, problems were posed by poor co-ordination, by an undeveloped co-operation culture, scarcity of resources and lack of obligations and agreements related to the division of labour and responsibilities. The trial also showed that it is possible to do some preventive work within the framework of existing resources, but full-time employees are needed to co-ordinate the co-operation. In addition, some legislative amendments are needed

to eliminate the factors hampering co-operation and to motivate young people to plan their education and work careers (Suikkanen, Martti & Linnakangas, 2004).

'One-stop-shop' Joint Service Centres (see also Annex IV, Chapter 6 in this volume): An important development in the strategy to help hard-to-serve job-seekers in Finland has been to collect the relevant authorities together as a one-stop-shop to solve the problems. These kind of joint-service centres have been created by the employment offices, the municipalities, and the Social Insurance Institution together at local level on an experimental basis in 2002 and 2003. The number of one-stop-shop service centres will be increased to 40 by 2006 (currently at 36) and the concept will be developed further and established on a permanent basis. Probably the most important part of this new development is the creation of a new service structure with possibilities for the networking of other public services within an integrated model. The strength of these centres is their large capacities to buy external services and support for their clients. However, these centres have not yet succeeded in reaching young people, as the majority of participants are still over 25. Nevertheless, there are examples of centres which are focussed on young people. According to the Youth Society Guarantee the one-stop-shop service centres are encouraged to establish youth services teams or departments when appropriate. Basic services for unemployed young people are always provided at the Public Employment Service.

The joint service centre *Vinssi* was one of the Ministry of Labour's joint service experiments for youth in 2002–2003. In January 2004 the activity was established on a permanent basis. Vinssi is a co-operation between the employment, the city of Lappeenranta and the Social Insurance Institution's joint service point for youth. The multi-professional team consists of one-stop-shop instructor/adviser, special one-stop-shop-advisers, social workers, social instructors, employees of the social insurance institution, youth instructors, and joint service secretaries. Vinssi is meant for young people under 25 that need counselling and support in education, working life and building a future. The young people are mostly directed to Vinssi by the employment office, the social- and health authorities or by the Social Insurance Institution. Among the young people referred are the unemployed, school leavers, outsiders, "school allergics" and immigrants. There is also a service point that offers services for young people, parents, for organisations and for those who work among the young. From this service point one can receive information about hobbies, studies, living, economy and health.

The *Youth Participation Project* started in spring 2002 to advance youth participation and intensify co-operation between local and regional administrative bodies. The project targets young people in the final stages of their compulsory education and early school leavers who face difficulties in being admitted to further educational and careers. The aim is to guide them towards activities that promote their health and well-being, help them to continue their studies and improve their employment possibilities. Attention will also be paid to parents' responsibility for their children in terms of school attendance and leisure time. The three objectives of the project are: to establish co-operation models and practises to develop youth participation and to improve living conditions; to outline a youth participation development strategy with a jointly defined action policy; and to apply and disseminate best practice. The comprehensive set of activities includes increasing guidance, intensifying the monitoring of students' progress, language training for immigrant youth, developing schools as living

environments, improving co-operation between school and family, improve possibilities of young people to influence their life conditions, establishing youth workshops and non-formal learning, increasing links between school and companies, further development of youth work. Furthermore local authorities ensure every pupil a place in post-compulsory education and monitor the destinations of school leavers, provide counselling to create education and participation plans, increase recreational opportunities. The Ministry of Education is responsible for coordination and has selected 39 municipalities for implementation. Funding is administrated by Allianssi, the Finnish Youth Co-operation, providing also consultancy to the projects. Above all young people shall have possibilities to participate in the planning and decision-making of the programme itself.

6. Conclusions

In sum, the Finnish situation is characterised by low early school leaving but high youth unemployment despite of a variety of initiatives aimed at increasing the activation rate among job seekers. As many of these initiatives are still not fully evaluated, following the Commission's recommendations for Finland (cf. NAP, 2004), it is a key priority to monitor and evaluate the reforms in a comprehensive way (see also Volume 1, Chapter 6).

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Introduction

The present report summarizes the information referring to the constellations of disadvantage in young people's transitions from school to work in Greece and the respective policy measures. It is based on national statistics, on policy documents, including especially the National Action Plans of Employment 2004 and the National Action Plan for Social Inclusion 2005.³⁶

Constellations of disadvantage

It should be noted that Greece adopts a very narrow approach as to how disadvantage is defined and considers a limited number of groups as disadvantaged in comparison with other EU member states. Youth disadvantage in Greece is perceived as those 14-24 years of age, who are drop outs/early-school leavers, teenage/single parents, delinquent juveniles, immigrants, have learning, physical and other disabilities or are long-term unemployed.³⁷ Multidimensional as it is considered, it is evoked by many factors. The main predictive factors, according to our research, that are associated with **early school leaving** and hence disadvantage are the following:³⁸

- Low parental socio-economical and educational level, i.e. families that live in remote agricultural areas or underprivileged urban areas, as well as families that have low or unstable income tend to put pressure on their children to quit school and enter outdoor, low-paid jobs
- Low school performance
- Rigid educational system, that attempts to make students fit in, ignoring their diverse socio-economic background
- Parental beliefs about their children educational situation

³⁶ Ministry of Employment and Social Protection 2004: National Action Plan for Employment 2004 (download from http://www.europa.eu.int/comm/employment_social/employment_strategy/nap_2004/nap2004el_en.pdf; 16.12.2005); Ministry of Employment and Social Protection 2005: National Action Plan for Social Inclusion 2005 (download from

http://www.europa.eu.int/comm/employment_social/social_inclusion/docs/2005/el_en.pdf; 16.12.2005)

³⁷ OAED, www.oaed.gr

³⁸ General Secretariat of National Statistical Service of Greece (2002), Transition from Education to the Labour Market –Year 2000, www.statistics.gr

Paleocrassas S. & Rousseas P & Vretakou V.(2001), Drop outs from Compulsory Education, Pedagogical Institute, Athens.

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P.A.E.P. (2003), Labour Market Yearbook 2003, Employment Observatory Research- Informatics S.A, Athens

- Pregnant girls

Based on the above mentioned predictive factors, disadvantage of youth in Greece falls into both types of concepts concerning the system of transition from school to work (see Volume 1, Chapter 3):

- ‘*young people are unemployed because they are disadvantaged*’
- ‘*young people are disadvantaged because they are unemployed*’

Significant parameters when attempting to elucidate on the issue of early school leaving, are gender, ethnic origin as well as territory. In particular, **gender** plays a decisive role in early school leaving:³⁹

- The drop out rate of females is significant lower than that of males and in general girls achieve higher qualification levels. This difference is mainly attributed to the fact that many young males leave school in order to work in low-skilled and often informal sectors of the economy, namely, in the agricultural and tourism sector.
- However, the rates of women dropouts are especially high inside ethnic and religious minorities as well as refugees
- Female unemployment is double than that of male unemployment

With regard to **ethnic origin**, members of the Muslim and Roma minorities, as well as immigrants tend to drop out of school at significantly high numbers correlating to high rates of unemployment. This can be attributed to two main reasons: firstly, to their social environment, customs and cultural and religious beliefs which exert a distinct influence on their attitude towards education and work, leading them towards early school leaving. Characteristic is the case of Thrace (North East of Greece), a region with a great percentage of Muslim population, where the drop out rate is significantly high, particularly that of women, since the traditional perception prevails according to which ‘women should stay home and get married’ and ‘men should work before they become delinquents’. However, their situation is seriously aggravated by a rigid, stringent educational system that expects the students to fit in while it ignores their diverse socio-economic background. As a result, the Greek educational system blocks their learning capacity due to psychological, social or intellectual deficiencies. Moreover, the traditional conventional type of education provided in Greece combined with the unmeasured increase of examinations sustains social inequalities thus pushing out students that “differ”.⁴⁰

³⁹ Eurostat (2003), Education across Europe 2003, Office for Official Publications of the European Communities, Luxembourg, p.183

⁴⁰ Paleocrassas, S., Rousseas, P., & Vretakou, V. (2001). Drop outs from compulsory education. Pedagogical Institute. Athens

Katsikas X. (2003). School performance: is it a personal issue? The unseen side of school failure

Kavvadia G. 2003, Dropping out High school, both in <http://katsikas.8k.com/articles/artro3.html>

Paleocrassas, S. (1999). School shortage: Vocational Training for the early school leavers, National Employment Institute. Athens

As concerns **territory**, differences do exist concerning dropping out of school among the prefectures and the regions; more specifically, the rates are greater in: a) remote agricultural areas, one of the reasons being that schools are unapproachable, b) underprivileged urban areas and c) the islands, since is usually linked to early entrance into a developed tourism labour market.⁴¹

Moreover, regional disparities exist in regard to unemployment as well, even though there is no data available specifically for youth unemployment. More specifically, as far as general unemployment is concerned, rates vary to a significant extent: from the lowest 5,2% found in Crete to the highest 15.7 % of Western Macedonia. According to PAEP, the prefectures of Macedonia (Eastern, Western & Central), Thrace and Epirus hold the highest numbers of unemployed people whereas the islands and the prefectures of Attica and Peloponnesus have the lowest rates. The rates in the area of Central Greece are somewhere in the middle.
(Reference⁴²)

As regards **youth unemployment** rate in Greece, it reached 26,97% in 2003 (18,9% of males and 36,6% of females) whereas the overall unemployment rate was 9,62%. The youth unemployment ratio in the same year was at 9.1% with 7.1% among males and 11.1% among females.⁴³

However, when referring to **youth unemployment**, it is necessary to take into account some basic components such as the qualification level of the young unemployed as well as the duration and the registration of unemployment. In particular, regarding to the:

- *qualification level*: in Greece unemployment rates of early school leavers are lower than those of overall youth unemployment⁴⁴
- *duration of unemployment*: long-term unemployment among youth reaches the 48% of the total number of unemployed⁸
- *registration of unemployment*: the vast majority of unemployed people is registered that is 112,645 out of 126.100. In particular, the LFS data exceed the registered unemployment marginally.⁴⁵

Disadvantage is reflected, not only by youth unemployment, but also by **precarious careers** that do not ensure work security or stable income, but rather serve as a temporary and subsidiary job position. In specific young people in Greece engage in:

⁶ Paleocrassas, S., Rousseas, P., & Vretakou, V. (2001). Drop outs from compulsory education. Pedagogical Institute. Athens

Katsikas X. (2003). School performance: is it a personal issue? The unseen side of school failure & [Kavvadia G. 2003](#), Dropping out High school, both in <http://katsikas.8k.com/articles/artro3.html>

⁴² P.A.E.P. (2004). Labour Market Yearbook: Regions & Perfectures 2004. Athens. Greece

⁴³ NSSG – ESYE. (2002). Labour Force Survey. Assessments: P.A.E.P. S.A.

Ministry of Employment and Social Protection 2004: National Action Plan for Employment 2004 (see above).

⁴⁴ P.A.E.P. (2003), The [Labour Market for Young People in the Period 2000-2002](#), Discussion Paper No.6, Athens

⁴⁵ NSSG – ESYE. (2002). Labour Force Survey. Assessments: P.A.E.P.

OAED – P.A.E.P. (2004). Labour Market 2004: Prefectures & Regions.

- atypical contracts such as *fixed term contracts* or *temporary contracts*
- *part-time jobs*,
- *traineeships*, that students do in various companies.⁴⁶

Two other work forms that should be considered are *informal work* and *self-employment*. Regarding the *informal work* and its types, it should be mentioned that:

- Undeclared work constitutes over 20% of GDP,
- employment in family business structures concerns many young people, especially at the tourist sector, as well as in domestic work,
- Involuntary part-time employment is very low.⁴⁷

As regards *self-employment*:

- Greece has one of the highest rate of self-employment among 15-24 years old,
- Programmes of engaging young people in self – employment are being launched (New Subsidized Self-Employment program for young people), according to labour market policies in order to create flexible labour markets.⁴⁸

Apart from the existence of programmes targeting at involving young people in this type of employment, the increased percentage of self-employment among young people may be further attributed to many employers' attitude; more specifically, even though the vast majority of young people would prefer a dependent job with a standard contract, they are often driven to self-employment as it decreases significantly the labour cost for the employers and has no time constraints for them.

Concluding, the serious repercussions of the wider social environment of disadvantaged youth should be noted, namely the following two key aspects:

⁴⁶ NSSG-ESYE (2002). Labour Force survey. Athens, www.statistics.gr

P.A.E.P. (2003), Flexibility & Organisation of work: Empirical data from Greece and the EU, Employment Observatory Research- Informatics S.A, Athens

⁴⁷ Petrakou E. & Dimitrakopoulos I. (2003), Migrants, Minorities & Employment in Greece, Exclusion, Discrimination & Anti-discrimination, RAXEN 3 Report, European Monitoring Centre on Racism and Xenophobia (EUMC), Athens

Paleocrassas, S., Rousseas, P., & Vretakou, V. (2001). Drop outs from compulsory education. Pedagogical Institute. Athens

European Commission - Employment and Social Affairs (2004), Undeclared Work in an Enlarged Union: An Analysis of Undeclared Work: An In-Depth Study of Specific Items, Office for Official Publications of the European Communities, Luxembourg

⁴⁸ www.oaed.gr

www.eommex.gr

- *Poverty* resulting from lack of or low income: a significant percentage of young people in Greece are at risk of poverty, due to the precarious economical situation of their family and in many cases of their region. As a result, young people are either “pushed” or feel “obliged” to drop out of school and enter the labour market, in order to support financially their family.
- *Multiple disadvantage* relating to living conditions characterized by a variety of difficulties in different areas of life: Transition from school to work can be burdened by a variety of problems such as: low socioeconomic level of the parents and/or the region, teenage pregnancy, natural deficits of mental, physical or psychological origin, confinement into prison or other institutions, dependency on various drugs and other substances, etc.⁴⁹

3. Policy approaches

Policies in Greece are mainly reactive to the manifest problems of unemployment and lack of skills. Moreover, there clearly is a mismatch between the demand and supply sides of the labour market and this is due to the insistence of the educational system to ignore the needs of the labour market, as well as the changes resulting from the use of new technologies and the globalization of economy. Greece’ main means of action is based upon the funds it receives from the Community Support Framework (CSF), which are mainly diffused through the Operational Programs:

- “Education and Initial Vocational Training”
- “Employment and Vocational Training”
- “Combating Exclusion from the Labour Market”.

The expenditure rates in Greece:

- for active labour market policies (ALMP) reach 0, 22% of GDP
- for education reach 3.7% of the GDP

Both expenditure rates are among the lowest in EU, in fact they are under-average.⁵⁰

⁴⁹ Greek Manpower Employment Organization, www.oaed.gr

General Secretariat of National Statistical Service of Greece (2002). Transition from Education to the Labour Market – Year 2000, www.statistics.gr

Paleocrassas, S., Rousseas, P., & Vretakou, V. (2001). Drop outs from compulsory education. Pedagogical Institute. Athens

Katsikas X. (2003). School performance: is it a personal issue? The unseen side of school failure & Kavvadia G. 2003, Dropping out High school, both in <http://katsikas.8k.com/articles/artro3.html>

P.A.E.P. (2003). Labour Market Yearbook 2003. Employment Observatory Research – Informatics. S.A. Athens.

⁵⁰ European Commission (2004). Commission Staff Working Paper – Draft Joint Employment Report 2004/2005. Commission of the EC. Brussels.

Policies against early school-leaving and youth unemployment can be summarised as human capital building, broadening access to the labour market and empowering individual decision-making distinguishing individualised versus structure-related and preventative versus compensatory approaches.

a. Human Capital Building

Preventing early school leaving

Concerning the prevention of early school leaving the following measures are implemented:

- Financial incentives – introducing free meals and textbooks – with the aim of enhancing and supporting equal access to education and training. Moreover, financial assistance in education (as a motive to enrol in primary and secondary education) is being given to those ethnic minorities who declare annual income less than 3000 € (the amount received is 300 €)
- *Support systems* which constitute the most successful measures and include: Support teaching, All day schools, Evening education, Inclusion classes, Integration of special education in regular. In relation to minority populations there are special classes for the repatriated and foreign students (through the Directorate of Intercultural Education) and minority schools of all levels (teaching is conducted in both language, assistant teachers etc)
- More *compensatory ways* of dealing with early school leaving such as the Second chance schools allowing for making up with missed qualifications as well as the Post – secondary vocational education and training where young people who complete compulsory education and then drop out of school can achieve qualifications.⁵¹

Recognition of prior (informal) learning, in Greece is very limited since:

- the present educational system offers very few alternatives to individuals who do not complete compulsory schooling and very rarely do these lead to higher education,

Vretakou, V. & Rousseas, P. (2003). Vocational Education and Training in Greece. Cedefop Panorama series: 59, Office for Official Publications of the European Communities, Luxemburg.

www.antagonistikotita.gr

www.psosonolatahos.gr

www.ekps.gr

See Volume 1, Chapters 5 and 6.

⁵¹ Education Research Centre of Greece (2004), A report on Education and Training in Greece, Education Research Center Publications, Athens

Education Research Center of Greece (2003), The Greek Educational System: Facts and Figures, Education Research Center Publications, Athens

[Institute for the Greek Diaspora Education and Intercultural Studies, http://ipode.att.sch.gr](http://ipode.att.sch.gr)

Dimitrakopoulos I (2004), Analytical Report on Education: National Focal Point for Greece- ANTIGONE- Information and Documentation Centre, European Monitoring Centre on Racism and Xenophobia (EUMC), Athens

Ministry of Education and Religious Affairs, www.ypepth.gr

Second Chance Schools, <http://www.e2c-europe.org/2cschools/>

- informal learning offers no access to any level of formal education,
- there is no established certification system for qualifications acquired through informal learning,
- employers tend not to acknowledge the possession of such skills, with everything this entails in terms of pay, professional rights, etc.⁵²

Vocational training routes

Following the National Action Plan for Employment 2004 extending vocational training is the key strategy to break up the vicious circle of early school leaving and unemployment.⁵³ Vocational education and training (VET) is not only a way of dealing with early school leaving but makes up for large share of post-compulsory routes to the labour market. On completion of compulsory education, the following training routes are available:

- Secondary vocational education and training
- Post-secondary vocational education and training
- Continuous Vocational Training
- Continuous Vocational Training in Companies

Apart from low or lack of qualifications, the manifest mismatch with labour market needs is a key problem. In Greece, only Greek Manpower Employment Organization operates its VET schools with the ‘dual system’. In addition, practice has been included in other VET schools while there are programmes funded by OAED that promote company-based training primarily aimed at unemployed youth.⁵⁴

b. Broadening access to the labour market

Concerning youth unemployment various Another type of ALMP is directed towards widening structures of segmented labour market entrance:

Deregulation of labour market entrance has aimed at reducing the costs connected to hiring young people by introducing forms of employment contracts with reduced protection. However, in Greece the precariousness and poverty of young people in fact have increased.

Subsidies aim at compensating employers for hiring young people despite of their lack of experience. In Greece, these subsidies are used to provide work experience and re-socialise towards work the long-term unemployed, often over 25 years old. These take various forms:

⁵² OECD – EKEPIS (2003). The role of national qualifications systems in promoting life-long learning – Background Report for Greece. Athens, Greece.
www.oaed.gr

⁵³ Ministry of Employment and Social Protection 2004 : National Action Plan for Employment 2004 (see above).

⁵⁴ Vretakou, V. & Rousseas, P. (2003). Vocational Education and Training in Greece. Cedefop Panorama series: 59, Office for Official Publications of the European Communities. Luxemburg.

a) the STAGE program, managed by the Greek Manpower Employment Organisation, with the purpose to help unemployed individuals, through placement in enterprises and organizations, obtain actual work experience and adjust their professional skills to the needs of the labour market.

b) the New Subsidised Work Schemes for young unemployed and disabled persons, age 16 and above, that subsidise companies for 36 months when they hire these young people under the condition to keep them in their workforce for another 12 months. This program covers part-time employment as well as temporary placements,

Non-wage labour costs have been reduced through the introduction of employment subsidies equivalent to social security contributions but not for all disadvantage groups (anyway, it is not specified which groups belong to this category).⁵⁵

Creating new employment opportunities

It is widely accepted that the combination of active employment policies and preventive measures is the most appropriate mean of combating unemployment. In Greece a positive indication towards this direction is the establishment of Law 3227/2004 that aims at gradually replacing passive subsidization policies with active policies favouring employment. As a result, a number of policies have been implemented:

transformation of unemployment benefits into employment subsidies, in particular for groups facing social exclusion,

- *the promotion of part-time work* in the public sector.

employment schemes that address long-term unemployed, especially those with disabilities and health or psychosocial problems. These take the form of a) the STAGE program and b) the New Subsidised Work Schemes (already mentioned above)

- *self-employment programmes* are very popular in Greece while the country has the highest percentage of self-employed among the workforce within EU25. The New Subsidised Self-Employment program addressed young people between 20 and 40 years who are interested in starting their own enterprise. The grant covers the 50% of the total original business proposal amounting from 30.000 to 75.000 €, distributed within a 3-year period. The program aims at developing, supporting and promoting the entrepreneurial skills of young people (both male and female) through financial grants for the creation of new and viable SME's. Both Subsidised work and employment schemes are funded by the European Union in an effort to enhance employability of people.⁵⁶

⁵⁵ www.oaed.gr

www.eommex.gr

European Commission (2004). Commission Staff Working Paper – Draft Joint Employment Report 2004/2005. Commission of the EC. Brussels.

⁵⁶ www.oaed.gr

www.eommex.gr

Ministry of Employment and Social Protection. (2003). Evaluation of the Operational Programs of the 2nd CSF. Athens

c. Empowering individual decision-making: Counselling and incentives

Counselling and Individualised Action Plans

Given the increasing individualisation and complexity of youth transitions, counselling becomes more and more crucial. A key concept in this regard is that of Individual Action Plans (IAP) which also is given a high priority in both the National Action Plan of Employment 2004 and the National action Plan for Social Inclusion 2005.⁵⁷ In Greece Individualised Action Plans (IAPs) are being put into practice by the Greek Manpower Employment Service (OAED). In Greece, Individualised Career Guidance:

- address the needs of young people aged 14-18,
- help unemployed persons identify their capacities and aptitudes,
- help unemployed persons to explore the labour market,
- its implementation is centred around employment
- its main aim is to recruit job-seekers in order to include them into activation programmes.⁵⁸

Incentives and disincentives are discussed in the context of activating the self-reliance of young people and their motivation to participate in education, training or ALMP. In Greece, PES is not reaching all jobseekers and therefore activation is hardly applicable. In fact, the National Action Plan for Employment states that in 2003 less than 20% of young people who had been unemployed for 6 months had either completed an Individual Action Plan or had received a re-integration offer. The [Centres for Promotion of Employment \(KPA\)](#) that provide services to unemployed individuals, is putting into practice the individualised action plans and has developed an organised system for individual career guidance. Criticism is being made however, on the existing system, since it does not address the needs of the individual itself but it rather deals with the needs of the market. In this sense it is ‘putting aside’ the needs of the unemployed and is providing inadequate support.⁵⁹

Ministry of Employment and Social Protection. (2005). National Action Plan for Social Inclusion

⁵⁷ Ministry of Employment and Social Protection. (2004). National Action Plan for Employment 2004 (see above)

Ministry of Employment and Social Protection. (2005). National Action Plan for Social Inclusion 2005 (see above)

⁵⁸ Law: 2525/9768

www.oaed.gr

www.ekep.gr

Ministry of Employment and Social Protection. (2003). Evaluation of the Operational Programs of the 2nd CSF. Athens

⁵⁹ European Commission (2004). Commission Staff Working Paper – Draft Joint Employment Report 2004/2005. Commission of the EC. Brussels.

www.oaed.gr

d. Coordination of policies

With regard to coordination of policies, there are many reflexive discourses in Greece. Although disadvantage youth is a complicated issue that requires manifold approach, in our country the isolated function of the different responsible public bodies involved (e.g. Pedagogical Institute, OAED, OEEK, etc.) reduces significantly the effectiveness of their interventions. Moreover, this is indicative of the lack of a holistic strategic which is also obvious as far as sharing good practises and successful measures is concerned since no dissemination takes places among the different organizations. The situation concerning coordination of policies has been further aggravated, after the involvement of social partners in the field of disadvantage youth. It should be mentioned that active involvement of local, regional, national and European actors is crucial for the effective implementation of policy measures, a recommendation that was put into practise in Greece after 1998 where social partners became involved in the administrative boards of training and education organisations. However, the final outcome, that is the reduction of disadvantage youth, requires not only the involvement of diverse organizations but, more importantly, their efficiently coordinated function. If the fewer in numbers public bodies responsible for disadvantage youth were not able to function with a minimum of coherence, the existence of many others services requires a higher level of coordination, that is rather difficult to be put into practise. Actually, policies constitute isolated parts rather than being integrated into an overall system of actions. Even though, Greece has set into practise the programme Territorial Employment Pacts for reducing sub national disparities, this measure failed to match policy with local labour needs.⁶⁰

The major and secondary bodies involved in the development of vocational training and in the promotion of employability and in need of harmonious coordination are:

- The Ministry of National Education and Religious Affairs through OEEK
- The Ministry of Employment and Social Protection through OAED.
- The PES that serves as a transmitter of preventative individualised and activating approaches.
- Social partners involved in training and education as the National Labour Institute that has implemented a significant number of continuous VET courses and has actively participated in almost all community initiatives in the framework of the CFS, the National Employment Observatory, the National Centre for Vocational Orientation, etc.

⁶⁰ European Commission. (2004). Commission Staff Working Paper – Draft Joint Employment Report 2004/2005. Commission of the EC. Brussels.

OECD – EKEPIS. (2003). The role of National qualifications systems in promoting lifelong learning – Background Report for Greece. Athens, Greece.

European Commission (2001). Joint Employment Report 2000 Part I: the European Union – Part II: the Member States.

- NGO's, non-profit organisations, as well as the church that play a significant role in reducing disparities and eliminating differences among people but there are not official, organized units concerning their actions or their results.⁶¹

It should be noted that policy approaches for disadvantaged youth include a dimension of *anti-discrimination*. Promotion of equal opportunities for access to the labour market, and in particular, for those threatened by social exclusion is one of the main policy actions of the Greek government. Actually, special provisions are being made through the CSF to combat social exclusion, some of them targeting specifically to ethnic and religious minorities (e.g. immigrants, refugees, Roma, muslims). Various initiatives combating racism and in support of diversity in employment have been implemented, fully or partly financed by the EU (e.g the **EQUAL Initiative** has approved 4 projects which will develop actions combating racism and xenophobia in strand ‘Combating Racism and Xenophobia’ in connection to the Labour Market and Support of Social and Professional Integration of Asylum Seekers, the **Integrated Action Plan for the Roma** that is a seven year integrated action project aiming at supporting people in their efforts to enter into the labour market, the **Intercultural Education Programmes** such as the programmes “Education of Repatriates” Education of Muslim children”, “Induction of Gypsy children to school”.

Moreover, of special interest is the importance attributed to discrimination issues in the National Action Plan for Social Inclusion 2005-2006. An **Integrated Action Programme** is specifically designed for the smooth adjustment and assimilation of third country citizens who legally reside in the country, as well as the continuation of the **Integrated Action Plan for Roma** aiming at their integration in the Greek society while maintaining their ethnic and cultural characteristics. The implementation of the planned programmes is underpinned by the recent establishment of Law 3304/2005 “Application of the principle of equal treatment, regardless of racial or ethnic origin, religious or other beliefs, disability, age or sexual orientation” which prohibits direct or indirect discrimination of individuals, in the public and private sectors, due to different origin, beliefs, disability, age, sexual orientation.⁶²

4. Assessment and evaluation of policies.

It is widely accepted that the success of policies depends directly on appropriate monitoring and evaluation. Evaluation is conducted at the completion of each Community Support Framework, by the Ministry of Employment and Social Protection that assigns the evaluation of all the actions realised to external contractors. Through this evaluation, implemented actions are reviewed, new developments concerning planning, implementation and decision

⁶¹ European Commission. (2004). Commission Staff Working Paper – Draft Joint Employment Report 2004/2005. Commission of the EC. Brussels.

European Commission (2001). Joint Employment Report 2000 Part I: the European Union – Part II: the Member States.

⁶² Petrakou, E. & Dimitrakopoulos, I.(2003). Migrants, Minorities & Employment in Greece, Exclusion, Discrimination & Anti-discrimination. RAXEN 3 Report. European Monitoring Center on Racism and Xenophobia (EUMC). Athens.

Ministry of Employment and Social Protection. (2005). National Action Plan for Social Inclusion.

making procedures are being assessed while the impact of these actions to unemployed individuals is estimated⁶³.

According to the evaluation conducted, even though many promising programmes have been introduced and serious efforts have been made, quite a few weaknesses were depicted, at the level of implementation. The lack of a systematic trace of the characteristics of the employment market, the lack of both qualitative and quantitative imprint of the young people and in general of all the socio-economic characteristics and the geographical dispersion of these target groups have been emphasized. In addition, a limited response at policy level has been revealed regarding the implementation of labour market reforms, the attractiveness of part-time work, the development of temporary work agencies, as well as activities combating undeclared workforce.⁶⁴

Moreover, although the turn towards active employment policies has been characterized as a positive measure, they did not succeed in attracting a satisfactory number of young people, especially those from vulnerable groups. In fact, the actual number of beneficiaries was particularly small compared to the size of the problem. Part of the responsibility for the limited access can be traced to the heavily bureaucratic nature of the enrolling process together with the inability to disseminate effectively the necessary information about the implemented programmes to vulnerable groups. For this reason, the creation of an appropriate infrastructure for sufficient access to necessary information is critically important for serving vulnerable groups and keeping them informed.⁶⁵

Another progressive step that is worth mentioning is the change of the educational system that offered the opportunity to early school leavers to attend vocational training programs and obtain a certificate in order to combat their unemployment. Nevertheless, it is a well-known fact that in the labour market these certificates are still considered of lower status and that people who acquire them are actually not ‘competent’ enough. This along with the lack of connection between the training system and the labour market may lead to social discrimination, cancelling any effort made.⁶⁶

Undoubtedly, the CSF funds had a significant impact in the development of structures aiming at youth disadvantage. However, the continuation of all implemented programmes, after the end of the funding, is a serious issue. There are many examples of programmes that were cancelled at the end of funding due to lack of financial resources, since their integration into the national strategy is not feasible. Moreover, the frequently fragmented planning for the utilisation of Community funds as well as the weaknesses in the implementation of the

⁶³ Ministry of Employment and Social Protection (2002), “Evaluation of the Labour Market Policies and Assessment of the Influence of EES in Greece during the period 1997-2001”-Final Report, VFA – Valter Fissamber & Associates Ltd - Metron Analysis S.A, Athens

⁶⁴ European Commission. (2004). Commission Staff Working Paper – Draft Joint Employment Report 2004/2005. Commission of the EC. Brussels.

Ministry of Employment and Social Protection (2003), Evaluation of the Operational Programs of the 2nd CSF, Athens

⁶⁵ Ministry of Employment and Social Protection. (2005). National Action Plan for Social Inclusion

⁶⁶ Vretakou V. & Rousseas P. (2003), Vocational education and training in Greece, Cedefop Panorama series: 59, Office for Official Publications of the European Communities, Luxembourg)

programmes and the heavily bureaucratic procedures for enrolling into these programmes often affected seriously both the effects of these measures to the targeted groups and absorption rates. It is noted that in some cases the absorption rate is significantly low, influencing the progress of the planned programmes as a whole⁶⁷.

Apart from the evaluation conducted every 4 years through the CSF programmes, there are no other mechanisms for recording, monitoring, and evaluating programmes and projects which are being implemented. In particular, the effectiveness of the measures can not be assessed at a local and/or regional level, making the deficiency of a decentralised approach clearly evident.

One of the main reasons for the above mentioned difficulties is the lack of coordination among the diverse bodies involved in the implementation of policies for disadvantaged youth. In order for any policy to be effective in combating discrimination in the labour market and promoting the social integration of disadvantaged groups, the cooperation of all diverse organizations and services is a prerequisite. Measures such as language and vocational training, promotion of self-employment, education, regional and income policies, psychological, social and legal support services, awareness raising actions and active participation of the members of the relevant social groups should be integrated into a holistic approach and not being set as separated segments⁶⁸.

5. Conclusions

Policy-mixes to tackle youth disadvantage can be judged according to the success factors we have mentioned above but the main conclusion to be drawn is that coherence and integration of approaches across different policy sectors are most appropriate to tackle complex problems such as the integration of disadvantaged young people into the labour market. In Greece the lack of a coherent and integrated approach is apparent. In fact, every organization follows its own course at combating social exclusion defying policies taken for the same purpose by other organizations.

Policies blaming the individual for being in a disadvantageous situation risk endangering one central resource all labour market interventions depend on: young people's motivation. A "youth" perspective on current trends includes clearly defined activation policies in a youthful and participatory way, the success criteria of which stem from a social integration perspective which is broader than mere labour market integration – yet without neglecting the importance of quality employment. Such a model incorporates "soft" aspects of policy outcomes as well as undesired side-effects. It should be emphasized, however, that the effectiveness of activation policies requires the placement of disadvantaged youth in the center of all interventions. This acquires even greater importance, if we consider that the majority of

⁶⁷ Ministry of Employment and Social Protection. (2005). National Action Plan for Social Inclusion.

⁶⁸ Vretakou V. & Rousseas P. (2003), Vocational education and training in Greece, Cedefop Panorama series: 59, Office for Official Publications of the European Communities, Luxembourg

planned policies aim at unemployment as a condition and not at the unemployed as an individual.

With regard to **ethnic origin**, members of the Muslim and Roma minorities, as well as immigrants tend to drop out of school at significantly high numbers correlated to higher rates of unemployment. This can be attributed both to their social environment and cultural and religious beliefs which influence their attitude towards education and work as well as to the inability of the Greek society and the so far ineffective policies to integrate these groups smoothly into the educational and societal context. Difficult though it is to incorporate people to a specific culture while respecting their unique cultural beliefs, policies and well organised strategies should be focused to this direction, taking into consideration the ongoing number of immigrants and refugees finding shelter in Greece.

Furthermore, since many non governmental organizations as well as the Church and other agencies are actively involved in a variety of actions, either by covering gaps or by contributing to the success of policies, the need to be supported by the government appears necessary. Taking into account the difficulty in continuing the EU funded projects, this support and cooperation becomes of critical importance

In order for all the policy measures to have the desired outcomes, the development of an integrated monitoring and evaluating system appears imperative. This implies the necessity of monitoring and evaluation tools which are more comprehensive and in depth while covering longer periods of follow-up. Data concerning the results/effects of the programs' implementation must be gathered, analyzed and reviewed, so as to measure the effectiveness of the drop-out rate reduction and youth unemployment and allow for remedial interventions. This way, quality standards for the service provided to youth disadvantage could easily be set. Quality assurance along with the achievement of a sufficient coordination would result in establishing indicators and benchmarks in combating social exclusion, essential for the evaluation of progress.

Experts consulted

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Introduction

This national briefing paper on Italy is part of *Thematic study on policy measures concerning disadvantaged youth in Europe* and is based on the existing literature and the available sources, both national and international, mentioned in the references.

Its structure follows the guidelines received by the international coordination team (see Annex III in this volume) and aims at providing a set of information targeted to ease their comparative work at the final stage of the project.

A first draft version of this paper has been distributed with keynote stakeholders, informants and experts (see Volume 1, Annex I). The discussants involved are both engaged in policy administration, policy making, and research at the national and local level.

We wish to thank them for the valuable comments and suggestions which helped us to refine our arguments.

1. The socio-economic characteristics of disadvantaged youth in Italy

1.1. Youth's disadvantage: a difficult definition

Defining disadvantaged youth is not easy. The Italian literature maintains the idea that the concept of “disadvantage” cannot be considered in absolute terms, but should be rather seen in relative terms: young people may be disadvantaged in relation to their actual possibilities of accessing the educational system, or in relation to their possibility to find a job, or in relation to their geographical background and so on.

In practical terms, young people’s disadvantages indicate the impossibility or the limited possibility for individuals to access material and immaterial opportunities granted by citizenship rights.

Istat (the Italian institute for statistics, 2003) includes young people’s disadvantages in the broader category of “social disadvantage” and uses indicators such as social inclusion/exclusion, access/not access to resources and services.

Tab. 1. Families living below the relative poverty line, family typologies and macro-area (2002)⁶⁹

	Italy	North	Center	South
Poor families ⁷⁰ (all typologies)	11,0	5,0	6,7	22,4
Lone person aged less than 65	3,1	1,7	---	8,9
Lone person aged more than 65	13,3	7,7	6,7	26,4
Couple with 1 son	8,1	3,5	4,8	18,6
Couple with 2 sons	12,2	5,4	8,2	20,2
Couple with 3 or more sons	24,4	13,0	11,7	31,8
Lone parent	11,5	6,0	7,1	21,4

Source: ISTAT, survey on the consumptions of Italian families, 2002

Tab. 1. shows the share of families living below the (relative) poverty line. It becomes quite clear that the most important area of disadvantage for young people in Italy regards people who live in families of the southern regions with an high number of members, especially if they are minors.

1.2. Two areas of disadvantage: education and the labour market

The project starts from the assumption that “education” and “labour market” are two main areas of disadvantage, which strongly contribute to structure the overall youth condition and the risk of exclusion. Also within these two fields of study, however, in the literature, there is no clear definition of “disadvantaged youth”. For this reason, we will describe the main characteristics of youth's disadvantage in these fields starting from two main indicators:

- young people's educational attainment level;
- young people's unemployed condition.

Both indicators are considered key determinants in the condition of disadvantage, even though they have to be considered dependent variables as soon as we widen our perspective and try to find causal relations. E.g. the educational attainment level depends on social class, specific educational policies and more general redistributive schemes, etc. (see § 2.1. below).

Educational disadvantage

With respect to educational attainment, the official statistics referred to school year 2002-2003 indicate that at age 19 (when the secondary school should be completed according to the Italian educational system), only 72.8% of young people actually acquire an upper secondary school diploma. This means that the 27.2% is either dropping out, repeating classes or already working (Istat, 2004).

⁶⁹ As a percentage of 100 families of the same typology and the same macro-area.

⁷⁰ It is defined as poor a family which monthly expenditure is equal or less than relative poverty threshold.

The most recent census (2001, with data available since January 2005) shows an increase in the level of educational attainment of the resident Italian population. In 1991, 23.7% of individuals >11 years of age hold a high school diploma, percentage which raised to 35.1% in 2001 (www.istat.it Census data press release). Compared with other European and OECD countries, Italy still has a wide gap to fill in, in terms of educational attainment, especially considering the lower age groups.

Apart from educational attainment, an indicator which could be very predictive of future social disadvantages may also derive from educational achievement. The 2003 OECD PISA survey results on reading, scientific and problem solving literacy of Italian 15 year olds show a very poor overall competence, which could affect adult life in the future, not only in terms of working opportunities, but also with regards to the exercise of civil rights and social participation (OECD, 2004).

Labour market disadvantage

Unemployed young people are defined as those individuals, aged 15-24, in search of an occupation which:

1. have at least made one active attempt to search a job in the 30 days preceding interview and are available for work (or to start their own business) within two weeks from interview;

or

2. will start a new job within 3 months from interview and are available for work (or to start their own business) within two weeks from interview, if it were possible to anticipate the inception date of the new job.

A profile of disadvantaged Italian young people deriving from this definition may be summarized as follows (Istat, 2003; Istat, 2004; Reyneri, 1997):

- age: 15-24;
- gender: mainly females;
- geographical region: concentrated mainly in the South;
- working condition: in search of first occupation for longer than 12 months with intermittency patterns.

Tab. 2: Unemployment rate by age, sex and macro-regions (2004)

	Males				Females			
	15-24	25-34	35-44	45-64	15-24	25-34	35-44	45-64
Italy	25,3	9,3	3,9	3,3	30,9	14,2	9,2	4,9
Centre-North	12,6	4,5	1,5	1,8	16,7	7,9	5,6	3,0
South	45,5	19	8,9	6,3	59,3	32,3	19,6	9,7

Source: our calculations on ISTAT "Labour Force Survey" 2005

Tab. 3. Unemployment ratio by sex and age (< 24) in Italy (2003-2004)

	Males	Females	Total
2003	9,5	9,2	9,4
2004	8,4	8,6	8,5

Source: Eurostat 2004

Connecting education and labour market

Attempts to introduce a connection between education/training systems and the labour market were made – in the last years – since 1997 with law nr. 196. In 1999, law 144 (art. 68) explicitly links the two systems via “compulsory training”, i.e. mandatory education or training up to 18 years of age. In 2003, law no. 53 further reinforces this principle. The effects of this effort are not clear yet, and the path for the future will depend on implementation strategies and family responses to the changes. Anyway, it might well be that the disrepute that traditionally hit the training system is likely to generate educational mismatches.

2. The Italian Educational and Training System: critical issues

The new institutional frame coming from recent reforms listed above foresees nowadays three main paths providing vocational training:

The first path takes place in schools: there is a vocational route of upper secondary schools, the so-called “Istituti tecnici” and “Istituti professionali”, providing both theoretical education and practical skills. Anyway, their collocation in the new two-branch system (education/training) at the moment is not very clear.

The so-called “alternanza scuola-lavoro” (school-work alternation) allows vocational schools to alternate classroom periods with training stages, but implementation rules are too recent to allow a clear assessment of the situation.

The second path is the vocational training in a strict sense, which is competence of the Regions (that usually delegate competences to provinces). Three teenagers out of four are enrolled in upper secondary schools; hence a low percentage of persons is involved in regional training. The second training path takes place partly in educational institutions (not only schools, but also training centres) and partly in collaboration with firms.

The third path is the vocational training in companies – the apprenticeship *strictu sensu*. Apprenticeship was firstly regulated in 1955 and is defined as “a special job contract” that binds the employer to train the young employees in order to make them skilled workers. It happens mainly on the workplace, but training in special centres supervised by public institutions is compulsory. Training is free both for the employers and the apprentices and it occurs during the working hours.

Young employees' wages are lower than skilled workers' and the involved enterprises receive tax benefits from the State.

As far as apprenticeship *strictu sensu* is concerned, the recent decree 276/03 changed the regulation frame again and designed three types of apprenticeship:

- Apprenticeship aimed at reaching the compulsory level of training and education until the age of 18 (according to the reform of school system: it is the type of apprenticeship consistent with the school-work alternation according to the reform of the school system);
- Vocational training oriented apprenticeship, which recalls the traditional type implemented from 1955 onwards;
- Apprenticeship aimed at attaining a diploma.

Also at the tertiary level there has been a growing concern about the wide school-to-work transition mismatch. The reforms of the higher educational system (university), with the institutionalization of professionalizing short degrees and of the two-tier system are also aimed at solving this problem.

In order to be authorized by the Ministry, a university programme should be discussed with local stakeholders and provide clear employability outlooks. Actually, these measures are mainly met in a formal way, though a general rethinking of the system is underway, even though its effectiveness is still dubious. As a matter of fact, the Italian economic system cannot sustain such a number of degrees and trainings (see paragraph *The demand side* in this chapter for figures), because in the South the entrepreneurial fabric is very poor, while in Central and Northern Italy it is mainly made up by SMEs working with mature technologies and labour intensive processes.

Hence, the Italian Educational and Training System suffers from two major problems, affecting the constellations of disadvantage in Italy:

- ➔ First, there is a basic difficulty in recognising and coping with problems whose origin precedes the entrance in the educational system;
- ➔ Second, there is the mismatch between the educational and training systems and the labour market.

The following section will shortly sketch the main characteristics of both these problems.

2.1. Recognizing and coping with inherited disadvantage

Inherited disadvantage heavily affects drop-out and early school leaving rates. For example, a class disadvantage – in which we can include for instance also immigrant children's problems – tends to be continuously reproduced, both from an intra- and from an inter-generational

point of view.

From an intra-generational point of view, initial attainment and integration problems tend to increase and reinforce one another, so to affect school careers more and more through time. From an intergenerational point of view, parents' schooling level is an important indicator of sons' and daughters' school success. In fact, even though in recent years a clear qualification process has occurred, it is worth to notice that the value of secondary and tertiary diplomas has more and more decreased, so that sons' skills and qualifications achieved do not come up to parents' expectations of upward mobility, especially for some professional segments once considered with high respect and today devaluated, and having weak possibilities of employment security: human sciences and teaching professions, accountancy and surveying studies are only some examples of education paths with a number of students but low employability.

Though it could be considered a problem of *labour mismatch* (and partly it is), this phenomenon can also be considered as a problem of reproduction of class disadvantage, with lower middle-class people grown during the post-war boom unable to provide needed-to-win capabilities to their children. Hence, intergenerational investments in education fail their original aim of social promotion.

The problem is that in Italy training and vocational education has always been considered "lower class", so that the liberation from manual jobs was a goal for almost every family experiencing or aiming at upward mobility. For families with a rural or working-class background, a past overcome only in the years of the economic boom, any brain-job their children could achieve was a success. None, at that time, could even take into consideration the proletarization of brain-workforce and the possibility of intellectual unemployment.

Thus, vocational tracks involve a small number of young people enrolled in the training and educational system, but the acknowledgment and the validity of qualifications released is dubious. In case, students prefer the educational track with (mainly theoretic) technical curricula more than vocational training *strictu sensu*. Also at the tertiary education level, non-university programmes and curricula enrol negligible numbers of people (some 8-10,000 in the whole country).

In fact, there are still prejudices against vocational training. For this reason pupils enter that path not directly after compulsory education, but often after a failure in the upper secondary education (Tuè, 2003).

Tab. 4. Students in vocational education as % of all students (ISCED level 3), by sex, 2000/01

	Italy	EU-15
Females	24	54
Males	28	57
Total	26	55

Source: Eurostat – Education statistics (UOE)

As a consequence, professional/vocational training courses are attended mainly by lower class students with unsuccessful schooling careers, while their position in the labour market is very

week, because of the above-cited prejudice against this kind of path. People with training qualifications are more and more loosing ground in comparison to people having school qualifications, this is particularly true as far as the risk of unemployment, the duration of the first job search and the jobs achieved are concerned (Schizzerotto 2002).

It is easy to figure what kind of problems disadvantaged families with even lower integration in the education system and in the labour market have to face. For the less integrated (gipsy minorities, immigrants, inhabitants of underprivileged neighbourhoods with high levels of unemployment, criminality and family problems) school drop-outs and early school leaving is more likely to be endemic, especially in risk areas.⁷¹

As far as immigrants are concerned, there aren't clear data specifically targeting the young. The database managed by the Ministry of Labour (Observatory of the Labour Market) shows that 1 immigrant out of 7 enters the labour before he/she is 25 (data available on the website www.ismu.org). This data, however, is quite old (1999) and covers a low share of labour matches, because the largest number of engagements happens outside the Public Employment Offices.

In general terms, since immigrants often fill the mismatch between labour demand and offer in the lower segments of the labour markets, problems of unemployment seem very limited for immigrants. According to some researches, immigrants' unemployment is lower than Italians' (Zanfrini 2001) and hits mainly immigrants without a legal status (Blangiardo 2005). Problems concern much more upward mobility and niche segregation – an issue that can become really disruptive for the new-born second generations.

In the schools, data from the Ministry of Education show a concentration of immigrants in professional schools and an education success considerably lower than their Italian colleagues'. Non-Italian students were 63,199 in the school year 1997/98 (10% of whom in upper secondary schools), while they were 361,576 in 2004/05 (16,5% of whom in upper secondary schools). They are as many as 4,2% of the whole number of pupils in Italian schools, but they account only for 2,31% of upper secondary school students.

The concentration of non Italian students in professional schools (4,57% of whom only one out of four are EU students) implies also that they account only for 1,1% of the students in lyceums (of whom one out of three are EU students), 2,41% in technical schools. In synthesis, 40% of non-Italian students are in upper secondary education are in professional schools, while only 20% of Italian students are in that path.

Non-Italian students' outcomes have been analysed by the Ministry for the first time in the school year 2003-04. If in primary schools 99,55% of Italian pupils and 96,19% of non Italian ones succeed in passing to the next schooling year, in upper secondary schools this happens for 85,22% of Italian students and only 72,66% of foreigners. Hence, drop-outs are really

⁷¹ According to the Ministry of Education, risk areas are 28 provinces in 5 Southern regions (Campania, Calabria, Puglia, Sardinia and Sicily) and 4 metropolitan areas in Central and Northern Italy (Rome, Milan, Turin, Genoa). These areas are identified by juvenile criminality and school drop out indicators. Furthermore, some additional funding is provided to areas with high percentage of foreign students.

considerable in upper secondary school; even though no clear data is available, the low number of immigrants at this education level is due to a mix of four factors:

- for immigration in Italy is quite recent, there is a small number of foreigners aged 15-19.
- immigrants aged 15-19 very recently settled in Italy rarely enter education paths, but they cope directly with labour market insertion
- at the end of lower secondary schools, many immigrants are oriented (and often supported by their families) to enter the labour market in order to achieve a bigger family income
- young immigrant in upper secondary schools find it difficult to achieve good results, because the support services are much lower than in primary and lower secondary schools and the didactics is very much result-oriented, with poor attention for language and education gaps accumulated in the previous years. What is more, families are often able to support their children when they are in the first years of schooling, but they have scarce resources and skills to be helpful at a later stage.

Tab. 5. Schooling indicators	90/91	98/99	99/00	00/01	01/02	02/03
	(I)	(I)	(I)	(I)	(I)	(I)
Students getting a lower secondary school certificate per 100 persons aged 14	99,0	97,5	98,3	98,8	98,7	n.d
Transition rate from lower to upper secondary schools (a)	85,9	93,2	95,5	100,5	101,0	99,6
Schooling rate in the upper secondary school (b)	68,3	82,2	84,1	86,0	88,9	91,1
Secondary school professional qualification rate (c)	11,2	13,2	12,1	12,6	14,4	n.d
Diploma degree (d)	51,7	70,8	70,5	72,7	76,4	n.d
Transition rate from upper secondary schools to university	71,3	64,5	63,2	66,5	70,3	74,6
Registration rate in the University (e)	35,6	44,0	43,2	45,6	51,6	55,7
Enrolment rate in the University (f)	30,6	44,9	47,6	49,6	51,7	55,8
University diploma rate (g)	-	1,8	2,5	2,8	2,0	n.d
University degree rate (h)	9,4	15,7	16,9	18,2	20,0	n.d
University degree rate after 7 years from the first registration	n.d.	41,4	41,6	45,2	51,7	n.d
Vocational training participation rate (i)	21,0	17,2	20,6	25,4	26,0	n.d
(a) The rate is higher than 100 because of repeatings and moving						
(b) Students aged 14-18 enrolled in upper secondary school out of the population aged 14-18						
(c) Students achieving a secondary school professional qualification out of the population aged 16-17						
(d) Students achieving a secondary school diploma out of the population aged 19						
(e) Total number of registered for the first time out of the population aged 19-21						
(f) Total number of enrolled out of the population aged 19-23						
(g) Three-year university diploma out of the population aged 21-23						
(h) Degrees out of the population aged 24-30						
(i) Enrolled in first- and second-level vocational training out of the unemployed aged 15-24						
(l) Figures of secondary schools are provisional.						
Source: www.isfol.it						

Tab. 6. Early school leavers – Italy (1993-2004)

	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004
Italy	37,1	35,1	32,8	31,7	30,1	28,4	27,2	25,3	26,4	24,3	23,5	23,5
EU-15	-	-	-	21,7	20,7	-	20,5	19,3	18,8	18,5	18,1	18,0

Source: Eurostat

If we consider early school leaving data (tab. 6), Italy's position in the European context is quite worrying: 23,5% against the European benchmark of 10% by 2010 (according to the objectives of the Lisbon strategy). Italy is antepenult in the list of EU countries. Using another Lisbon benchmark: only 72,9% of young people aged 22 has achieved an upper secondary school qualification, while the EU goal is 85% by 2010.

Tab.7. Youth education attainment level, 2002 (Percentage of the population aged 20 to 24 having completed at least upper secondary education)

	Italy	EU-25	EU-15	Euro-zone
Females	74,0	79,5	76,8	76,1
Males	64,2	73,7	70,8	69,4
Total	69,1	76,6	73,8	72,8

Source: Eurostat – European Union Labour Force Survey

It is important to underline that in the last decades also a new phenomenon has grown, i.e. intergenerational dequalification in areas with very dynamic labour markets. In some areas of the so-called *Third Italy*, based on flexible specialization, labour-intensive productions in mature segments of the market, labour demand for flexible manpower is very high and drains human resources from secondary schools and training paths before a qualification is achieved.

Immigrant children's dequalification have a different situation. Their parents have often achieved secondary and tertiary qualifications in their home countries (even if their diplomas are rarely recognized in Italy), but they lack skills to address their children's careers in Italy. In addition, they suffer from poor language and social skills, so that second generation immigrants usually achieve school qualifications lower than their parents'.

Hence, in order to fulfil the Lisbon objectives, an important effort to enhance school and training performance levels is necessary. As a consequence, an education reform has been a top-priority in the last 7-8 years. Finally, after a revised primary and lower secondary cycle, a two-side upper secondary system, inspired by the German model, was planned.

Law 144/99⁷² decrees the compulsory training and puts on an equal footing *education* and *training*. Thus, especially after Law 53/03⁷³, a separated professional/vocational education and training route was stated and can be accessed directly after the end of the lower secondary schools.

⁷² Titled "Measures concerning investments, delegation to the Government for the reorganization of employment incentives and norms concerning INAIL (National Agency for the employer's liability insurance), as well as measures for the reorganization of social security agencies".

⁷³ Titled "Delegation to the Government for the definition of general norms concerning education and basic performance levels in education and training matters".

A training route outside the school system shouldn't any more be a "blind alley", but certifications achieved supposedly can be spent in the education system in order to get a diploma and (eventually, after an additional year at school) enter the tertiary education institutions. Anyway, it is worth saying that no data about the implementation and the outcome of this reform is still available, since it is still mainly under way: some decrees and regulations about upper secondary school have been passed just in the last months of 2005, and other implementation rules are still needed.

As a consequence, professional/vocational training isn't intended anymore as a link between school and work, but as part of the educational system. This decision is aimed at keeping school leavers in the educational system for a longer period. Actually, the main part of basic training courses was shorter than 600 hours, and usually no longer than two years. Law 53/03 establishes three-year basic training courses and a system of accreditation that makes regional courses acknowledgeable at a national level.

As a matter of fact, however, the risk is the segmentation of educational skills and the deschooling process of students which were before included in the secondary schools. Furthermore, this reform seems unable to affect the traditional bias between training and schooling paths and their class disadvantage segmentation, because it seems neither easy nor clear how a training student can integrate his/her skills in order to enter the upper secondary school or even the university system.

The statement of a two-branch system clearly reproduce the traditional rigidity of upper secondary schools, affected by ineffective didactics and not supported transitions path from lower secondary schools. Anyway, as far as implementation rules have been determined by the Government only few months ago, it is too early to assess outcomes.

The potential class bias intertwine with another basic ascription problem, i.e. the territorial segmentation of resources and possibilities in Italy. PISA reports show adequate skills for students in Northern schools and worrying results for students in Southern schools – the top of the iceberg of a general problem concerning institutional performance in some areas of the Country.

Also the number and effectiveness of professional/vocational and training paths (apprenticeship included) sets a wide territorial divide, whose solution is far to be addressed effectively. As a matter of fact, qualifications given by the Regions answer to different criteria and the State hasn't still released national standards. This is also due to the new constitutional setting (constitutional law 03/01), taken into account by decree 276/2003 as far as training activities are concerned: Regions have the sole responsibility for training programmes and concurrent responsibility for labour policies (this means that Regions have legislative power, but basic principles have to be set by the State), while the Ministry of Labour plays only a guaranty role. If the national government doesn't meet its responsibilities and duties (as, moreover, it happens for national standards in social policies, too), an uncontested regional differentiation repeats *ad infinitum* a cumulative causation of disadvantage.

As a matter of fact, measures against drop-outs and early school leaving are more and more local and fragmented. Among the many measures implemented, we can consider the

following as the most important (though the regional differences should always be taken into account):

1. Counselling within lower secondary schools (mainly information of the options young people have in terms of education and training);
2. Counselling in upper secondary schools: many schools have “sportelli per l’orientamento” (information and counselling desks) in order to support transfers from one school to another and to re-orient young people after wrong choices;
3. Counselling activities within the Centres for Professional/vocational Training, where often an assessment of one’s own competences, re-motivation, self-esteem support, etc. is provided;
4. Tutoring activities: in some schools there is at least one professor acting as a tutor. Within vocational training the tutor is mainly individual;
5. Courses to attain the compulsory education diploma: the municipal CEPs (Centri di Educazione Permanente/centres for permanent education) organise courses for young people aged 14-18 (compulsory training age); these courses are accompanied by laboratories of arts, motivation and job counselling;
6. The CAGs (Centri di Aggregazione Giovanile/Youth centres), often managed by third sector agencies -- financially supported by municipalities -- mainly targeting spare time and afternoon activities. Many of them are specialised in “street education” (*educazione di strada*) and popular schools (*scuole popolari*) therefore having a privileged contact with dropped-out people and organising for them paths back to school, re-motivation and job-counselling;
7. School-work alternation (dual system perspective): vocational training schools organize for their own students stages and on-the-job training at local firms, tutoring them and assessing the single projects while they are carried out;
8. The LARSAs (*Laboratori per il recupero e lo sviluppo degli apprendimenti*/Laboratories aimed at supporting the learning process) are funded by provinces and are implemented jointly with upper secondary schools. They are aimed at vertical and horizontal transition (school-to-work; school-to-school), but often they end up helping the most problematic pupils to do their homework.

The last two measures included in the list above are mostly tied with the last reforms and legislative innovations. Anyway, the overall effects and outcomes of such measures are far to be clear, because their implementation is too recent. Furthermore, data retrieving and collecting is very difficult, since these projects are funded via different sources and managed mainly at the regional and local level.

As far as immigrant students in secondary schools are concerned, at the moment there is neither a national program of inclusion nor any relevant interest at the local level: local

education policies and ministry circulars target much more primary and lower secondary schools, with a wide range of action aimed at introducing 'intercultural education' in school curricula and supporting immigrant children with intercultural mediators. According to some interviewees in the Emilia-Romagna region, the main action carried out in secondary school is a deeper attention in the post-secondary education, often redirecting young immigrants out of schooling paths in favour of training 'on the job' or direct insertion in the labour market.

2.2. The mismatch between education/training systems and the labour market

As soon as we consider the Western European context, the Italian situation is worrying and anomalous at the same time. Among the OECD countries Italy's average transition period was – at the end of the Nineties – one of the longest: 11 years, while the OECD average was 7. In 2000, Italy was the OECD Country with the lowest share of young people entering the labour market directly after leaving school and with the highest share of young long-term unemployed.

The mismatch

The mismatch concerns both the level and the type of qualifications; both the demand and the supply side. According to an analysis by Checchi and Jappelli (2004), business demanded 54,000 graduated people (demand from public administration not included), while in the same year the university output was 225,000, with enormous potential brain unemployment.

The mismatch is substantial for those who graduated in Law, Literature and Political & Social Sciences. As a matter of fact, the Italian university system is for many people a long-term parking lot for unemployed. It is not accidental that in Italian tertiary system completion rates and completion times are among the most problematic in Europe. This is true especially for the courses suffering from a significant mismatch, so that many graduated in these sectors accept jobs not requiring a university degree and are hence unsatisfied.

Due to long-term education expectations, transition from school to work is often a second-choice and happens in a subordinated way, after education failures.

As for immigrant youngsters, the second generation is still too small to recognize specific transition patterns. In the last couple of years, anyway, their futures is becoming an issue at least for social researchers (see Ambrosini & Molina 2004), stressing risks of expectation mismatch between young people of immigrant origin with an expectation set similar to Italians of the same age and a demand locking them in dirty-dangerous-demanding positions, i.e. in their parents' ethnicized niches.

On the other hand, there are also immigrant youngsters in Italy who enter the labour market without any contact with the Italian education system, so that they are trapped in secondary labour market positions if they don't manage to enter the training system (quite developed in some regions, also for immigrants, but not targeting explicitly young immigrants).

The demand side

On the demand side, the Italian economic structure is for many aspects backward. In 2004,

enterprises foresaw 673,000 new jobs, but 41% of the demand concerned lower secondary school diplomas and only 18% a university degree.

These data are well-known, but families, schools and universities foster wrong choices and can't cope effectively with this mismatch. For many young graduated, their university degree is a sign of the ability of mastering a commitment, but the skills achieved aren't useful on the labour market.

On the other side, enterprises rarely invest in training. This is true for many reasons: structurally, the Italian business system relies on very small firms, with no resources and skills for training; furthermore, the national regulation system, when not effectively supplemented by active, proficient and affluent local authorities, doesn't foster adequately training investments.

Measures to support the transition are “empty boxes”

Even actions and measures designed (and sometimes used in the past) to train people in transition are now empty boxes, whose aim shifted from training to flexibility. In this field, a useful example comes from the apprenticeship system. Apprenticeship was quite effective in the 1960s, but later it became less used and more misused. Other instruments (for example the *contratti di formazione-lavoro* – training-on-the-job contracts) were considered to have a better status, while the training aspects of apprenticeship were usually totally disregarded, so that informally it became just a job-insertion contract aimed – implicitly – at reducing labour costs.

As a consequence, apprentices passed from 900,000 at the end of the Sixties to 250,000 in 1996. Law 196/97 (the so called *Treu Law*, named after the Minister of Work at that time) reformed apprenticeship: a) age limits (15-24) were raised for southern and deprived areas (15-26) and for disabled persons (15-28); b) secondary education diploma doesn't hinder any more an apprenticeship contract; c) the term is longer (up until five years in artisanship); d) training outside the workplace is reasserted and delegated to the Regions (at least 120 hours per year).

Then, Law 144/99 states that apprenticeship can be used to reach the compulsory training and educational levels and becomes a part of the education system. As a consequence, apprentices, which were some 345,000 in 1998, grew up to 482,000 in 2001. However, training outside the workplace is still scarcely implemented, even if the State has devoted some 90 millions euro between 2000 and 2006 to this objective. Regional training classes involved only some 20,000 apprentices till the year 2000, 60,000 in 2001 and (supposedly) some 100,000 in 2002: in the best case, only an apprentice out of five achieved a real and certified training.

We have to bear in mind that no actual national standard for company-based training exists.

Tab. 8. Training qualifications of young people in the school year 2000/01 per type and area

	First-level	Second-level	School-work	Apprentices	Total
North	98,969	26,968	20,403	25,498	171,838
Centre	13,430	14,631	847	3,037	31,945
South	41,507	34,336	315	3,032	79,190
Total	153,906	75,935	21,565	31,567	282,973

Source: www.isfol.it

Also in this case, the territorial divide is very important: due to the disparities in regional labour markets, with Southern Italy unable to promote development processes and characterized by a high unemployment caused by a structural deficiency of labour demand and a bad quality of jobs (informal and non-standard arrangements are there more widespread), school-work transition and matching problems are exacerbated in Southern regions.

3. Young people and unemployment: Italy in context

3.1. New contexts and complexities

Close to the structural difficulty of overcoming the school-to-work mismatch – which represented always one of the main Italian problems – we witness nowadays the emergence of new problems that make the picture even more complex. Despite the fact that labour relations are changing for everybody, young people are more exposed to these transformations. Indeed they are asked implicitly to take distance from the working models internalized in their socialization processes and to adapt to the new labour market conditions and regulatory frameworks.

In particular, greater obstacles are given for those who were born from the second half of the sixties onwards. Compared to their parents' generation, they have fewer probabilities to find their first job in a short period of time. On the contrary the probability to spend longer periods of their working life in unemployment, to experience higher job instability and slower career developments, to reach the economic independence from their parents in an older age is much higher (Schizzerotto, 2002).

These features are common to most advanced economies, even though intensity might differ quite considerably. In Italy, in particular, these changes have a greater impact than in many other countries, because of the chronic incapacity of the labour market to employ young people.

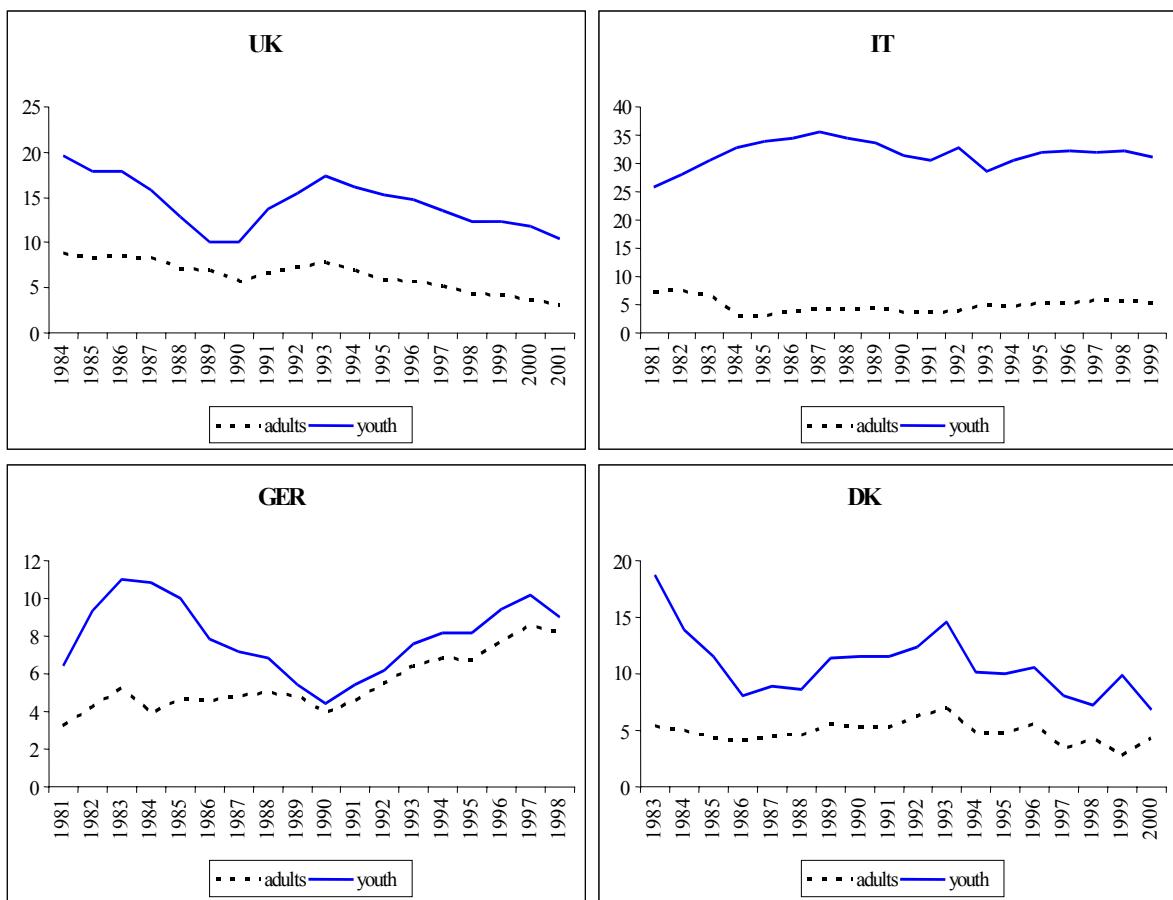
Comparing young and adults unemployment rates in four European countries, with different labour market regulations (*unemployment welfare regimes* according to Gallie and Paugam 2000), it emerges that young people in Italy are more disadvantaged than others in the probability of finding a job.

Figure 1 underlines a spread weakness and a greater exposition to the unemployment risk for young people compared to the adults in all four countries, even though in Italy the gap

between the two is higher and shows a tendency to increase during periods of high unemployment. This implies that during an employment crisis, it is mainly the young who are in a condition of greater vulnerability (Pugliese *et al.* 1996). Figure 1 shows how between 1992 and 1994, without doubt the most difficult years for the European labour market in the recent past, the youth's unemployment rate increased more than the adults one.

Within this general picture youth's condition in Italy is extremely worrying. The unemployment rate (15-29) is constantly around 30%, while in any other country – during the last twenty years – it has never exceed 20%. Besides, the youth unemployment rate in Italy shows a high stability over time.

Fig. 1: Young and adult unemployment rates in IT, GER, UK and DK.



Source: own calculations on OECD data (2002).

The consequences of unemployment: “forever young”

One of the direct consequences deriving from the difficulties of young people on the labour market in Italy is the extension of the youth condition and the delay in overcoming all phases of transition to adult life.

Among the numerous researches on the subject, the Eurostat survey on the “Youth condition in Europe” (Eurostat 2000) has showed that in the four European countries taken as a reference (but east and central European countries should be also considered), the share of young people among 20 and 24 years still living with their parents are the 87% in Italy, 55%

in Germany, 47% in the United Kingdom and 43% in Denmark. In most cases in Italy the whole transition to the adult life – of which the participation to the labour market represents one of the fundamental steps – is completed quite late: beyond the age of thirty.

Youth unemployment as an example of intergenerational parallelism

A longitudinal survey on Italian households (Schizzerotto, 2002) has underlined how the two final steps in the transition to the adult life – exit from the family and birth of the first child – are completed by young people today at the same age in which their grandfathers became adults. The reason of this intergenerational parallelism is easily understandable if we consider that the first generations of the XX century lived economic and labour market conditions that, for many aspects, were similar to those of their grandchildren which were born after the second half of the sixties.

The first aspect shared by the two generations is an unfavourable economic context characterized, in both the cases, by low productivity deriving (for the grandfathers) from the effects of the overproduction crisis and the war and (for the grandchildren) from the low productivity that characterizes most services in the contemporary economy (Esping-Andersen, 1999).

The other common element is the weak covering mechanisms of protection against labour markets risks, deriving from the retrenchment of welfare regulations. However, there is a crucial difference: people that were born in the three first decades of the XX. Century were in a period during which the mechanisms developed and were newly defined. Those who were born in the second half of the seventies, on the contrary, live in a period in which the low coverage derives both from the adaptation of social policies to the changed economic conditions and from the strong financial crisis that in the last twenty years reduced the capacity of the welfare state.

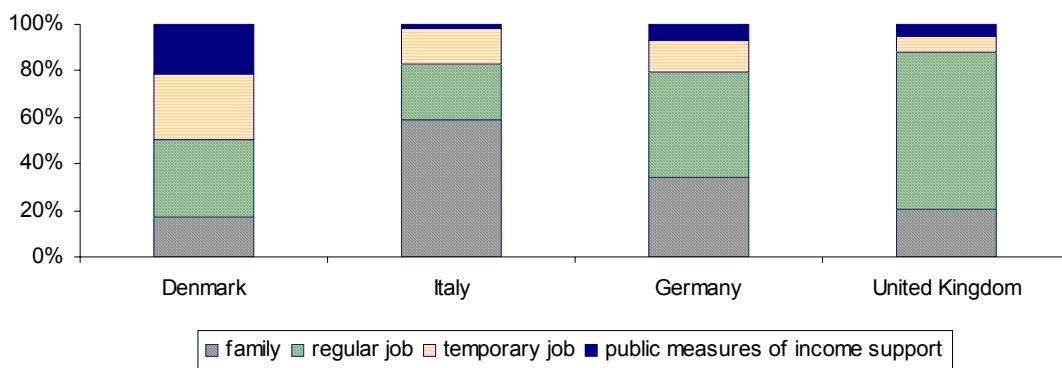
As a consequence, the transition to adult life of the two generations share a context of prevailing market exchange relations as the most important mechanism for the allocation of resources (Polanyi, 1974) and from the predominant role of the family as the main welfare agency (Mingione, 1997).

The important role of the family

Although the overall transformations show that the capacity of support and assistance of the family is declining, this is less the case in Italy than in other countries.

The extension of youth and the “de-standardization” of the phases in the transition to the adult life (Saraceno, 2001) in Italy must be read, therefore, also as a consequence of the tight linkage between the difficulty of young people to enter the labour market and the role attributed, from a residual welfare state, to the family as the first, and often alone, support for several social risks.

Fig. 2: Main sources of income for young people (< 24) cohabiting with parents



Source: EUROSTAT (2000)

Why is the Italian case different?

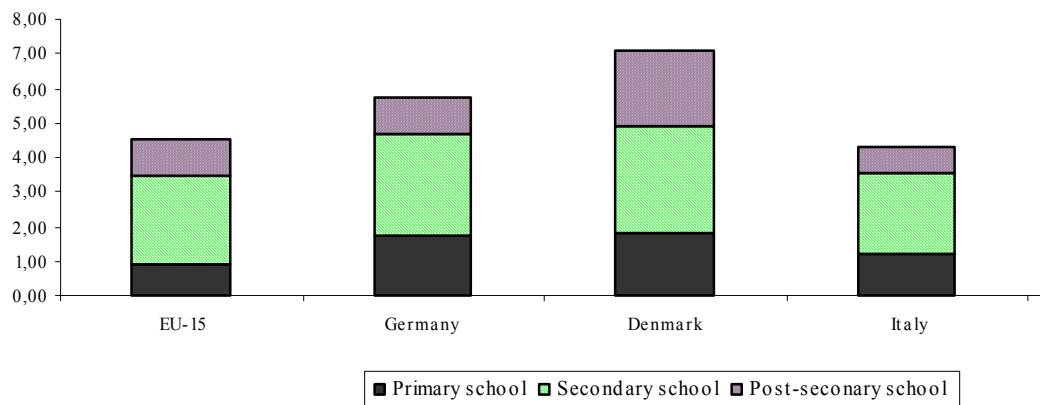
There are several factors that explain the differences between Italy and the other European countries in relation to the incidence of youth employment. Many of these are related to *the persistent school-to-work transition mismatch*.

As it has been showed before, the distance between skills that young people acquire in the school system and the skill requirements of the productive system is very high. Why is this the case? In this section we will complement the information we provided in § 2.2. of this report.

Little funding for education

First of all we must consider that despite long lasting discussions (among politicians, economists and academics), the level of public expenditure for the highest degrees is still less than those of other European countries (figure 3).

Fig. 3: Public expenditure in training for degree of education (% on GPD)



Source: our calculation on EUROSTAT (2002) data.

The specificities of the Italian economic system and its consequences

The existing gap between school and the labour market in Italy must be read, also, as a consequence of the specific economic system of this country that is strongly centered on small and middle enterprises. This characterization produces, in fact, important effects on the labour demand that affect significantly the employment chance of young people.

First of all, the professional skills requested from this system are extremely differentiated compared to the productive vocation of the several territorial contests. This aspect would ask for, therefore, a greater flexibility in the teaching planning and thus a scholastic system less centralized, with respect to the present one, and more “open” to the local requirements of job skills coming from the enterprises.

It derives that if the school system is not able to provide the necessary skills requested by the economic system, these can be acquired only through a direct job experience, and this represents, inevitably, a loss of competitiveness for those who are searching for a first job.

On the other side, the productive logic of the “diffused economy” limits the number of managerial job opportunities both because the number of employees with these competences inside the small productive units is inevitably reduced, and because these functions are carried out and handed down, often, among the members of the family that manages the enterprise.

All these elements contribute to a “familistic” logic underlying the labour market regulation, that aims to defend primarily the “male breadwinner” occupation, contributing to create a labour market characterized by a particularly low job mobility (Cobalti and Schizzerotto, 1994) and a low intergenerational turnover.

As it is showed in table 4 in fact, the unemployment risk for people, especially for men in central and northern regions, aged more than 35 years is very low compared with young people.

The youth question and the north-south divide

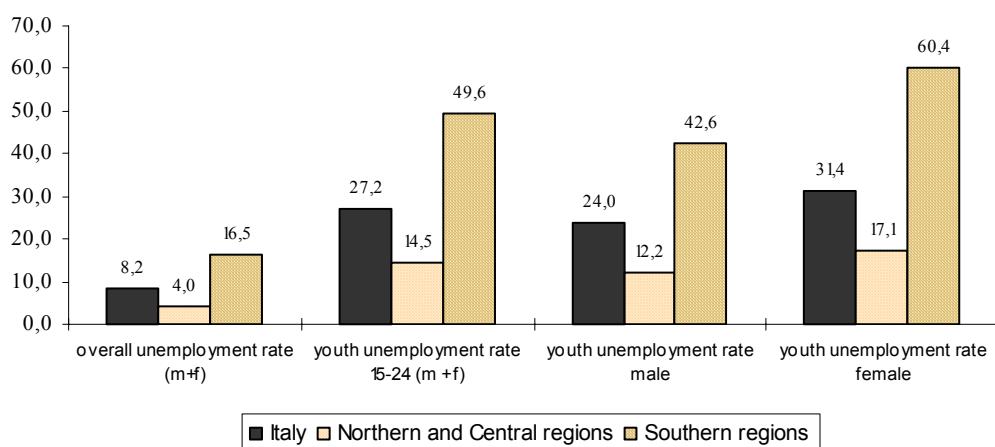
The above sketched scenario is incomplete if we do not address the north-south divide that has already been addressed in relation to education. In fact the main employment problems in Italy are distributed unevenly at the regional level. In particular, they are concentrated in the southern regions, where youth unemployment reaches its climax.

In this context young people (and in particular young women) are also those with smaller job opportunities, like adult women whose low employment rates are due to discouragement in entering the labour market (Calza Bini, Mingione, Pugliese 1993; Reyneri, 1996; Bernardi 1999; Mingione, Pugliese 2002; Carbone 2005b).

Longitudinal studies on the Italian labour market dynamics (Bison et al., 1996, Schizzerotto, 2002) showed that in the southern regions the greater risks to lose ones own job are concentrated, the same applies for fewer opportunities of insertion for young and women and to longer times to re-enter the labour market after an unemployment spell. This evidence, together with the official statistics (ISTAT, 2004), point to the fact that – despite the employment crisis in the industrial sector and the growth of the service sector in recent years – the structure of the Italian unemployment model has not changed (Pugliese e Mingione, 2002). This confirms that employment problems in these areas, are necessarily linked to a structural deficiency of the labour demand (Pugliese 1993, Reyneri 1996) deriving from the low economic development ability of these regions.

Figure 4 clearly shows that the southern regions record an unemployment rate which is four time higher than that of the Center-North and, in this contest young people and, above all, young women represent the part of population in which it is concentrated, much more, the risk of exclusion from the labour market.

Fig. 4: Unemployment rate for geographic distribution, sex and age in Italy (2003)



Source: Our calculation on ISTAT “Labour Force Survey” (2004).

This picture gets even worse when we consider the quality of work. It is in southern regions that there is a greater diffusion of non-regular jobs and of temporary job arrangements. The latter are 8,2% of the total job arrangements in Italy, while in the southern regions they reach the 14,4% (ISTAT, 2004).

3.2. Active labour market policies and young people's employability

The bad condition of youth in Italy in relation to ALMPs becomes particularly evident when we compare it with other European countries. In 2002 Italy targeted only 0,53% of its GDP to active labour market policies compared to 1,18% in Germany and to 1,58% of Denmark (OECD, 2004).

The weakness of active labour market policies is also evident if we consider that Italy does not have explicit welfare policies yet, even though some first attempts going in this direction are available⁷⁴. Among them, for instance:

- For 4 years (1999-2002) the *Reddito Minimo d'Inserimento* (RMI) has been tested. This specific measure was targeted to all people in economic and social need aimed at activating people by defining an *ad hoc* and individualized insertion scheme which included training, job insertion, etc. on the model of the French RMI. Within this scheme, sanctions were applied to people who were not participating in the insertion scheme, first by reducing the benefit (by about 20%) and afterwards by excluding people from the benefit. The test, however, lasted only 4 years (actually 4 years in 39 municipalities and 2 years in about 270 additional municipalities) and there has been no common pattern in dealing with sanctions.
- The law 297/02 on job placements obliges all unemployed to be registered at the CPI (*Centri per l'impiego*/Public Employment Services) and to sign a re-allocation plan. Of course much of the quality of this allocation plan depends on the resources available at the local level and at contextual conditions of the labour market.⁷⁵
- In 2004 the government introduced experimental projects of this kind within the frame of the law "Biagi". This law has changed the public regulation of the labour market through the promotion of new forms of labour arrangements in which the key-word is flexibility. Since law enforcement is very recent, at present we do not have further information on the application of these regulations.

⁷⁴ The importance to overcome this gap has been underlined, also, in the National Action Plan for employment (Welfare and Labour Minister, 2004). The target for the period 2003-2005, has been to reach an employment rate of 58,5% by December 2005 (in 2002 it was 56,7%). This target should be reached through a double path. The first step regards the complete implementation of the Biagi Law (see *infra* this paragraph), which aims, at facilitating the jobless to work transition for disadvantaged groups (women, young people from Southern regions and also unemployed aged more than 45 years). The second step regards the reorganization of the welfare system. This reform aims to discourage all measures of passive income support that represent, in the rhetoric of law makers, the first cause of the early labour market exit. Simultaneously the reform aims at encouraging all measures in which income aspects are supported by training and educational plans and effective actions of job re-insertion.

⁷⁵ Since the implementation of the measure is still in progress and the system isn't yet fully established, there are no data about the coverage and success of this law provision.

We can include in this list also self-employment measures, mainly fostered via Legislative Decree 185/2000. Anyway, they refer more to a kind of traditional support for disadvantaged areas (L.D. 185/2000 is only the last evolution of similar actions dating back at least to the 1980s), even though the measure is shifting toward a more individualized approach.

Despite these rather weak attempts, there are other active measures that were more successful. It is the case, for example, of the training programs like the *Orientation Stage* (law n°196 of 199, ⁷⁶, see Annex IV, Chapter 7 in this volume) and *The Employment Placement Plans* (law n° 451 of 1994), developed to support the transition from school to work through a job experience and a formative project within a firm or a professional office.

Surveys by ISFOL (2003) on the effectiveness of these measures show that they eased access to the first job for young people and especially for young women. Within one year from the formative path 61,2% of young people are employed, 55,7% of whom for the first time.

Tab. 9. Share of young people employed within one year from the training experience inside the programs of active labour market policies for macro-regions (val.%)

	North West	North Est	Center	South	Total
Trainees employed	73,1	75,5	66,7	36,0	61,2
Of whom at their first job	69,9	70,0	60,5	28,1	55,7

Source: ISFOL 2003

Jobs in which young people are mainly employed after these paths are non-manual ones of an executive/administrative type (around 46% of cases) or selling or family services (around 19%); slightly less than 20% are employed in manual labour as skilled workers, plant operators and other unqualified jobs, and the remaining 15% are located in the higher-skill part of the job scale used. In general, it seems there is a tendency to use the young people in less qualified jobs than the ones for which they were educated, something anyway quite widespread in the Italian labour market.

⁷⁶ Beyond orientation stages, the law introduced other two active labour market measures: Job-grants (*borse lavoro*) and Jobs of public usefulness (*Lavori di pubblica utilità*). These two measures were addressed particularly for young unemployed resident in the most disadvantaged regions of the country (Sardegna, Sicilia, Calabria, Campania, Basilicata, Puglia, Abruzzo, Molise and all the provinces in which the average unemployment rate was higher of the national average). Specific target were those who were 21-32 years old, were in search of the first job and were registered as unemployed for at least, 30 months. The job grants allowed young unemployed a working activity for one year in a small or middle sized enterprises (from two to hundred employees), and a subsidy, paid by INPS (the National Institute for Social Security) equal to that granted to workers employed in the firm. *Jobs of public usefulness* were activities of short duration (12 months extended to a maximum of 24 months) in the following areas: the services to the person, gardening and care of the environment, development of rural activities, the recovery of urban spaces. Young workers involved received a subsidy of about 410 € for 20 hours of activity per week. Given that jobs of public usefulness arrangement did not represent and establish a formal work relation, no contributions were paid.

4. Conclusions: the persistence of old inequalities

In both educational and labour market regulations, Italian policies do not seem to be able to prevent disadvantage and its reproduction. This becomes clear when we consider the degree of income inequalities existing in Italy (e.g. measured through the Gini index) and the redistributive impact of social policies. Italy is on the one side unable to reduce inequalities, and on the other it keeps reproducing them through its policies.

The profound differences existing between social classes and the various regions involve both the "quantitative" capabilities for implementing policies and the attention devoted to monitoring and evaluating them.

The increased regionalization of regulatory powers and policy design does not seem to help overcoming these differences. As far as active labour market policies are concerned, for instance, in many regions framework-agreements play a fundamental role, enabling trainees to be placed in firms which signed a general agreement between the promoting body and employers' associations. However, the success rate of these measures is in the southern regions half than in Northern ones.

Regarding gender differences, it should be underlined that, although the female patterns of participation in the labour market are changing radically in latest years, young women involved in education and training paths continue to orientate mainly toward activities characterized by low social prestige, low wages and low career attainment. The analysis on trainees' labour market inclusion shows that the "education" sector continues to have a central role, and it represents, together with other public services, both in social and personal assistance, about 40% of the activities for young women. Thus also in this case despite the success of some of these measures there are some relevant drawbacks.

In fact, as a result of these differences in policy design and implementation, disadvantage affecting young people is mainly concentrated in the South (see § 2.1.1.), where young people attain lower educational levels, are more unemployed or work in the informal economy.

These differences related to gender and to the territorial divide suggest that new labour market action plans are path dependent to a great extent, and thus their impact risks to be a multiplier of the inequalities already existing, if they are not coupled to specific policies aimed at removing the consolidated system of social stratification.

The over-reliance on family solidarity – consolidated in an institutional framework which does not support its social responsibility with adequate resources, strengthens the intergenerational reproduction of poverty.

It also does not seem that there is a concrete political will to overcome the existing fragmentation, on the contrary the reforms of the last years seem to institutionalize these difference in regulatory contexts which will be increasingly difficult to change in the future.

Experts recommendations concentrate on the need to find a solution to these problematic

areas, in particular providing a safety net able to couple security and flexibility (fashionably identified as flexicurity in the Netherlands and Denmark). These imply the support to human capital building processes and – specifically – the revision of all those social security instruments which penalize the young: particularly unemployment benefits based exclusively on contributory seniority, but also maternity benefits linked exclusively to wage work.

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Roberto Moscati, Professor at the University of Milan-Bicocca, Milan (MI).

Franco Pesaresi, Former Mayor of Pesaro, and former president of ANCI, the National Association of Italian Municipalities, Manager of Social Educational and Health Services of Ancona (AN).

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Poland

Prof. Bohdan Jung, Beata Błaszczyk, Bożena Kołaczek and Małgorzata Moleća-Zdziech, Warsaw School of Economics (in consultation with Prof. Adam Kurzynowski)⁷⁷

I. Concepts of „disadvantage“

1.1. „Disadvantaged youth“ as an external concept

The term „disadvantaged youth“ is not used in Polish social policy discourse. The concepts in use include children and youth living in poverty, youth with disabilities up to the age of 24, young people below the age of 18 who fail to comply with obligatory schooling, young orphaned people below the age of maturity with no family in the biological and social sense, legally and institutionally protected by the state, unemployed youth aged 15-17 and 18-24 (school leavers, graduates), demoralized youth under the age of maturity (alcoholism, drug addiction, prostitution, juvenile delinquency and crime)⁷⁸. With relation to the key factor of disadvantage, which is unemployment, youth is statistically defined and researched on in different age groups: 15-24 years old (GUS or the Central Statistical Office), 19-26 (by market research companies, public opinion pollsters, such as SMG/KRC's survey “Youth 2002”), 13-18 and 18-24 in official government programmes (National Action Plan for Employment), as well as young people up to the age of 25 (EU projects such as „EQUAL“). The meaning of „disadvantage“ in the Polish context was one of the most hotly discussed topics during the meeting with national experts, who unanimously disliked the term.

The process of preparing the national report and compiling local information for the project was collective. The questionnaire was assembled from national statistics, published research, working papers, experts' papers, seminars and presentations held at the Ministry of Labour, academic communities, statisticians from the Central Statistical Office, data from NGOs and international projects dealing with the topic. The composition of the team directly involved in the preparation of the report reflected this diversity with the group effort being able to draw from various disciplinary (sociology, economics/labour economics, social policy) perspectives and professional angles (practitioners and policy makers, researchers, consultants).

The national report in Polish (55 pages), which was much more extensive than the English version, was confronted with the opinions of national experts (see list of invited and attending

⁷⁷ Input from the national meeting with experts is gratefully acknowledged

⁷⁸ For further review of definitions and concepts related to this group of youth, see: S.Golinowska, „Polska bieda“, Instytut Pracy i Spraw Socjalnych [Institute for Labour and Social Affairs, further referred to as IPiSS], Warszawa 2002, S.Golinowska, J.Balcerzak-Paradowska, „Rodziny w Polsce. Ewolucja. Zróżnicowanie“. in: „Okres transformacji“, IPiSS, B.Kołaczek, „Zagrożenia rozwoju a ochrona dzieci. Kraje Europy Środkowo-Wschodniej“, IPiSS, „Zagrożenia rozwoju a ochrona dzieci. Kraje Europy Środkowo-Wschodniej“, IPiSS, 1995, „Dzieci w trudnych sytuacjach“ IPiSS, 1996, „Diagnoza społeczna 2000“, Rada Monitoringu Społecznego WSP TWP.

experts at the end of this report) during a meeting held on July 6. Despite poor attendance the quality of feedback was satisfactory and it came from varied sources (represented were the two ministries most concerned with the report: Economy and Labour and that of Social Policy, as well as local government and the academic world). A few common elements were present in the submitted comments. These included the following:

- The research topic was a „real“ one, much needed and appreciated by policy makers and academics alike, addressing urgent issues
- The report was a serious and comprehensive document
- It was also described as reliable and capable of acting as „reference work“ in this area.

The use of the term „disadvantaged youth“ was widely criticized both by practitioners and the academics. We used a direct translation of the English term in our translation into Polish, rather than settle for the more commonly used in Poland expressions such as „youth in a difficult social and economic position“, „youth experiencing hardship“, „youth with special needs“ etc. Whereas the term „marginalised youth“ or „excluded youth“ has a clear meaning in Polish and finds its correspondence in EU programmes, the idea of „disadvantaged youth“ immediately gave rise to the question of who was in the „advantaged youth“ group to be used as control in our study.

2.2. Defining unemployed youth

In the light of the law in force since June 1, 2004⁷⁹, unemployed youth is defined as persons aged 15-24 (including 15-17 year old graduates) capable of work and willing to become employed, remaining without work and not following day education, registered in the labour office which corresponds to their place of dwelling. This new legislation also introduced the concept of those unemployed up to the age of 25 (as defined by the calendar year he/she is eligible for services and instruments of the labour market)⁸⁰.

According to Labour Force Survey criteria, unemployed youth were aged 18-24 and were out of work in the week of the study, actively looked for work and were ready to take up work within two weeks of the week of the study.

⁷⁹ Legislation of Dec.14, 1994 on employment and combating unemployment (Dz. U. 1995 nr1, poz.1., art.2, p. 2)

⁸⁰ Legislation on labour market of 2004 (Dz. U. 2004 Nr 99 srt.2., p.2)

II. Education and training

2.1. Compulsory education and reform of the educational system

In Poland education is compulsory until the age of 18, full-time compulsory education starts during the calendar year in which the child reaches 7 years of age and lasts until the end of the *gymnasium* (lower secondary school), yet no longer than it reaches the age of 18 (The Act of 25 July 1998). Attending of both primary and the newly created lower secondary schools (gymnasiums) is now obligatory. Our study was conducted at the time when both old and new educational systems were co-existing, so we could see the full impact of the educational reform, which sought to prolong the time of general education and limit narrow (and inflexible) vocational education. The changing structure of enrolment and the falling demographics of secondary education are shown in the table below:

Table 1
Enrolment in old and reformed secondary education system in Poland 2000-2003

Enrolment (pupils in 1,000s)	2000	2001	2002	2003
Secondary (prior to reform):				
General	924.2	716.8	487.2	250.0
Vocational	985.9	787.7	591.4	405.6
Upper secondary (reformed):				
Basic vocational*			94.0	185.7
General			258.3	501.8
Specialized			94.2	170.2
Technical			129.5	276.3

* not giving access to higher education

Source: Rocznik Statystyczny 2004, GUS, Warszawa 2004, p.563

The new system reflects the aspirational change of Polish youth and the boom in higher education. Whereas in 1989/90 nearly 55% of those graduating from elementary schools chose to go into vocational training, in 2003/2004 this percentage fell to 17%. In the same years, the percentage of those deciding to go into higher education rose from 13% to 47%⁸¹.

Post-secondary education is included as part of secondary education in the Polish classification and assigned to level 4 in the ISCED (Revised Version). In the school year 2002/03 236,839 young people aged 19 to 24 attended post-secondary schools⁸².

⁸¹ Rocznik Statystyczny 2004, GUS, Warszawa 2004

⁸² Source: Ministerstwo Edukacji Narodowej o szkolnictwie zawodowym, http://www.men.waw.pl/menis_en/higher_education/strategy.php

Every child and youth with disabilities or socially maladjusted has the right to education in all types of schools in accordance to its individual development and educational needs and predispositions, as guaranteed by art. 70 of the Polish Constitution, the law on the educational system of September 7, 1991 r. (art. 1 p. 1, art. 1 p. 5). This education can take place in generally accessible classes, in integrated classes, in special classes specialised in one type of disability or (rarely) through individual education.⁸³ Education of children with disabilities can be extended up to the age of 16 in elementary education, up to 21 in gymnasias and up to the age of 24 in post-elementary schools.

2.2. Causes behind educational failure

Educational failure in Poland relates mainly to children whose parents have a low level of education, who abuse alcohol, from emotionally-disturbed families which also happen to be poor and living in difficult housing conditions. Educational failure is also often linked to health disorders (the so-called “micro-defects”)⁸⁴.

In Polish education a distinction is made between dropping out and being ‘pushed out’⁸⁵. Push out starts when in a given school year the ‘undesired’ pupil reaches the age of 18 and is encouraged to join a school for adults or move to Voluntary Work Corps (OHP)⁸⁶. The study came across various types of potential drop out. This included: transfers to “worse” schools, creation of “worse” classes, repeating classes, moving pupils to special schools, to schools offering vocational training, to adult schools and special educational centres, dragging pupils through the educational system (hidden dropout within the system).

Of some 3 million pupils enrolled in the school year 2002/2003 only a fraction (0.2%) failed to meet the scolarity obligation (one of the lowest rates in the EU). A similar situation existed in the gymnasias. With an enrolment of some 1.8 million, the rate of those failing to meet the scolarity obligation was 0.1%⁸⁷. In 2003 the percentage of young people aged 18-24 who did not take up further education was 6.3% (1.3% lower than in 2002). This percentage is lower for women (in 2002 - 5.6%, in 2003 – 4.7%), while for men it was respectively 9.5% and 7.8%)⁸⁸. 12.3% of youth aged 16-18 lat discontinues their education after the gymnasium.

⁸³ Source: "Integracja" nr 2/2002, p. 35; <http://www.niepelnosprawni.info/labeo/app/cms/x/2624>; Government's Representative for the Affairs of the Disabled, Ministry of Labour and Social Policy; Magda Gorczyca, *Poradnik dla rodziców dzieci niepełnosprawnych*, Warszawa 2001, <http://www.niepelnosprawni.info/labeo/app/cms/x/5169>

⁸⁴ See: *Przyczyny i przejawy dysfunkcjonalności rodzin*, in: *Rodziny w Polsce-Raport IPiSS 1995, Dzieci gorszych szans, praca zbiorowa pod red. B.Głowiackiej i T.Pilcha,2001; Oświata i Wychowanie w roku szkolnym 2002/2003, GUS 2003; B.Balcerzak-Paradowska, Rodzina i polityka rodzinna na przełomie wieków, IPiSS 2004; B.Kolaczek, Uwarunkowania realizacji funkcji wychowawczej rodziny. Rodzina polska wobec nowych wyzwań*, in: *Praca i polityka społeczna wobec wyzwań integracji, IPiSS 2003, Ogólnopolski Szczyt w Sprawach Dzieci-Materiały Konferencyjne 2003*

⁸⁵ See: B. Fatyga, A. Tyszkiewicz, A. Zieliński, Skala i powody wypadania uczniów z systemu edukacji w Polsce. Raport z badań odpadu szkolnego na terenie 32 gmin. ISP (2001), chapter 1.

⁸⁶ Ibidem.

⁸⁷ Krajowy Plan Działania na rzecz Integracji Społecznej na lata 2004-2006 [National Plan for Social Integration for 2004-2006], Ministerstwo Polityki Społecznej, Warszawa 2004

⁸⁸ Ibidem

In 2002 for people aged 18-24 the percentage of those dropping out of further education was 7.6%, which is just slightly over half of the EU-15 average. However, the reform of the educational system and higher educational standards in post-gymnasium schools can bring this rate up in the near future⁸⁹.

Children and youth are also particularly endangered by poverty. When taking the most acute definition of poverty level (biological minimum of existence), in 2003 41.6% couples with four and more children were below poverty line. (respective data for children from single-parent families was 13%)⁹⁰. The highest percentage of children not continuing education after vocational or secondary education was coming from the farmers' families, but relatively high levels were also found among the children of the retired and pensioners, as well as of the self-employed⁹¹.

2.3. Vocational training and volunteering

The traditional and widely applied measures of preparation for professional life included professional training and placement. These are now among the most neglected forms of the educational process in Poland, but since 1996 there exist the so-called Centres for Practical Education organized in vocational schools and offering apprenticeship for those from vocational schools⁹². Traineeships are an obligatory element of higher vocational education (students must get at least 15 weeks of training). In the last decade many institutions of higher learning created career offices for students and graduates. This coincided with higher levels of unemployment among the young, which made these a much needed institution, but not leading to enough placements⁹³.

Training schemes are generally better suited to the needs of the employers than of the employees. Some of original Polish solutions in this area (which could be described as „good practice”, see Annex IV, Chapter 7 in this volume), include *tripartite* training contracts signed by the young unemployed, the employer and a labour office. Such contracts are used for two elements of the First Work scheme (see section 4.4, p.14) which provide for a) training and b) employment of graduates of post-gymnasium schools. The financing is provided by the Work Fund and placement (usually for one year) is provided and administered by the labour office. Another example of good practice in this area is a system of dual and rotating professional education. These systems are already at work in dual training for artisans⁹⁴.

⁸⁹ Another approach to the fate of young drop outs and other disadvantaged youth is exemplified by NGOs' conceptualisation of the “children of the streets”, with claims that as many as 600,000 children in Poland do not attend schools even in the age of obligatory schooling, but this estimate appears to be extreme. See:

(http://portal.engo.pl/files/01dzieciulicy.ngo.pl/public/pliki_do_pobrania/broszura_ok.pdf).

⁹⁰ Source: *Sytuacja gospodarstw domowych w 2003 r.*, GUS

⁹¹ Source: „Diagnoza społeczna 2000”, p.141.

⁹² Source: www.men.waw.pl

⁹³ An estimated 102,000 young people follow vocational training. In 2004 34,000 new apprenticeship contracts were signed. 38,000 artisans/craftsmen are offering such forms of training. See: M.Prószynski, director of the Centre for Vocational Training and Social Affairs of the Polish Craftsmen's Union at the meeting with the Minister of Education and Sports, on Dec.13, 2004

⁹⁴ See: M.Kabaj, *Strategie i programy przeciwdziałania bezrobociu w Unii Europejskiej i w Polsce*, Wyd.Nauk.Scholar, 2004)

Many young people decide to get work experience and training by volunteering⁹⁵ or casual work experience, such as summer jobs. During summer vacations of 2004 children from 19% of households worked (mainly pupils from secondary schools, age range 16-19, 27% working)⁹⁶. Working for the NGOs and in the voluntary sector has become an increasingly important way to gain work experience for the young people⁹⁷.

III. The scope of disadvantage

3.1. Youth labour market in Poland

In the light of labour market statistics, youth (age 15-24, in conformity with ILO approach) has a much more difficult situation on the labour market than other age groups. The activity rate of youth (or the percentage of youth professionally active) was 39.1%, while that for 25-34 years olds – 87.4%⁹⁸. Young women have a lower activity rate (35.8%) than men (42.3%)⁹⁹.

LFS statistics show that employment rate for young people for 15-17 year olds is 2.4%, 18-19 – 5.4%, 20-24 – 28.1%¹⁰⁰. The problem of young people not in obligatory schooling is correlated with the level of unemployment and the scope of poverty across the country¹⁰¹.

An increasing number of young people enters the labour market late, prolonging their stay in the educational system. This is supported by growing net scolarisation rates for young people aged 15-18 from 79.9% in 1990/1991 to 86.4% in 2002/2003. For young people aged 19-24, the respective data was 15.1% in 1990/91 and 34.5% in 2002/2003¹⁰².

In the light of legislation in force until the end of 2005, the minimum wage for graduates taking up work in their first year of employment is equivalent to 80% of the minimum wage, rising to 90% in the second year. In January 2005 official minimum wage was (in gross terms) roughly 210 €.

3.2. Unemployed youth

While the bulk of Polish young people aged 19-26 only studies (36%), they are closely followed by those who don't work and don't study (27%). This group is of particular interest

⁹⁵ See: legislation of April 24, 2003 r. (Dz.U. Nr 96. poz. 873)

⁹⁶ Source: „Wakacje uczniów - wypoczynek i praca zarobkowa”, BS/153/2004, CBOS, Warszawa, September 2004

⁹⁷ 35% of NGOs offer a job contract (62,000 jobs, 0.6% of employment outside of agriculture), 1.6 milion work as volunteers in NGOs, most are young people; Source: Raport o NGO [Raport Rocznny Stowarzyszenia Klon/Jawor z 2003 roku (Raport 2004.pdf),

<http://www.klon.org.pl/x/29123;jsessionid=107F3491F2544D384403124F0C1B87AA.tomcat>, retrieved 26.11.2005]

⁹⁸ Source: National Census 2002

⁹⁹ Ibidem, section: Population.

¹⁰⁰ Source: „Aktywność ekonomiczna Ludności Polski. I kwartał 2004”, GUS, Warszawa 2004

¹⁰¹ Source: Oświata i wychowanie w roku szkolnym 2002/2003, GUS, Rocznik Statystyczny Województw GUS, Warszawa 2003

¹⁰² Source: Rocznik Statystyczny (Statistical Yearbook) 2004, GUS, Warszawa 2004

to our study as it is possibly mostly composed of unemployed youth¹⁰³. High (but slowly falling) rate of unemployment among young people is the country's main dimension of disadvantage, as shown in the table below:

Table 2. Unemployment rate by age

Item	2003	2004
	III quarter	III quarter
	rate of unemployment in %	
Up to the age of 24	41.9	38.9
25 – 34	20.4	18.3
35 – 44	15.7	14.8
45 and more	13.2	13.5

Source: http://www.stat.gov.pl/dane_spol-gosp/praca_ludnosc/index.htm

According to Labour Force Survey (LFS) data unemployment rate for those aged 15-24 in the first quarter of 2004 reached 45.9% (vs. 46.5% a year earlier)¹⁰⁴. Eurostat data for the age group under 25 for Poland shows that the unemployment rate was 41.2% in 2003 and 39.5% in 2004 (see: <http://eurostat.cec.eu.int>). Also according to Eurostat, this rate for 2004 was broken down into 38% for men and 41.4% for women. This source also quotes the ratio of unemployment for young people under 24 for 2004 was 14.2 overall (15% for men and 13.4% for women).

Of the total 815,000 young unemployed aged 15-24, more than 55% had elementary or secondary vocational education and less than 2% - higher education. There were more unemployed young men (449,000) than women (366,000)¹⁰⁵. Unemployment also tends to be concentrated geographically¹⁰⁶.

Under the legislation in force, it doesn't pay for the unemployed not to register, because they lose not only unemployment benefits¹⁰⁷, but also health insurance and continuity in employment records, which counts for retirement pension. Nevertheless, it can be estimated that a few percent (not more than 10%) of young people may fail to register in labour offices.

¹⁰³ Source: report of AIG and "Gazeta Wyborcza"- „Praca dla młodych” [Work for the young], 2002, carried out by SMG/KRC research centre on a sample of 1062, 19-26 age group (study done Jan.14-Feb.1, 2002)

¹⁰⁴ See: „Polska 2004. Raport o rynku pracy oraz zabezpieczeniu społecznym”, Departament Analiz i Prognoz Ekonomicznych, MGIP, Warszawa 2004

¹⁰⁵ „Aktywność Ekonomiczna Ludności Polski I kwartał 2004”, GUS, Warszawa 2004

¹⁰⁶ *Ibidem*

¹⁰⁷ Unemployment benefits for graduates are relatively low and correspond to 30% of the average wage in the Polish economy. They cannot be considered as motivating not to take up employment.

This is also confirmed by the different unemployment rates reported by LFS data and labour offices. The exact percentage may be close to the percentage of youth aged 18-24 not continuing education (7.6%)¹⁰⁸. The main reason for young unemployed not to register in labour offices is probably their work in the informal sector (often providing them with means to finance their education), but some studies also found that the better educated ones, perceived the contact with the labour office as humiliating. They preferred to look for jobs by themselves.¹⁰⁹

Qualitative research conducted throughout the country shows that among the young unemployed there is a certain group (difficult to estimate its size), which prefers to make a living from various types of benefits and assistance, rather than seek employment. The highest percentage of ‘seemingly unemployed’ registered with the labour offices after the year 2000 can be found among people with elementary (and lower) level of education. These are mainly housewives with low educational levels.

Studies show that the image of the young unemployed varies greatly, but a negative stereotype of the unemployed is most likely to be voiced by owners of businesses and managers – both potential employers. An ambivalent attitude to the young unemployed is manifested by labour offices and social assistance centres.

3.3. Young people in long-term unemployment

Long-term unemployment relates to those registered with the labour office for over 12 months over the last 2 years¹¹⁰. In the first half of 2004 in the 18-24 age group there were 283,700 (against 315,700 in 2003) unemployed for more than 12 months registered with the labour offices. These constituted 36.5% (against 38.3% in 2003) of the total in this age group and 17.4% (against 18.9% in 2003) of all those in long-term unemployment. EUROSTAT data shows an even higher rate of young people (as defined in the 15-24 age group) in long-term unemployment: 43.3% for the fourth quarter of 2004 and 45.4% for the first quarter of 2005.

Long-term unemployment of young people can mainly be found in the regions with predominance of former state farms (PGRs) in North-Western Poland¹¹¹, as well as in villages and towns with a population under 20,000 and single-company towns (deindustrialisation)¹¹².

¹⁰⁸ With respect to the latter - actually lower according to Eurostat data – 5.7% for those aged 18-24 with at most lower secondary education and not in further education or training in 2004 (6.3% in 2003).

¹⁰⁹ Similar findings came from the “Young people and employers in Poland” study by K.Roberts, A.Kurzynowski in mid-1990s. Informal employment was also quoted as the reason in K.Roberts, B.Jung, “Poland’s First Post-Communist Generation”, Avebury, Aldershot-Brookfield-Hong Kong-Singapore-Sydney 1995. Same themes were current in the region, see: “Initial analysis of the lifestyle of young unemployed and young self-employed in Bulgaria, Hungary, Poland and Slovakia”, w: L.Machacek, K.Roberts (eds.), “Youth unemployment and self-employment in East-Central Europe”, Institute of Sociology, Slovak Academy of Sciences, Bratislava 1997.

¹¹⁰ Legislation as published in: Dz.U. 2004 Nr 99 art.2., p.3. LFS’s studies also use the criterion of being out of work for over 12 months.

¹¹¹ See: E.Tarkowska, K.Korzeniewska, „Młodzież z byłych PGR-ów. Raport z badań”, ISP, Warszawa 2002, M. Dziubińska-Michalewicz, „Problemy bezrobocia i ubóstwa na terenach byłych Państwowych Gospodarstw Rolnych”, Kancelaria Sejmu, Biuro Studiów i Analiz, Wydział Analiz Ekonomicznych i Społecznych, February 2004, no. 220, Warszawa.

¹¹² Source: „Polacy wobec bezrobocia w swoim miejscu zamieszkania (zróżnicowania terytorialne)”, CBOS, BS/20/2005, Warszawa, January 2005.

As in other countries, research on the unemployed youth showed that the longer they stayed out of job, the less inclined they were to take up employment. They tend to blame external factors, such as economic policy, for their joblessness. Their register in the local labour offices as potential candidates for social assistance, while also trying to work in the informal economy. When their incomes from such sources tend to meet their needs, this specific and temporary situation seems to transform itself into a permanent lifestyle¹¹³.

3.4. Youth with disabilities

In the light of art.1 of the law of Sept.7, 1991 (amended in 1996, 1998 and in 2003) on the system of education, this system is to provide in particular: 1) opportunity to be educated in all types of schools by children, disabled and socially maladjusted youth according to individual development needs, educational needs and predispositions, 2) care for pupils with disabilities by providing them with individualised education forms and programmes, as well as rehabilitation classes, 3) care for orphaned children and youth, who are partly or entirely deprived of parental care, as well as pupils who are in a difficult life or material situation¹¹⁴.

In the school year 2003/2004 in all elementary schools (standard and special) there were 82,900 children with disabilities. In the regular schools they constituted 2.9% of all pupils. Some 9,800 children with disabilities took advantage of individual education. In special elementary schools there were 45.5% of children with disabilities. In gymnasium (both those opened to all pupils and special ones) there were 65,100 young pupils with disabilities. They constituted 3.9% of the total enrolment in standard gymnasium. Some 4,400 gymnasium-level pupils with disabilities continued their education individually at home. In special gymnasium, this kind of pupils accounted for 59.6% of their enrolment¹¹⁵. The young disabled are high on the list of NGOs activities (this is reported by one third of active NGOs)¹¹⁶.

However, as foreseen by the **National Strategy for Social Inclusion**, the group likely to suffer from social marginalisation includes children and youth from neglected social milieus and children growing up outside of their families. Policy makers see this group as most likely to become marginalised and fall out of the educational system, with lasting repercussions for their prospects of employment. In consequence, the National Plan for Employment 2005 (approved by the Council of Ministers on Sept.21, 2004, section 1.1, point 50-56) starts by specifying as its first objective professional activation of youth and increasing the employment levels among young people in the 18-24 age group who are out of work, as well as professional preparation of youth from dysfunctional families and pathological milieus.

¹¹³ See: E.Trafialek, Bezrobocie-stereotypy i wyzwania, in: "Polityka Społeczna", no. 1 /2003

¹¹⁴ See; Government's Representative for the Affairs of the Disabled, Ministry of Labour and Social Policy; Magda Gorczyca, *Poradnik dla rodziców dzieci niepełnosprawnych*, Warszawa 2001, <http://www.niepelnosprawni.info/labeo/app/cms/x/5169>

¹¹⁵ See: "Oświata i Wychowanie w roku szkolnym 2003/2004", GUS, Warszawa 2004

¹¹⁶ See: Raport Roczny Stowarzyszenia Klon/Jawor z 2003 roku (Raport 2004.pdf), op.cit.

3.5. Romany youth

With respect to ethnic minorities, Romany population (about 20,000) is most seriously affected by social problems. These are mainly related to barriers in assimilation and in the access to education and to jobs requiring higher level of skills¹¹⁷. Regular education is undertaken by 70% of Romany children, but their attendance in schools is low and they drop out early. The “Strategy for Integration of the Romany Minority” [Strategia Integracji Mniejszości Romskiej], addresses the fact that the Romany minority is the only one with a clearly disadvantaged status (material situation, high drop out rate, poor integration, very high levels of unemployment etc.)

The undertaken policies are targeting the educational needs of young people whose parents have a low level of education, are poor or come from Romany minorities. One in three Romany people has graduated from an elementary school and only 0.8% of them have a higher education. Since 2003/2004 there seems to be a breakthrough in the access of Romany children to education, which is attributed to the swift implementation of the Strategy for Integration of the Romany Population in Poland¹¹⁸, as exemplified by the table below.

**Table 3. Schools for children from minorities and ethnic groups
(these schools are not integrated but are run for minority groups only)**

Item	Elementary schools		Gymnasia		Lycees	
	Schools	Pupils	Schools	Pupils	Schools	Pupils
Romany						
2002/2003	4	117	-	-	-	-
2003/2004	42	548	11	51	2	3

Source: *Rocznik Statystyczny 2004* [Statistical Yearbook], GUS, Warszawa 2004, pp. 342-343

A long-term analysis is needed to see whether these encouraging effects can be maintained over time and how they will impact on the employability of the Romany youth.

3.6. Erosion of full-time employment contracts for youth

As in the other EU countries, young people (especially women) are more likely to be employed on a limited contract and casual basis, or work in the informal sector¹¹⁹. Part-time employment is mainly popular among the youngest age groups. In 2003 among those gainfully employed aged 15 – 24 18.4% of men and 22.5% of women were working on a part-time basis. The popularity of fixed-term contracts among young people is particularly significant. While in 2003, in general 19.5% of the working population were employed on the basis of the fixed-term contract, the share among persons aged 24 years or less attained 57%.

¹¹⁷ Source: „Wspólne Memorandum Na Rzecz Integracji Społecznej Polska, Bruksela SEC/2003

¹¹⁸ There is also an increase in the number of schools for such minorities as Kaszubi and Łemkowie. So far, there were no reported problems of high drop-out rates or difficult access to education for other minorities. In the years 1992-2004 the number of schools for the German minority increased 25 times, new schools (both elementary and gymnasium) are also created for youth and children with Byelorussian and Ukrainian backgrounds.

¹¹⁹ For over 60% of young people up to the age of 24 this is the only work which they have, while for 40% this is an additional occupation (GUS, 2004).

This may indicate that majority of persons entering labour market for the first time is offered a fixed term contract¹²⁰.

The use of flexible work arrangements leads to segmentation of the labour market into jobs that allow for stability and identification with the employer and those that are temporary by definition, with lower pay, no perspective for promotion and participation in further training. These „good“ and „bad“ job posts exist in every economy. However, the situation looks different when employers discriminate against some groups of potential employees (such as youth) by blocking their access to „good“ jobs¹²¹.

3.7. Labour migration

Empirical studies show that unemployment greatly influences migration decisions of Polish unemployed youth¹²². The lack of jobs on the local labour market and no prospects of improvement in the near future forces them to emigrate. The decision to go abroad is more likely to be taken by young people without prior work experience, with at least a secondary level of employment and not married. The domestic territorial mobility of labour in Poland is small due to housing problems and the low skills of the unemployed. Also, most of the new job posts are created in the service sector of urban agglomerations and require a combination of high skills and specialisation. However, work migrations of Polish youth have so far been seasonal, temporary and for most part not resulting in permanent settlement in the „old“ EU countries¹²³. In terms of exporting labour to the EU (with 70% of that flow heading for Germany), starting with 2005 this was expected to decrease due to demographic factors (very low birth rates, decreasing supply of young people entering the domestic labour market, which improves slightly the problem of youth unemployment¹²⁴).

IV. Policies and programmes for disadvantaged youth

4.1. Legal and institutional provisions at the national level

The problems experienced by disadvantaged youth are addressed indirectly at the national level by such programmes as:

- The **National Strategy for Social Inclusion** which concentrates on children and youth from neglected social milieus and children growing up outside of their families, most likely to be marginalised and drop out from education early.

¹²⁰ G.Grotkowska, Recent changes in flexible form of employment in Poland, paper prepared on the basis of research made for a country report for the ILO project “Labour market flexibility and employment security in the Central and eastern European Countries and Baltic States” in 2004, for the informal Workshop “The transformation of Internal and External Labour Markets in Eastern and Western Europe” 4-5 December, Jena, Germany, to be published in April 2005.

¹²¹ E. Kryńska, Elastyczność polskiego rynku pracy in: Praca i polityka społeczna wobec wyzwań integracji, IPiSS, Warszawa 2003

¹²² „Rynek Pracy“, September 2004

¹²³ <http://www.europolforum.pl/onas.html?&j=1&sec=12>, retrieved 26.11.2005

¹²⁴ ibidem.

- The “**State Strategy for Youth 2003-2012**”: one of its strategic objectives is to combat marginalisation of the young generation and prevent it, among others, from the use of narcotics. The governmental “**State Strategy for Youth**” was prepared following a series of consultations around the European Commission’s White Paper “*New initiatives for European youth*”¹²⁵.
- The **National Plan for Employment 2005** has as its first objective professional activization of youth (1.1, point 50-56) and increasing the employment levels among the 18-24 age group who are out of work, as well as professional preparation of youth from dysfunctional families and pathological milieus.

These programmes are largely inspired/coordinated with EU programmes and their implementation is relatively recent. In consequence, it is too early to evaluate their effectiveness. They are co-financed from structural funds, above all from the European Social Fund (especially EQUAL)¹²⁶, which among others provides assistance to „Employability. National Action Plan for Employment in 2005” (implemented by the Ministry for the Economy and Labour, 2004) and „Lifelong learning: Strategy for developing continuous education up to 2010”.

National Strategy for Social Integration Poland 2004, National Employment Action Plan 2005, legislation on employment of 2004 are the basis for an integrated approach to youth employment (development of traineeships for graduates, trainings, wage subsidies, national scholarship system, educational programmes for pupils who dropped out from elementary schools, gymnasiums and post-gymnasium education). While work support programmes seem to be developing well, further education schemes for early school leavers are not yet operational.

Some of the institutional solutions are specific to the country’s post-war tradition. Art.6.3 of legislation of April 20, 2004 designates a state institution specialised in promotion of youth work (especially that of youth threatened by social exclusion) and the unemployed up to 25 years of age. This institution is the **Voluntary Work Corps** (or *Ochotnicze Hufce Pracy* – further referred to as OHP). This is an interesting case of a complete and successful transformation of an institution whose initial goal was Stalinist upbringing of young proletarians. OHP now offers a mix of education, vocational training, continuous education and character formation for early dropouts, young unemployed, disabled or socially maladjusted youth, as well as those who are orphaned or in a difficult material situation¹²⁷.

¹²⁵ www.menis.gov.pl

¹²⁶ „Narodowa strategia wzrostu zatrudnienia i rozwoju zasobów ludzkich w latach 2000-2006”, Ministerstwo Pracy i Polityki Społecznej [MPiPS], Warszawa 2000; E. Kryńska, Zmiany w obszarze zatrudnienia i przeciwdziałania bezrobociu, pp. 14-50, in: „Reformy społeczne. Bilans dekady”, ed. M. Rymsza, ISP, Warszawa, 2004, Community Initiative EQUAL, 107 Development Partnerships in Poland, EFS, Warsaw 2005

¹²⁷ As an example, the work corps organized by OHP enrol some 27,000 young people, further 3,500 study in training centres and 1,500 – in educational centres. In 2002 1466 projects were run, combining recreation, tourism and leisure with workshops, seminars and debates. These involved 54,000 young people. Various forms of training were also organised for about 8,000. In the school year 2002/2003 8,200 young people were recruited from “families with problems”, 14,100 – from unemployed families, 18,600 – from families living in poverty and 6,700 – from pathological families.

Since 2003 the Minister for the Economy and Labour holds a competition for grants related to the creation of: 1) a network of county European information centres which provide traineeships for graduates, 2) School Career Centres (SzOKs) to educationally assist young people in their entry on the labour market and provide professional counseling, 3) mobile centres for professional information for young people from rural areas and small towns, 4) academic carrier centres and 5) county information centres.

Other government schemes include: 1) „**Junior**” – for young people with disabilities, financed from PFRON (State Fund for Protection of People with Disabilities), 2) “**My first business**” for young people in regions with high unemployment levels, who decide to set up their own businesses, 3) multimedia kiosks in labour offices and OHP centres.

New government programmes for young people are being rolled out in 2005. These include:

1) “**Plan your career**” carried out by OHP, the objective of which is professional activation of youth from former state farms threatened by structural unemployment. Foreseen actions include: promotion of professional activation schemes which constitute an alternative to agricultural activities, development of cooperative forms, enabling equal start-up opportunities through training and workshops.

2) „**Equal start**”, „**Chance 13-18**”, „**Chance 18-24**”, all carried out by OHP, to provide counseling and educational services, promote employment and assist in organization of self-employment of young people threatened by marginalisation and poverty.

4.2 The local level

The issue of youth poverty may also be effectively addressed through simple schemes of assistance in kind. Since 1996 a government programme was launched to support local communes by providing **food relief** (mainly meals and snacks from dairy products) for children in elementary schools and gymnasiums (this programme is currently extended to all secondary education). This system is applied to all children in order not to stigmatize poor and neglected children and reached (2003) 21.4% of the target group.

Such schemes also included monitoring pupils threatened with expulsion from schools. Extra courses are organized for them both within and outside of school by OHP, local self-government, social and religious organizations and private companies.

School Career Centres [or SzOKs] are a new organisational form of vocational counseling recently offered for the first time in Polish practice in schools, which promotes professional development and further education of pupils at earlier stages of education. By offering early career guidance, it is expected to provide an antidote against the lack of professional mobility of youth and mismatch between supply and demand, but at the time of report elaboration, no hard facts were available to assess the effectiveness of this programme.

Additionally, in 2003 there existed at least 35 local and independent programmes directed at graduates. In all, 23 million zlotys (€5.6 million) were allocated from the reserve of the Labour Fund in 2003 to support additional activation of graduates¹²⁸.

4.3. Growing role of the NGOs and of the civic society

An important number of programmes addressing the needs of disadvantaged youth in Poland are handled by the civic society and the NGOs. At the time of the study there were over 36,500 associations and over 5,000 foundations registered in Poland (at least 58% of them active). Their most important fields of activity are sport (59.3%), education (48.2%), health protection, rehabilitation and assistance to the disabled (32.6%) – areas close to the problem of disadvantaged youth. Some of them (such as „Children of the Streets) directly deal with marginalised young people. The total scale of employment in NGOs can be estimated at (approx.) 62,000 FTE positions or 0.58% of total employment outside agriculture sector. Volunteers (non-members of the associations, many of them youth) participate in the work of half of the NGOs. We estimate their number at about 1.6 million¹²⁹. They are an important force both helping disadvantaged youth and providing them with a professional experience.

Some signs of synergy can be seen in cooperation with the NGOs, which view its relations with the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy as exemplary. They work together on the use of funds from the European Social Fund; NGOs are present in the committees which monitor the National Development Plan and draft together legislation on NGOs and the V-sector¹³⁰.

4.4. Active Labour Market Policies (ALMP)

Public spending on labour market programme was reduced in the late 1990s when unemployment rate increased sharply and they now amount to some 1% of the GDP. When unemployment was still relatively low, expenditure on active measures reached over 23% of the total outlays from the Labour Fund. In most difficult moments, it fell to 5%¹³¹. Less means available and the decentralisation reform of labour offices (1999/2000) has seriously curtailed ALMP's effectiveness. However, ALMP projects were extended to some 4.5 million participants, including a good number of young people.

While in the first half of the 1990s the actions of the active labour market policy financed through the Labour Fund were concentrated in the regions threatened with high unemployment, in the later period the focus shifted to high-risk groups, such as the former

¹²⁸ A.Trzeciecki, *Finansowanie lokalnych i regionalnych inicjatyw i programów rynku pracy*, in: *Polityka Społeczna*, No. 10, 2004, Ministry of Social Policy

¹²⁹ www.ngo.pl

¹³⁰ See: Radosław and Anna Gawlik, „Zasady partnerstwa między III sektorem a rządem i Sejmem”, (*mimeo*)

¹³¹ In 2003 the following outlays were made from the Labour Fund: 5 bln zł (1.25 bln €) – for unemployment benefits, another 5 bln (1.25 bln €) - for benefits and pre-retirement funding of some 500,000 persons disappearing from the labour market and only 1.3 bln złotys (0.35 bln €) for active labour market policy. With such a structure of outlays it is difficult to lead an active policy, not to mention targeting it to young people.

employees of state farms (PGRs), professional activation of women or assistance to graduates entering the labour market.

Up to June 1, 2004 employment schemes were focused on a special category of young people – graduates seeking work for the first time. For 12 months which followed their graduation (as confirmed by diploma or certificate), young people had the status of a graduate registered with the labour office, which gave them privileged access to assistance from labour offices.

A special programme [„*Absolwent*” or “The Graduate”] was set up for this last target group. It now functions with some modifications under a different name [“*Pierwsza Praca*” or “First Job”]. From June 1998 til June 30, 2002 nearly 76% of the registered graduates were involved in various forms of professional activation schemes. „First Work” programme involved over 150,000 graduates (or 29% of the registered total) in the second half of 2002 and in the first half of 2003¹³². In 2003 this programme involved some 207,000 persons in the 18-24 age group, of which 177,000 were graduates (this corresponded to 36.6% of all registered job-seeking graduates)¹³³. The implementation of the programme showed the effectiveness of three forms of pro-active instruments of the labour market for graduates: traineeships (using tripartite contracts), training courses (also - tripartite contracts) and refunding of employment of young graduates¹³⁴. Additionally, in the second half of 2002 and in the first half of 2003 about 600,000 young people took advantage of professional counseling in local labour offices (see Annex IV, Chapter 7 in this volume).

In light of the recent legislation graduates cease to be the priority group for labour market policy. This is an important signal for the Polish schools that labour market policy ceases to automatically solve problems resulting from a mismatch between the educational system and labour market needs, such as organising and financing traineeships for thousands of graduates to acquire practical job skills.

4.5. Unemployment benefits for the young unemployed

Registered unemployed youth (as other groups of unemployed) is entitled to unemployment benefits provided that prior to their registration in the labour office they were employed, worked, did their military service or conducted activity generating income and resulting in payment of social security or Labour Fund contributions. In practice, young people are

¹³² Source: *Wspólne Memorandum na Rzecz Integracji Społecznej Polska, op.cit.*

¹³³ The „First Work” programme is regarded as highly successful by the Ministry of the Economy and Labour and the Ministry of Social Policy. In 2003 within the framework of the First Work scheme, various programmes were attended by 206,617 persons aged 18-24 who have not worked before. The most widely used (and most effective) proved to be the programme of graduate traineeships (120,000 persons; their re-employment rate in 2000 was 34.9%, in 2001 – 35.2%, and in 2002 – 41.0%). It was followed by trainings (some 30,000) and refunds for wages of employed graduates (27,200). Intervention works created 11,400 jobs, while public works contributed to further 7,900 job posts. Also in 2003 89,900, or nearly 50% of those who followed the First Work scheme, found employment within 3 months from the end of their participation in ALMPs. The effectiveness of active labour market policies was demonstrated in re-employment rates (data applies to all beneficiaries of these schemes, except for (2) and (3), which apply to youth only): 1) training courses – 44.5%, 2) wage refunds for graduates – 73.5%, 3) graduate traineeships – 35.2%, 4) intervention works – 67.8%, 5) general public works – 13.%, 6) special programmes: 62.4%.

¹³⁴ *Krajowy Plan Działań na Rzecz Zatrudnienia na 2005 Rok, Ministerstwo Gospodarki i Pracy, 2004*

entitled to a lower unemployed benefit (80% of the basic allowance, which is now some 120 euros)¹³⁵. The period over which the unemployment benefit is paid is 6 months in the regions where the unemployment rate does not exceed 125% of the national average and for 12 months if it exceeds 125% of that average. Young people can also receive scholarships for a period up to 12 months (value of 40% of the unemployment benefit) if within 6 months of registering they take up education in post-elementary and post-gymnasium schools for adults or take up higher education in the system of evening studies. Young unemployed can also benefit from occasional social assistance. The value of this assistance depends on per capita income in the family.

V. Conclusions

In the foreseeable future, very high level of youth unemployment will continue to be the basic dimension of disadvantage for Polish youth. Within the existing (but changing) structure of youth's educational profile, the gap between demand for high-skill jobs and the supply of low-skill labour will not shrink¹³⁶. Over the last decade Polish economic growth has been labour-saving, based on efficiency of the existing resources, both material or human. No great change is expected for youth unemployment, but more jobs for the young will be available in various forms of distance work, tourism, information sector, hospitality industry.

Size of the country's labour market matters since the problem of job creation or active labour market policies (such as the idea to prioritise young graduates and facilitate their transition from school to work) becomes much more complex and costly when it involves nearly a million of young unemployed. Furthermore, Poland is also suffering from social consequences of the growing number of families with many children and single-parent families (2.2 million) who are threatened with poverty. However, the falling demographics will make young people a less numerous part of the Polish society than at the time of the study.

Young people tend to think that they now have less chance for success in life than their predecessors from the early 1990s. Studies refer to the attitude of "learned passivity", of those inheriting the unemployed status of their parents living in the collapsed former state farms (PGRs)¹³⁷. The same source of hopelessness and marginalization is sensed among youth rap subcultures associated with „tower blocks” in working class areas of large and middle-sized cities. The educational system is not helping to alleviate the problem because it seems to be inefficient in protecting children from inequalities, but this is merely a reflection of a wider processes of growing wealth polarization of the Polish society.

The country's labour market policy is not directly connected with the educational system for youth, even though there exist cases of good practice in dual vocational training. This is

¹³⁵ Full unemployment benefits are paid to those with a documented period of eligibility (defined as above) equivalent to at least 5 years.

¹³⁶ U. Sztanderska, Praca dla niskokwalifikowanych – podsumowanie rekomendacji. www.strategia.lizbonska.pl/PDF/php

¹³⁷ E. Tarnowska, K. Korzeniewska, Młodzież z byłych PGR-ów. Raport z badań, ISP, Warszawa, 2002; CBOS, bs/187/2002, „Ocena perspektyw młodego pokolenia Polaków, Warszawa, November 2002

documented by very high unemployment rates (close to 40%) among young people in the 18-24 age group and low rates of their professional activation. The reform of the educational system in 1999 was to make education more flexible and responsive to labour market changes, as well as offer more choice to young people, but it is too early to see whether this was a success or not (statistics from the co-existence of the old and of the new systems are so far inconclusive)¹³⁸.

Poland's ALMP is more active during better economic outlook, such as in periods of higher growth, but it loses its importance during a slowdown in growth rates and growing unemployment. At this time both policy experts and employers agree that no good active labour market policy can substitute for economic development policy leading to job creation.

The policy towards disadvantaged young people can be described as following a 'rescue model'. It reacts to the appearance of problems (such as the poverty of children in the areas where state farms used to dominate or the tendency for children from poor and dysfunctional families to drop out of schools early). The same conclusions can be drawn from the approach to children from Romany families.

The policy of combating youth unemployment can be described as interventionist rather than preventive. Now that the unemployment level among young people has become so high, the authorities concentrate on other types of instruments: traineeships for graduates, training courses, on-job training, subsidies for employment (including wages for youth), organization of public works, eventually also credits and loans for starting own business activity. Particular attention is given to unemployed youth threatened by permanent social marginalisation, such as young people from the former state farms (PGRs). These farms are now the hotbed of culminating negative phenomena, such as long-term unemployment (unemployed status inherited within the family), coupled with lasting poverty (reproduction of poverty) and social pathologies¹³⁹.

The programmes for supporting young and the elderly are viewed in Poland as competing with each other. Not only do they compete for funds, but also for the scarce part-time jobs available. Such is the context of the "fast track" for early retirement, seen as a measure to create jobs for the young, but not working this way in practice.

It is only beginning with 2005 that the new programme for employment takes into account more complex elements of policy aimed at better employability and increased chances for young people to find a job. The employment policy is to become more active and more axed on self-employment schemes, voluntary work, expansion of counseling, training, career planning, active job matching centres, expansion of the network of School Career Centres, better information on education opportunities and higher quality of education matched to the needs of the labour market¹⁴⁰. Programmes targeted at young people are also becoming

¹³⁸ See: K.Roberts, A.Kurzynowski, T.Szumlicz, B.Jung, "Employers' Workforce Formation Practices, Young People's Employment Opportunities and Labour Market Behaviour in Post-communist Poland" in: "*Communist Economies & Economic Transformation*", Vol.9, No.1, 1997

¹³⁹ E. Tarnowska, K. Korzeniewska, Młodzież z byłych PGR-ów. Research Report, ISP Warszawa 2002.
¹⁴⁰ *Krajowy Plan Działań na Rzecz Zatrudnienia na 2005 rok*, Warszawa 2004.

increasingly individualised, giving more flexibility to professional counsellors and job brokers in the labour offices, as well as social workers signing contracts with the beneficiaries of allowances.

Recent initiatives of the Polish government, even though not youth-specific, show the beginnings of a shift towards more comprehensive policy to limit poverty and social exclusion, targeted on social and professional activation of groups disadvantaged in the process of transformation through a mix of social assistance and protection with education and promotion of employment¹⁴¹. These actions refer to the concept of social economy and its main elements, such as non-profit institutions, social enterprises, co-operatives etc. At the time of the study the effectiveness of these strategies cannot be evaluated since these are long-term measures that started recently and will last until 2010¹⁴². However, with the proclaimed orientation of the new government in place since November 2005, more focus on social solidarity can be expected (perhaps at the expense of job creation by economic growth), with increased temptation to use more „manual steering“ on the labour market and the need to appease populist parties which are supporting the minority government.

Experts consulted

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Prof. dr hab. Adam Kurzynowski, Institute for Social Economy, Warsaw School of Economics

Prof. dr hab. Piotr Bledowski, Director, Institute for Social Economy, Warsaw School of Economics

¹⁴¹ One new issue which has to be addressed quickly and in a comprehensive way is the educational gap between rural and urban areas, which became striking when the first results of the new system of „baccalaureat“ was evaluated in September 2005 (novelty of the system lies in a standardised exam evaluated by external examiners).

¹⁴² See 5.8 of the Strategy for Development of Continuous Education to 2010, MENiS 2003, or Action Programme of the Ministry of National Education and Sports 2002-2010, MENiS 2002

Portugal

Luis Capucha

1 Introduction

Very soon in their lives Portuguese youth have to make choices that will influence decisively their life trajectories. These choices depend on the combined effect of their socio-economic background on the one hand and the socio-economic context and the institutional arrangements providing the pathways linking the education/training systems and the labour market on the other.

At a very early age, pupils are offered three alternative and strongly contrasting pathways into the labour market and future trajectories. The first one consists of the “regular” and traditional schooling courses leading to higher education and, therefore, to the future occupation of the higher quality jobs in the labour market (although many times not exactly corresponding to the expectations of students and families, due to deep changes in the labour market that occurred simultaneously with mass attendance of university); the second one includes a variety of segments of vocational education and training. Their reputation is not very high (they tend to be seen as “second or third class” courses) and the labour market includes as easily workers with lower qualifications as those with middle level qualifications. Young students with secondary education, in spite of their relative smaller numbers, are affected by unemployment almost as much as the less qualified (see table 4 below)¹⁴³. Thirdly, the combination of a low profile of qualifications’ demand in the labour market and the short outcomes of the vocational segments of the education and training systems tends to keep students with poor socio-economic backgrounds in a situation of disadvantage and social exclusion. Indeed, most young people from poor conditions tend not to invest in long education trajectories. They leave school before or immediately after completing compulsory education (9 years) and enter into the low quality segments of the labour market or, in some specific cases, get engaged in peer networks of youngsters with problematic behaviour. There is plenty of evidence that there still is a class factor operating along the three typical trajectories. Social classes provided with more economic and cultural capital are over-represented in the first one¹⁴⁴, disadvantaged social classes are almost the only ones feeding the third pathway.

¹⁴³ The figures of unemployment must be read carefully, because there are significant differences as far as different careers are considered.

¹⁴⁴ From a study published in May 2005 (Susana Martins, Rosário Mauritti and António Firmino da Costa, *Condições socioeconómicas dos estudantes do ensino superior em Portugal – Socio-economic conditions of students of higher education in Portugal* -, Lisboa, Direcção Geral do Ensino Superior) we can pick-up a few indicators like, for instance, the socio-economic category of the generation of the fathers of the students in higher education. The “employers, directors and professionals” are 15,3% of the Portuguese population aged 40 to 60 years old and 15,9% of the class origin of students. The numbers rise to 14,4% and 36,6% in the case of “technicians and managers”. On the other hand the “white collar workers” represent 20,2% of the total population and 16,6% of students, while “manual workers” represent 39,5% of the total population and only 14,2% of students. The differences are higher when we consider the variable “father’s level of education”. In the

From a political point of view the main emphasis has to be put in a balanced set of priorities to promote

1. the transition of the economy towards an innovative, modern and productive economic tissue, thus rising the level of the demand and the participation of companies in the effort to train young workers and to participate in school life and education;
2. the reform of the school and training systems towards a comprehensive lifelong-learning strategy that up to now exists on paper.

The present report presents the main characteristics of disadvantage in young people's transitions from school to work in Portugal, analysing the available data about the performance of schooling and training systems, the immigrations trends, the poverty structures and policies, the labour market indicators, the demographic tendencies and other comprehensive data. The results of the analysis were the subject of a debate between a selected group of Portuguese experts about labour market policies, education policies and youth policies, representatives of the youth civil organizations, the social partners, the representatives of the local governments and the representatives of different public bodies, whose contributions were integrated in the report. This includes the agreed conclusions about youth disadvantages and the best way to deal with them (see below).

2 The Portuguese situation: Early school leaving, youth employment and unemployment

As shown in Table 1 the levels of education of the total Portuguese population have been growing, mainly within young population and with a bigger contribution from women. Yet, the highest level of education reached in Portugal in 2001 was at most the basic education (compulsory level of 9 years) for 75,7% of the population (against 35,4 in the EU15), the secondary education level for 13.0% (EU15=42,6%) and a higher education degree for 11,4% (EU15=21,8%).

total population of 40-60 years old the one with higher education are only 9,8%, but their children are 35,7% of the students. The fathers with the secondary level are 8,9% and the students with parents with that education level are 16,4%. On the opposite side, the population with the first cycle of basic education (4 years), are 62,5% of the total in the age group 40-60, and the students from their families are no more than 22%. The differences are much more significant if we separate University from Polytechnic Higher Schools.

Table 1. Levels of schooling (1981, 1991 and 2001) according to gender and age group in 2001 (%)

Age Level of schooling	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	25-64 T	25-64 H	25-64 M	1981	1991	2001
None	4,3	6,4	10,3	28,6	11,3	8,7	13,6	27,4	22,4	11,3
4 years	16,2	33,9	52,3	46,7	35,9	37,0	34,8	64,9	44,4	35,9
6 years	23,3	18,9	8,8	5,9	15,1	16,2	14,0	4,0	10,8	15,1
Basic	18,8	15,3	10,0	7,3	13,4	14,9	12,0	-	7,4	13,4
Secondary	21,2	13,9	8,9	5,0	13,0	13,3	12,7	-	8,4	13,0
Higher	16,1	11,5	9,8	6,5	11,4	9,9	12,8	2,6	6,7	11,4
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100,0	100,0	100	100

Source: INE, Censuses 1981, 1991, 2001

Considering the EU average, the gap does not seem to be diminishing, since Portugal presents one of the highest levels of early school leaving. The proportion of 10 to 15-years-old who have not completed the 3rd cycle (ISCED 2) of basic education (the compulsory education level nowadays in Portugal) and are not attending school, per 100 individuals of the same age group, were 3,9% according to INE (2001). The “official” indicator of early school leaving (according to the European agreed definitions, the total number of 18 to 24-years-old, who at the time of the survey, have not completed secondary education - ISCED 3 - and are not attending school nor training, per 100 individuals of the same age group), is 41.1% (Eurostat, 2003), against 18,8% in the EU15¹⁴⁵. Women perform better than men. According to the Ministry of Education, in 2001, drop out from secondary education was 52% for men and 38% for women.

There is a widely shared vision between research and experts about the main factors of early school leaving. These are the following:

- Recurrence in the family of low regard for education due to experiences of school failure of parents, transmitting a sense of incapability and lack of adaptation at school. In most cases there are no plans for a return after early school leaving;
- Economic deprivation and the need to make a contribution to the family budget by the young members of the poor households;
- The negative image of the efficacy of school, linked to insufficient co-ordination with the working world and little trade-off from the point of view of employability. The young people who abandon school early do so either with early entry into the labour market in mind, thus representing a group that is more vulnerable to precarious labour situations, or belonging to peer groups involved in problematic behaviour and marginal practices.

As shown in Table 2, the proportion of young workers in sectors providing worse quality jobs such as manufacturing industry, construction (mainly for men) and commerce and

¹⁴⁵ Needless to remember that the situation will not improve during the working trajectories of the younger workers (unless a deep change happens in Portuguese companies practices), because the rate of participation of employed population in learning actions in Portugal is no more than a third of the European average.

vehicle/goods repairs (a total of 57,4%, providing most of the 11% of working poor that existed in 2001 in Portugal) is bigger than the average. Women present a more diversified structure, since they are better represented in education, finance and some other rather qualified sectors.

Table 2: Employed population by age group and business sector and young employed population by business sector and gender

2001	15-29			30-64
	M	W	T	T
Agriculture	2.9	1.6	2.3	5,2
Fisheries	0.4	0.0	0.2	0.4
Mining industry	0.6	0.1	0.4	0.4
Manufacturing industry	23.8	27.1	25.3	20.6
Electricity gas & water production/distribution	1.0	0.2	0.7	0.8
Construction	23.5	2.0	13.8	11.8
Commerce and vehicle/goods repairs	17.3	19.4	18.3	15.7
Catering and accommodation	4.6	7.7	6.0	5.4
Transport, storage and communications	5.2	3.1	4.2	4.6
Finance	1.7	2.2	1.9	2.2
Property, renting and services	6.3	.3	7.2	5.2
Public administration, defence ...	6.9	5.0	6.0	8.7
Education	2.2	8.5	5.0	7.8
Health and social action	1.5	.2	4.6	6.1
Other activities: collective, soc'l & pers'l services	2.1	3.9	2.9	2.3
Families with domestic employees	0.1	2.6	1.2	2.8
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Source: INE - Census 2001

The proportion of short-term contracts of young workers, when compared with adult labour force, shows the precarious situation and probably precarious careers of the former. According to data from the Personnel Tables of Companies (DGEEP – 2002), permanent contracts include 82,1% of workers aged 30 to 75 years old, while the percentage is only 63,1 for people from 15 to 29. Short-term contracts include 16,3% of older workers and 34,2% of the younger ones. Anyway, precariousness is not limited to short-term contracts, including also temporary work and season jobs, which in Portugal do not concern simply young students who search for an occupation along-side studying, but also youngsters who left school and do not find other solutions. There are links between this kind of situations and the ‘black economy’.

Young people are also affected by higher rates of unemployment than the overall population. The figures of youth unemployment are more than double of the average. Particularly penalised are young women, with an unemployment rate four points above the one of their male colleagues. Translated in terms of the unemployment ratio unemployment in 2004 affected 6,7% of young Portuguese between 15 and 24 (6,9% of young men and 6,5% of young women; Eurostat LFS).

Table 3: Unemployment rates, by gender, 2003 and 2004

	Overall unemployment rate %		Youth unemployment rate % (15-24)	
	2003	2004	2003	2004
Men	5.5	5.8	12.4	13.5
Women	7.2	7.6	17.0	17.6
Total	6.3	6.7	14.5	15.3

Source: INE - Employment Statistics (2005)

The level of education does not seem, at a first glance, to be an important factor affecting unemployment, thus reinforcing the false idea held by youngsters and their less qualified families that staying longer in school does not have any advantage.

In fact, youngsters that enter the labour market with higher education, even if they find it difficult to get a job, or when they have to go through a period of experimenting several undesired jobs, at the end have much better professional careers characterised by a strong wage progression (Albuquerque, 1999). The period of accession to quality jobs may represent a price to pay for a career, even if this is not anymore correspondent to the expectations held by families, used to consider job opportunities as they were before the mass access to the university. Therefore, behind the appearance of greater vulnerability of more qualified youngsters to unemployment, the pathways into the labour market are contrasting ones: some youngsters manage to enter through the front door into the modernised sectors of the economy, while the others feed the traditional, low quality and productivity, and high risk zones of the Portuguese labour market.

Table 4: Relative weight of youth unemployment by educational level in 2004

Educational level	Unemployment (relative weight)
ISCED 0-2	15,9%
ISCED 3-4	13,1%
ISCED 5-6	24,3%
Total	15,8%

Source: EUROSTAT, Labour Force Survey Unemployment 2004 (Q4)

Summing up, there is a paradox in the Portuguese labour market, since students leaving the university with the missing high qualifications tend to find unexpected difficulties to get a job compatible with their prolonged learning processes, while the less qualified young people (at least 40%, the proportion of early school leavers), apparently do not seem to be particularly penalised by the exclusion from the labour market; except when they find out, later on in their lives, that they have no chances to escape from poverty and bad working conditions. The most important explanations for this statement results from the coincidence of a set of factors:

- Dropping out from school due to the mismatch between the formal objectives of the legal system and the real practices at schools (including the devaluated reputation of “professional” routes), that tend to make it difficult for youngsters coming from underprivileged socio-economic backgrounds to stay in the system¹⁴⁶;

¹⁴⁶ The figures for school leavers are 0,1% in the first cycle (4 years), 15,1% in the second cycle (2 years), 18,8% in the 3rd cycle of basic education and 37,2% (last data available) at the secondary.

- and the demand from the labour market, that integrates rather easily young under-qualified workers, but in conditions which reveal to be a trap and not an opportunity; even more because life-long learning is not a common practice in companies that – legally or illegally – employ these young workers.

Making calculations about the real probability of reaching high levels of schooling, that are low as the school system goes on functioning according to the old “scholar” tradition, youngsters often do not understand the advantage of delaying the entrance into the labour market, preferring to contribute to the poor income of their families or to reach autonomy. The indicators of employment and labour market participation appear, therefore, to be rather positive, but indeed they hide a trap of a trajectory of bad quality jobs (and this is the best case scenario, the worst case being the inclusion in marginal networks).

Many times, the youngsters who are excluded from school have a first precocious experience of work, followed by one or more situations of unemployment. If they contact the employment services they rarely receive positive answers because they have not the required minimum schooling. They once again drop-out, this time from the employment system, while their situations become more and more risky, calling for urgent action. While the situation of illegal employment of children has been solved or at least minimised, another priority emerges with the described situation of youth.

Another important factor has to do with protection. Besides being more vulnerable to unemployment than adult population, youngsters are also less protected. That is why they register less in employment services than overall population. Indeed, the overall numbers of registered unemployed are higher in Portugal than the figures of Labour Force Survey, because registration is required for the entitlement to certain benefits. In the case of younger workers the numbers are the reverse: in 2004 the figures of LFS were 89.200, against 70.397 (78,9%) registered unemployed. Indeed, in December 2004 only 25.594 people aged less than 25 years old were beneficiaries of unemployment benefit¹⁴⁷.

Specific situations

The problems we have been referring to are structural and form part of the common situation in Portugal for a significant proportion of youth. But we can also briefly mention specific problems of some categories that reinforce the disadvantage of some segments of young population. This is the case of:

- young under-qualified women with children. Given the absence of available child care facilities, and the most common organisation of families with no practical share of home work, they are obliged to leave the labour market, or in alternative they are subject of a double burden of housework and employment in the available low quality jobs;

¹⁴⁷ For instance, the entitlement for unemployment benefit requires at least 270 days of work in the immediately preceding 12 months in a legal job – and the related contributions to the social protection schemes -, precondition which more vulnerable young people rarely meet, due to precariousness and involvement in black economy.

- Disabled youngsters face a particular problem of exclusion from the labour market. This is due to the barriers that they encounter and the scarcity of trained professionals prepared to help them. They find some support, not always in the best conditions, at school, and afterwards they can be inserted into the socio-economic rehabilitation system – more and more oriented towards mainstreaming institutions – and therefore youngsters are no longer in the same conditions of older disabled people. The rehabilitation system is rather new in Portugal and has come to benefit mainly young people who, in turn, also have benefited from a change in the schooling and training systems that operate in the last decades and did not exist before. But they still face difficulties, connected with representations about their capacities as well as material barriers that make them more vulnerable to unstable jobs and to unemployment than their colleagues of the same age. This is particularly true for disabled girls, who are much more disadvantaged than boys.
- The ‘black economy’ has got a strong presence in Portugal and constitutes, altogether with low quality jobs, a danger for young people who enter into the labour market through that door, since it affects decisively their future careers. There is a paradox, because this kind of integration seems to represent a valid choice for families – who increase their (still low) income, and for young people that feels relatively independent (the relativity has to do with other aspects of life, like for instance housing). Although they represent a minority, the 16.3% of young Portuguese who work or have worked and have not paid their social security contributions (a condition for drawing such social benefits as unemployment and sickness benefit, among others) demonstrate the precarious nature of the participation in the labour market and, also, reveal occupational activity at the edge of the formal economy, which mainly affects working students and domestic staff. Generally speaking, the weight of the informal economy in Portugal is quite high (22.5% of GDP in 2001/2002), far higher than the average for OECD countries (16.7% of GDP in 2001/2002). The most important sectors for this significant percentage are construction (40%), services (18%) and manufacturing (17%). As we have seen, these are sectors in which young people are well represented. Although there are no estimates about the part that young population plays in the informal economy, it is reasonable to suppose that, given the temporary, utilitarian and pressing nature of their first job experience, the formality of the work arrangement is not a very important criterion in the young people’s plans for their integration into the labour market. If informal employment runs parallel with education/training attendance, the young people’s involvement tends to be temporary. It may even assist their future integration into the formal market. But in contrast, if it goes together with young people leaving school early to enter into bad quality jobs in the labour market, it represents a trap from which the ones involved will find it difficult to escape.
- Especially problematic is the involvement of some groups of youngsters living in poor neighbourhoods in the main cities and also in the periphery of those cities that are involved in non-legal activities or criminal activities and risky behaviour. These bands include Portuguese and second generation immigrants, sometimes in cooperation other times conflicting (and almost always also conflicting with the poor Roma who live in those neighbourhoods). But the case of immigrants, mainly when they are Africans or

Brazilians, is particularly visible because of the negative and racist role played by the press. Refusing schooling and also the jobs that their parents accepted put them outside regular labour market, which is seen as unable to offer real acceptable opportunities. This can help to explain the involvement in criminal activities and the high prevalence of immigrant prisoners. But this kind of “anomie” in poor neighbourhoods also can help to explain why Portugal is one of the European countries with less prevalence of drug consuming in Europe, but with the highest problematic drug abuse, mainly of heroine. Studies about drug abuse in Portugal show that drug addicts begin to consume when they are at the beginning of the third cycle of basic education (13/14 years old), in part due to the “shock” suffered from transition from previous cycles, when personal support is much stronger, to a system where no adult really takes care of them.

Of course the neighbourhoods can not be considered guilty of the situation. School plays a role in this. Portugal made a big effort to universalise the access to school in a few decades. The process that in other EU member-states lasted for decades in Portugal has been and has to go on being much quicker. Only two decades ago the problem was the massive abandonment of school at the ages of 10 and 14. In this context, a very much diversified public attends school, and the institutions and professionals are not prepared to deal with this. The consequence is, very often, the discrimination of more “problematic pupils”, most often from poor backgrounds. Their parents were under-qualified, frequently illiterates, workers in the ‘black economy’ or in low quality jobs, alternating work with unemployment, living in stigmatised communities sometimes submitted to criminal networks, living in bad housing conditions. Usually, schools located in those places are not prepared to deal with the students who do not behave in the “proper way” according to the actual scholar ideology on which the organization of schools is based. Those young pupils quickly become very well and personally known by teachers, who tend to concentrate them in the same divisions and let them reach the age of leaving the system (16). Teachers are more concerned about “giving classes” and looking for good time tables, letting behind the role of educators (in other words, schools are more concerned with their workers than about serving the community). Teachers will avoid bringing “signalised bad students” into second chance evening schools. These young “problematic” people often do not “abandon” school. They go on visiting their colleagues outside schools. It is not schools that they reject, it is the kind of teaching and the kind of relation with education that is offered and that they reject. Particularly visible is the case of the second generation of immigrants. Not being treated as Portuguese at school (indeed immigrants’ children can not get Portuguese nationality before 18 years old) they react as excluded students, becoming particular targets of exclusion and also particularly “difficult” students for schools. The system creates strangers and afterwards complains of having to deal with them. Without a proper institutional belonging, these young people born in Portugal tend to join together in peer groups rejecting school and other institutions. Therefore, the question of the social integration of immigrant families deserves special attention.

3 Policy measures

One of the most remarkable features of the Portuguese school system is that it has got everything that seems to be needed and yet the problems remain. There is, indeed, an important gap between the legal framework and the practices and attitudes inside schools.

3.1 Investing in Human Capital

Compulsory education in Portugal reaches the 3rd cycle of Basic Education (ISCED 2, 9 years after pre-school), beginning at 6 years old and going to 15. For the ones who do not get the diploma, a second opportunity schooling subsystem exists, with a credit system for obtaining the qualifications, but this only works at night, what means that youngsters of 16 and 17 can be obliged to enter night courses even if they do not enter the labour market.

In order to retain pupils who do not intend to follow higher education, in order to solve the main gap in the Portuguese qualifications structure (the secondary level), and also to improve the quality of the transition from school and training into the labour market, from the second cycle onwards the offer is diversified. There are upgrading programmes, including the programme “Territories of Education Under Priority Intervention” for schools located in problematic areas; the alternative curricula for pupils with special needs; vocational courses (ISCED II), a post-basic education year for practical education at work; the education/training courses. All these are permeable (schools are supposed to be provided with orientation services, helping students to choose their best pathway). The system allows the transition from the general “normal” courses to vocational courses and vice-versa, and also from school to the training system, especially apprenticeship courses.

The ways to reach secondary education are, therefore, diversified. The apprenticeship also offers courses equivalent to secondary education (ISCED 3). The education/training courses are also available for secondary level. Besides the general courses, oriented to the students who want to go on studying, the education system offers, at the secondary level, vocational courses, professional courses, courses of arts and second opportunity courses. Post-secondary education includes high education and also technological specialization courses (ISCED 4). For the adult population, there are in place training programmes for unemployed, training programmes for employees and, since the last years of the nineties, the adult education/formation short term courses and a system of verification, recognition and certification of skills and knowledge acquired in non-formal and informal contexts.

Being the levels of state budget investment in “regular” education a little bit above the European average (5,22% of GDP) and being the vocational segments of the education and training systems supported by the structural funds, the problem is not a lack of financial resources. What is not working that makes the performance so problematic?

- as we have seen, there is the problem of the profile of recruitment practiced by most companies, as well as the problem of no involvement in continuing training in or outside the workplace;

- but there is another major problem of devaluation of alternative segments of the system's offer, seen as "second class"; this helps to explain why out of the few students that enter secondary education only 32,5% are involved in any kind of education courses with vocational certification;
- most schools are not prepared to provide good quality vocational courses, from the infrastructural point of view and mainly as far as professional human resources are concerned. In fact, in Portugal teacher training, managed by Centres for Teacher Training is connected with the progression in the career. But the large majority of the courses, whether these are related to updating scientific and technical knowledge, or to the didactic use of new technologies, in reality has no impact on teaching practices and school organisation.
- Schools are rather closed institutions and have little or no relation at all with companies and other institutions and organisations in the community. The exceptions to this rule show that such relationships are a key requirement to overcome the vicious circle between early school leaving and low quality demand from the labour market.

3.2 Promoting opportunities for labour market integration

With regard to youth unemployment the Portuguese National Action Programme for Growth and Jobs 2005-2008 (PNACE, 2005) which promotes the reforms and modernization according to the priorities of the Lisbon Strategy includes several programmes and action plans that are fundamental in defining interventions with regard to the labour market situation by revitalizing employment policies, professional training and social inclusion, as well as the reinforcement of Public Employment Services. The Action Plan addresses the main structural problems of low qualifications by expanding and improving the quality of professional youth qualifications and enlarging life-long learning opportunities.

The success of such interventions relies on the quality implementation of the following fundamental measures regarding both the reinforcement of education and qualification and the promotion of employment and reduction of unemployment. A life-cycle perspective of the transition into labour and active life is adopted in this regard. The main measures are:

- Pre-school Programme
- English Teaching Generalization Programme for the first cycle of basic education (ISCED 1);
- Continuum Professional Training in mathematics for the first cycle of basic education teachers;
- Educative Complementation and Social Support Programme for pupils with learning difficulties;
- "New opportunities" Initiative promoting the generalization of the secondary

- education (ISCED 3) among youngsters and the valorisation of the existent formative vocational tracks;
- Professional Training for Young Unemployed;
 - Reinforcement of the Recognition, Validation and Certification of Qualifications System;
 - Professional Certification and Training Entities Accreditation National Systems Reforms;
 - Bologna Process Implementation readjustments;
 - Advanced Training for higher education teachers and researchers;
 - Continuum Professional Training of teachers and professional trainers;
 - Schooling and Professional Information and Orientation Integrated System;
 - Reinforcement of Youth Enterprise Spirit, promoting enterprise initiatives stimulus in secondary schools and supporting financial and technically the creation and sustainability of enterprises and jobs promoted by young people;
 - Specific Employment Programmes for Youth, in general, and higher graduated youngsters, in particularly, like the Youth Intervention Programme (“New Opportunities Initiative”) promoting schooling and professional certification for young unemployed and the Intervention Programme for Young Qualified Unemployed - FORDESQ;
 - Prevention and Elimination of Child Work Exploitation Programme (PETI) and it's readjustment to the phenomena today's configuration;
 - Employment Programmes on a Territorial and Sectarian employment police basis;
 - Professional Stages Programmes like the INOV-JOVEM Programme;
 - Logic of proximity and pro-activity of the Employment Public Service Modernization Programme, through the employers entities and Employment Centres Service re-articulation seeking qualifications adjustments and the reinforce and consolidation of INSERJOVEM methodology.

Many of these measures fall into the realm of education policies which however are seen as fundamental with regard to raising the qualification level and the quality of jobs in the Portuguese labour market. As regards specific labour market related measures, the term of ‘activation’ can not be applied in Portugal in the same way as in other EU member-states¹⁴⁸.

¹⁴⁸ Mainly in the case of active policies centred in the objective of cutting disincentives to work existing in social protection systems, which do not exist in Portugal. In this case what is still needed is the development and growth of social protection schemes, even if the objective is to prepare the transition of the economy to a

The employment rates are relatively high, both for men and women and the most important problem is not one of openness of the labour market, but one of adaptation of companies and workers to the new economic context. It is also important to improve the profile of the demand of skills to stimulate the reform of the systems concerned with developing human capital.

Therefore, if a policy is to be used to promote the inclusion in the labour market through subsidies, this should relate to the recruitment of qualified work into companies – for instance, promoting the integration of workers with medium, high and very high skills – in order to stimulate process- and product-related innovation. At the same time, subsidies can also be a good way to help the integration of particularly difficult groups (like disabled people, ex-drug addicts or long term unemployment). These are, generally speaking, available in the Portuguese employment system, although the implementation can be more difficult in the context of economic crisis and rising unemployment.

Another requirement, especially for the more problematic groups and with regard to the objective of reconciling work and family-life, is to subsidise a social labour market. While contributing to the development of social facilities and the creation of a better environment, it simultaneously provides those without even basic skills an opportunity to improve their employability in terms of social and relational skills.

Experience shows that social labour market policies are more effective and sustainable when their application is integrated in larger projects of local and community development. There is a relation between the territorial intervention of problematic neighbourhoods, the integration of excluded people (including groups adopting risk behaviours) and the promotion of services and facilities that create social cohesion. The experience also shows that it is not easy to avoid the creation of a secondary labour market based on social employment and third sector initiatives, instead of pursuing the aim of building bridges to normal (mainstreaming) labour market.

Finally, we can emphasize the role that employment services can play in activating unemployed people, both short and long term unemployed (the former in the perspective of prevention of long-term unemployment, the latter in the perspective of re-integration into the labour market). The rationale of person-centred and tailor-made employment plans, as the evaluation of National Employment Action Plan has shown, can really work and produce good activation results, which not always mean immediate integration into labour market, but on the contrary many times claims for other, previous, needed actions (cf. MSST, 2004).

3.3 Good practice

In spite of the persisting problems in youth transitions in terms of low qualifications, precariousness and poverty, there are some policies that work efficiently, although their scope

modern, productive and competitive one. The feeling of security – that comes with better protection and more qualifications - is absolutely decisive to allow for some of the reforms to introduce in the organisation of work.

and outreach is not sufficient to produce the need comprehensive impacts. In the following, we will briefly introduce these measures (see Annex IV, Chapters 4 and 8 in this volume):

- With regard to the relation between education and employment the apprenticeship programme is a means to combat early school leaving and facilitating labour market with appropriate skills. The programme is inspired by the dual systems in Germany and Austria (see National Report for Austria in this volume) although it is smaller in terms of training places it provides. The apprenticeship system is a national long-term policy created in 1984 and re-structured in 1996, incorporated into the Lifelong Learning strategy (LLL). It promotes training for specific occupations in the labour market, with both educational and vocational certifications. It is open for those who have passed the age limit for compulsory education and have not reached the age of 25 years. Since 2000 an average of about 26.000 young trainees participate every year in the system, 77,3% in ISCED 3 courses and 22,6% in ISCED 2 in 2004. These figures represent an important improvement since the launching of the NAP Employment (the numbers for 1997 were 13.033 trainees). The system is monitored in the context of active labour market policies included in the NAP Employment (cf. PNACE, 2005).
- With regard to promoting the return of the adult population (including youngsters over 18), especially those without or with low qualifications (below ISCED 2) working in the precarious segments of the labour market, to regular education and training, the system of recognition and validation of skills (RVCC) and the education/formation courses (EFA) need to be mentioned. RVCC is a long term national policy, including 56 Centres operating since 2003 all over the country. The system consists of a scheme for the recognition, validation and certification of knowledge acquired in non-formal and informal contexts, which operates on the basis of identifying this knowledge according to a Key Skills Reference Guide. People who do not meet the needed skills are channelled into EFA courses in order to acquire them. Created in 2001, the system enrolled 60.130 people until 2003. A total of 11.488 have completed the process in 2003, while 35.840 were in the recognition phase and 13.958 were receiving complementary training. RVCC system was the subject of an evaluation in the framework of mid-term evaluation of PRODEP, the Operational Programme for Education in the European Support Framework III. The RVCC system is now developing in order to certificate skills equivalent to upper secondary education level (ISCED 3).
- In the field of integrated and multidimensional programmes able to promote the access of groups faced by multiple disadvantage to the labour market (see Volume 1, Chapter 6.2), providing them specific support necessary for sustainable inclusion the Employment-Life Programme addressing ex-drug addicts is important. It is a national long-term policy that intends to help ex-drug-users to find a job and thereby to complete the treatment and reintegration process. The programme is based on the provision of stages in companies, on support to companies that employ the beneficiaries (either in short term or long term contracts) and on support with regard to self-employment. The key professional in the Employment-Life Program is the mediator based in treatment institutions but subsidized by the Public Employment

Service. His or her mission is to follow the individual integration process of the beneficiaries. Between 1999 and 2002 there were 5.145 beneficiaries supported. The programme was evaluated by an expert team in 2004 and, in spite of the good results, some additional measures were suggested in order to reinforce the involvement of treatment institutions.

- Finally, in the field of individual approach and guidance, the programme Inserjovem is a recognised good practice, evaluated at an European level in the framework of the peer review methodology organised by the Employment Committee of the EU (IEFP, 2001). It is a measure of the Public Employment Services to fight against long-term youth unemployment, created in the context of Guideline 1 of the European Employment Strategy (version 1998). It consists of an individual approach to re-integrate unemployed youngsters before they complete 6 months of unemployment, offering them an opportunity for training, employment or another suitable action to facilitate occupational integration. Multidisciplinary teams working in the Public Employment Centres are responsible for the assessment of each young person's needs and for the negotiation of a Personal Employment Plan. The proportion of young unemployed who have begun their personal employment plan (before 6 months) was 35.3% in 1998, rising to 39.0% in 2003. On the other hand 4,1% of the registered young unemployed were still in that situation after 6 months after registration and had not begun any plan.

The question of learning from others' experience in the context of international comparison is very important. Portugal has got some specificity that has to be taken into consideration. Anyway, the idea is that the specificity must not be seen as a reference for policy making but needs to be taken into consideration in the course of assessment.

4 Crucial issues for the future

While the National Action Plan for Growth and Jobs 2005-2008 includes a series of relevant measures criticism has been raised regarding the discrepancy between legal frameworks and formal objectives on the one hand, and the real implementations and outcomes of lifelong learning policies on the other hand. The National Action Plan for Social Inclusion includes exactly the same measures as far as disadvantaged youth is considered. As crucial for the future of the life-long learning system and, therefore, to combat early school leaving and prevent youth unemployment, three main factors must be addressed and for some of them Portugal must search for good solutions that have been tried elsewhere with success and that can be adapted to the Portuguese conditions. These are:

- The innovation in the practices of companies, in order to promote life-long learning for employed people and for employers themselves, and also to participate in the reform of the schools allowing the transition from a strategy of closure towards one of openness;
- The reinforcement of specific policies addressed at particular groups, preferably

promoted in the context of local development of poor neighbourhoods.

- The reform of the school system, the valorisation and qualification of the vocational segments and the necessary training of teachers and monitors. This issue deserves a special attention, namely as long as the following topics are concerned:
 - The constellation of problems resulting from the interaction between socio-economic background, practices and exclusionary mechanisms at school, obliges the systems of education and training to make a complete change in their practices. Professional courses need to be valued and schools and training centres need to be opened towards the community and particularly to the participation of new partners, mainly companies. The development of practical teaching and training in real work situations, as a complement of traditional classes or as courses composed of both classes and experience in the workplace is, in this context, a priority.
 - There are “specialised” professional or arts schools where school leaving is avoided and where problematic students are included with success. But the priority should not be to create “segregated” schools, but instead changing “normal” schools in order to make them more inclusive, diverse and flexible.
 - If the socio-economic background is at the origin of school drop-out, there is no reason to expect that disadvantaged families contribute to the solution. On the contrary, and mainly in the context of economic crisis, middle and upper class families tend to close even more the monopoly of better opportunities, thus increasing inequalities. There is, on the opposite side, a relationship between the reference of poor youngsters to their families and the adoption of problematic behaviour. Promoting equality must come from the State, the structure that has the possibility of correcting inequalities. The combat of social exclusion must be understood as a collective responsibility. In this context, the reform of education and training systems are the central priority, but other measures may be needed. There is, for instance, a gap in the social protection of young people looking for a first job, and also a gap in supporting access to housing and mobility.
 - Although it can be said that the main constellations of problems begin at the basic education levels, the biggest deficit of qualifications in the Portuguese labour market is situated at the secondary level. Therefore, the priority must be put in the reform of the curricula of secondary education, in order to make it attractive to all students and to make it manageable for all. The references for the curricula of secondary education for second opportunity schooling are now being prepared. It is urgent to accelerate.
 - This would be particularly necessary to bring back the ones that have been left behind (the 50% left out). This implies measures to oblige companies that hire under-qualified young workers to send them to complete their education (and pay a part of the costs), and also to implement programmes to bring back those who do neither work nor study. The systems of second chance education and of recognition, validation and certification of competences are, in this context, decisive for a successful strategy.

- The diversification of pathways in schools and training centres must change in two senses: first of all, by prioritising most problematic schools, knowing that teachers tend to respond positively to positive discrimination; secondly, the existing system of teacher training must change very deeply, since now it only serves for progression in the careers. It must prepare teachers to the new needs of schools, valuing professional courses and improving their technical and pedagogical quality and also promoting the connection between teacher training and changes in school organisation and the cooperation with other partners.
- This reform of schools also implies the diversification of the composition of staff. Besides teachers and attendants there are now working in schools psychologists in a small number. But the existence of “problematic” students and the need to establish relations with their families, and also with education partners, calls for other professionals, like, for instance, social workers and sociologists. Furthermore, the creation of good extra-curricula activities and leisure occupations are also aspects that deserve strong improvement, because they allow for the acquisition of skills that complement formal teaching and training in the workplace. Non-formal and informal skills should be valorised at schools and be the basis for reintegration of pupils in the right pathways of schooling¹⁴⁹. This also requires the investment in human resources to organize such activities.
- The integration of policies is the biggest defeat to deal with. Sectors of public administration have no tradition of working together and the development initiated in the second half of the nineties, in the framework of the National Action Plans for Employment, the Minimum Income Programme and other policies, has turned to the reverse. The key issue of coordination of policies includes economic policies, fiscal policies, training and education policies, social protection policies and policies of incentives to postpone the entrance of youngsters into the labour market when they hold higher qualifications. This should go together with earlier experiences with the world of work in the different segments of the school and training system.
- Attention must be paid at all territorial levels. While in each single school segregation can be reduced or reinforced, there is also a problem of coordination and articulation at regional and national levels. This articulation should be essential to built up a good and diversified network of schools and courses.
- There is a problem of qualifications and a problem of quality of the opportunities available for integration that require an agreement between all political parties and the social partners, in order to allow for a long term policy, able to change the status quo in the period of one generation.

These conclusions are in line with the results from the external evaluation of the National Employment Plan that took place in 2002, and also led to the implementation of two projects

¹⁴⁹ The traditional school used to socialise future workers to be disciplined, a prominent quality to work in Fordist factories. As the work organization is changing, as well as every day life, requiring more skills to deal with risky situations, these skills should be valorised in the learning process.

for monitoring and evaluating the reform of basic and secondary education which are now in operation.

In spite of risking doing nothing but to repeat common sense statements, this set of topics represents an important part of a comprehensive life-long learning strategy in Portugal, able to realise the reform of actual practices of institutions and different types of agents.

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Introduction

Participation of 13 countries in the study has made it necessary using standardised questionnaires in which national experts inserted national information and data. The filling out of the questionnaire by national experts was carried out during the first months of 2005, and the national experts did their best to insert data relating to the years 2003 and 2004, as far as these data were available from public sources. In case such data were not available, most recent available data were inserted. In Romania's case most data relating to labour market indicators have been taken from Household Labour Force Surveys for the third quarter 2003 and third quarter 2004, conducted by the National Institute of Statistics (INS-AMIGO), while data relating to education for the school year 2003/2004 have been taken from statistics published jointly by INS and the Ministry of Education and Research (MEC), and data relating to poverty have been taken from studies carried out by the National Anti-Poverty and Social Inclusion Commission (CASPIS) and INS (or jointly) published in 2004 but including mostly data from 2002. I have also benefited from special support by the General Department for Pre-University Education at MEC, as well as from certain information and data provided by the National Agency for Employment (ANOFM), which one may difficultly find in public statistics. Besides data above referred to, I had the opportunity to use for the purpose of this report information and data contained in the Joint Inclusion Memorandum (JIM) drawn up by the Government of Romania together with the European Commission, Directorate-General for Employment and Social Affairs, signed in Brussels on the 20th of June 2005, which were not available while filling out the standardised questionnaire. Additional information has been inserted in response to the Commission's comments and recommendations to the Final Report, which I found pertinent and beneficial.

This report follows the thematic structure of the Final Report (see Volume I), in a view to ease readers' reference to country context.

Constellations of disadvantage

a. Ideal types of concepts

The syntagm "disadvantaged youth" is being often used in Romania, but no official definition is available in research works, legislation, or policy documents. However, the category of population it refers to is being defined, either as a whole or by sub-categories, by several syntagms.

In social research, the former Youth Studies and research Centre (nowadays incorporated as research department with the National Agency for Supporting Youth Initiatives) had been

using the syntagms “vulnerable youth” and/or “youth at risk”, with the meaning of young people who are confronted with severely restricted opportunities for secure employment, social and economic advancement and personal fulfilment. This approach was embraced by the Ministry of Youth and Sports (nowadays National Authority for Youth) while developing the National Action Plan for Youth¹⁵⁰.

The National Anti-Poverty and Social Inclusion Plan contains mostly operational definitions aimed at focussing anti-poverty social policies, which do not differ significantly from the above referred to, but just put special emphasis on living conditions, as expected¹⁵¹.

Statistics in the fields of education and employment do not operate with this syntagm as such, but when aiming at grounding specific policies and/or programmes they do contain indicators that are relevant for the main dimensions of disadvantaged groups’ definition, including for young people¹⁵².

Although in the field of education policies one cannot find an official/legal definition for “disadvantaged youth”, both policy documents relating to education and internal documents of MEC relating to education programmes contain the syntagm “disadvantaged groups”, with special regard to children and youth belonging to Rroma¹⁵³ population, to children and youth with special education needs, and to children and youth from socio-economically disadvantaged areas. Furthermore, MEC has developed a set of socio-economic, educational, and cultural indicators aimed at making it easier the identification of target groups and decision making on suitable support measures.

The National Development Plan for the period 2004-2006 does not contain definitions of “disadvantaged persons” or “disadvantaged youth” either, but contains some relevant assertions: children and youth aged 15-24 represent the poorest category among all age groups; Rroma population is disproportionately affected by poverty; in households with many members (5 or more) the incidence of poverty is twice as higher as the national average; households in rural areas face a higher risk of poverty as compared to the other households¹⁵⁴.

The Joint Inclusion Memorandum refers to “vulnerable social groups”, including *inter alia* children at high risk, young people 18+ no longer covered by protection structures available to children with no families, persons with disabilities, Rroma minority, and homeless persons¹⁵⁵.

¹⁵⁰ The National Action Plan for Youth has been recently updated by the National Authority for Youth, with support by the Youth Studies and Research Department at the National Agency for Supporting Youth Initiatives, but not yet published on NAY website

¹⁵¹ cf. National Anti-Poverty and Social Inclusion Plan Concept, on www.caspis.ro

¹⁵² cf. Education in Romania – statistical data, INS, Bucharest, 2004

¹⁵³ “Rroma” is the term used by the community in Romania itself, it will be used throughout this report as a synonym to the international more current “Roma”.

¹⁵⁴ cf. National Development Plan 2004-2006, on www.mie.ro

¹⁵⁵ cf. Joint Inclusion Memorandum (JIM) drawn up by the Government of Romania together with the European Commission, Directorate-General for Employment and Social Affairs, signed in Brussels on the 20th of

The main legal regulations regarding disadvantaged people are contained by the Law no 116/15.03.2002 on prevention and combating social marginalization. Social marginalization is defined as the peripheral social position, the isolation of individuals or groups who have limited access to economic, political, educational and communicational resources of the community; it results in the absence of a minimum of living social conditions.

The law does not provide a definition of the category of young people above referred to, but while establishing the order of priority for the potential beneficiaries to access the available resources, the following groups are listed: young people coming from placement centres and host centres, young single parents with children in care/guardianship, young family persons with or without children in care, young family persons former convicts, other categories of young people in difficulty. The Governmental Decision no 1149/2002 further defines the socially marginalized person as being the person who benefits from the minimum income guaranteed or belongs to a family benefiting from minimum income guaranteed according to Law no 415/2001, and is in at least two of the following situations: has not a job; does not own or have in use a dwelling; lives in inappropriate conditions; has one or more children in care or belongs to a family with many children in care; is an aged person without legal guardianship; has been medically classified as handicapped or disabled people; has in custody a person medically classified as severely handicapped or with disability in first or second degree; was jailed.

If one were to subsume the disadvantage of Romanian youth with regard to early school leaving and youth unemployment to one of the ideal types of concepts across European systems of transition from school to work identified in the Final Report: '*young people are unemployed because they are disadvantaged*' versus '*young people are disadvantaged because they are unemployed*' (see *Volume 1, Chapter 3*), an option is difficult to make. At the first glance one could opt for the first one, since restricted opportunities result in individual deficits, which is the focus of this ideal type. However, if looking behind those restricted opportunities we find structural causes rather than individual deficits, which are the focus of the second ideal type. Therefore, looking for constellations of disadvantage, as interaction between socio-economic, institutional and individual factors, appears to be a much suitable approach while trying to discern both individual and structural factors that in a certain socio-economic context may result in young peoples' failing to achieve the level of education which otherwise their individual potentials would have allowed them to achieve, and consequently in lower/restricted opportunities on the labour market. This also applies to policy assessment since the impact of policy measures depends to a large extent on their suitability to socio-economic contexts as well as on their synergy in addressing constellations of disadvantage rather than individual deficits.

b. Gender related issues

Although women's full social participation and the promotion of gender equality remain important objectives for Romania, as stated in the Joint Inclusion Memorandum, with regard to participation in education one cannot speak about gender inequality. Women represent

51.2% of the Romanian population, but only 48.9% in the age group 15-24 years. The overall enrolment rate in all forms and levels of education, in the school/university year 2002/2003, was 72.9%, with 71.2% for male and 74.6% for female (higher for women in tertiary education: 38.9% overall, with 34.1% male and 44.0% female)¹⁵⁶. Unfortunately, breakdowns by gender of data regarding early school leavers are not available.

As regards the labour market, according to the JIM “participation in employment does not show any significant difference between women and men: 44.6% of employees are women and unemployment is lower among women than among men”¹⁵⁷. While lower unemployment rate among women than among men applies to the age group 15-24 as well, both activity rate and employment rate among young women are lower than among young men by circa 10%¹⁵⁸. This may relate to a certain extent to higher participation rate in education among young women.

c. Ethnic minorities related issues

From among ethnic minorities living in Romania, only in the case of Rroma population one can say that ethnic origin correlates with lower socio-economic status, which is mediated by low achievement in school, and low access to the (formal) labour market. As publicly recognised by JIM, the Rroma minority is faced with multiple and mutually re-enforcing deficits: low quality housing, very poor living environments, low access to quality education, low level of vocational qualification, and low access to the labour market. Among Rroma population there are a lot of people who have never had the experience of a legally recognised economic activity, while participation in education is significantly lower among Rroma than the average at country level, lower for Rroma girls than for Rroma boys (46.9% as compared to 52%, according to data quoted in JIM based on studies from 1998)¹⁵⁹. A special governmental strategy has been developed to address this severe disadvantage of Rroma minority, while Rroma targeted measures have been integrated in almost all strategic planning policy documents. A multi-annual Phare Programme - RO 0104.02: “Access to Education for Disadvantaged Groups, with special focus on Rroma” (EU Amount - 7.000.000, 00 Euros, National Co-financing Amount - 1.330.000, 00 Euros) has been implemented - 2001, 2002, 2003, and 2004 - in a view to address a major deficit faced by this ethnic minority, which is access to quality education. The objectives were: quality assurance in preschool education as a precondition for stimulating interest in increasing enrolments in primary education and stimulating children to participate to education, preventing, thus, early school leaving and drop outs. The evaluation of the project in November 2004 indicated that the proposed objectives were achieved, though continued efforts were still needed to improve access to quality education not only for Rroma children, but also for children belonging to other disadvantaged groups. Therefore, EU assistance in this respect has been further provided through the PHARE project RO -2003/005.551.01.02- Access to education for disadvantaged groups_(EU Amount - 9.000.000, 00 Euros, National Co-financing Amount - 2.300.000, 00 Euros). This programme is an extension of the 2001 PHARE and contains new elements like:

¹⁵⁶ cf. Education in Romania – statistical data, INS, Bucharest, 2004, pp.2-3

¹⁵⁷ Joint Inclusion Memorandum, page 68

¹⁵⁸ cf. National Institute of Statistics, Households Labour Force Survey (AMIGO) - Labour Force in Romania - Employment and unemployment, Third Quarter 2004, pp. 47-50

¹⁵⁹ cf. Joint Inclusion Memorandum, page 31

defining the target group (*Roma children, (SEN) special education needs children, children from economically and specially disadvantaged groups*), focus on the elimination of school segregation phenomenon. The implementing period is November 2003-November 2006.

d. Territory related issues

The already traditional unequal development of rural and urban areas, the disparities resulting from de-industrialisation in several cities and towns, as well as the regional development disparities have resulted in specific constellations of disadvantage in rural areas as compared to urban areas, in de-industrialised cities/towns as compared to cities/towns with stable or emerging economies, as well as in more developed regions as compared to less developed ones. They relate to both the economic context and the unequal opportunities to access quality education. Data collected from regional statistics for the purpose of this study revealed that the unemployment rates for youth in the third quarter of 2003 were under the value registered at national level in five regions – North-East, South-East, South-West, West, and North-West and over this level only in three regions – South, Central, and Bucharest. In Q3 2004 the situation had changed as compared to 2003: in three regions the value of this index was below the national level – North-East, West, and North-West, in South-West was equal to the national level and over the national level in South-East, South, Central, and Bucharest. The highest rate of youth unemployment was registered in Bucharest in Q3 2003 (21.8%) and in Central region in Q3 2004 (26.3%). The lowest values were 9.8% in North-East region in Q3 2003 and 13.3% in North-West region in Q3 2004. The dynamic 2003-2004 shows a 4.4% increase of the youth unemployment rate at national level and increases of this index in six regions – North-East, South-East, South, South-West, West, and Central. The youth unemployment rate has decreased by 4.5% in Bucharest and by 1.8% in North-East region. Looking at the available data one could note significant increases of the youth unemployment rate in three regions – Central (by 9.3%), North-East (8.3%), and South-East (8.2%)¹⁶⁰

The analysis of poverty evolution among Romania's population, carried out annually since 2003 by the Anti-Poverty and Social Inclusion Commission (CASPIS)¹⁶¹ reveal that leaving in rural areas is more often associated with poverty as compared to urban areas. However, poverty in urban settlements is more profound than in the rural ones (mainly because poor people in urban lack the survival opportunities offered by the rural households). Unfortunately, education statistics do not provide enough relevant data for comparative assessment of participation in education in urban and rural areas (enrolment is recorded based on the school location, not pupils' domicile).

Education in rural areas still suffers from poor school facilities, which along with inadequate living conditions for teachers in these areas perpetuate inequality in education opportunities for young people living there, which hamper their employment perspectives. Support measures for young people from poor families to continue education have been enacted but the available resources in both state budget and local budgets are insufficient to compensate the lack of family resources for all or at least most of those willing to continue education,

¹⁶⁰ cf. National Institute of Statistics, Households Labour Force Survey (AMIGO) - Labour Force in Romania - Employment and unemployment, Third Quarter 2003, pp. 138-149, and Third Quarter 2004, pp. 141-149

¹⁶¹ cf. CASPIS, The evolution of poverty and of severe poverty during 1995-2003, on www.caspis.ro

mainly the post-secondary education. However, encouraging mobility for education purposes may not solve the problem, which I think has structural causes (among which: rural infrastructure, poverty and low education experience among parents, difficult access to information, weak NGO/NPO sector, mobility barriers, poor local budgets, etc.).

e. Youth unemployment related issues

The youth unemployment rate (the %age of the 15-24 years old labour force) in Romania was 16.3% in Q3/2003 (16.5% for male and 16.0% for female) and 20.7% in Q3/2004 (21.7% for male and 19.4% for female)¹⁶², which do not seem very high compared to the EU-25 average of 18.3%. However, as compared to the average unemployment rate in Romania those values were almost three times higher.

Much worrying is the fact that 77% of young unemployed in Q3/2003 and 65.2% in Q3/2004 were long-term unemployed (in Romanian statistics youth long-term unemployment refers to young unemployed under unemployment for 6 months and over)¹⁶³.

52.8% of young unemployed registered in Q3/2003 and 52.6% in Q3/2004 had been ISCED 2 graduates, which reinforce the assumption that those with the lowest qualifications are mostly affected by unemployment. Despite having no indication on the level of education achieved by the young people recorded in the groups of occupations that absorb most of employed population without education or training certificate (one cannot ignore under-employment), the data collected for the purpose of this study revealed that besides the occupations specific to rural areas (agriculture, forestry, fishery, and to a certain extent handicrafts as well) young people without qualification certificates are most probably employed in unqualified and low qualified works (more women in services and trade, and more men in handicrafts and several kinds of unqualified works)¹⁶⁴. LFS Eurostat data on unemployment / qualification for Q4/2004 reveals for Romania a quite balanced distribution of young unemployed (15-24) among ISCED 0-2, ISCED 3-4, and ISCED 5-6 young labour force (20.5%, 22.1%, and 27.4% respectively).

The activity rate for young people (15-24) was 36.4% in Q3/2003 (42.4% for male and 30.0% for female), while for whole population aged 15 and over it was 56.6%. In Q3/2004, the activity rate for young people was 37.7% (43.0% for male and 32.2% for female), while for the whole population aged 15 and over it was 56.0%¹⁶⁵.

A problem which proved to be very difficult to analyse was the relation between registered and unregistered youth unemployment. One way to get estimations was to compare absolute numbers of registered unemployed (by NAE) with AMIGO/LFS data, but AMIGO operates with the age group 15-24 years old, while official registration of unemployed in Romania starts with the age of 16. To correct the above data on NAE records as to include the population ages 15 who were not enrolled in education at the respective reference dates as potential registered unemployed (if they were entitled to), the only reliable way was to apply

¹⁶² cf. National Institute of Statistics, Households Labour Force Survey (AMIGO) - Labour Force in Romania - Employment and unemployment, Third Quarter 2003, pp. 55-57, and Third Quarter 2004, pp. 63-66

¹⁶³ ibid. Third Quarter 2003, page 32, and Third Quarter 2004, page 34

¹⁶⁴ ibid. Third Quarter 2003, page 124, and Third Quarter 2004, page 127

¹⁶⁵ ibid. Third Quarter 2003, pp. 43-44, and Third Quarter 2004, pp. 47-48

the school enrolment rate for people aged 15 to the total population aged 15 in 2003 and respectively in 2004. Because school enrolment rates for the school year 2004/2005 were not available at the time of filling out the questionnaire, I had to accept the compromise of using the same rates as of 2003. The results of these calculations have shown that in 2003 circa 57% of ILO young unemployed were not registered with public employment services, while in 2004 only 37% were in this situation.

Another problem difficult to analyse was of those who are neither in education or training nor employed nor registered with the employment service (so called “status0”).

The concept of “Status0” youth is not familiar in Romania, except for the Romanian research team having worked on YoYo Project¹⁶⁶. Consequently, no statistic records for this category are available as such. However, estimation may be done based on existing data from General Census of population and dwellings (2002), labour market statistics (AMIGO), and education statistics. Since data for the school year 2004/2005 are not yet available in public statistics, the estimation regards the first quarter of 2004 (somehow in the mid of school year 2003/2004).

Extracting from the total number of population aged 15-24 in March 2004 the number of employed population aged 15-24 (as estimated by AMIGO), the numbers of pupils and students aged 15 and over (except students over 24), and the number of registered unemployed aged 15-24, we come to an estimation of young people aged 15-24 who were neither in work nor in education nor registered as unemployed, i.e. 632.132 total, of whom 289.202 male and 342.930 female, i.e. 18.8% of 15-24 years old population (16.8% male and 20.8% female). Although this may be considered as a fair estimation of “Status0” young people, it has to be emphasized that employed population in AMIGO includes, *inter alia*, the category of “contributing family worker”, meaning “that person who carries out his activity within an economic family unit run by a family member or relative, not receiving remuneration as salary or pay in kind.” At the end of the first quarter 2004, AMIGO had estimated a total number of 281.702 people aged 15-24 in this category, of whom 162.947 male and 118.755 female. One may suspect that this category of “employed” young population hide a certain number of “Status0s”.

Unemployment among youth is often determined by structural causes rather than by lack of jobs. The lack of consistency between the structure of (formal) educational system’s offer and the structure of labour market’s demand seems to range first among this type of causes, but we cannot take it for sure as far as the public educational system is undergoing major reforms towards better adaptation to the labour market demand, the emerging private education system follows the free market’s rules, and the “third sector” (NGOs/NPOs) is more and more active in providing alternative vocational training schemes. The structural distribution of opportunities (such as educational and economic resources among origin families, access to information/ counselling/guidance, opportunities for territorial mobility, etc.) may account for as well. The lack of policies/strategies for optimising the distributional impact of development

¹⁶⁶ Youth Policy and Participation – YOYO, funded by the EC’s 5th Framework Programme, Project no: HPSE-CT-2001-00072, coordinated by IRIS e.V., Tübingen; Final Report available on <http://iris-egris.de/egris>

programmes (many of which financed from EU/EC funds) contributes to the maintenance of structural misfit between territorial distributions of available labour force and available jobs.

As regards under-employment, several aspects may be considered as well. The main aspect is the acceptance by young people of jobs below their qualifications but better paid (this includes, without being limited to, those working abroad, more or less legally, most of those working on the black market, those living in cities and having to pay rent for dwellings). Programmes to address the problems faced by these categories of young people are rare.

A problem that affects youth transition to adult life, which impacts the access to education and employment as well, is the shortage of affordable accommodation which would allow young people to move away from home and live independently or start their own family. Due to this lack, young people are obliged to stay for longer with their parents.

According to the 2002 census¹⁶⁷ (most recent data available in this regard), circa 97% of employed population with maximum 8 grades (i.e. without education certificate), in total number of 2,560,502, was concentrated in five groups of occupations:

- Operative workers in services, trade, and assimilated (6.1%);
- Farmers and qualified workers in agriculture, forestry and fishery (56.3%);
- Handicraftsmen and qualified workers (15.7%);
- Operators for installations, machineries, equipments, etc. (7.7%); and
- Unqualified workers (14.3%).

Breakdown by age groups is not available for the above census data (population by groups of occupations and levels of education), but if considering the numbers of young people in the respective groups of occupations, which are available, one may get some indications on the occupations of young people without education certificate. The figures reveal that besides the occupations specific to rural areas (agriculture, forestry, fishery, and to a certain extent handicrafts as well) young people without qualification certificates are most probably employed in unqualified and low qualified works (more women in services and trade, and more men in handicrafts and several kinds of unqualified works).

f. Liaison between education and labour market; the transition problems

In spite of all measures already undertaken and of reforms underway, aimed at strengthening and diversifying partnerships between the institutions of education and the institutions of the labour market, in a view to better adapt the offered qualifications to the labour market's demand (e.g. annual protocols between MEC and ANOFM, institutionalised partnerships between education inspectorates and the business environment, and institutionalised partnerships between universities, research and business environment) the structural misfit between the education's offer and the labour market's demand still persists. This is rather a

¹⁶⁷ National Institute of Statistics, General Census of Population and Dwellings, March 19, 2002, available on <http://www.insse.ro>

general problem of the education system than one specific to disadvantaged youth, yet in their case the negative impact could be higher. Partnerships and cooperation networks aimed at better tailoring the education's offer to the local and regional labour markets include institutional actors, while pupils/students are not part of the process. Moreover, in spite of increasing access to Internet among young people, the information regarding the achievements and the measures envisaged by responsible institutions in this regard hardly reach young people, so that the perception above referred to stays alive.

Youth research has revealed a quite widespread perception among young people that what they are being taught in school does not help them very much to get a job, so less a good one. This largely affects the motivation for participation in education, often resulting in early school leaving. The lack of labour market forecasts, and subsequently of information on employment perspectives, also contributes to maintenance of uncertainty among youth with regard to career options.

If listening to the young peoples' voice, i.e. last opinion survey among youth¹⁶⁸, one may easily find out that the main factors perceived by them as problems being confronted with are related to their transition to adulthood: opportunities to have an appropriate dwelling, finding a job, conditions to set up a family, living conditions.

g. The relationship between different aspects of disadvantage

Unfortunately, young people who come from economically disadvantaged families and/or whose parents have limited educational experience still run a higher risk with regard to educational advancement, which may result, *inter alia*, in either opting for the shortest educational route that provide minimum qualification required to access the labour market, or in school leaving for reasons related to parents being unable or unwilling to provide financial assistance for continuing education. This may be associated with belonging to ethnic minorities, which in Romania is the case of Rroma population who cumulates to a larger extent than Romanians and Hungarians both economic disadvantage and low educational experience. Of course, under the circumstances of greater competition for quality jobs among graduates and qualified school-leavers, these young people face increased difficulties to access good jobs, and consequently to develop successful transitions.

Since 2003, the Anti-Poverty and Social Inclusion Commission (CASPIS) has been carrying out annual analyses of poverty evolution among Romania's population. Unfortunately, the most recent results available on CASPIS website refer to 2003¹⁶⁹. However, being based on trends analysis, those findings are enough relevant for identifying predictive factors that are associated with disadvantage:

- Leaving in rural areas is more often associated with poverty as compared to urban areas. However, poverty in urban settlements is more profound than in the rural ones.

¹⁶⁸ “Youth situation and their expectations – Diagnosis”, opinion survey conducted by Metro Media Transilvania upon request by the National Authority for Youth, 2004 (available for a while on <http://www.e-tineret.ro>, but not published)

¹⁶⁹ cf. CASPIS, The evolution of poverty and of severe poverty during 1995-2003, on www.caspis.ro

- Self-employed (especially in agriculture) run the highest risk of poverty among occupational categories
- The risk of poverty considerably increases in the cases of families with 5 members or more.
- The risk of poverty for households with 3 or more children is twice higher than for those with fewer children.
- Young people and children are victims of poverty to a larger extent than other age groups:
- The level of education is the most important predictor for the risk of poverty; poverty considerably decreases with each additional education cycle.
- Rroma population is facing a higher risk of poverty as compared to the main ethnic groups:

According to the above findings, families with many children, Rroma people, self-employed (especially in agriculture), children, and youth are the most vulnerable groups with regard to poverty.

Policy approaches

In political documents regarding youth policy (such as governing programmes, National Action Plan for Youth) the above issues appear to be acknowledged by policy makers, and political objectives to alleviate their incidence on youth life are being set.

In the field of education policy, though an official/legal definition of “disadvantaged youth” does not exist, within internal documents of the Ministry of Education and Research, such as “The strategy for development of the pre-university education for the period 2001-2004, with forecasts by 2010”, the concept of disadvantaged groups does appear in the title of educational programmes with European funding (e.g. Phare Programme “Access to Education for Disadvantaged Groups, with special focus on Rroma; multi-annual - 2001, 2002, 2003, 2004, see Annex IV, Chapter 1 in this volume). Policies in the field of education also operate with this concept, with reference to Rroma children/young people, children/young people with special educational needs, children/young people from certain zones that are disadvantaged from socio-economic point of view. Moreover, under the PHARE 2003 Programme, the Ministry has developed some socio-economic, educational, and cultural indicators aimed at easier identification of target groups and better substantiation of support measures. MEC has continued to develop and implement national programs to increase the access to quality education for all and to diminish early school leaving. The results are the following: the setting up of zone education centres for ensuring access to quality education for young people from the rural areas, the school transport, free school stationary supplies for children coming from low income families, dairy and bakery products for pupils in primary education.

The policy response to the deficit of education opportunities in rural areas has been the acknowledgment by the Ministry of Education and Research (MEC) as key priority of education policy the development of education in rural areas, as well as in areas that are disadvantaged from socio-economic and cultural point of view.

A Loan Agreement has been signed by the Government of Romania and the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD) in May 2003 for financing a „Rural Education Project“ over a six years period (2003-2009), amounting to US\$ 91 million (60 million IBRD, 30 million Romanian Government, and 1 million local authorities). The project is being implemented by MEC and its overall objective is to have rural school students benefit from improved access to quality education, as evidenced by higher achievement scores and completion and transition rates. The project has four components: 1) improving teaching and learning by financing school-based professional development for teachers, providing career development opportunities; upgrading basic education conditions in schools, and ensuring access of rural students to basic teaching-learning materials; 2) improving school-community partnerships by setting up a school-community grants program; 3) strengthening the analytic capacity of the Ministry of Education and Research at national and local levels for policy analysis and formulation, as well as for planning and evaluation; and 4) strengthening project management capacity; its activities include forming an information, education, and communication strategy for increasing awareness of policy and decision makers and generating stakeholders' support. According to the IBRD SOPE (status of projects in execution) report for the financial year 2005¹⁷⁰, the project is running well, activities in schools being developed as planned and teachers participating with interest and dedication. Local authorities have been supportive and have also benefited from the trainings. Water supply facilities have been installed among the first batch of 430 schools, and new furniture has been delivered to many of the schools.

Additionally, through the Minister's Order no. 4462/04.07.2005, a work group has been set up at MEC having as main mandate to develop, periodically review, implement and permanently evaluate the Strategy for Development of Rural Education in Romania. The work group has been also assigned the responsibility of ensuring the integrated management of the programmes and measures in the matter, of strengthening the capacity for monitoring, evaluation, and development of policies and programmes for rural education, of coordinating the investments and the programmes' components as to ensure coherence and added value, and of strengthening the management capacity of and cooperation between project management units and project implementation units that deal with components focussed on rural area.

The main legal regulations regarding disadvantaged people are contained by the Law no 116/15.03.2002 on prevention and combating social marginalization. The methodological rules for putting this law into practice have been approved by the Governmental Decision no 1149/2002.

¹⁷⁰ cf. STATUS OF PROJECTS IN EXECUTION – FY05 (SOPE), IBRD, Operations Policy and Country Services, SEPTEMBER 23, 2005, pag. 888, at <http://www1.worldbank.org/operations/disclosure/SOPE/FY05/SOPEReportFY05-Final.pdf>

As expressly stated in its second article, the aim of the Law is to guarantee the effective access, especially of young people, to the basic and fundamental rights such as: the right to have a job, to have a dwelling, to benefit from medical care, to education, and to establish measures for prevention and combating social marginalization, and to mobilize the institutions with responsibilities in the matter. Social marginalization is defined as the peripheral social position, the isolation of individuals or groups who have limited access to economic, political, educational and communicational resources of the community; it results in the absence of a minimum of living social conditions. The law stipulates the responsibility of the National Agency for Employment to undertake a personalized social accompaniment for young people aged 16-25 years being in difficulty and running the risk of professional exclusion, in a view to facilitate their access to job.

Labour market policies are generally connected to the education and training system. NAE and MER conclude cooperation protocols on annual basis, with a view to better coordinate the school enrolment figures and consequently the numbers of graduates by specializations with the dynamics of the labour market. The process is still at its beginning, so that the results are to be expected in the next years. However, it is my opinion that development of forecasting capacity with regard to labour market(s) evolution is the single reliable way to ensure consistency/correlation between offer and demand in the long run.

Both education policy and employment policy are closely related to the EU accession process, the Romanian Government having assumed obligations to undertake profound and fast reforms as to ensure compliance with the EU acquis by 2007. Both MEC and MLSSF/NAE are benefiting from extensive financial and technical assistance from the EC and the World Bank in these regards, which include, *inter alia*, close collaboration and coordination with responsible bodies within EC.

At national level, the harmonization of regional development being a key principle of strategic planning, the design and the implementation of reforms have a strong regional dimension. Regional Consortia have been set up, chaired by the Regional Development Agencies, which take on the responsibility for developing policies/strategies in the field of TVET. They have already developed regional action plans for technical and vocational education (PRAI) in 7 development regions, which contain recommendations regarding the domains of vocational education and the related qualification levels that will be required by the labour market in the perspective of year 2010.

At county level, based upon PRAIs, have been developed local action plans for technical and vocational education by county school inspectorates with assistance from the Local Committees for Development of Social Partnerships in Technical and Vocational Education.

Having in view the above action plans, the education institutions at local level are developing school action plans, as tailored response in terms of institutional development to the county and regional action plans.

The National Development Plan 2004-2006 includes as one of the five strategic priorities “Human resources development, increasing employability and fighting social exclusion”. The overall objective of the third priority of the National Development Plan is “Enhancing

employability of the labour force, as well as fighting social exclusion”.

The strategy will be articulated along two main pillars: improving the labour market adaptability to the market requirements and actively combating social exclusion. In the first phase priority will be given to creating the basic pre-conditions for the strategy success: first of all by redressing the educational system and reversing its present decline by particularly focusing in areas and social groups with very low participation rates. This will also mean addressing the present mismatch between the achievements of the VET system and the requirement of the markets through a combination of investment, training schemes and a reform of the curricula to make them better compatible with the EU standards.

Secondly, labour market adaptability will be pursued through investment in human resource development based on a strategy for lifelong learning. This shall imply: i) the promotion of increased participation in tertiary and higher education, to be achieved by, *inter alia*, spreading Internet access all across the educational system to maximise the use of web-based information (thus overcoming infrastructure bottlenecks as well as lowering the cost of learning); ii) the establishment of an accessible lifelong learning environment helping people to retrain and upgrade their knowledge and skills. Lifelong learning is increasingly needed to prolong the active life of the work force, to develop competencies for the future labour market learning, to anticipate possible gaps of labour qualifications caused by mismatches between labour demand and supply. In parallel a better use of human resources calls for active measures for the unemployed and the socially excluded. While the fostering of entrepreneurship to create more and better jobs will be addressed within the framework of priority 5, specific training schemes will be devised to support the long term unemployed (off from employment for more than 9 months), and the young unemployed (15-24) and other disadvantaged groups to address market demand and find permanent jobs¹⁷¹.

Finally the strategy for fighting social exclusion will be complemented by strengthening the provision of social services and shall target vulnerable persons within the poorest areas of the country. It shall also target social infrastructure including, but not limited, to emergency help structures in support of the elderly and the disabled, the health system, and special support to orphans and abandoned children.

The Policy Frame fully acknowledges the European Employment Strategy principles as well as the long-term objective set by the Lisbon European Council for the European Union to become the most competitive knowledge-based economy by 2010. Additionally, it is in line with the recommendations of the accession partnership and the Joint Assessment of Employment Priorities in Romania (JAP).

a. Human Capital Building

The option for approaching youth as a resource rather than as a problem, since many years recommended by youth researchers and finally acknowledged by the first Youth Action Plan in Romania (actually the first in Europe) is a good ground for policies aimed at developing human capital, among which those aimed at increasing youth participation in education and on the labour market play a crucial role.

¹⁷¹ cf. National Development Plan 2004-2006, on <http://www.mie.ro>, pp. 98-114

The main preventative measures that attempt to counter the effects of disadvantage through education with regard to family and ethnic background (in the case of Rroma), which also contribute to diminishing early school leaving, are presented below.

Persons of school age who belong to families entitled to receive the minimum income guaranteed and have two or more children, and who have registered in the compulsory education benefit from scholarships, at a level annually approved by governmental decision (40% is granted in advance – in August – to the legal representatives of beneficiaries, while the remaining 60% is granted in monthly or quarterly instalments, provided that the beneficiaries attend school and meet the minimum requirements for graduation). In cases of dropouts the amounts paid shall be recuperated from the legal representatives of beneficiaries.

Graduates from compulsory education who belong to families entitled to receive the minimum income guaranteed and have two or more children and who have registered in post-compulsory education (second cycle high school, post high schools and foremen schools, universities) benefit from scholarships as well, at a level annually approved by governmental decision, which should cover at least the costs of housing in student shelters and meals in student canteens. The regulations regarding attendance, performance and measures in case of dropout are similar to those for compulsory education. Scholarships for students are covered from the state budget, while scholarships for pupils are covered from the budgets of local councils.

For illiterate people, the Ministry of Education and Research develops and implements programmes aimed at phasing out illiteracy. Participants in those programmes may benefit from scholarships with this destination, provided from local budgets.

These programmes are available to persons over 14 years old who are in one of the following situations:

- Have never attended the compulsory education organized according to the law;
- Have not completed compulsory education organized according to the law;
- Have attended the courses in compulsory education organized according to the law, but have not achieved the basic knowledge specific to compulsory education.

Beginning school year 2001/2002, the Ministry of Education and Research developed a program of providing students in compulsory education, coming from families with low income with free school books and stationary. Beginning from the school year 2002/2003 a new social program has been launched – to assure a daily snack consisting of dairy and bakery products for all students attending primary education; starting with school year 2003/2004, the program has been expanded to children from preschool.

There are several types of scholarship for pupils in compulsory education (social scholarship, performance/high performance scholarships, high school scholarships, special scholarships). Most important/relevant for our study are social scholarships (in amounts decided upon by county school inspectorates – somewhere between 1,000,000 and 1,500,000 ROL/ 30-40

EUR) and high school scholarships (decided by the ministry, in amount of 1,800,000 ROL/50EUR).

b. Broadening access to the labour market

Among the conclusions of our study on Youth Policy and Participation¹⁷² was that “classical” trajectories (classical only in respect of sequences, as employment trajectories have been no more linear) meaning compulsory education, followed by additional education (higher and/or vocational education), than by employment, make no longer the rule in youth transition, but rather the “yo-yo trajectories”, meaning formal education followed by zigzagging between employment and unemployment, eventually with short-term vocational training/re-training.

Besides the generalised access to initial vocational education, one category of measures that may ensure broader access to the labour market are those aimed at ensuring vocational training flexibility by the progressive phasing out of narrow qualifications. The present design of vocational training (professional qualification) allows graduates to practice more than one occupation, which increases the employment chances. Additionally, the Romanian TVET system is redefining the qualifications in accordance with the defining systems of qualifications in different member states, using ISCED classifications, Decision of the European Council 85/368/EEC regarding the comparability of professional qualifications between member states of the European Community. The planned process of redefining professional qualifications, aims at consolidating transferability of competencies and quality assurance within TVET.

Third sector organisations play an important role in the design and implementation of programmes aimed at both improving vocational education and improving employment opportunities for young people (not only). Moreover, partnerships with public institutions, especially local authorities, have improved since financing from European funds requires in many cases such partnerships as eligibility criterion. Unfortunately, no systematic records of third sector's involvement in implementation of education/employment-oriented programmes do exist. However, at least for projects financed by international donors, especially the EU, transparency of selection processes is ensured, so that one may find out who got money for what project.

A relevant programme in this regard is the Phare funded “Economic and Social Cohesion Programme”, which identifies one priority on human resources development. The major groups of actions concerning youth are:

- alleviating structural unemployment problems including *active measures for youth and long-term unemployed and unemployed in rural areas*;
- *actively combating social exclusion* with particular focus on the *disadvantaged groups* as Roma, disabled persons and youngsters no longer in child protection system and the development of social services;
- improving access to education

¹⁷² see footnote at page 7

For the purpose of this study, I checked on the EC Delegation's website the situation of projects selected for funding under the Phare RO 0007.02.01 programme – Human Resources Development. Out of 416 projects selected, 145 belonged to companies and 129 to NGOs. An analysis of those projects from the perspective of target groups and objectives would be of course very interesting, but would however exceed the scope and the space of this report.

Measures and schemes do exist to combat unemployment and encourage employment, most of which addressing all unemployed, not young unemployed as such. The responsibility for implementation of these measures stays with the NAE, and they are available in all regions through NAE county/local employment services (LES); most relevant are listed below.

- Vocational information and counselling (provision of information on the labour market and on the evolution of the occupations; assessment and self-assessment of the personality in view of vocational orientation; development of the jobseekers' ability and self-esteem in order to be able to make the right career decision; training in job-search methods and techniques)
- Labour exchange (information on available vacancies and the requirement for their filling in by publishing, displaying, and organising electronic labour exchange and Job Fairs; job placement: placing in contact of the employers and the jobseekers with a view to establish work or service relations). These two measures are included in NAE reports as labour mediation measures, under which 324,054 persons have been employed in 2004, of whom 135,448 women.¹⁷³
- Training and retraining courses (provision of free-of-charge training/retraining courses upon request of either unemployed or employers , through service providers that may be public or private training institutions, companies or NGOs; NAE covers all related expenses for training periods up to nine months, including travel costs for trainees living in other localities than the place of training). 28,032 persons, of whom 27,475 unemployed registered with LES), participated in vocational training courses financed by NAE during the year 2004, of whom 39% under the age of 25. Almost 10,000 participants were belonging to disadvantaged groups (e.g. 2,304 long-term young unemployed, 4,131 people from rural area, 282 Rroma people).¹⁷⁴
- Consultancy for starting up a business (free-of-charge consultancy and assistance services for starting up an independent activity or a business, which may be provided by NAE as well as by private companies, professional organisations, foundations and associations specialised in the respective areas of expertise). 1,596 unemployed have benefited from this measure in 2004.¹⁷⁵
- Complementing the salary income (if beneficiaries of unemployment benefit take-up employment, they benefit, from the time of employment and by the end of the period for which they were entitled to receive unemployment benefit, from a monthly tax-free

¹⁷³ Cf. NAE Annual Report for the Year 2004. at <http://www.anofm.ro>

¹⁷⁴ Ibid.

¹⁷⁵ Ibid.

amount of 30% of the unemployment benefit). 85,704 persons have benefited from this measure in 2004, of whom 10,113 unemployed under the age of 25.¹⁷⁶

- Stimulation the mobility of the labour force (the persons who, during the period when they receive unemployment benefit, take-up employment in a locality located over 50 Km away from their place of residence, are entitled to an installation bonus equal to two gross minimum wages at national level in force at the time of employment; in case they change their residence to move in the locality where they got employment, the installation bonus is equal to seven gross minimum wages at national level in force at the time of employment). 5,774 persons have benefited from this measure in 2004, of whom 1,041 unemployed under the age of 25.¹⁷⁷
- Job subsidies for employment of graduates (see details in Annex IV, Chapter 7 in this volume). 21,634 young graduates have been employed under this measure in 2004 (49.25% of graduate jobseekers employed with NAE support).¹⁷⁸
- Job subsidies for employment of disable people (874 beneficiaries in 2004).¹⁷⁹
- Job subsidies for temporary employment of unemployed in community interest works (62,113 beneficiaries in 2004).¹⁸⁰
- Supporting the creation of new jobs (low-interest credits are granted to SMEs, co-operatives, family associations, natural persons authorised to carry out independent activities, and to unemployed setting up companies in view of creating new jobs, out of which minimum 50% for unemployed persons). 6,830 persons have been employed under this measure in 2004, of whom 3,415 from among unemployed registered with LES.¹⁸¹
- Pre-lay-off services (in case of restructuring of the activity, which may lead to substantial changes in the number and professional structure of the personnel, the employers have the obligation to notify the agencies for employment in view of carrying out specific measures for preventing the negative social effects of such restructuring). Through these services, during 2004, 5,570 persons have been re-employed within 30 days from being laid off, 983 persons have been included in re-qualification programmes, and 51 persons have set up their own business within 60 days from being laid off.¹⁸²

c. Empowering individual decision-making: Counselling and incentives

While previously mentioned measures are available for all jobseekers (registered with LES), for young people ages 16-25 being in difficulty and running the risk of professional exclusion, according to the provisions of the Law no. 116/2002, NAE have the obligation to undertake personalised social accompaniment, in a view to facilitate their access to employment. These young people are entitled to vocational counselling and mediation by specialised personnel of

¹⁷⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷⁷ Ibid.

¹⁷⁸ Ibid.

¹⁷⁹ Ibid.

¹⁸⁰ Ibid.

¹⁸¹ Ibid.

¹⁸² Ibid.

NAE, based upon an individual mediation plan. They may benefit from employment with an employer certified by NAE, based upon a solidarity contract. The solidarity contract is to be entered into by the young beneficiary and the Agency for a period up to two years, but not less than one year. Based upon the solidarity contract, the employer (named insertion employer) shall enter with the young beneficiary into a labour contract for a preset period, which should be equal to the duration of the solidarity contract. The insertion employers shall conclude conventions with the Agency, through which the Agency undertakes the obligation to reimburse the insertion employers the salary agreed with the young beneficiary, but not more than 70% of the average net salary income per economy acknowledged by the National Institute of statistics. If at the completion date of the individual labour contracts the insertion employers enter into open-ended labour contracts with the young persons having been employed by them based on solidarity contracts, the employers benefit, under the same convention with NAE, from a monthly reimbursement in amount of 50% of the unemployment benefit that the respective young people would have been entitled to in case they had become unemployed. This amount may be granted to employers for a period up to two years, until the young employees turn their 25 years old. According to NAE Annual Report for the Year 2004, 3,000 people should have been employed based on solidarity contracts in 2004, but no evidence could be found in the report as to what extent this target have been reached.¹⁸³

d. Coordination of policies

Several aspects relating to coordination of policies in the fields of education and employment have been referred to within the previous sections. A governmental commission has been established for fighting poverty and promoting social inclusion (CASPIS), several inter-ministry committees and commissions have been established with the aim of developing strategies for addressing complex transition problems that require focussed interventions from several line ministries (including in the case of young people who have to leave childcare institutions at their 18 years old). The problem is whether and to what extent the member entities actually interact and develop synergies in the implementation of those strategies. As far as youth policy is concerned, neither previous research experience, nor documentation for the purpose of this study has provided evidence of such interactions and synergies.

e. Anti-discrimination legislation

Legal background for prohibiting discrimination are the following:

- Government Ordinance no 137/2000 regarding the prevention and the punishments for all types of discrimination, approved through the Law no 48/2002;
- Government Ordinance no 77/2003 modifying the GO no 137/2000 and approved through the Law no 27/2004;
- Instruction no 1/2003 regarding the obligations of the employers or of their representatives, and of the authors of the public announcements regarding job offers and/or contests for filling in vacancies.

¹⁸³

Cf.idem.

These documents stipulate that it is prohibited any discrimination on race, nationality, ethnicity, language, religion, social category or the affiliation to a disadvantaged category, age, gender or sexual orientation, and beliefs in the following directions:

- participation to an economic activity or when choosing/free practicing of a profession;
- free access to the public/private system of education (any form, degree, and level).

These provisions are also comprised in the Labour Code approved through Law no 53/2003.

Additionaly, Chapter V in the Joint Inclusion Memorandum explicitely refers to gender differences and the politics of equal opportunities for women and men within social inclusion, and lists main policies and measures for promoting gender equality¹⁸⁴. It remains to be seen whether these legislative initiatives can achieve the goals of the EU-wide framework of the Race Equality Directive an the Framework Employment Directive¹⁸⁵ and which impact these initiatives will have on the inclusion especially of young people from the Roma community. However, enacting anti-discrimination laws and establishing anti-discrimination public authorities is a good approach to prevent occurrence and development of such phenomena.

Conclusions

Although including measures to encourage employment of young people, labour market policies are not specifically focused on youth employment. Much more concern could be found in education and vocational training policies, as their target population includes youth to a large extent. One could say that policies aiming at developing opportunities in education prevail, compared to training and employment, at least as regards young people, which correspond to a low activity rate. As regards preventative measures versus reactive measures, one could say that policies are consistent with the objectives and strategies contained in the National Development Plan and on the strategic planning documents, which focus on preventative measures, providing also room for reactive measures in special cases. As far as the implementation of policies is concerned, the social pressure often results in changing of perspective, the policy response to acute social situations prevailing on preventative measures.

Except the regulations on minimum income guaranteed and incentives for unemployed receiving unemployment benefit who take up employment before the end of their entitlement, effective measures to “make work pay” are not in place. Incentives for employers who employ graduates and tax reduction for those employing young graduated in ITC positions might have encourage employers to better pay those employees, but no evidence of such effect could be observed. The low levels of salaries offered to young people (except for some private companies, of which many subsidiaries of big foreign/international companies) is the

¹⁸⁴ Cf. The Joint Inclusion Memorandum jointly prepared and signed by the Romanian Government and the European Commission, 2005, pp.68-70

¹⁸⁵ Cf. European Commission’s report “The Situation of Roma in an Enlarged European Union”, Brussels, 2004, p.12.

main factor that discourage young people to take up employment. Governmental policies can do anything more in this respect (reductions of income taxes already enacted by the new Government have resulted in a certain increase of net salaries, but one cannot be sure that while employing new personnel employers would not offer lower gross salaries); so less for employees in state owned companies and in public institutions, in which cases IMF constraints act in the opposite sense.

Although both education policy and employment policy in Romania are undergoing positive reforms, in line with the European standards, as far as young people in general, and disadvantaged young people in particular are concerned, the documentation under this study as well as previous youth researches suggest that the effectiveness of policies aimed at smoothing youth transitions from school to work is still questionable. On the one hand, it seems that while designing such policies very little attention is being paid to the constellations to which the problems to be solved belong, and to specific expectations of intended beneficiaries (e.g. giving incentives to employers for hiring young unemployed for salaries at minimum level). On the other hand, it came out from the study that target groups of certain policies are not defined in a view to include all people in need of such policies, but rather in a bureaucratic view, i.e. according as they meet certain formal criteria (e.g. policies aimed at improving employment opportunities, but only for registered unemployed).

Motivation is a key factor in all social projects, since their success is highly dependent upon beneficiaries' participation. This equally applies to policies aimed at discouraging early school leaving and encouraging youth employment, while the extent to which policy makers pay due attention to the motivation of addressees is questionable. As far as the researchers' role in ensuring effectiveness of the open method of coordination is concerned, this is an important area of intervention.

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Introduction

The outline of the National Action Plans for Employment and for Social Inclusion 2004-2006 and the selected objectives in Slovakia are strongly related to the national employment strategy built on the idea that employment is the most effective way to fight poverty and that welfare dependency should be very strongly discouraged.¹⁸⁶ Major stress is put on strengthening the role of the individual in order to increase his/her motivation to (re)enter the labour market.¹⁸⁷ Accordingly, the main tool in the combat against poverty and social exclusion is considered increasing employability.

The measures described in the NAPs address individual issues within the social inclusion process: Active labour market policy (ALMP) measures are defined and are supported by amended labour law/new labour legislation; the education aspect is taken on board through different initiatives aimed at groups at risk of social exclusion. A new legislation in the field of social assistance and social benefits is presented. It brought a new structure of the social assistance benefits with a motivation aspect for people in material need to take up work; new measures were introduced to support families with children. Different programmes for the Roma minority are being implemented; however, a comprehensive approach to this minority should be further enhanced (with the support from the Structural Funds). Anti-discrimination objectives as laid down in government documents¹⁸⁸ still are not fully reflected in ALMP or school-related policies. There is also a lack of reliable statistical data as citizens from a Roma background are not obliged to give information regarding their ethnic belonging; neither with regard to census nor with the Employment Services.

Beside the four key challenges defined in the NAP (to increase employment levels and employability of vulnerable groups; to decrease the risk of poverty of families with dependent children; to overcome educational disadvantage; to promote integration of the Roma communities), it will be necessary: to closely monitor impacts of the recent reforms of the social protection system; to establish a permanent co-operation network in order to enhance the involvement of the social partners, the poor and excluded themselves; to tackle the housing shortage and to combat homelessness, to fight regional disparities in employment; to respect the gender mainstreaming principle when formulating strategies; and to increase public awareness in relation to the Roma minority.

¹⁸⁶ See also Competitiveness Strategy for the Slovak Republic until 2010 (National Lisbon Strategy) and the Action Plan 2005-2006 aiming at prevention of poverty and social exclusion.

¹⁸⁷ GDP growth remained high in 2003 and reached 4.2% (4.4% in 2002). The overall employment rate (57.7%) is still under the EU 25 average (62.9%). The female employment rate is at 51.4%. The unemployment rate declined in 2003 to 17.1%, but long-term unemployment (11%) and unemployment of young people under the age of 25 (32.9%) remains very high. See: Report on social inclusion 2005. An analysis of the National Action Plans on Social Inclusion (2004-2006) submitted by the 10 new Member States European Commission; Directorate-General for Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities Unit E2 Manuscript completed in February 2005 Document drawn up on the basis of SEC(2005) 256.

¹⁸⁸ Comprehensive Development Programme of Roma Settlements 2002; Government Conceptual Policy in the Integration of Roma Communities 2003 (see NAPIncl 2005).

Who are the disadvantaged young people?

In the National Action Plans for Employment and Social Inclusion 2004-2006 young unemployed school leavers in general are included in the most vulnerable groups although it is obvious that Roma community and also disabled young people receive special attention.

Disadvantaged young people might be defined as those of the age group 15 – 25

1. without any qualification, i. e. those who have not finished any secondary school, have not passed any training or re-training course, or even have not accomplished elementary education, where all these characteristics are quite often due to the fact that they are coming from a disadvantaged social and economic conditions,
2. with some disability (mental, physical, sensorial disorders).
3. on the labour market the factor of “being young” as such, even with a qualification (secondary or higher) is viewed as a disadvantage itself, when combined with low or no qualification or with a disability, then the young person is disadvantaged “twice”.

Early school leaving and the general organisation of the school system

The Slovak education system is in the period of transition. As of the school year 1999/2000, compulsory education comprises 10 grades of elementary school (except for lower secondary education schools – Grammar school with grades 4-11); students usually finish the compulsory education at the age of 15. Secondary education for pupils aged 15/16 and 18/19 is structured in three types of schools: Grammar schools, Secondary Technical Schools, and Vocational Schools. Secondary schools aim to provide pupils with a complete secondary education. Education is provided in the following forms: day-classes, evening-classes, or in a combined programme. Length and amount of classes and the structure of study programmes is decided by the Ministry of Education, preceded by discussions with relevant central bodies. In 2002, the number of registered students at universities during the period 1992 – 2002 was 122,529, which represented 26.5% of the population of 20-24 years old (462,274 total)¹⁸⁹.

In Slovakia, special education for pupils with disabilities has been highly structured and developed. Pupils with disabilities attend different schools, according to their type of disability. Schools include programmes for hearing and visually impaired, ill and health weakened children, pupils with communication disabilities, autism disorder, disorders of mental and social development and developmental behavioural disorders. All schools except those for mentally handicapped pupils use a slightly modified study programme taken from regular elementary and secondary schools. According to a law, there are these types of special schools: Special Elementary schools, Special Secondary schools, Training Schools and Vocational schools (Law no. 229/2000). The system of special schools is differentiated on the same basis as regular schools, in terms of education levels, technical programmes and disability categories. There is a special pre-primary education in kindergartens for children with disabilities.

¹⁸⁹

Source: Statistical Yearbook of SR in 2003, STATISTICAL OFFICE SR, Bratislava, 2004

Table 1. Number of schools, students and graduates of secondary education in Slovakia, 2002

Year 2002	Schools	Students	Graduates
Grammar schools	220	91 661	13 427
Secondary Technical (Specialised) schools	306	92 138	21 090
Secondary Vocational schools	299	89 137	20 923
Special Schools	445	32 494	X

Source: *Statistical Yearbook of SR in 2003, Statistical Office SR, Bratislava, 2004f*

In 2002, the total number of students with completed secondary education was 212,772 (graduates from 1997 to 2001); this represents circa 46% of 20-24 aged (462,274 total).¹⁹⁰

In comparison with other EU contexts, early school leaving is rather low in Slovakia. In 2004 the rate was at 7.9%; however, as this has risen from 4.9 in 2003, attention should be paid and preventative action strengthened, especially taking the high level of youth unemployment into account (Eurostat, 2005).

Underachievement in school of youth is ascribed in Slovakia multi-dimensionally:

- to cultural difference such as language problems or traditional family values.
- to lower socio-economic status
- to segregation to social infrastructure and housing in general and to school in particular (East Slovakia).

Among those affected by early school leaving, especially children and young people from the Roma minority need to be considered. Educational disadvantage among the Roma however is also reflected by the fact that they are over-represented in special schools.¹⁹¹ This is at least ambiguous. While special schools may in some cases allow for person-centred learning, students risk either not to achieve regular certificates or these are regarded as second class.

Structure of the youth labour market

Over the first six months of 2004, the number of people employed in the Slovak Republic was 2,140,400 and the portion of young people aged 15-24 comprised 11%.¹⁹²

The typical way in which young people enter the labour market starts after completion of the minimum of second level of education or job training. There are very few young people who enter the labour market without any job training, completion of elementary school only or uncompleted elementary education. There are also few young people with uncompleted secondary education.

Labour Code defines relatively strict criteria for work of young people aged 15 through 18. According to the valid Labour Code of the Slovak Republic, a natural person under 15 years is not allowed to take over any rights and duties of an employee. An employee is allowed to sign the agreement on material responsibility toward an employer after his 18th birthday. The

¹⁹⁰ Source: *Statistical Yearbook of SR in 2003, STATISTICAL OFFICE SR, Bratislava, 2004*

¹⁹¹ The European Commission's Report on the Situation of the Roma from 2004 refers to a study conducted by ERRC in 2002/2003 according to which more than half of students in special schools had a Romani background, in some schools all students. Source: European Commission 2004: The situation of the Roma in an enlarged Europe. Luxembourg: Office for Official Publications of the European Communities.

¹⁹² Source: Report on Social Situation of Slovak Population in the first half of 2004.

Labour Code defines an employee as a person who is between 15-18 years old as a juvenile employer. The Labour Code also states that an employer can hire a juvenile worker if a medical examination and a statement of an authorised representative of the juvenile precede signing a work contract. Shorter work hours are another criterion of employing a juvenile worker. For instance employees younger than 16 years can not work longer than 30 hrs per week, whereas workers older than 16 years can work 37 and ½ hours per week maximum. Only adult employees are allowed to work longer than that.

Young people enter the labour market under the same conditions as others. The Act on Employment services (no. 5/2004) claims that “A citizen has a right to access work opportunities, without any limitations, in accordance to equity treatment in labour-law relations and similar relationships stated in special law. Under the equity treatment, it is against the law for any employer or provider of a service to discriminate on the basis of: marital status, family status, colour, language, political or other attitudes, union participation, national or social origin, health disability, age, property or different status.”

Act no.5/2004 on Employment Services defines a Job Seeker as follows:

“For the purposes of this Act the job seeker is a person able and wishing to work and seeking employment and being filed in the Office’s register of job seekers (hereinafter referred to as “register of job seekers) and

- Who is not an employee pursuant to Article 4, unless regulated otherwise by this act,
- Who does not operate or perform self-employed activity,
- Who performs no gainful activity abroad,
- Who performs gainful activity maximally 16 hours per week and whose wage for such activity does not exceed 800 SKK per week (i. e. ca 20 EUR).

Article 8 defines disadvantaged job seekers among which also school graduates:

“A citizen below 25 years of age, who has completed his/her systematic vocational preparation in full-time study courses less than two years ago and failed to acquire his/her first regularly paid employment (hereinafter referred to as “graduate”, in Slovak “absolvent školy”).”

Table 2. Population (by percentage) aged 15 – 19 and 20 – 24 in Slovakia, in 2004

<i>Age cohorts</i>	<i>Percentage of employed</i>	<i>Percentage of unemployed</i>	<i>Unemployed with no work experience</i>	<i>Long term unemployed (more than 12 months)</i>
Men: 15 – 19 yrs.	3.7	6.3	90.1	35.0
Women: 15 – 19 yrs.	4.5	4.5	83.5	31.9
Together: 15 – 19 yrs.	4.1	5.4	87.9	33.6
Men: 20 – 24 yrs.	52.2	23.2	59.0	54.9
Women: 20 – 24 yrs.	45.5	17.3	55.1	49.3
Together: 20 – 24 yrs.	49.0	20.3	57.4	52.6

Sources: Statistical Yearbook of SR 2003, STATISTICAL OFFICE SR, Bratislava 2004, Results of labour force survey (4th quarter 1999 and 2nd quarter 2004), STATISTICAL OFFICE SR, Bratislava 2000 and 2004. Vařo, B. – Jurčová, D. – Mészáros, J.: Prognóza vývoja obyvateľstva SR do roku 2050, VDC, Infostat, Bratislava, 2002.

According to the data, the situation of young people in the age cohort 15 through 18 is fairly different from the situation of the age cohort 20-24. For the younger cohort it becomes evident that their participation among employed and unemployed is decreasing, however 9 out of 10 graduates (aged 15-19) become unemployed immediately after completing their education and this trend has not changed significantly over the past five years. One of the remarkable changes in this age cohort is the growth of those who became long term unemployed (from 28% in 1999 to 34% in 2004).

Decline of the employed among the age cohort 20-24 from 51% (in 1999) to 49% (in 2004) equals reduction by approximately 2 percentage points; at the same time unemployment (of both men and women) increased by 3 percentage points (from 17% to 20%).

Over the past five years the significant growth of young men (in the age cohort 20-24) with no work experience is to be found among the unemployed (from 40% to 59%); the less dramatic increase was found among women with the total share of 55% among unemployed, compared to previous 49%. The number of the long term unemployed in the age cohort 20-24 increased from 43% in 1999 to 53% in 2004, which equals growth by 10 percentage points.

There are less people with no work experience among people from older age cohort; however the situation did not change remarkably over the past years especially among young men. It is rather alarming that in the age cohort 20-24, nearly a half of young people are long term unemployed and the situation got even worse over the past five years. The rate of unemployment among young people aged 15-24 reached 11.0% over the first six months.¹⁹³

According to the 2003 survey, experts estimate that the number of young people (25 and below) participating in illegal labour market is 6%, 6,000 - 10,000 in amount and this equals 2% of total youth population (Infostat survey, 2000, estimates that the number of illegal workers in Slovakia is 120,000). Illegal workers are mostly 25-35 years old (approximately 3/5 of total illegal workers). This comes along with non-taxable earnings and illegal work contracts of those who receive material need assistance. Young people thus do not represent the dominant share in the illegal economy and it is not the solution of their situation.¹⁹⁴

Table 3. The young unemployed by age categories

Year	<i>Unemployed total Absolute numbers</i>	<i>Age Categories (by Percentage)</i>		
		<i>-19 years</i>	<i>20 – 24 years</i>	<i>25 – 29 years</i>
1992	260 274	18.6	15.3	14.9
1998	428 209	15.1	17.1	12.1
2002	533 652	7.6	17.9	13.3

¹⁹³ Source: Report on Social Situation of Slovak Population in the first half of 2004. MOLSAF, Bratislava 2004.

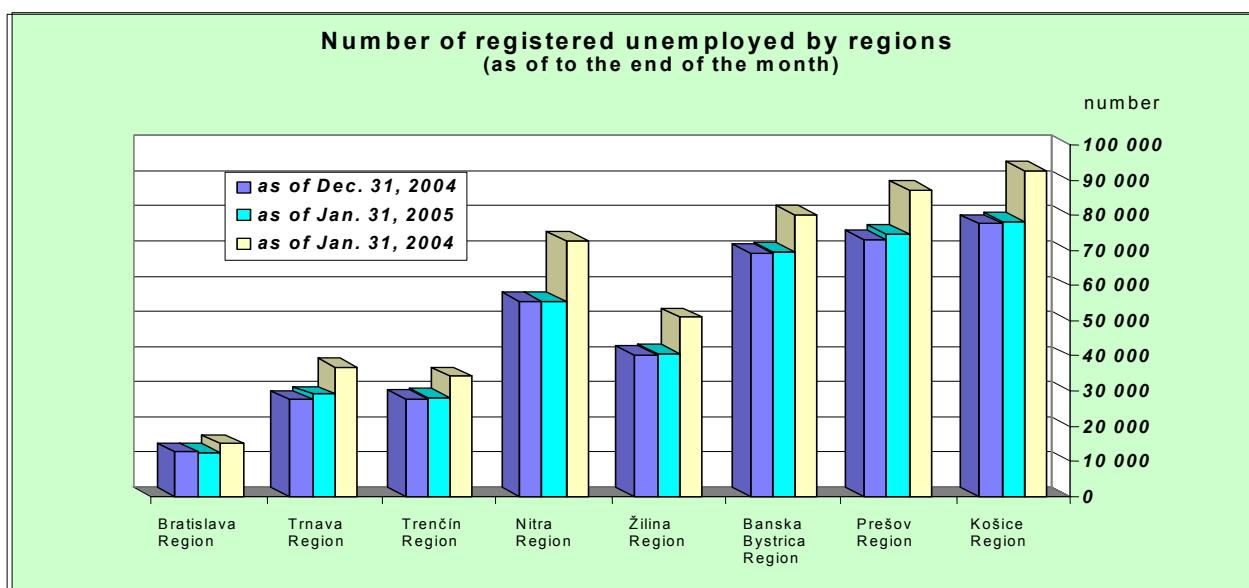
¹⁹⁴ Source: Bednárik R. – Danihel M. – Sihelský J.: Illegal Work in the Slovak Society (Nelegálna práca v podmienkach slovenskej spoločnosti). Friedrich Ebert Stiftung, Bratislava 2003.

According to the age structure, young people aged from 15 to 24 comprised 25.5% of overall unemployment rate. In 2003, the share of young people aged 25 and less in overall unemployment rate was 32.9%.¹⁹⁵

The ratio of long-term unemployment (more than 12 months, according ILO standards) in the population group of 15-25 years old was 11.1% in 2003. The gender structure of this was as follows: 11.4% represented women and 10.9% men.¹⁹⁶

This means that by the end of 2003, 38.4% of young unemployed were long term unemployed. Young people aged 15-29 with the completed education level of “vocational training” represented 31.5% and those with elementary education comprised 24.2%. The higher job requirements consequently lowered the chances of those with elementary education. This means, that long-term unemployment affects especially early school leavers as there are only very low-paid jobs and jobs where no qualification is needed that still are in the full accordance with the labour legislation.¹⁹⁷

Generally, there is large regional disparity with regard to unemployment, also to youth unemployment in Slovakia. This is especially remarkable in the Eastern part of Slovakia where the situation is described as the worst as can be seen in the graph and the table below.



Source: Central Office of Labour, Social Affairs and Family, 2005 (www.upsvar.sk)

¹⁹⁵ Source: National Action Plan of Social Inclusion 2004-2006 (NAP/Inclusion).

¹⁹⁶ Source: Structural Indicators Eurostat, STATISTICAL OFFICE SR. In: National Action Plan of Social Inclusion 2004-2006 (NAP/Inclusion).

¹⁹⁷ Sources: Report on Social Situation of Slovak Population in 2003. MLSAF, Bratislava, p. 17; National Action Plan for Employment 2004-2006.

Table 4. The unemployment in the regions of Slovakia (January 2005)

Region	Unemployment Rate (%)	Absolute numbers	Women	Disabled	Young (%)	Graduates (%)
Bratislava	3.37	12 608	6 760	363	37/1.03	877/4.18
Trnava	9.26	28 927	14 948	1 166	206/5.76	1 805/8.61
Trenčín	8.22	28 043	13 465	2 119	123/3.44	1 862/8.88
Nitra	14.87	55 733	27 257	2 325	230/6.63	3 091/14.75
Žilina	11.18	40 865	20 803	1 870	156/4.36	2 655/12.67
Banská Bystrica	19.56	69 597	34 036	2 852	772/21.57	3 315/15.82
Prešov	17.91	74 768	35 210	3 407	1 211/33.84	3 848/18.36
Košice	18.97	78 335	37 407	3 308	844/23.58	3 508/16.74
Slovakia	13.23	388 876	189 886	17 410	3 579/100	20 961/100

Source: Central Office of Labour, Social Affairs and Family, 2005 (www.upsvar.sk)

The potential development of the individual economic sectors' share on the GDP during next few years is shown in the following table:

Table 5. Development of different economic sectors¹⁹⁸

	2003	2006	2010	2013
Agriculture	4.8	4.5	4.2	3.9
Construction	3.7	3.9	4.1	4.3
Industry	25.8	25.5	25.2	25.0
Market and non-market services	57.4	57.8	58.3	58.7
Others	8.3	8.3	8.2	8.1
SR together	100	100	100	100

Similar development might be expected in the overview of the sectoral structure of employment in the Slovak economy:

Table 6. Development of employment in different economic sectors

	2003	2006	2010	2013
Agriculture	6.9	6.6	6.4	6.2
Construction	6.5	6.9	7.1	7.3
Industry	27.2	26.5	26.3	26.2
Services	59.4	60.0	60.2	60.3
SR together	100	100	100	100

The regional imbalance of unemployment adds to the labour market disadvantage of the Roma a majority of which lives in the Eastern part of the country. Due to the low level of schooling among the Roma, discriminatory recruitment practices of Slovak employers and the infra-structural segregation in many Roma settlements unemployment reaches 100%.¹⁹⁹

¹⁹⁸ [Source: Elaboration of the Strategic Development Tendencies of the Industry until 2013 as a Support Material for the Regional Development Programme Documents (the NUTS II level) (Rozpracovanie zámerov strategického rozvoja priemyslu do roku 2013 ako podklad pre programové dokumenty rozvoja regiónov na úrovni NUTS II, Ministerstvo hospodárstva SR, www.economy.gov.sk)]

¹⁹⁹ Source: National Action Plan for Social Inclusion 2004-2006

In public debates and sociological research unemployment is presented as a serious problem we have to deal with. People perceive it as the biggest threat and one of the most serious life problems of today. This works for those who have personal experience with unemployment as well as for those who have not experienced unemployment. Of course, arguments that those who are unemployed are just being lazy appear in surveys as well.

According to the EU-funded survey on political participation of young people (2004/2005) in Slovakia, 44.3% respondents do not think that “If someone can't find a job, it is all his/her fault” and only 6% agree with that strongly.²⁰⁰

Table 7. Young people's attitudes towards unemployment and state responsibilities

	<i>Agree strongly</i>	<i>Agree</i>	<i>Neutral</i>	<i>Disagree</i>	<i>Disagree strongly</i>	<i>Don't know</i>
Free market offers best solutions for all social problems	4,2	20,6	48,2	15,0	3,0	9,0
Social state is responsible for losing one's own responsibility	5,1	18,2	43,2	22,0	4,1	7,5
If someone can not find a job, it is all his/her fault	6,2	14,2	32,0	33,2	13,1	1,3
I do not need the state support to live a good life	4,0	18,6	38,6	29,3	6,2	3,2

Research on youth shows that high unemployment rate and threat of unemployment produces anxiety among young people when deciding about having their own family. Lack of regular salary is a hindrance for getting their own place to live and thus having their own family. Unemployment of young people is perceived also by adults as a threat for having their own family and children.²⁰¹

Young unemployed only in exceptional situations are entitled to benefits as according to the Act on Social Insurance Act on Social Insurance no. 461/2003 entitlements to unemployment benefit require three years of contributions to the unemployment and health insurance.

Policy measures

As regards policy measures for disadvantaged youth it is noticeable that educational reforms are only rarely mentioned which is justified by the low ratio of early school leaving. The majority of current measures however falls under field of active labour market policies (ALMP) the while a few measures target the multiple disadvantage of the Roma population. In general, policies are characterised by a trend towards activation.

Educational reform

In 2003 public expenses on education reached 4.05% of GDP, which is still a low figure when compared to other EU countries. It is important to enable more young people to study at universities – people with university degree represent only small share in the total

²⁰⁰ Macháček,L.: Political Participation of Young People in Europe. In: Youth and Society, Vol. 2005, No. 2 (Politická participácia mladých ľudí v Európe. In: Mládež a spoločnosť, Vol. 2005, No:2.)

²⁰¹ Source: Family Policy and Needs of Young People – Research Report. The Centre for Labour and Family Research, Bratislava 2004. (Rodinná politika a potreby mladých rodín - Výskumná správa. Stredisko pre štúdium práce a rodiny. Bratislava 2004)

unemployment rate. Some general recommendations refer to the fact that education and needs of the labour markets are insufficiently connected. Even after completing studies young people have problems to find a job relevant to their education. Rationalization of the university system and the increase of practical vocational training to allow for a higher employability of graduates on the labour market are on the agenda. Apart from this, benefit entitlements of the youngest unemployed have been suspended as some parents stopped their children to participate in education so that they could receive social benefits.

The education reform plan for 2002 describes steps for promoting higher employability: to continue in the reform of education, to broaden the cooperation of education bodies and employers when designing study and vocational profiles at secondary level so that they reflect the requirements of the labour market. (p.15) It further continues, "High quality education aims to lower the number of pupils who do not complete their basic or secondary education and thus guarantees 80% graduates complete the entire secondary level of education." Additionally, the Plan stresses the need of modernisation and expansion of module system of further education, which would contribute to the economy, based primarily on knowledge. Design of national strategy of long-life education is also one of the primary goals of the plan.

Policies addressing young people's employability or policies developing opportunities in education, training, and employment are of similar importance. Slovak reform of the education system is under way with the main priorities such as: shift to life-long education, developing the access for more young people to university study etc.

Active labour market policies for young people

At the beginning of 2004 an institutional reform of active labour market policies was implemented; it aimed to interconnect Employment Services with the Social Security Administration to provide comprehensive services regarding unemployment and the social benefit system. The Act on Employment Services created conditions for implementing activation regulations in the labour market and enabled to provide more relevant and individually addressed employment advice.

The National Action Plan of Employment 2004 – 2006 claims that the main problem of the Slovak labour market is a high number of those who are "not easy to employ". This includes long term unemployed, disabled citizens, young people, recent graduates etc. In 2003 the average number of disadvantaged registered job seekers at the Employment Service was 350,000: 30.9 thousand graduates, 3.8 thousand youth, 24.4 thousand persons with altered work capacity, 218.3 thousand long term unemployed and 72.6 thousand job seekers older than 50.

In 2003, more than 230,000 unemployed participated in programmes and projects of the labour market. Career counselling service, which focused on early identification of individual needs of the unemployed, played the dominant role in prevention approaches.

Due to the new legislation, the scope of the active labour market policy measures and availability of financial sources were much broader than in previous years. In 2004, 292,778 job seekers participated in were placed in various ALMP measures, where 227,601 (77%) of them were disadvantaged job seekers – 186,951 (82%) of them were long-term

unemployed, 45,990 (20%) were job seekers over 50 years of age, and 22,512 (10%) were graduates, etc. (Source: Central Office of Labour, Social Affairs and Family, 2005).

Activation activities of the labour market are defined in the Act no.5/2004 on Employment Services. They aim to provide assistance while looking for employment and harmonizing the conditions of his personality with the requirements of specific employment, in addition relevant information and professional consultancy is provided. Job seekers who are registered at the labour office are obliged to look for employment and prove this with a confirmation document from an employer. Job seekers are obliged to visit the office in person (long term unemployed once in seven days, those participating in activation once in 14 days). Lack of cooperation with the office may result in excluding a job seeker from the register while losing certain advantages, e.g. social benefits.

Individual action plans were designed for more than 200,000 unemployed, 37% of them were 25 years old or younger. However, the fact that this represents only 40% of the unemployed reveals that the extension and decentralisation of the Employment Service is still in progress.²⁰² While In policy makers' opinion, insufficient creating of new job opportunities is the main cause of the constantly high unemployment rate.

Apart from individual action plans, there is a series of tools for bringing people back into the labour market. In 2003, 69,452 people were placed into the labour market through the instruments of ALMP (19.8% were disadvantaged registered job seekers). The group of disadvantaged registered job seekers was represented by 9,376 graduates (30.3%), 293 youth (7.6%), 6,478 people with altered work capacity (26.6%), 26,094 long term unemployed (12%) and 6,699 people were older than 50 years (9.2%).²⁰³

Education is described as the effective tool for increasing employability. In order to prevent long term unemployment, finding a job for long term unemployed, with the special focus on skills and re-training development became a priority during the monitored period. The Act no. 5/2004 foresees preparation for the labour market due to educational measures in terms of:

- Theoretical or practical education of job seekers without a qualification upon concluding his/her compulsory education;
- Special training of job seekers;
- Preparatory course toward additional completion of primary education;
- Preparatory course for the secondary school attendance examination of the job seeker or person interested in employment;
- Education and preparation for the labour market for disabled citizens.

In 2003, the number of re-training applicants among unemployed reached 45,814. Out of this number 25,010 registered unemployed participated in re-training programme, which represents more than 50% of all unemployed. The total of 10,217 registered unemployed were placed into the labour market after completion the re-training programme.

²⁰² Source: National Action Plan for Employment 2004-2006

²⁰³ Source: National Action Plan for Employment 2004-2006, MOLSAF

Two examples for recent, innovative measures are the following

- *Graduate Practice*: Act no. 5/2004 on Employment Services defines the graduate practice which enables a graduate to acquire professional skills and practical experience corresponding to the attained level of the graduate's education. The labour office grants during the graduate practice a regular monthly allowance of 1,500 SKK (about 37,5 EURO) The office may also reimburse the social and injury insurance for the graduate while employers receive a lump-sum contribution of 1,000 SKK (about 25 EURO) per month and per graduate.
- *Training Firm for Graduates*: In 2002 the idea of training firms began to assert even behind the borders of initial vocational education and training and training firms through re-training courses started to be open also to registered unemployed, or entered into the field of life-long learning. Within the framework of the PHARE programme "*Development of civil society*" and in co-operation with the Foundation of Apprenticeship Education and the Civil Society Development Foundation the State Vocational Education Institute started the project "*Training Firm for Graduates*". The aim of the project was to offer training firms to graduates of secondary and higher education institutions who could not find a job after graduation. Since September 2002 to March 2005 several hundreds of registered unemployed participated in re-training courses. Participants were chosen in co-operation of labour office in Bratislava, lecturers were from SVEI, Business Academy and the University of Economy in Bratislava. In the PHARE project, where several hundreds registered unemployed graduates participated in "*Training Firm*" courses during 2002 – 2005, about 50% of them found a job after the course. Detailed summary results and/or analyses of their successfulness will be perhaps available at the end of this year (see also Annex IV, Chapter 4 in this volume).

Grant schemes were another tool for increasing the employability of the target groups. Grant schemes on human resources development were implemented through professional counselling services and education programmes in the region of Kosice, Presov, Banska Bystrica (65 approved grant projects, the total value of 2,093,783 EUR) and through preventive and individual programmes for unemployed (97 approved applications, the total value of 4,396,108 EUR). In 2003 11,300 of registered unemployed young people were participating in the Programme of supported employment. All projects (84) within the Programme were completed by December 31, 2003.

Within the Programme of individualized services for the unemployment, which is also of significant importance among activation programmes in the labour market, as many as 131 projects were carried out. The estimated activated 15,433 of unemployed from different target groups were supposed to be participating in the project and the total amount of approximately SKK 110 million was planned for consulting services and APTP (in 2003, SKK 64 million were used).

The Programme of maintaining the working habits was entered by 75,647 registered unemployed. The project mediated little work projects between an individual and his/her

community. During the Programme (by August 31, 2003) 18.2% of registered unemployed received a work agreement.²⁰⁴

Recently implemented reforms in Slovakia have made the social benefits system to an extensive degree stricter. At the same time the criteria for being registered in the unemployment system have been newly defined. The main reasons for excluding an unemployed person from the registration system are: absence of payments to social funds and the absence of their cooperation with the labour offices. Newly defined rules explain social and property risk assistance, lowering social benefit structure for the groups of long term unemployed. Social benefit may be higher while participating in activating programmes.

Assessment of effectiveness of new active labour market measures is quite sensitive issue with respect to the fact that they were implemented just recently. While the National Action Plans ascribe a – rather slight – reduction in youth unemployment to the new policy measures²⁰⁵, there are no exact data available yet about what is the impact of these measures on employment growth, or on unemployment decrease.

The fact that active labour market policy measures by the new legislation in 2004 were incorporated into current programmes of the European Social Fund may be interpreted as a sign of success. The Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Family launched a new call for proposals to submit projects focused on assessment of effectiveness of some new active labour market measures (see www.upsvar.sk). Such analysis should assess in-depth whether activation – and especially the more rigid conditions for getting social benefits – have sustainable effects under conditions of a lack of demand for labour.

Policy measures addressing the Roma

In key policy documents, the government of the Slovak Republic has demonstrated commitment to increase efforts in improving the living conditions of the Roma minority and to combat discrimination. However, if policies for disadvantaged youth are concerned only small steps are noticeable.

With regard to early school leaving, these are primarily the training of 400 Roma assistant teachers (which at the same time represents a specific measure for the Roma in the framework of ALMP). Other measures aim at increasing the pre-school enrolment of Roma children.²⁰⁶

In its Governmental Policy Programme, the Government of the Slovak Republic proclaimed their determination to provide financial support to education and training of disadvantaged children groups focusing mainly on pre-school preparatory activities designed to integrate the Roma pupils and other disadvantaged groups.

In compliance with the National Programme of Education and Training in Slovakia for the next 15 - 20 years, a long-term Plan/Concept of Integrated Education of Roma Children and Young People including the development of secondary and higher educational forms has been

²⁰⁴ Source: Report on Social Situation of Slovak Population in 2003, MLSAF.

²⁰⁵ National Action Plan on Employment defines young people aged 15 to 29 years.

²⁰⁶ Source: National Action Plan for Social Inclusion 2004-2006.

prepared and approved by Resolution No. 498 of the Government of the Slovak Republic of May 26, 2004.

This Plan/Concept focuses on integrated education as a component-part of education based on individualized approach respecting personal, social and cultural features of all individuals irrespective of their majority or minority status, and equal access to education.

With regard to combating youth unemployment, additionally Roma social assistants are trained which are expected to build bridges between the Roma community on the one hand and Slovak employers and Employment Services on the other. However, targeted measures in favour of the Roma are rather small.²⁰⁷ Taking the deep cultural and social gaps between the majority population and the Roma minority impeding significant participation of the Roma in mainstream ALMP these measures appear to be insufficient.

In many occasions where the Slovak policy for disadvantaged youth is presented at international forums, problems of young people are reduced to problems of Roma population. All successful steps and progress in the area of social and employment policies are “overlapped” by a difficult and complicated problem of social and cultural development of the Roma community in Slovakia. It was mentioned recently also by a team of international experts in their assessment report for the Council of Europe:

“The international review team acknowledges the efforts being made by various domains in an attempt to dilute, and possibly dissolve completely, the tension that exists between the Roma ethnic minority and the mainstream social actors. However, the team cannot condone a glaringly contrasting situation: the relaxed rapport that exists with other minority groups in contrast with the clear inability of the mainstream society, at all levels, to disconnect the ‘Roma issue’ from the ‘Roma problem’. The team strongly suggests that reference be made to the Recommendations listed in the Third Report on Slovakia, adopted on 27 June 2003 and published on 27 January 2004 by the European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI). The recommendations for further action, for stronger response and for rapid adoption of laws, are still valid. Both our observation and those mentioned above give evidence of a situation which is characterised by mutual distrust and prejudice. Given the current social and economic situation, improvement requires an advance of trust and recognition on behalf of the Slovak society and its institutions towards the Roma.

In the team’s view, the first step required in this regard is the nurturing of a mentality that recognises the Roma as Slovaks, that accepts otherness, that refutes a paternalistic approach to solving problems, and that accepts responsibility where lacunae and irregularities are identified.

The removal of obstacles, both overt and covert, that hinder the Romas from genuinely participating in civil society is a top priority. Their representation at all levels needs to be strengthened / introduced and their social conditions in rural areas more than in the urban environment must be equal and equivalent to those of the mainstream inhabitants. Without claiming a thorough knowledge of all the causes that led to the prevailing situation, the review team does not hesitate to suggest urgency in monitoring and assessing the implementation of programmes prepared for the Roma and to increase public awareness in relation to this minority. The team believes that this is the challenge facing the country and, in more specific terms, the youth policy.”²⁰⁸

²⁰⁷ National Action Plan for Employment 2004-2006; National Action Plan for Social Inclusion 2004-2006.
²⁰⁸ YOUTH POLICY IN SLOVAKIA / International team of experts from the Directorate of Youth and Sport of the Council of Europe/ Rapporteur: Dr. A.E. Azzopardi, EYC, Strasbourg 2005.

In the *National report on youth policy in the Slovak Republic*²⁰⁹ there is a similar ascertainment: The most striking problems that the Roma community is confronted with are: the spread of illiteracy, poor school attendance, barriers that appear in attitudes towards education, insufficiencies in the field of health preservation and planned parenthood, gaps in ability to understand and use valid legislation and growing unemployment. Racism and violence against the Roma mainly committed by right extremists is also prevalent.

The high attention paid to problems of young Roma implies that we need to point out to the need of broad co-operation of various institutions of social life in solving social integration of highly disadvantaged young people as such. Especially our experience with “breaking” sectoral barriers and finding new, original forms of co-operation of various partners from the state administration, local and regional self-governments, and NGO's in searching for instruments for social inclusion and cultural integration of the Roma youth is a valuable expertise and even “know-how”. The European Youth Pact²¹⁰ with its requirements in the “employment, integration and social advancement” line of action – presumes and requires that the policy of the “youth mainstreaming” will be applied in all sectoral policies and approaches in Slovakia.

Conclusions

In sum, the situation of youth disadvantage in the Slovak Republic needs to be taken very serious. This regards on the one hand the fact that young people in general after graduating from school due to a lack of jobs and the mismatch between school and the labour market face unemployment. This regards on the other hand and particularly young people from the Roma community who are confronted by multiple disadvantage and discrimination.

In terms of education policies especially more inclusive ways of education are needed rather than segregating a high percentage of Roma students in special schools. In general, curricula reforms as well as the reform of vocational training need to strengthen the links between school and companies.

In terms of active labour market policies, it needs to be remarked that efforts are made to develop an individualised counselling system and a differentiated supply of measures related to facilitating labour market entry. Especially, measures as the graduate practice and the training firms should be mentioned in this regard.

At the same time however, the activation trend also deserves critical remarks inasmuch as pressure on the job seekers is increased in a situation which is characterised by a clear lack of jobs. This caution regards especially policies addressing the Roma community. More measures need to be targeted for them or measures need to be intensified in those regions where the Roma population is higher. Anti-discrimination legislative needs to be applied more consciously in shaping the social integration of young Roma.

²⁰⁹ Source: National report on youth policy in the Slovak Republic. Ministry of Education of the SR, June 2005, p. 129

²¹⁰ Communication from the Commission to the Council on European policies concerning youth. Addressing the concerns of young people in Europe – implementing the European Youth Pact and promoting active citizenship. Mr.Figel in association with Mr.Spidla.Brussels, 30.05.2005

While it may be re-considered whether a rigid application of pressure and sanctions undermines young people's motivation, the most crucial factor for the sustainability of ALMP is their integration into regional economic and social development.

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1. Introduction

This national briefing paper is based primarily on the data provided by the Statistical Office of the Republic of Slovenia, the Employment Service of Slovenia, Centre of the Republic of Slovenia for Vocational Education and Training, Institute of Macroeconomic Analysis and Development, then on the EUROSTAT data and the findings of the research projects conducted by the Institute of Social Sciences of the Faculty of Social Sciences, University of Ljubljana (Ule, Rener, Mencin, Tivadar, 2000; Ule, Kuhar, 2003). In writing this report we took into account all comments, objections and suggestions of experts who participated in the consultations held on July 5, 2005 in Ljubljana (see below).

Statistical data for Slovenia should be interpreted with caution, since due to the small population size the statistics of large numbers may easily mislead to overlook the most vulnerable groups, especially when operating with survey data.

The assessment indicating a favourable situation of young people in Slovenia compared to that in other EU member states is based primarily on the large percentage of young people integrated in the educational system and a large percentage of those who, after completing the compulsory education, gain at least basic qualifications. Although accurate data on early school leavers in Slovenia is not available, the number of students who have completed education suggests that the dropout rate has been on the decline during the last ten years. There are two key factors that influenced this downward trend during the past ten years. First, the issue of early school leaving has been intensely discussed. The result has been the establishment of a relatively dense institutional network that enables early school leavers to re-connect with the educational system (Ule, 2000). In addition, education is treated as the crucial factor of social mobility and even social security, so parents from all social classes strive to ensure that their children attain a high level of education (according to the 2002 census, 46.7% of all 20-year olds were integrated in the educational system at ISCED 5B and 5A levels – source: The Statistical Office of Slovenia).

Although in terms of employment policy Slovenia proved somewhat less successful, the unemployment rate among young people in Slovenia is still around the EU average. Two issues that continue to be problematic are fixed-term employment (recently, as much as $\frac{3}{4}$ of

all new employment vacancies, in all age groups, were based on a fixed-term contract)²¹¹ and a large percentage of long-term unemployed young people (unemployed more than one year). The proportion of long-term unemployed /the entire population/ decreased in 2002 but is still high - 57.7%. The decline was due to the policy priority of including long-term unemployed persons in employment programmes, and is also to a certain extent a result of the fact that some of the long-term unemployed fulfil the conditions for retirement, because of which there has been an increased outflow of long-term unemployed to retirement. Among the registered unemployed there are around 27% without any basic vocational education, of which 3% with no school education and 24.0% without elementary education (JIM, 2003). These two issues raise the questions of how the labour market should be regulated and whether the measures arising from the active employment policy have been effective.

2. Who are the disadvantaged youth?

»Vulnerable groups include in particular the disabled (unemployment, inadequate housing), the homeless (health, housing problems), Roma (unemployment, low education, poor housing) and people with low income (unemployed, elderly without pensions, single-parent families). Over the past few years, some other groups have similarly experienced increasing problems, in particular the victims of violence, people with mental health problems, addicts, persons in post-penal treatment and people without a work permit. Individuals from these groups usually face an extremely poor social and economic situation, stretching over a longer period of time. They are discriminated against on the labour market and therefore find it very hard to obtain employment« (JIM, 2003).

We can safely assert that the Roma, although their number is not large, are an expressly underprivileged group with evidently limited options for social promotion. They are the victims of a number of institutional obstacles and prejudices, and poverty. They are low educated and the unemployment rate among the Roma group is high: the working activity of Roma is much lower than that of the majority population in Slovenia, regular employment is rare, and irregular forms of work predominate (however, there are no exact data available). Under legal provisions on protection of personal data, data on ethnic affiliation of the unemployed are not kept in the records of the Employment Service of Slovenia (ESS). It is estimated that 98.2% of registered Roma unemployed in UO in Novo Mesto (south-eastern part) did not complete primary school and 90% in UO Murska Sobota (eastern part). The number of registered Roma job-seekers is gradually increasing, but does not exceed 2 300 (February 2003 estimate) (JIM, 2003). Owing to a lack of knowledge of the Slovene language, Roma children have problems as soon as they join pre-school institutions or elementary school - there is no knowledge of the Roma language or suitable textbooks. This leads to a large number of Roma children having to follow adapted elementary school programmes. The inclusion of a Roma assistant in classes with a significant number of Roma

²¹¹ The figure in the graph on the percentage of young people aged 15 to 24 employed for a fixed term is wrong. In 2004, this percentage was 47%, compared to 42% in 2002. It indeed increased but not as much as suggested by the said graph. (Source: Annual Report, Employment Service of Slovenia, 2002, 2003)

children is an attempt to improve the situation of Roma children within the education system. However, given their explicitly marginalized status in Slovenia, it is not likely that this measure will be significantly effective. There are no schools in which the language of instruction is Romany; measures aimed at encouraging education among the Roma children usually carry an additional stigma, and the expectations regarding their school achievement are expressly low. In short, we can say that there are no effective anti-discriminatory measures as far as Roma children are concerned, while the conviction underlying public discourse is that the state provides for them more than is necessary, so the responsibility for their unfavourable position lies entirely with them. Immigrants from ex-Yugoslav republics and their descendants are an invisible minority at least as regards the attitude of the state (Sources: Klopčič V. 2004, Komac M., Medvešek M. (eds.) 2004).²¹²

While the influence of SES, gender and territorial distribution can by no means be interpreted unequivocally, the picture resulting from the statistical and survey data is as follows:

According to the 2002 census (Statistical Office of the Republic Slovenia), women aged 15-24 attain on average higher levels of education than men (source: The Statistical Office of the Republic Slovenia, Census of the population, households and dwellings, 2002); furthermore, more women than men are integrated in the educational system (for example, in 2003 women accounted for 64% of all graduates of higher vocational and university courses). However, the unemployment rate among young women (aged 15 to 24) is still much higher than that among men in the same age group²¹³. The total youth unemployment rate decreased in 2002 to 15.3%, but the unemployment rate for young women (17.2%) still remains higher than that for young men (13.9%) and also than EU average for young women (15.5%) (JIM, 2003). These differences do not arise from the child-care system. For example, in the school year 2004/2005, the percentages of children (by age) in the kindergartens were as follows: 26.5% of children up to one year, 48.0% of two-years olds, 66.8% of three-years olds, 75.9% of four-years olds and 83.8 five years olds. Parents with lower income pay lower contributions (Source: The Statistical Office of the Republic Slovenia, 2005).

- We would like to draw attention to an increase in the number of highly educated unemployed people, primarily graduates in social sciences, with women again being in the majority. This means that they have been (or will be) compelled to accept jobs that do not match their qualifications, and that they are (will be) paid less than they would be had they been able to find a job corresponding to their educational level. Another problem is the

²¹² The Roma community does not have the position of a national minority in Slovenia but it has the status of a **special ethnic community**. At the last local elections on 10 November 2002, a total of 15 Roma representatives were elected to the municipal council for the first time, so that Roma are given more chance of direct **participation** and decision-making in wider political, social, economic and cultural spheres. Up to June 2003, 18 Roma representatives had been elected; there are two municipalities left which have to hold such elections.

²¹³ In July 2002 the **Act on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men** came into force, which introduces an integral approach to creating equal opportunities and encouraging gender equality. The Act is of a general nature and determines **overall guidelines or foundations that will be a guide for legislation in individual areas**. The law defines gender equality among other things as the removal of obstacles to establishing gender equality, especially by preventing and removing unequal treatment on grounds of gender as forms of discrimination in practice deriving from traditional and historically conditioned different social roles, and the creation of conditions for creating equal representation of the two genders in all spheres of social life.

traditional predominance of male students in some, mainly vocational, schools. As a result, young women who drop out from more demanding educational programs are less likely to enrol in these less demanding programs.

- There is no reliable data available on the direct influence of SES on the situation of young people. However, the data that we have shows that the differences are greatest between the young population attending vocational or technical schools and those attending general education schools. Furthermore, we should not underestimate the issue of poverty as is frequently done in the typically middle-class societies, in societies with a relatively low poverty risk and a relatively low level of social inequality. The risk of underestimating poverty is particularly high in Slovenia where poverty figures are low because of the small population size. Accordingly, these figures are insignificant in the statistics of large numbers. In the context of this research, an indicative piece of information is the fact that in the period 1993 to 1997-99 the poverty risk largely increased for unemployed people (the percentage of persons entitled to financial compensation for the period of unemployment reduced, as did the sums they receive). In addition, the child poverty risk has increased as well (Stanovnik, 2004:320)²¹⁴. Another relevant piece of information is that one of the conditions that a person must meet in order to receive compensation for unemployment is previous employment. This effectively means that first-time job seekers cannot obtain compensation (but they are entitled to social security benefits and to free-of-charge education if they are registered with the Employment Service). However, the financial aid (social assistance) equal to the minimum salary (167 euros), is also given to persons who “cannot support themselves through work, rights arising from work or insurance, income from property and other sources, compensations, income arising from other regulations, or with the help of those who are obliged by law to support them, or in some other way” (Social Security Act). It proceeds from this provision that first-time job seekers are entitled to social assistance only if they live in their own household (even if sharing address with their parents), and the establishment of this fact is entrusted to the Centre for Social Work. In all other cases, the income per family member is taken into account. The height of the minimal income per family member, with respect to the minimum salary, is calculated according to the following criteria:

- first adult in a family 1
- every other adult in a family 0.7
- a child under 18 and a child over 18 who is still studying and whose education is paid by parents 0.3.²¹⁵

²¹⁴ The at-risk-of-poverty rate (Table 15; year 2000, income in cash + in kind) is higher for women (12%) than for men (10%). The at-risk-of-poverty rate for children (0-15 years of age) is below average (9%) and has slightly decreased (in 1999 it was 10%), and is lower compared to EU-15 (19%). The at-risk-of-poverty rate according to **activity status** is particularly high for the unemployed (43%, 38% in EU-15), where women (45%) are in a worse position than men (42%). Unemployment is thus one of the major determinants of poverty and social exclusion. The at-risk-of-poverty rate is also relatively high for other economically inactive persons (19%). This group includes housewives, persons unable to work, pupils and students, persons in military service and other economically inactive persons (elderly without pension) (JIM, 2003).

²¹⁵ Please note the ambiguity in table 13

- The statistical data show that low educated young people (ISCED 0-2, and ESCED 3-4) face the highest risk of unemployment; as noted earlier, we have also observed an upward trend in unemployment among highly educated persons.
- A qualitative research conducted in 2002 (Trbanc et al., 2003) pointed out the fact that most drug addicts were low educated, not registered as unemployed, and were not participating in any educational program (it will be possible to assess the share of these young people only after the further analysis of the 2002 census data). The same source pointed out that the number of homeless people was on the increase²¹⁶. In addition to economic deprivation, this group typically has weak social networks that only aggravate their problems by not providing adequate support and not encouraging them to seek a solution.
- Young people coming from labour intensive regions are manifestly more at risk of becoming unemployed and poor; this problem is additionally aggravated by an inadequate system of schools in these regions offering insufficiently diverse programs.
- Disabled persons: the number of registered unemployed persons with disabilities has been fast increasing in recent years (the proportion of persons with disabilities of the total unemployed amounted to only 5.7% in December 1995, but in December 2000 it was 16.4% and 17.9% in December 2001). The number increased because the limited employment opportunities did not allow an outflow to employment. In 2002, the amendment of the Employment and Unemployment Insurance Act concerning proof of unemployment excluded unemployed persons who are not active job-seekers or employable. The proportion of persons with disabilities therefore decreased to 14.5% in December 2002 (JIM, 2003)²¹⁷.

²¹⁶ The problem of homelessness is addressed within a range of programmes in the fields of housing, social services and health. The National Social Assistance and Services Programme 2000-2005 envisages the **expansion of a network of five reception centres and shelters** in different Slovene towns, providing an additional 100 places for homeless people. The National Housing Programme envisages the provision of **temporary accommodation to prevent homelessness**. This is regulated by the new Housing Act (see housing, 4.2.4.3).

²¹⁷ Disability is regulated by different laws, the most important being: (i) Pensions and Disability Insurance Act; Training and Employment of Disabled Persons Act; Social Protection of Mentally and Physically Handicapped Persons Act; War Invalids Act; Placement of Children with Special Needs Act; and Social Assistance and Social Services Act. The Parliament adopted the Development Strategy for the Protection of Disabled Persons in 1991, which forms the basis for the legal system of laws and sub-statutory regulations, as well as for dealing with problems of disability in various development programmes covering different areas (e.g. National Housing Programme, National Social Assistance and Services Programme, etc.) (JIM. 2003)

3. What are their problems?

Early school leaving:

Analysis has shown that dropouts were higher in programmes in which pupils have re-enrolled from other programmes in which they have already been unsuccessful. There is no fundamental difference by sex, though dropping out is generally lower among girls. There is a characteristically high dropout rate among pupils in the first year of post-compulsory education, and in the fourth year almost none (JIM, 2003).

Definitions:

Until 1997, the monitoring of early school leaving was the responsibility of the Employment Service of Slovenia. In 1998, the task was carried out by the Ministry of Education and Sports. However, since then early school leaving has not been monitored. The definition: early secondary school leavers are students who have not completed successfully the secondary education within five years of the enrolment (Geržina, S., Polak, M.1998).

The program designed to prevent early school leaving anticipated monitoring, but owing to legal obstacles it cannot be carried out at the moment.

Two definitions have been formulated:

- Early primary school leavers are students who fail to progress to a higher class and do not enrol in a lower vocational school within two years. Students who have completed primary school, but have not enrolled in a secondary school are not considered early school leavers.
- Early secondary school leavers are students who have not completed the secondary education within four, five or six years of the first enrolment (this number depends on the type of school; it is four years for a lower vocational school, five years for a secondary vocational school, and six years for grammar and technical secondary schools).

International comparison. Slovenia uses the definition of the European Commission based on the close approximate to the dropout rate, which is an indicator obtained through the internationally comparable Labour Force Survey. According to this indicator, the dropout rate is defined as a share of population aged 18 to 24 who have attained the ISCED2 level of education or lower and are not included in any educational process or training schemes.

Structural versus individual factors

Are early school leavers ‘pushed’ out of the education system by selective structures or ‘pulled’ out by subjective reasons? Previous qualitative research studies have pointed out that the majority of students who leave a particular school or program early are students who did not show interest in that program before the enrolment, but enrolled anyway for other reasons, i.e. either because their low achievement in the primary school prevented them from enrolling in another program, or because they were pressured by parents, or because that particular

school was closest to their home, or they knew the school through their friends and so on. The highest dropout rate has been recorded in the lowest level vocational schools, followed by technical secondary schools. The lowest dropout rate has been recorded in grammar schools. Experts concerned with vocational education have observed that vocational and technical schools have first addressed the issue of school failure only recently, partly in the form of structural changes. To be more precise, they switched to a modular structure of the curriculum and joined the programs for the prevention of school failure carried out under the auspices of the National Education Institute and Centre for Vocational Education and Training. Students who drop out from (or leave) the educational system and do not join the active employment policy programs continue to present a problem.

Another conclusion is that vocational schools have failed to respond adequately to school failure. Accordingly, it would be necessary to develop the monitoring strategy that would ensure the traceability of the population that drops out from the schooling system, to expand the forms of counselling to total counselling for this population, and to develop programs that would help reduce this period to a minimum.

Unemployment

According to the LFS data for second quarter 2004, the unemployment rate among young people in the age group 15 to 24 was 14.2%, i.e. 2.3 times higher than the overall unemployment rate. The percentage of long-term unemployed young people has indeed decreased since 2002, but the problems faced by the first time job seekers have become greater. In 2003, the young first-time job seekers accounted for 23.2% of all registered unemployed and for 20.6% of all long-term (more than a year) unemployed (Employment Service of Slovenia, in Trbanc 2005). Yet not one program of the active employment policy has been designed specifically for this group. Even the subsidized-jobs program is targeted primarily at regions with high unemployment rates. In other respects, too, the active employment policy programs are geared to the low educated population. However, given the increasing share of highly educated unemployed young people (their share in the long-term unemployed group – i.e. unemployed for more than a year – already exceeds 20%), this policy should be revised to include measures that would be geared to the unemployed population in general. Although it is true that low educated persons are the most vulnerable, many others, too, lack skills for an individualized approach to unemployment problems, especially in the countries in transition without this kind of experience and tradition.

In connection with this, we should also mention the widespread practise of atypical paid work through the Student Job Agency. This option, on the one hand, helps young people to alleviate their financial problems and gain work experience, but since this type of work is subject to different regulations than regular work, they can neither obtain the employed person status nor enjoy the rights arising from that status (e.g. this period of work is not counted as the years of service, they are not insured against unemployment nor entitled to compensation during the maternity leave, the child-care leave etc.). Since this type of “employment” is less expensive for the employers, it is very popular among them, but working students are competitors to regular-job seekers, particularly highly educated first-time job seekers who are a costly labour force. The share of part-time employments among young people has also been

on the increase.

4. Policy models

Early school leaving

National Vocational Qualifications Act adopted in 1999: This law introduced a new form of qualifications gaining, through a national certification system (in the past, qualifications could be gained only through the school system). This system takes into account the previously acquired skills and knowledge.

It is possible to assert that the greatest structural change in the field of vocational and technical education has been the formulation of new educational programs which were specified in the document entitled The Basis For the Preparation of Educational Programs of Lower and Secondary Vocational Education. The document was adopted in November 2001 by the Council of experts for Vocational and Technical Education. One of the main novel features introduced is a modular approach to education. One of the reasons cited for taking such an approach was as follows: "We have also established that many young people fail to complete vocational education, either because the programs are too demanding for them, or because we fail to motivate them to persist until the end." (Pevec, Mali, 2002). The modular concept is expected to enable young people without vocation to acquire skills and qualifications needed to enter the labour market. Above all, this approach facilitates the completion of higher-level courses, since students may take a step-by-step approach (by modules).

Programs/projects: Measures for the prevention of early school leaving within the framework of the European Social Fund.

This project is goal oriented and aims to encourage implementation of measures against early school leaving.

These measures were formulated with the causes of early school leaving in mind. Accordingly, they include primary activities aiming to prevent problems (counselling work targeted at the entire population even before they enrol in a vocational or technical school, i.e. at the beginning of secondary education), secondary measures, including the intervention by the technical or vocational school at an early stage of a problem, and tertiary preventive measures intended to prevent the compounding of existing problems. Assistance is also envisaged and it is applied when certain preventive intervention fails to produce desired results. Schools are invited to join this project through public announcements. One fifth of all vocational and technical schools is included in this project.

Active Labour market policies

As regards activation, the policy used in Slovenia most approaches that typical of Austria and Spain. Unemployed persons without previous work experience or with the work experience shorter than one year are not entitled to any special compensation apart from that provided by

the Centre for Social Work for persons included in an educational program. The Centre offers a stipend (app. 50 euros) and covers transportation costs.

- *Individualised action plans:* For every person who registers with the Employment Service, an employment action plan is drawn including the specification of all activities that will lead to employment. As a rule, a plan drawn for a young person also includes an educational plan, if education is paid by the Employment Service. Unemployment status is suspended for persons participating in an educational program. Programs of this kind are limited, or rather, there is only one such program – the project-based learning program preparing a person to enter the educational system (Program 10,000 see below). In addition, professional guidance is available to all who require it, regardless of whether or not they are registered as unemployed.
- *Labour market training:* short-term courses in a broad range of skills (foreign language, computer skills, driving licence etc.) aimed at increasing the employability anyone participating in the training program receives 30% of the minimum salary per month and is covered transportation costs;
- *Job creation:* This program is targeted at young people and it ensures the compensation of the salary to a first-time job seeker.
- *Entrepreneurship:* the sum is 1250 euros and must be spent on salaries and taxes/contributions.
- *Action employment programme for unemployed Roma:* The Ministry of Labour, Family and Social Affairs in cooperation with the Ministry of Education, Science and Sport started preparing the programme in the spring of 2003. It is expected to be adopted by the Government by the end of 2003. The aim of the programme is to increase employment opportunities for Roma and to reduce the number of unemployed Roma by means of the following measures: to include young unemployed Roma in primary and vocational schools, to include adult Roma in programmes of subsidised jobs (in cooperation with Roma associations and local communities), to create public works (for learning assistance) in order to reduce school drop-outs, to employ Roma advisers in public employment services.

Good practice

Among the measures adopted by public institutions some can be seen as good practice – at least within the national context – inasmuch as they offer disadvantaged youth additional opportunities and have contributed to create innovative transition structures.

Total Counselling

Like many other European countries Slovenia, too, has been facing the problems of considerable drop out rates and difficulties in reintegrating young people into education, training and employment. There is also a growing awareness that not all young people find their place in the education and vocational training system.

Based on the analysis of the guidance services offered to young people who have dropped out from the educational system and have not registered with the Employment Service, the starting points for a new, holistic guidance service network were set (within the Leonardo da Vinci project Total Counselling). The implementation of the network was delineated in the Single Programming Document 2004-2006. (Wostner, 2003, p. 163)

The model indicates one of the strategies for working with young people in ‘status zero position’ involving a highly personalised approach, addressing their personal and social needs as well as their educational and guidance needs; in other words, a holistic approach.

It addresses various issues, including the role of the counsellors, the ways in which service is structured at the national and regional level and it indicates the ways of monitoring the development of the service (see Annex IV, Chapter 5 in this Volume).

Program 10,000

Program 10,000 is an active labour market program formulated on a yearly basis by the Ministry of Labour, Family and Social Affairs and the Ministry of Education and Sports, in cooperation with other key institutions responsible for human resources. This program is drawn in accordance with Article 53.c of the Employment and Insurance Against Unemployment Act which regulates the area of qualifications gaining. The aims are to enhance employment opportunities, educational level and skills, and to reduce professional and structural disparities.

It is carried out in accordance with the provision in the Employment and Insurance Against Unemployment Act, which specifies that any unemployed person for whom it is not possible to ensure an adequate or corresponding employment, may join the educational program based on the educational plan with the aim of enhancing his/her position on the labour market (see Annex IV, Chapter 4 in this volume).

5. Factors of success

Despite socio-economic transition, Slovenia managed to preserve a relatively stable economic situation; real GDP per capita dropped somewhat during the first two years of the transition process, but not below a level of 85.5% of GDP from 1990, and from 1993 onwards GDP gradually grew, reaching the 1990 level in 1997. The unemployment rate as defined by the International Labor Organization between 1990 and 1994 rised up to 9.1%, but in the ensuing years it did not exceed 7.9% (1998) (Mrak, Rojec, Silva-Jauregui, 2004: xxvi-xxvii). However, during the transition period, the risk of poverty increased, particularly for the unemployed, and social inequalities increased (Stanovnik, 2004: 318-320). But Slovenia has maintained a relatively stable system of social protection even during the period of transition (this includes pension and health insurance, the system of social assistance). It expanded the network of public educational institutions that provide programs ranging from primary education to university undergraduate and graduate courses, as well as various forms of assistance for children and young people coming from socially more vulnerable families (e.g.

the book fund). The intense problematization of early school leaving during the past decade has led to the establishment of a relatively dense institutional network that offers alternative educational options for early school leavers and also encourages participation in various educational programs. This was one of the factors that influenced the decline in the dropout rate in the past decade. Another important factor is a great significance ascribed to education. Parents' expectations regarding their children's education have increased and, as a result, they have put more effort in the realization of these expectations.

6. Conclusion

The educational position of young people in Slovenia is relatively favourable for the time being, although data on completed education and participation in educational programs obscure certain specific problems such as (in)permeability of the educational system and the problem of early school leaving in vocational and technical schools. A serious obstacle faced by the young Roma students and immigrants from the former Yugoslavia is the language of instruction in schools, which is Slovene. Many of them do not understand it well enough to follow the classes. Slovenia should introduce national programs that would equalize initial opportunities. Another problem is the school network. Particularly children from socially underprivileged families quite often opt for a secondary, post secondary or high school that is closest to their home.

However, the position of young people on the labour market is rather unfavourable, as is obvious from the data showing a large percentage of long-term unemployed young people and those employed part-time or for a limited term. This assertion is also supported by the trends on the labour market, the characteristics of active employment policy, and the fact that unemployment is related to a high risk of poverty. All this calls for a careful consideration of the future regulation of the labour market and a thoughtful planning of social security policy. Since the number of unemployed persons who are also first-time job seekers has been increasing during the past few years (as has the number of highly educated persons in this group), it will be necessary to revise the active employment policy program by adding the programs targeted at this category of the unemployed.

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1. Introduction

In 2005, the discussion about the reform of the general education system and the results of the PISA report (2003) has highlighted the deficits of the Spanish educational system. Although the overall unemployment rate dropped below 10%, young people under 25 years, especially women, suffer higher rates (as high as double this figure). Together with the high rate of early school leaving (30,4%), being the second largest in the EU15, reaching the goals of the European Union's Lisbon Strategy by 2010 as well as the "Integrated Guidelines for Employment 2005-2008" and the European Pact for Youth represent major challenges.

The policy context of this report is also characterised by the 3rd Social Inclusion Plan (2005-2006) passed by the Spanish Government in September 2005 which is based on the evaluation of the 2nd Social Inclusion Plan (2003-2005).

The definition of "disadvantaged youth" is not clear, because it includes a heterogeneous group of young people. This concept has a multi-causal and multi-dimensional character. We can refer to social, educational or economic "disadvantage". Some reports use the concept of "disadvantaged" to describe the social-economic background and social inequalities according to education, gender, territory or ethnicity. Others use the concept to analyse the role of the family in transitions or to describe the situation of "disadvantage" as a consequence of the educational, cultural and labour biography. At the same time, there are researchers that use different concepts such as "social exclusion" or "near to social exclusion" to describe the situation of disadvantage which has also been influenced by the European Social Inclusion Process and the respective National Action Plans for Social Inclusion.

In contrast, pedagogic and social work researchers focus on an individual perspective to analyse the consequences, the strategies of the system to stimulate motivation and the measures developed to increase young people's abilities and interest towards training and job-searching.

Besides the reading and analysis of relevant academic literature, our report uses the following official sources: INE (National Institute of Statistics), INEM (National Institute of Employment), Regional Employment Services, National Action Plans for Employment, National Action Plans for Social Inclusion, ILO Reports, reports and research conducted by the Spanish Unions UGT and CCOO, CES Reports (Social and Economic Council), Reports of the Ministry of Work and Social Affairs and the Ministry of Education, Plans and Reports of different municipalities; OECD, EUROSTAT. Another very important information source

²¹⁸ With collaboration of Germán Gil Rodríguez, Jasetxo Errea and Ferran López Aiblinger

was the meeting organized in Valencia (Burjassot) on the 20th of June 2005 to discuss preliminary findings. We would like to underline three of the outcomes of this meeting:

- 1) It gave us the possibility to discuss the outcomes of the report completed for the European project “Thematic study on policy measures concerning disadvantaged youth” with different participants (researchers, administration technicians, policymakers, teachers, professionals of the social services);
- 2) Different good practices were presented, and using “good practice” indicators, we measured the scope of their transferability;
- 3) The meeting itself became a platform for the presentation of research and projects addressing disadvantaged young people in the region of Valencia (in fact, this was highly valued by the participants and will have a certain continuity: the organizing committee meets once every month and is preparing the publication of a book²¹⁹ – February 2006 – and a second meeting on a national level in May 2006). Only invited persons participated at the meeting, among them: 8 policy makers (experts, working at the administration or at different policy-programmes), 2 representatives of the two main trade unions in Spain, UGT and CCOO; 8 university researchers; and 22 practitioners (SEE Annex I).

Finally, we would like to stress the important collaboration with a different regional and national ministries, researchers, policy makers, and experts in municipalities, schools and NGO's during the production of the report (see list of experts consulted at the end of this report).

2. Constellations of Disadvantage

In the following we will analyse the following relevant constellations of disadvantage: early school leaving, youth unemployment, precariousness and poverty (cf. Volume 1, Chapter 3).

2.1 Education as a constellation of disadvantage?

Change of school system

Education, according to its different levels, has been considered as the most valuable instrument to lower social inequalities. But reality has come to prove that the situation of social disadvantage, especially in the case of young people, is the consequence of a plurality of causes due to which school and education cannot be the one and only solution to the problem and the causes of inequality.

In the last 30 years, there have been three different education laws in Spain (1970, 1990 and 2002). These changes have produced a situation of instability and social distrust that should be corrected with the passing of a new law at the end of 2005. The Kingdom of Spain has

²¹⁹ López Blasco,A.,Gil Rodríguez,G.(2006) Jóvenes desfavorecidos: educación, empleo y territorio – la tozudez de los datos estadísticos. Valencia, Col. ISCUAL 7

decided to adopt an education model that combines a variety of school types: schools funded with public funds (public and semi-private schools) and private funds (private schools). 67,5% of all pupils enrol in public schools and 32,5% in private or semi-private schools. At the tertiary level public education represents 90,4% of all pupils and private tertiary education only 9,6 %. (Ministerio de Educación y Ciencia, 2005, Datos y Cifras)

Education policies involve both the national and regional policy level. The Education Law of 1990 (LOGSE) made education compulsory up to the age of sixteen, introduced a comprehensive education system and harmonized the entrance to the labour market through a new design of Vocational Training. The comprehensive school, that left the selective school system of the Franco regime behind, tries to adapt to the new social situation in Spain offering the same opportunities to all pupils, regardless of their social position, economic possibilities, gender, ethnic group, religion, etc.

At the same time, education in Spain tries to be as inclusive as possible, although in our society there are no sufficiently developed cultural habits of acceptance of the differences. Inclusive schools emphasize the sense of community, so that all pupils have a sense of membership and support through parents and other members of the school community, while looking for right answers to their "special educational needs".

Another feature of the Spanish education system is the combination between a certain kind of pupil selection and a diversity of routes to re-enter the system. Through different exams and the accreditation of employment experience they can re-enter the system (access examination for vocational training, adult schools, university access examination for people over 25). The Organic Law of Qualifications and Vocational Training (2002) favours the participation of social agents, the creation of integrated centres, makes practices in companies compulsory, implements professional specialities according to labour market demands and promotes the recognition of informal learning through a National Catalogue of Vocational Qualifications.

However, ongoing reforms suffer from a low level of public expenditure on education which in 2004 was about 4,4% of the GDP. (INE, 2005, Gastos en Educación)

Distribution of students according to education level

In the school year 2004-05 there were 8.397.204 students in the Spanish education system, among whose 16,9% were in Child Education; 29,4% in Primary Education; 0,3% in Special Education; 22,09% in Secondary Compulsory Education; 13,7% in Secondary Post-Compulsory Education, and 17,4% in University. The rate of young people studying in the University is higher than that of Secondary Post-Compulsory Education.

In recent years, the Spanish education system has been affected by the new phenomenon of *immigration*. In the last decade, the number of pupils that were in education (not university) has grown from 50.076 to 447.525, this is 6,5% of all people receiving education. The extent of immigration from Central and South America (48,7%), from Europe (26,4%), Africa (19,1%), Asia and Oceania (4,7%) is considerable. This new situation demands the application of specific integration and compensation measures making it possible to overcome situations of disadvantage during the schooling period and to prepare for labour market and

social integration (Ministerio de Educación y Ciencia, 2005, Datos y Cifras). In the public educational centres, immigrant students represent 7,8% of all pupils (9,9% in Primary and 8,1% in the Secondary Compulsory Education) while in the private or semi-private centres the rate is only 3,7%.

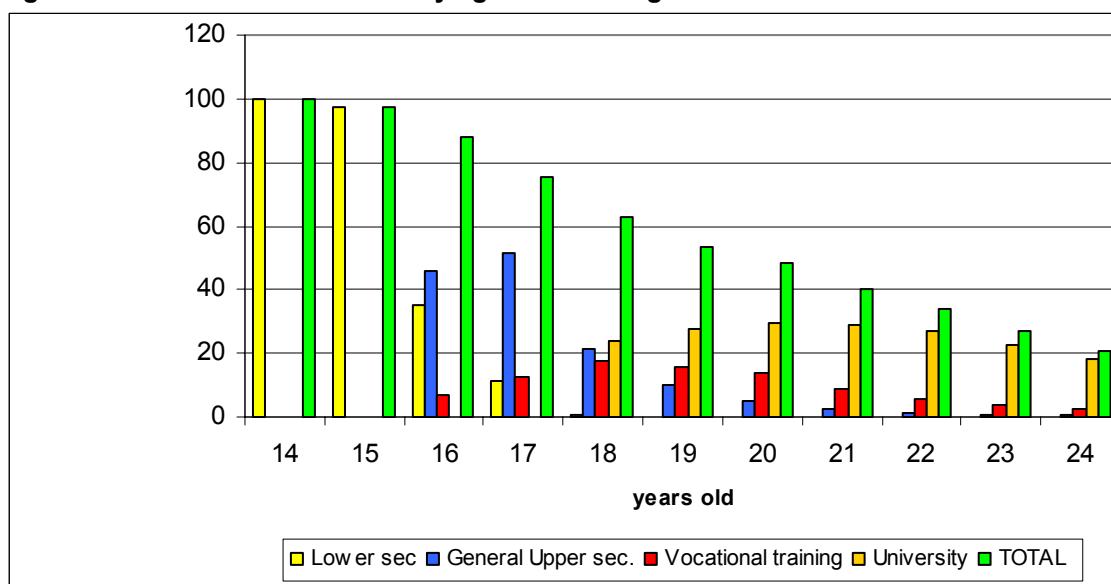
The distribution of young immigrants in the education system is also concentrated in some regions. In Baleares, for example, 11,1% of all students are immigrants, followed by Madrid (10%), La Rioja (9,8%), Murcia (8,9%), Comunidad Valenciana and Navarra (8,7% in both cases) and Cataluña (8,4%).

Early school leaving

Early school leaving is one of the most important constellations of disadvantage in the Spanish education system. The percentage of young people between 18 and 24 years that were not in school and had only a compulsory education certificate or less was **30,4% in 2004**, much higher than the European average (18%) and from the Lisbon objective of 10% by 2010. (The main aim of the Spanish government for 2010 is to reduce the percentage to 15% to converge with the European average – Document: National Reform Programme Spain 2005). The drop-out rates by age (year 2001-2002) are:

- At age 16: 9,6%
- At age 17: 22,2%
- At age 18: 36,6%
- At age 19: 45,1%

Figure 1: Enrolment rates sorted by age and training. Year 2002-03



Source: MEC (Ministry of Education and Science), 2004.

Figure 1 displays the low rate of young people – 17 to 19 year-olds – participating in vocational training and the high percent of young people – from 19 to 24 year-olds – studying at the University. In the education system, all forms of social disadvantage co-exist. But as the education system lacks sufficient resources it is not able to balance disadvantages.

Among others, the objectives of the National Reform Programme Spain 2005 (October 2005, p.36) for 2010 are: to increase the nursery school enrolment rate at the age of two at >30% (“Spain is one of the countries with the highest enrolment numbers among 3 year-old children. But the enrolment rates of 0 to 3 year-old children are very low”); to increase the rate of pupils who successfully finish Compulsory Education (ESO) at >80% and to achieve a rate of 80 % of young people between 20 and 24 who successfully finish Upper Secondary Education. The approach tried by the new government is realistic: education is a political and budgetary priority, true statistical information and outcomes of researchers are given in official documents, for example the PISA study; and objectives are achievable, without leaving the final objective of the Lisbon Strategy aside (“European aim is to achieve a 85% rate in terms of successfully finished Upper Secondary Education in 2010” p.37).

2.2 Socio-economic characteristics

Youth unemployment

The youth unemployment rate (under 25) in Spain has decreased from 22,1% in 2003 to 21,3% in 2004, a fall of 1 percentage point. (Present EU-25 average is 18,6%. Intermediate objective of the Spanish government for the year 2008 is to reduce youth unemployment to at least 19,3%; Government of Spain, National Reform Programme Spain 2005). Youth unemployment is significantly higher than the overall unemployment rate (10,3%). From a statistical point of view, the definition of young unemployed usually refers to young people under 25 (16 to 24 year-olds). The National Institute of Statistics uses this age limit (as the National Institute of Employment and the Ministry of Employment and Social Affairs do), among other reasons, to facilitate international comparisons; ILO, OCDE, UE, etc.

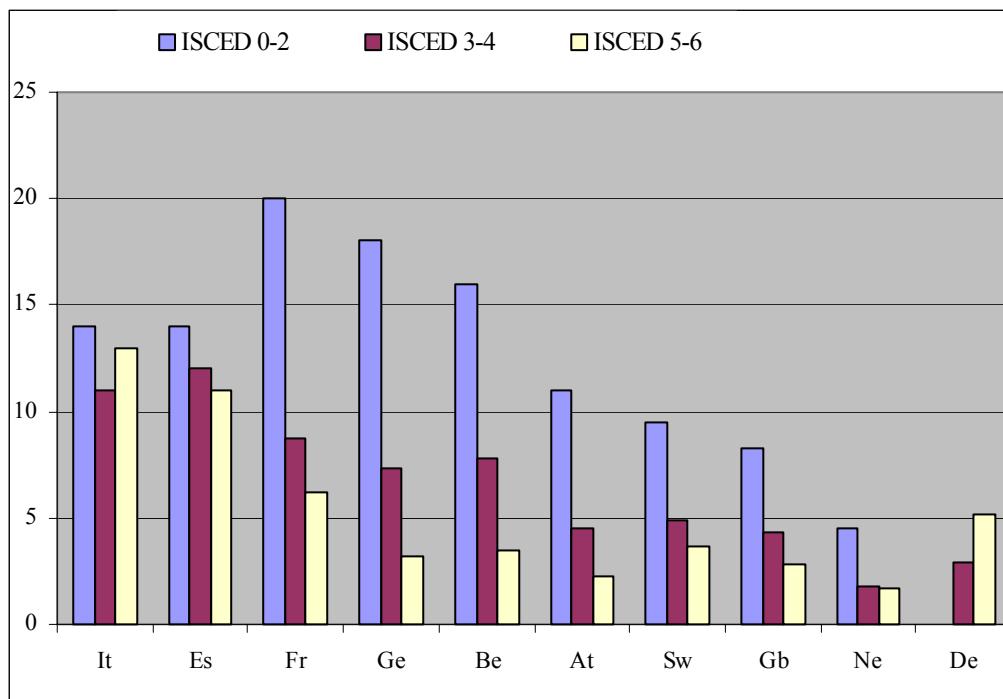
Young females are much more likely to be unemployed with an unemployment rate among those willing to work but cannot find a job of 26,1% of these under 25 years compared to 17,6% among young men. (INE: EPA IV, 2004 (Labour force survey)).

According to the Eurostat Labour Force Survey this translates into a youth unemployment ratio (unemployed among the age population) which in 2004 was 9,9% – 9,4% for young males and 10,5% for young females.

A higher level of formal education does not mean a lower unemployment rate

In relation to youth unemployment, the rate of young people from 25 to 34 year-olds with intermediate and high educational degrees (ISCED 3-6) being unemployed is higher in Spain and Italy than in the rest of European countries (Eurydice, 2005). Labour uncertainty (temporary jobs) and professional uncertainty (changing professional profiles) together with the possibility of staying at their parents’ home for a longer time, lead young people to spend more time in the educational system and to accumulate educational degrees without necessarily improving their employment opportunities and – in parts – this leads to the phenomena of over-qualification.

Unemployment of young people from 25 to 34 year-olds according to training level
 Training levels: (ISCED 5-6=high, 3-4=intermediate, 0-2=low)



Source: Eurydice Eurostat 2003. Key Data on Education in Europe 2005

Regional character of youth unemployment

Regional disparities are noticeable. The regions with the lowest youth unemployment rates (under 15%) are Navarra, Aragón and La Rioja (north of Spain). The highest youth unemployment rates (over 25%) are found in Asturias, Andalucía and Extremadura.

Labour insertion trajectories

Men enter the labour market at the average age of 17,8 years and women at the age of 18,3 years. We can speak of two kinds of transitions from school to work

Direct trajectories from school to work (or *express initiation trajectories*): these are the most frequent since 55,5% of young people entering the labour market are under 19; and low qualification levels are over-represented among this group.

Delayed trajectories: *Young people who invest in education/training* and are between 20 and 26 years old (for example, 92,5% of those who start working between 23 and 25 years old have high qualification levels; or 88,6% of those youngsters who start working between 26 and 35 years old have a high level of qualification 1. (Source: INE: National Institute of Statistics)

Young immigrants

Young immigrants (16-29 year-olds) represent 6% of the overall young labour force. The economic activity rate of immigrants (68,4%) is 15 percentage points higher than the economic activity rate of Spanish population (52,9%; *Source: EPA 2004*). Furthermore, the

female economic activity rate of immigrants is 15 points higher than the overall female economic activity rate (*Cachón, p. 27, 2003*).

Young immigrants enter the labour market at an earlier stage: the economic activity rate of immigrants is 18 points higher for those aged between 16 and 24. On the other side, young immigrants from outside the European Union tend to suffer higher unemployment rates. The labour market discriminates against immigrants and only offers employment where there is no national demand. Five economic activity sectors gave employment to 76% of 199,752 foreign workers (not EU) with a work permit in 1999: “household service” (26%), “agriculture” (21%), “hotel business and restaurants” (12%), “construction” (9%) and “retail trade” (7%) (*Cachón, 2003, p. 29*). Of course, we have to consider that these activity sectors only represent one third of the overall employment supply.

According to the Labour Force Survey (2003 IVQ), young immigrants show an unemployment rate of 18,3%: 3% of them come from countries within the EU-15, while the rest come from abroad: 45% from South America, 18% from Europe but non-EU and 34% from the rest of the world.

More than half of immigrant unemployed young people are women (58%). This is much higher than that of the Spanish population. According to age, the highest unemployment rate is suffered by those under 20 year-olds.

Important sectors for youth employment

Young people under 30 years find employment primarily in the services sector (71%), the construction sector (13%), the industrial sector (9%) and the agriculture and fishing sector (7%).

Types of unemployment benefits

- “Unemployment insurance”: Those who lose employment and have contributed a minimum period of 12 months in paid employment during the last 6 years receive unemployment insurance. The entitlement duration is calculated by dividing by 3 the number of months contributed, with a minimum duration of 120 days and a maximum duration of 720.
- “Unemployment Assistance”: Unemployment assistance is available for those who have finished their insurance benefit and have not contributed the minimum period.
- “Active Income Insertion Programme”: under certain circumstances and complying certain requisites.
- “Unemployment benefits” for temporary workers in the agricultural sector.

Unemployment insurance cover rates

The Spanish Unemployment Compensation System offers two different types of unemployment benefits: Unemployment insurance and unemployment assistance. Unemployment insurance: Those who lose employment and have contributed a minimum

period of 12 months during the last 6 years receive unemployment insurance. With a minimum duration of 120 days and a maximum duration of 720. Young people obviously can have access to benefits, but they have to comply with certain prerequisites. According to the information from INEM (2003) of all young people between 16-19 years registered as unemployed, only 9,9% received unemployment insurance compared to 41,1% of young people between 20 and 24 (see table 1).

Table 1: Unemployment insurance cover rate sorted by age. Year 2003

Both sexes	Nr. of people that benefit from unemployment insurance or assistance*	Nr. of registered unemployed people*	Insurance cover rate
Total	1.004.700	1.657.582	60,61
Between 16 and 19 years-old	7.600	76.679	9,91
Between 20 and 24	76.700	186.425	41,14
Between 25 and 54	696.600	1.165.713	59,76
Over 55	223.700	228.766	97,79

Source: INEM (National Institute of Employment), Statistics of registered unemployment; Ministry of Work and Social Affairs.

Long-term unemployment: another characteristic is long-term unemployment (more than twelve months): 28,3% of all young unemployed people under 30 have been unemployed for over one year. The alternation of labour contracts with unemployment and long-term unemployment periods is another feature of precariousness.

High perception of unemployment but without social responses: there is a high perception of unemployment as a problem, but high unemployment rates do not cause any social responses. Toharia et al. (2001) sum it up as follows: “The implementation of labour flexibility and the cohabitation with the highest unemployment rate in the OECD region is hard to understand, if we do not take a look at the absorber-effect of familiar solidarity and the organisation of Spanish households. Flexibility and unemployment have not created serious problems nor social conflicts. Partially, that is so because flexibility and unemployment concentrate on two specific groups (women and young people). These groups get help from their families. The help comes from wages of the “father of the family” (male and with a permanent job), whose labour security is commonly granted” (Toharia, Luis et al 2001: p.80-811).

3. Constellations of precariousness

The transitions to work include a range of phenomena which need to be taken into consideration:

Poverty in Spain: “according to the Housing Panel from the European Union (PHOGUE), in 2001 there was 18,8 % of Spanish population under the poverty threshold. Poverty has increased mainly in the case of young and elderly people”. (III National Action Plan for Social Inclusion in Spain 2005-2006, September 2005, p. 6)

Informal economy: The definition of informal economy is “certain forms of work defined as “no work”, that is, “not productive” [...] and certain types of economic activities that produce money (salaries) but avoid state regulation and/or are not registered by official statistics.” (Ybarra et al, 2002: 270-80). Under this definition of informal economy it is possible to distinguish three general types of work: domestic service (mainly done by women), volunteering (representing about 5% of the Spanish GDP) and irregular work (no official statistics, but estimations say it represents about 20% of the GDP. Sanchis (2005) asks who benefits from the existing “statistical blackout”).

Fixed-term contracts: the temporary character of employment contracts is one of the main features of the labour market in Spain, affecting mainly younger people of both sexes. The main topic of the discussion in the field of labour relationships has shifted from unemployment to the precariousness and the temporary character of employment contracts.

Between 1988 and 2004 the number of registered fixed term contracts was always above 90%. In 1994, the number of registered fixed term contracts was at its maximum (96,60% of all contracts) and in 2004 it was 91,31%.

In 1997, the Law 63/1997 (Urgent measures to improve the labour market and promotion of indefinite hiring; B.O.E 30/12/97) of December 26th was passed. Aim of this law was to reduce the number of fixed term contracts and increase the number of indefinite contracts.

This law established tax incentives, by means of reducing the fees to be paid to the Social Insurance to levels between 25% and 90%. These reductions aimed to favour specific social groups.

Between 1998 and 2004, temporality rate was always above 30%.

	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004
Total	33,0	32,9	32,2	32,2	31,8	31,8	32,5
Males	32,1	31,6	30,9	30,6	29,9	29,9	30,6
Females	34,6	35,0	34,2	34,7	34,8	34,6	35,2

Source: INE (National Institute of Statistics). Labour Force Survey, methodology 2005. According to: Report Spain 2004. CES. Madrid, 2005. Memoria sobre la situación socioeconómica y laboral (Report on the labour and socio-economic situation).

Temporality affects people of all ages, regions and areas of economy, but it mainly focuses on young people between 16 and 19 years old. In the period 1998-2004, young people of this age range have suffered an increase of the temporality rate of 56,23%, while the temporality rate of young people between 20 and 29 has been lowered.

Development of rates of fixed-term contracts by age and sector.

	Age					Private Sector		Public Sector	
	16-19	20-24	25-29	< 30	> 30	< 30	> 30	< 30	> 30
1998	26,34	69,78	47,93	59,20	21,91	59,68	25,24	54,54	12,83
2004	82,57	62,12	44,42	53,24	24,22	52,13	26,57	64,22	16,32
Diff/	+56,23	-7,66	-3,51	-5,96	+2,31	-7,55	+1,33	+9,68	+3,49

Source: INE (National Institute of Statistics). EPA (Labour Force Survey). (Elaborated by UGT (Union), p. 10)

In 2003 IIIQ, 65,5% of young people between 15-24 ear-olds in employment, had fixed-term contracts (65,6% in the case of men, 65,3% for women) and in 2004 (IIIQ), this has increased

to 66,6% for the same age group (66,5% for men and 66,6% for women) (Eurostat +INE, EPA IIIQ2004).

This phenomenon applies to all productive sectors and all Spanish regions and it is to be considered under the perspective of labour market segmentation.

Since 1988, the rate of fixed-term contracts has not been less than 90%. The highest level was observed in 1994 -96,60%-; in 1997, after an agreement made between trade unions, employers and the Government, the Act 63/ 1997 of December 26th has been approved introducing “Urgent measures for the improvement of the labour market and the promotion of permanent hiring”. This law established tax incentives for permanent positions, by means of reducing Social Insurance fees from 25% to 90%. These reductions aimed to assist certain social groups such as women, disadvantaged people, etc.

The outcomes of this law have so far has had a relatively limited impact: in 1998 the rate of temporary jobs was reduced to 91,67% and is currently around 90%).

The “rotation” of labour contracts: a high number of the contracts signed annually clearly show the uncertainty of recruitment. In 2003, each person signed on average 1,3 contracts per year. (Labour Force Survey III, 2003) This uncertainty mainly affects young people under 24: young people between 16 and 19 sign 2.3 on average contracts per year and young people between 20 and 24 sign 1.8 contracts per year (Labour Force Survey III, 2003).

4. Policy measures

The responses given to constellations of disadvantage depend on the evolution of the economy, on the situation and regulation of labour market, on the policy priorities according to the correlation of majorities of central, regional and local governments and on the agreements of the European Union and the effects produced by the diffusion of statistical data concerning the situation of disadvantaged youth. This statement is reflected in the presentation of the main policies concerning early school leaving, broadening access to the labour market and counselling, and Individualised Action Plans.

Policies concerning early school leaving

The policies to prevent early school leaving can be considered as “human capital building” policies imply the need for preventive action, authorisation and reinforcement of individual decisions as well as structural and compensatory measures.

The new education law that is currently being discussed in Parliament is a good example of a structural, preventive policy, responding to a certain political vision on the role of education. This law has textually integrated the results published concerning early school leaving, school failure and the agreements of the Lisbon Conference (Proyecto de Ley Orgánica de Educación).

In the following we show some specific measures:

- Group splitting. 23,2% of all students in the 3rd and 4th year of Primary Education will be affected (883.486)
- Programmes for curricular diversification (adapting the educational curriculum to the specific needs of each pupil)
- Initial Vocational Qualification Programmes.

The 3rd National Action Plan for Social Inclusion (2005-2006) passed in September 2005 also highlights several measures aimed at tackling “early school leaving”. For example:

- Increase of schooling at early ages as well as in post-compulsory education
- Increase of initial vocational qualification programmes focused upon students' more than 16 year-olds who have not achieved the basic goals of compulsory education levels.
- To introduce a 5% increase in the real amount of all school grants.
- To establish commitments between the school and families in order to introduce a number of measures leading to an improvement of school performance of those students in situation of, or in risk of falling into social exclusion.
- Supporting immigrant students by means of specific measures answering to their special circumstances.
- Integral social intervention projects addressed to the Spanish Roma community.
- Promotion of support programmes for psychologically disabled people.

Those pupils who do not manage to finish compulsory education face a situation that allows them to prepare for labour insertion through Social Guarantee Programmes (PGS) or Schooling workshops and Employment workshops. In the year 2003/2004, 3,65% (42.468) of all 1.119.895 pupils that were in non-compulsory secondary education participated in Social Guarantee Programmes. One of the reasons for this success is the flexibility of the programmes, pupils can access the courses in certain moments, depending on individual competence.(Ministerio de Educación y Ciencia, “Las cifras de la Educación en España. Estadísticas e Indicadores. Edición 2004).

Although in Spain there is a debate about who is responsible for the control of school enrolment, the number of municipalities that, through their social services, are taking measures to prevent early school leaving and to control and support young people and their families, is increasing. Integrated youth policies include assessment, spare-time, education, culture, employment and social services as well as introducing social educators, psychologists and vocational counsellors into schools. They develop general policies for all young people, and attention policies for unstructured families who live in neighbourhoods where poverty is especially prevalent, where basic needs are not covered. The aim is to motivate and promote young people, so they can continue with training, labour training and non-formal learning.

Policies against youth unemployment

Several types of policies exist: those that aim to enhance employability, those directed at counselling and integration, those promoting hiring, as well as tax incentives to employers,

support to young people in risk of exclusion and policies combining training, employment and increasing employability.

The government and the social and economic agents in Spain focus on the development of an economy of knowledge, favouring a life-long training to guarantee the adaptability of companies and workers and to increase employability of the whole labour population (*Source: National Action Plan for Employment of the Kingdom of Spain 2004*).

Apart from this, there is a change in the design of active employment policies and the management of training, now including the participation of social and economic agents and regional governments (*Source: National Employment Plan of the Kingdom of Spain 2004*). The National Action Plan for Employment as well as the Declaration for Social Dialogue 2004, signed by the Government, the Employers' organization and the Unions, complies with the guidelines of the European Employment Strategy, with special regard to social and employment policies to increase employment and participation in the labour market. For that, the Declaration specifies that "actions with similar intensity have to be promoted to favour youth employment, employment of older people, employment of disabled and other groups with labour integration problems." Other target groups are women and immigrants. (*Source: Declaration for Social Dialogue 2004*).

Policies promoting hiring and counselling for labour insertion

Recent employment policies have introduced specific employment contracts such as the so-called contracts to promote employment, replacement contracts, training contracts, contracts for young people in situations of risk and the physically disabled, as well as turning temporary jobs in permanent contracts. The employers hiring under these possibilities will get tax benefits from 20% to 35%.

The public employment services carry out guidance activities addressed at young people in general, and to disadvantaged groups in particular. These programmes are coordinated by the National Employment Institute (INEM) and the regional employment services together with the agencies collaborating with the INEM

Information and vocational counselling are carried out by means of personal attention to employment seekers, with a priority on those less than 25 year-olds that remain unemployed for more than six months, or more than twelve if they are over 25 years. This is regulated by the Orders of 20th January 1998 and 4th February 2000.

The first step consists in carrying out an interview to check and make a diagnosis of the needs of the employment seeker. This one, according to his/her requirements, can participate in vocational counselling activities to get a job or either can be supported to build his/her own business.

Vocational counselling to employment is carried out by means of:

- Individual monitoring. This is an individual process in which the employment seeker

agrees with the advisor the steps to be followed in order to develop his/her professional integration trajectory in an optimal way.

- Development of personal aspects for integration. This is a collective activity aiming to enhance the personal skills and resources, allowing them to assume their own in the development and adjustment of their personal project addressed to labour market integration.
- Employment search group, allowing them to obtain the skills needed to carry out an active, organized and planned employment search.
- Interview workshop. This is a collective activity aimed at increasing the theoretical and practical knowledge of employment seekers so they will have more possibilities of success while facing a job interview.
- One of the most important employment policies is the "volunteer activity commitment" ("activation") and the measures to integrate "vocational training within the active employment policies" (Action Plans for Employment and National Plan for Vocational Training).
- In the framework of "activation" policies, the unemployed person can receive a Basic Insertion Income. If he or she gets this benefit, he/she is committed to participate in actions designed to enhance his/her labour market integration, with the double goal of employment and protection against unemployment. This commitment or contract means to carry out the activities to promote labour market integration in agreement with the public employment services or, in its case, the institutions collaborating with them. The programme includes the following activities, which are not exclusive but complementary:
 - Individual mentoring. Counselling and design of a path for labour market integration in agreement with the employment seeker, being monitored and updated on a monthly basis. The tutor suggests and evaluates the different actions carried out to enhance the participants' employability.
 - Labour insertion path. After the vocational interview, the aim of which is to define in an exact way the professional profile of the participant, starting from the information available at the public employment services, a labour market integration path is designed after 15 days (maximum) since being admitted to the programme. According to the participant's personal, professional and training characteristics, the employment tutor will establish together with the participant the activities to be carried out and the calendar to develop them (Ministerio de Trabajo y Asuntos Sociales, 2003).

Attention to young people at risk of exclusion

There is no up to date statistical information on the social reality of disadvantaged minorities, because this information is not evaluated or outcomes are not made public, as stated in the report "*La violencia racista en los estados miembros de la UE. Estudio comparativo de los informes de los centros de referencia nacionales de la red RAXEN 2001-2004*", published by the European Observatory against racism and xenophobia (2005): "Spain has only made public limited information on acts of racism in 2001, by demand of the Spanish CRN". (<http://www/errc.org/>)

In Spain, the most important group classified as disadvantaged group is the *Roma minority*. It is difficult to find objective and general information on this minority, because there exists no census. Article 18:1.4 of the Spanish Constitution (1978) protects personal and family privacy and limits the use and processing of personal information to guarantee privacy. In fact, the II Social Inclusion Plan of the Kingdom of Spain (2003-2005) admits the need for “collecting updated information on the Roma ethnic minority to evaluate the impact of developed social policies”. Later (III Social Inclusion Plan 2005, p. 8), it is said that “the Spanish Roma ethnic minority is estimated to be between 600.000 and 650.000 people (approximately 1,5% of the total population), and 30% are in a position near to social exclusion or completely excluded. The Roma ethnic minority is mainly found in Andalucía (45,2%), Cataluña (13,4%), Madrid (10,1%) and Valencia (8,7%).

There are training programmes from NGO's that aim to enhance the employability and labour market integration of Spanish Roma who can not access training programmes and to the normal labour market; programmes are funded relating to the teaching to of literacy skills, training and social abilities, as well as prevention and education for health, with the aim of promoting the social and labour market integration of Spanish Roma minority women (Blas López-Angulo (2005). Programmes to support the associative movement of the Roma community (*III National Action Plan for Social Inclusion (2005-2006 p.16)*)

Immigrants in situation or risk of social exclusion

Immigration is analysed from the point of view of territories of origin (countries and continents), education levels in which they are integrated, territorial distribution and education centres where they study (public or private). But there appears to be no research on immigration that takes into account ethnic group, religion or level of disadvantaged pupils. The concept of ‘immigration’ hides different social realities that would help us to determine the pupil’s state of disadvantage (pupil’s legal situation, type of labour activity, level of income etc.). There has been an important legal change with the approval, on December 30th 2004, of the Royal Decree 2393/2004, which approved the Regulation of the Organic Law 4/2000, of 11th January, about rights and freedom of foreign people in Spain and their social integration. Also, individualized and integrated labour market integration paths have been designed by the National Plan for Vocational Training and Professional Insertion.

The annual agreements to promote the social integration of immigrants have been renewed (*III National Action Plan for Social Inclusion (2005-2006)*).

Policies combining training, employment and employability

Workshop Schools, Employment Workshops and Trade Workshops (see Annex IV, Chapter 4 in this volume) are combined training and employment projects for young people between 16 and 25 years old. These programmes show a high level of insertion, since in the year 2002 the insertion rate of Schooling Workshops was 76,61% (81,75% males and 67,91% females) and of Employment Workshops 67,91% (59,06% males and 62,22% females).

The factors that determine the success of these programmes are to be found in the financial

incentives for employers and young participants, in the higher degree of authorisation, in the accessibility for young people with low academic levels, in the high level of usefulness of the projects and in the possibilities of future labour market integration. But factors like temporality of programmes, the dependence of funding from supra-municipal administrations, the provisional nature of the hiring, etc., weaken the projects.

Policies of counselling and Individualised Action Plans

The National Action Plan for Employment (2005) refers to the need to implement ‘individualised’ policies to enhance employment. After the individual interview with a person who is looking for a job, after analysing his/her personal characteristics and techniques, after listening to his/her wishes and demands, a diagnosis is made and a counselling and monitoring scheme is proposed to him/her. The young person is also interviewed and monitored in the training phase and in his/her process of labour integration. (European programmes carried out in Spain have facilitated the experimentation and learning of the techniques required. Those programmes have also allowed an elaboration of training and counselling materials which have been widely validated in the framework of the different programmes.

The evaluation reports of those projects carried out at the local level as well as those carried out by the Regional Employment Services are an important source of information on the elaboration of materials and indicators for the evaluation of these experiences.

Another policy which we can call “individualised action” is the concept of “**activation**” which however has an ambivalent meaning: it can enhance motivation but, at the same time, it can imply that the unemployed person is responsible for not finding a job. “Activation” is important for active employment policies that link unemployment benefits to the acceptance of adequate employment offers or to the participation in active policies. “Activation” tries to motivate unemployed people to enter the labour market. Therefore, it encourages job searching, and is sometimes coercive. “Activation” transfers unemployment and labour market problems to the individual, associating this concept to “flexibility”, “mobility”, “adaptation” and “availability”. The common use of these concepts leads to a definition of unemployment in moral, not in political and social terms. The ideology of “activation” defines employment in terms of employability and this leads to holding unemployed people responsible for their own situation: they have to prepare to find a job. Under these circumstances, no one argues about economic and social processes that condemn large groups to unemployment. (*Source: Serrano, A. (2004); Santos, A., Montalbá, C. And Moldes, R. (2004).*

5. Conclusions

The analysis of constellations of disadvantage shows that the possibility of falling into social exclusion may affect many people. In the segmented society, the stratification of the different levels can lead us to the margin, to society’s marginalization without even realizing.

Disadvantage is clear among young people mainly in the educational sphere, in the world of work and in fields we could name as precariousness and poverty. Disadvantage is also reflected in the territory itself, in spatial fields such as housing, neighbourhoods etc. as well as in other social institutions such as family.

Success in school makes the labour market integration of young people easier, even though a labour market has its own rules, and these rules have nothing in common with collective needs, educational needs and individual needs of society. It is true that disadvantage particularly affects young people that leave school too early; it also affects other specific groups such as immigrants, women or young people with limited economic resources.

We think that those measures that aim to correct disadvantages in the education system are useful. In our opinion, an increase in educational resources that makes access to education possible for all is required. Scholarships and other forms of support should become common and the ratio pupil/ teacher/ classroom is still too high. (In Spain, presently debates focus on how to increase public expenditure to at least to 6% of the GDP)

Courses organized and coordinated by Schooling Workshops, Trade Workshops and Social Guarantee Programmes show high labour market integration rates, though this rate is not that high when related to training courses and real job creation.

There is a need to comment and debate about the statistical information concerning disadvantaged young people's situation. We developed a dissemination campaign about early school leaving in Spain and fixed term contracts compared to EU-25 countries. We prepared a 7-page document that was distributed among trade unions, politicians and education centre actors: that is, teachers and parent-teacher organizations. Two comparative tables had an impact on targeted groups and public opinion: a) investment in education, showing GDP-percentages in Spain and other EU-25 countries and b) comparisons between early school leaving numbers. (Statistical information about youth unemployment, fixed term contracts and the situation of ethnic minorities and immigrants are well known). There have been debates on the radio and in the press (27-10-05 in newspaper INFORMACIÓN of Alicante, think piece "SUBCAMPEONES EUROPEOS EN ABANDONO ESCOLAR" ("Losing finalists in school leaving") or 16-11-05 in newspaper INFORMACIÓN of Alicante, think piece "AUMENTAR PRESUPUESTO EN EDUCACION" ("Increase education budget").

The new education law (which is being discussed in the Parliament) as well as in the *3rd National Action Plan for Social Inclusion (2005-2006)*, approved in September 2005, the constellations of disadvantage that young people are living are considered. The actions and measures suggested represent a big step forward to overcome young people's disadvantages.

Curricula and organization of schools need to become more flexible to meet the specific needs; promotion of detection, attention and guidance programmes for disadvantaged young people.

Vocational training also requires changes that facilitate access to work and improve occupational and continual training. Changes should also take place to incorporate new technologies.

The transition from school to work is facilitated by schooling workshops, trade workshops, social guarantee programmes etc. but these programmes should enjoy programmatic and budgetary stability to be able to establish short-term and medium-term plans. (Presently, the number of programmes that will last more than a year is completely random).

Disadvantage becomes apparent in the labour market. Employment is limited while there are neglected social needs, such as attention towards old people, towards childhood, training and the protection of the environment. Among young people with work, disadvantage shows itself in the large number of fixed-term contracts. Social actors need to reach agreements to reduce the rate of temporary positions. Exchanging fixed term contracts for indefinite contracts is one of the most effective policies to overcome disadvantage. Stable contracts make access to housing easier for young people, so they can define their future while temporary ones only sustains precariousness of the labour market and the life of young people. The current discussion between the social partners – employers and trade unions – and the Government focuses on reducing the high rate of fixed-term contracts: the trade unions have announced this as their priority.

Tax incentives that benefit companies for contracting young people and risk groups should increase, in order to really work; and there should be special attention paid to the replacement of fixed-term contracts by permanent contracts.

At the same time, it is important to make the underground or informal economy visible, so that it is no longer a factor that favours precarious work.

Integrated services offered by labour guidance have proven as effective measures to guide and support young people. But these services have to be complemented by guidance services offered in school. Collaboration between school and the sphere of employment would facilitate the transition from school to labour market.

One of the greatest challenges to overcome the disadvantage of women is to combine family and employment. Participation in employment in the EU of women with children under 12 years old shows a clear relationship: 65% of women with one child have a job, whilst the figure for women with two or more children is 41%. Taking into account the children's age, the following relationship is highlighted: if the child is between 6 and 11 years old, 67% of women have a job; if the child is between 3 and 5 years old, 60% of them have an employment; and if the child is less than 3 years old, 52% of women are in employment (Eurostat, Statistics in focus 4/2005).

Measures that favour the hiring of women with children should continue to be developed. As a consequence of the changes that have occurred in Spanish society on the matter of couple-relationships and the new situation of families, fathers also have to be affected by the rules regulating the conciliation of family and employment. Therefore, the number of nursery schools and public childcare provision needs to be increased for children between 0 and 3 and between 3 and 6. If parents are willing to, the promotion of part-time work (not fixed-term contracts) could also be necessary.

Description of existing policy measures and of good practices shows the important role of municipality, at the local level. On the local level, innovative projects are developed,

coordinated and supported, creating new employment in a “productive” framework of economy. But these activities create employment in the economy of “social needs”, too. They promote activities in economy of “social needs”, which means that they create employment to improve education, to take care of elder persons, of children and disadvantaged people. This also means to increase support in areas such as social services and health.

Presently, all activities need a legal background and their appearance in budgets of national and regional administration is unavoidable.

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UK

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Introduction

In the UK the coordination of policy for disadvantaged young people in the areas that are focused upon within this study fall under a number of different administrative boundaries. In England it mainly falls under the remit of the Department of Education and Skills and the Department of Work and Pensions. From 1999, following the extended devolution of power to the regional parliaments educational policy outside of England is the responsibility of the devolved national assemblies of Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland²²⁰, who have continued to develop their own distinctive educational policies. Employment and social services policy however remains the responsibility of UK national government.

Over recent years there have been many policy reforms within the broad area of disadvantaged youth policy, some of these reforms have been adopted nationally, whilst others remain specific to the UK regional contexts. It is not possible within the confines of this study to highlight the different directions of policy, that have been taken throughout each of the UK regions, and therefore the focus has been on those policies that operate at the national level or those that are specific to the English educational context.

UK Context in Relation to Early School Leaving and Unemployment

Until relatively recently the large majority of young people in the UK left education at the age of 16, at the end of compulsory schooling, and made direct entry to the labour market. With the changes to the occupational structure and the large shift from the manufacturing to service sector, that occurred throughout the 1970's and 1980's there has been a sharp decline in the availability of jobs for early school leavers. Participation in post-compulsory education and training has risen steadily, with 87% of 16 year olds currently participating in some form of education or training, although participation rates fall steeply with age thereafter (DfES, 2005a)²²¹.

The UK has also witnessed large increases in participation in higher education, where there has been considerable success in achieving expansion, with the aim of achieving 50% participation by 2010. Despite these general increases in educational participation, participation at the post compulsory level remains well below the desired level, with lower levels of achievement among a minority of young people and significant levels of educational disengagement at an early stage.

²²⁰ Following the collapse of the political process in Northern Ireland, since 2002 all devolved policy in Northern Ireland has reverted back to London ministers, with the suspension of devolved power.

²²¹ Figures apply to England only.

Participation in post-compulsory education and training is strongly linked to levels of attainment at examinations at age 16 (GCSE's) and females now outperform males at all levels of education in the UK, both in terms of qualifications (Table 1) and levels of participation.

The relationship with ethnicity and educational attainment on the other hand is not straightforward, with certain ethnic groups outperforming British Whites (Table 1). On average young people from a Black or Pakistani/Bangladeshi ethnic background achieve lower levels of attainment than British Whites, whilst those from Indian or Chinese backgrounds have the highest level of attainment of all ethnic groups. Different levels of attainment among ethnic groups may be partially a reflection of variations in socio-economic composition. Analysis of attainment at age 16 shows that after controlling for deprivation the higher levels of success among Indian and Chinese pupils for both the deprived and non-deprived groups remains above average. Among the deprived population White British, those from Traveller, Irish Heritage and Roma backgrounds have the lowest levels of attainment, whilst those from a deprived Black ethnic background perform slightly better than comparable whites, the performance of the non-deprived Black population is also well below the national average. The underachievement among young Blacks is seen to be most acute among Black Caribbean males.

Table 1: Attainment at age 16 in England & Wales: Percent achieving 5+ GCSE's at Grades A-C

	%
Males	46
Females	56
White	52
Black	36
Asian (All)	52
- Indian	60
- Pakistani	40
- Bangladeshi	41
- Other Asian	64
Other Ethnic Group	53
Not Stated	30

Source: DfES Youth Cohort Survey

Unemployment among young people in the UK experienced a dramatic rise from the mid 1970's and continued at a high level during the 1980's due to successive recessions and economic restructuring associated with the decline of the manufacturing industries. Since then it has fallen dramatically both as a result of increasing educational participation combined with a recent period of relative economic stability with slow but sustained economic growth. In Spring 2004 overall unemployment reached its lowest rate since 1975, with levels of unemployment among young people typically following the adult rate albeit at a higher level. Current levels of unemployment are lower than the EU average (Table 2), with an LFS unemployment rate of around 11% among 18-24 year olds although it is significantly higher among 16 and 17 year olds who have left education (20.8% LFS), who represent about 6 per cent of the age cohort.

Table 2: ILO unemployment Rates United Kingdom (October to December 2004)

	%
All 16-17 Year Olds	20.8
Males (16-17 Years)	22.8
Females (16-17 Years)	18.9
All 18-24 Year Olds	10.9
Males (18-24 Years)	12.3
Females (18-24 Years)	9.4

Source: ONS Labour Force Survey

Whilst it is common for young people of all educational levels in the UK to experience a spell of unemployment during the initial transitions from education to employment, albeit of relatively short duration, longer-term difficulties in the labour market tend to be perceived as concentrated among the least qualified, this is supported by analyses of people of working age which shows a direct relationship between educational level and unemployment rates.²²² Analysis of long-term unemployment in Spring 2003 (defined as over 12 months) shows younger workers (18-24 years) for both men and women are less likely to be subject to long-term unemployment. For men 38% of men aged over 50 and over were unemployed for 12 months plus, while for 18-24 year old men the respective figure was 15% (Begum, N. 2004).

Reflecting the pattern of the labour market as whole, unemployment is slightly higher among young males compared to females, among 18-24 year olds 12.3% and 9.4% respectively.

²²²

Unemployment: by highest qualification, Spring 2003. ONS: Labour Force Survey

Some ethnic minority groups experience above average levels of unemployment in particular Blacks and those from Pakistani/Bangladeshi backgrounds.

Key Characteristics of Disadvantaged Youth

In considering the specific characteristics of young people who are at risk of experiencing long-term social exclusion and extended periods of unemployment the following groups have been identified as most at risk:

- Those who achieve low levels of qualification and leave education or training at age 16, or drop-out of vocational training, including the status zero or NEET group
- Those who lack basic skills (Numeracy and Literacy).
- Teenage parents
- Young people leaving Local Authority care
- Males more than females
- Blacks (African/West Indian Descent and whites from lower socio-economic backgrounds.
- Those with special educational needs
- Strongly associated with poverty and family disadvantage.

Policy Approach

At a broad policy level the focus has been on raising educational achievement to ensure international competitiveness, centred around a policy discourse on building skills for the knowledge economy. Employability and social exclusion policies have focused very much on the supply side, aiming to tackle the perceived skills deficits of young people. At the lower end of the attainment spectrum there remains a minority of young people who leave school with minimal levels of qualification success, at a level perceived to be below that required for employability in the modern labour market and employer groups have frequently criticised a deficit in basic skills among school leavers. The government aims to tackle low post-16 participation and has set itself a target of increasing participation at age 17 from 75% to 90% over the next ten years. There is also a particular concern with the status zero/NEET group and the comparatively high levels of teenage parenthood in the UK. These issues are not only linked to concerns over unemployment, but wider concerns over criminality among young people, risks of long-term social exclusion and welfare dependency.

The strategy is concerned with reducing disadvantage through ensuring employability with an

analysis that stresses the importance of education and training, and one that balances rights with responsibilities. For example, stringent conditions are applied to access welfare benefits and Active Labour Market Policies that include sanctions for non-compliance or insufficient job search efforts. Although the 'New Labour' government in the UK has no explicit policy in reducing class based inequalities, debates over inequality have tended to be conducted in the context of social exclusion agendas and building a world-class economy. The political response has often been framed in terms of poverty is not an excuse for educational underachievement and if some can succeed so can others, however increasingly educational strategy documents have explicitly acknowledged the link between poverty and educational attainment and considerable policy efforts have been placed on preventative approaches aimed at tackling disadvantage in the pre and early years of schooling. This focus on tackling disadvantage at an early stage is reflected in the UK's National Action Plan on Social Inclusion.

The work of the Social Exclusion Unit, a policy think tank based within the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister has been an influential body in promoting a more coherent holistic approach to policy aimed at disadvantage youth, rather than the largely disjointed approach to policy across different government departments that had tended to predominate in the past. In particular its influential report produced in 1998 '*Bridging the Gap*', which provided a detailed research based analysis of the NEET group and led subsequently to the development of the Connexions service in England (See below).

Personal advisers and local partnerships formed between agencies within the public, have been at the heart of the delivery of many of the new policy developments, advisers providing one-to-one support and a single point of contact for disadvantage young people, with the aim of brokering additional services according to their clients needs through a range of local partnerships involving the public, private and voluntary sectors.

Increasingly policy reforms have attempted to build policy on evidence based practice, and major programs have only been rolled out nationally following pilot projects and thorough research evaluation and this has led to an evolutionary policy approach, with the continual reformulation of policy as difficulties have emerged. In particular this has resulted in greater flexibility in provision reflecting local circumstances set within the boundaries of centrally national prescribed policy frameworks. Target setting in the form of clearly specified quantitative indicators and the sharing of best practice have been other major features of recent policy, although the overemphasis on the former has sometimes been criticised in creating too much focus among practitioners in the achievement of targets rather than promoting a more individualised approach.

Labour Market Policies for Unemployed Youth

In-line with the proposals contained within the Lisbon summit the UK government launched a major active labour market policy whereby all young people aged between 18 and 24 are required to enter the 'New Deal for Young People' following a period of 6 months continuous unemployment. Participation in the programme is mandatory and those who fail to cooperate

can be sanctioned through the withdrawal of benefits.

There is an initial four-month ‘Gateway’ period during which time individuals draw up an individual action plan with the assistance of a personal adviser and are given help with job search and vocational guidance. Many young people leave the programme during this Gateway phase and successfully enter employment, for those who fail to find employment within the specified period they may enter one of four main options: A period of subsidised work experience with an employer, an education or training course up to NVQ Level 2 (equivalent of ISCED 3) a place on a voluntary programme or on an environmental task force. (see Annex IV, Chapter 3 in this volume).

Certain young people with specific disadvantages are entitled to enter the programme prior to the normal 6-month unemployment requirement. The programme is coordinated by Job Centre Plus (formerly the Employment Service) and delivered through a series of local partnerships and provision at the local level is often enhanced through ESF funded projects. Since its initial conception as a programme for young people, New Deal provision has been developed to cater for a range of other groups such as lone parents and the disabled although in these cases participation is voluntary.

Educational Reform: 14-19 Education

Successive reforms have been made to the qualification system in the UK and have led to the development of a qualification framework that offers diverse and flexible patterns of attainment with coherent routes for progression within the vocational, general and academic post-compulsory educational provision. During the compulsory years in England students follow a National Curriculum up to the age of 16, they progress through compulsory education in year groups and students rarely repeat or skip school years. Recent attempts have been made to reduce the level of prescribed subjects within the National Curriculum in order to allow the option for more vocational options in the 14-16 curriculum. Concerns have been expressed that the curriculum has focused too much on the more able majority of pupils at the expense of the lower attainment group. At the post-sixteen level despite numerous reforms, the UK has continued to struggle to establish a quality and coherent system of work-based vocational training, which continues to be perceived of low status in relation to the general or academic route. Although influenced by, but not solely confined to concerns over the more disadvantaged group, a major review of educational provision for the 14-19 age group has recently been undertaken, this led to the White Paper ‘*14-19 Education and Skills*’ published in February 2005 (DfES, 2005b).

The proposals contained in the White Paper represent a major reform of the 14-19 curriculum and assessment and is to be phased in over a 10 year period. Many of the proposals contained within the White Paper focus on those young people who face barriers to learning; such as those who drop out because existing qualifications and learning styles do not suit them, those with personal problems outside of school and those with specific learning difficulties. It has proposals to ensure a greater focus on English and Mathematics to ensure all young people are equipped with the expected standards in these basic skills by the age of 14. Some of the proposals however have been criticised for failing to follow the original working groups

recommendations to break down the vocational and academic divide by replacing existing qualifications with a single unified Diploma available over four levels (Tomlinson, 2004). Instead the proposals propose to retain the academic examinations (GCSE's and A Levels), but aim to provide alternative specialised diplomas in 14 vocational areas covering each occupational sector of the economy, available at three different levels and developed in conjunction with employers. The flexibility over the duration of study, which currently tends to be restricted to age cohorts will be increased to reflect the different pace of learning styles. This will also include making available the existing prevocational course, 'Entry to Employment' currently only available to 16-18 year olds, available from the age 14.

The Connexions Service

The *Bridging the Gap* Report of the Social Exclusion Unit represented the government's assessment of 16-18 year olds not in education, employment or training (NEET) and identified two main sets of factors associated with non-participation educational underachievement and disaffection and family disadvantage and poverty, which led to the development of the Connexions Service in England (SEU, 1999).

The Connexions Service (see Annex IV, Chapter 1 in this volume) is a mainstream programme that is aimed at 13-19 year olds; at the heart of the service is a new profession of *Personal Advisers*, recruited from the former Careers Service, youth and social workers. The aim of the role of Personal Advisers is to provide a single point of contact for the delivery of support to young people across a wide range of issues. Whilst it is a universal service, the level of support provided has three tiers: Intensive and sustained support for those with multiple problems, in-depth guidance for those at risk of disengaging from learning and for the rest advice on education and careers choices with minimal intervention. Aside from providing generalised career advice to the majority, among those at risk of disengaging the aim is to provide holistic support to those with multiple problems and end the fragmentation of services for young people at risk. Personal Advisers provide a single point of contact for an individual young person and broker advice or support from a range of other agencies through local partnerships depending upon the young persons needs. (see Annex IV, Chapter 1 in this volume for further details). In the context of reaching out to young people outside of the education and training system, the programme "Getting Connected" is an attempt to make use of non-formal education methods to bring these young people closer to the education system (see Annex IV, Chapter 3 in this volume).

Anti-Discrimination Policies

Although as highlighted above there is not a clear relationship between educational participation and attainment and disadvantage in the UK among young people from Ethnic Minorities, employment outcomes after controlling for the level of education or skills highlight persistent disadvantage. The UK National Action Plan for Employment highlights that although some ethnic groups have employment rates close to whites other groups' fare

much worse (UK NAP 2004). In 2001 the Prime Minister commissioned a Strategy Unit to look into the reasons behind Ethnic Minority employment disadvantage. The Strategy Unit report led to a number of detailed recommendations including the creation of a cross-departmental Ethnic Minority Employment Task Force, which was established in 2003 and incorporates Government ministers and other key stakeholder groups. Although the remit is not specific to young people the Task Force aims to monitor progress in relation to reducing discrimination across different government departments and implement a range measures to provide greater support for ethnic minorities education and employment outcomes (Ethnic Minority Employment Task Force, 2004). Although this represents a commitment on the part of national government to tackle discrimination among ethnic groups, and progress has made in implementing the recommendations of the Strategy Unit it is too early to assess the quantitative impact of the ongoing strategy in reducing ethnic minority disadvantage.

One of the policies that specifically addresses young people from minority backgrounds is the Ethnic Minority Achievement Grant (EMAG). This allows schools to apply for additional financial resources to support activities specifically designed to improve the attainment of minority ethnic and refugee pupils. In particular it aims to raise standards of achievement for those minority ethnic groups who are particularly at risk of under – achieving, to meet the particular needs of pupils for whom English is an additional language (EAL) or the children of refugees. A range of programmes have been funded under EMAG, mostly providing additional staff in the form of learning mentors and projects tend to focus either on language issues or addressing issues such as peer pressure or negative expectations. Although there are no quantitative measures on the impact of the programme, qualitative evaluation of the pilot projects for EMAG indicated that an overall positive assessment of the programme from teachers, pupils and parents. School staff felt the programme had contributed both directly and indirectly to raising the achievement of Ethnic Minority pupils (Cunningham et al, 2004).

Other Relevant Policies

There have been numerous other reforms over recent years to promote increased initial participation in post-compulsory education and training and tackle disadvantaged young peoples disengagement with learning. These include economic incentives that are provided to young people according to family household income through the Educational Maintenance Allowance (EMA), which was recently expanded to cover vocational training as well as school-based education. The Allowance is aimed at 16-18 years who are studying a post-compulsory educational course up to and including NVQ3. It has three levels dependent on household income (available to all those with household income under 44,000 Euro) and around half the age population should qualify for a payment of between 15 and 45 Euros each week. Dependent on progress young people can receive up to a further total of 740 Euros in additional bonuses over the duration of their course. A longitudinal quantitative study of the EMA pilot areas, showed both a positive increase in participation and retention rates in post-compulsory education, particularly among young males (Middleton et al, 2003).

Sure Start Plus forms part of the national Teenage Pregnancy Strategy and aims to reduce the risk of long-term social exclusion among young parents under 18-years. It is delivered

locally through partnerships and tends to have strong links with the Connexions service. Teenage parents are given access to a specialist personal adviser with the aim of providing personal, confidential advice and support to pregnant teenagers. In particular providing support with: healthcare during and after pregnancy, parenting skills and support, practical housing and benefit assistance and access to education, training, work and childcare.

Key Issues and Concerns

There has been significant debate over the proposed reforms to 14-19 education and in particular whether the reforms go far enough in bridging the divide between the status of academic and vocational courses and whether the traditional academic qualifications should remain in their current form.

There have been issues surrounding the Connexions Service and its ability to fulfil its role as both a universal service to the majority of young people and also a targeted service to those with multiple disadvantages. There has been concern that as a result of the establishment of the Connexions Service that the careers guidance needs of the majority have been neglected as the service has focused more on the disadvantaged and there is speculation that these two forms of provision may become separate.

There have been ongoing debates over the compulsory element of participation in the New Deal for Young People, and there is some evidence to suggest that this may drive some young people off the unemployment register and may leave some in real economic hardship through the application of benefit sanctions for non-compliance. There is also some debate over the extent it should focus on the most disadvantaged group as opposed to all young people who experience 6 months unemployment. Although supporters of the programme would highlight that the majority of young people move off the programme into employment relatively quickly and that the majority of resources are focused on the more disadvantaged residual.

The continued underachievement of Black ethnic minority pupils continues to represent a particular area of concern, especially as increasing levels of attainment among the majority of young people have not been shared to the same extent among Black pupils leading to a widening of the attainment gap. Recent debates have begun to emerge over whether Black males educational needs in particular may be best served through separate school or class provision, a proposal that the government has strongly rejected.

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Experts consulted

David Taylor, Young People's Strategic Delivery Division, Department of Education and Skills

Nick Powell, Welfare to Work, Children and Disabled People Group. Department of Work and Pensions.

Simon Wood, Department of Work and Pensions

Stephen Foster, National Youth Agency.

Annex III

Guidelines for National Data Collection

Thematic study on policies for disadvantaged youth: Guidelines for data collection

About the product: In order to be able to efficiently gather the information for the project and for comparability reasons, we have chosen not to have every partner write a national report, but rather use a questionnaire-type of instrument. We would ask you to fill in your answers into the given structure of questions and enlarge where further explanation is needed. Either answer briefly or with bullet lists. If additional tables are helpful add an annex. After completing the questionnaire the overall length should not exceed 40 pages.

Collecting the feedback from all partners, mainly for clarification, we have added/ altered some questions: these are marked in yellow for your convenience.

To provide more focus on the overall questions of this data collection exercise, we have included comments to each section on the key topics in green. Please use these as guidance if unsure which questions/data are most important and which ones have a lower priority.

We have marked the top priority questions with an asterisk (*).

PLEASE, refer to years 2003 and 2004. If 2004 not available: 2003 or the latest available data!

DEADLINE for completing and resending: 1st of March 2005 !!

Please, send what you have by 1 March also if not complete. You will have 2 more weeks to finalise your questionnaires. This gives us the possibility to start with inserting the answers in an overall matrix. If some answers are only provisional in the first version please indicate!

Please particularly consider gender and ethnic differences in all of your answers!

Sources:

- National Action Plans for Employment for the European Employment Strategy
http://www.europa.eu.int/comm/employment_social/employment_strategy/04_national_en.htm or Joint Action Plans in case of acceding countries:
http://www.europa.eu.int/comm/employment_social/employment_analysis/japs_en.htm
- National Action Plans for Social Inclusion
http://www.europa.eu.int/comm/employment_social/news/2001/jun/napsincl2001_en.html (some information for Romania and Bulgaria under:
http://www.europa.eu.int/comm/employment_social/enlargement/inclusion_front_en.htm)
- **VERY IMPORTANT:** Drafts of joint employment and social inclusion reports for 2005 available (Please, refer to the objectives/recommendations set for your specific country!):
<http://europa.eu.int/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=IP/05/100&format=HTML&aged=0&language=EN&guiLanguage=en>
- European Training Foundation (new member states and acceding countries): www.etf.eu.int
- OECD: PISA-studies 2000: <http://www.pisa.oecd.org/dataoecd/44/53/33691596.pdf>
 2003: <http://www.pisa.oecd.org/dataoecd/1/60/34002216.pdf>

To be used nationally:

- national education and labour market statistics
- evaluation studies
- youth research (surveys and qualitative)
- where necessary (due to lack of data) expert interviews may be carried out

Please indicate which sources your replies are based on and, where necessary, give your appraisal on reliability of data.

1. Give a brief description of the transition system (ca. 5 pages)

Key topics: Integrated/selective school system; structure of vocational education and training system; labour market for young people

- 1.1 General organisation of school system
- 1.1.1 * Up until what age is education compulsory?
AGE
- 1.1.2 * At what age/after how many years do differentiated routes start?
AGE
- 1.1.3 * Are decisions for different routes
COMPULSORY (e.g. according to marks) [] VOLUNTARY []
- 1.2 Special Schools
- 1.2.1 * Are there special schools for disabled (what categories? Only physically or mentally disabled or also those with learning disabilities?)
NO SPECIAL SCHOOLS [] YES, THE FOLLOWING TYPES:
PHYSICALLY, SENSORIALLY OR MENTAL DISABLED []
(Normally physical handicap refers to brain and other physical lesions, while
sensorial refers to blinds , etc)
LEARNING DIFFICULTIES []
OTHER TYPES: PLEASE LIST
- 1.2.2 If there are no special schools for some of these categories do there exist special provisions of support within normal schools?
INSERT OPEN ANSWER HERE (give reference)
- 1.3 Organisation of vocational training
- 1.3.1 * Does it take place in schools, companies or both? Are there different systems operating parallelly?
[] Only Schools [] Only companies [] either/or
[] alternating/apprenticeship
DESCRIBE
- 1.3.2 * What is the coverage? How many young people are included?
INSERT OPEN ANSWER HERE (give reference)
- 1.3.3 Who steers and who pays vocational training: state, companies, social partners?
INSERT OPEN ANSWER HERE (give reference to laws and other regulations)
- 1.3.4 Are there national standards for company-based training?
YES [] NO []
- 1.3.5 What is the relationship between academic and vocational tracks?

INSERT OPEN ANSWER HERE (give reference to laws and other regulations e.g. about convertibility of qualifications and certificates)

- 1.3.6 * How many young people (%) reach an education certificate allowing for higher professional training and University or polytechniques (ISCED 4/5)?

INSERT % HERE (give source)

Do both general and vocational education in upper secondary qualify for access to higher professional training/higher education)

[] Only general education [] Both [] vocational ed. only partially

- 1.3.7 How many (%) actually enrol in higher education (i.e. ISCED levels 4 and 5)?

INSERT % HERE (give source)

- 1.4 Structure of the youth labour market (Please consider gender, region, ethnic background, age groups and other relevant socio-economically relevant categories wherever possible in the following questions)

- 1.4.1a * What are the most frequent trajectories of young people to enter the labour market/start a career? (e.g. direct from school to work, through apprenticeship training etc.) Mention at least three (if possible give percentage of school leavers). Are there studies about the duration and different patterns of transition?

INSERT OPEN ANSWER HERE (give reference)

- 1.4.1b Share of young people according to different situations between study and work?

INSERT % HERE (give source)

1. Young people who work and study

2. Young people who study only

3. Young people who work only

- 1.4.2 To what extent do young people entering the labour market compete with adults or is there a specific youth labour market? Is there a special segment of the labour market in which labour market entrants typically are employed (apprenticeship, low wage sector, part-time etc.)

INSERT OPEN ANSWER HERE (give reference)

- 1.4.3 * Are there jobs/careers which are accessible without education or training certificate?

INSERT OPEN ANSWER HERE and give an estimate of the share (%) of school leavers in such trajectories (give reference)

- 1.4.4 * What is the youth unemployment rate and the overall unemployment rate (differentiated according to gender) in 2003 and 2004?

INSERT % HERE (give reference where possible use ILO definitions)

- 1.4.4b * What is the relation between registered and unregistered unemployed young people

INSERT OPEN ANSWER HERE (give source)

IF AVAILABLE, GIVE QUANTITATIVE ESTIMATIONS (give source)

- 1.4.5 What age limits exist in definitions of ‘young’ unemployed? If necessary differentiate according to different institutions or actors and programmes
AGE
- 1.4.6 Partial overlap with 3.11: Please skip here and provide info in 3.11 What is the percentage of long-term unemployment among young unemployed?
INSERT % HERE (give source)
- 1.4.7 * To what extent do regional disparities exist with regard to (youth) unemployment?
INSERT OPEN ANSWER HERE (give reference)
- 1.4.8 What are important economic sectors for (youth) employment?
INSERT OPEN ANSWER HERE (give reference)
- 1.4.9 What are the economic prospects with regard to future development of (youth) (un)employment? How are economic growth dynamics and sectoral developments linked to youth (un)employment?
INSERT OPEN ANSWER HERE (give reference)
- 1.5 * Where are the weaknesses of the national transition system according to
 - Your point of view?
 - Policy makers point of view?
 - Public debate/Media (give some recent examples)

2. Who are the disadvantaged young people? (ca. 6 pages)

Key topics: Differentiation and critical appraisal of the definition of “disadvantaged youth”

- 2.1 From scientific point of view?
INSERT OPEN ANSWER HERE ON MAJOR SCIENTIFIC DISCOURSES (give reference, please consider studies from “neighbouring fields” which overlap as well, e.g. research on deprived areas, families’ roles in transitions, interrelation with income and other inequalities)
- 2.2 According to labour market and education/training statistics?
INSERT PERCENTAGES FROM OFFICIAL SOURCES HERE (give reference)
- 2.3 * According to policy makers, guidelines of policy programmes and/or law? Are there fixed codifications for disadvantaged youth (e.g. in the German Employment Act disadvantaged young people – who receive special assistance are defined as those “with learning disabilities and social disadvantages who for the reasons lying in their person are not capable to initiate, continue or complete successfully a vocational training.” with an age limit of 25 (while definition is broader in the Child and Youth Welfare Act)
INSERT OPEN ANSWER HERE (give reference)
- 2.4 * How does unemployment and early school leaving vary according to socio-economic background, gender, **education**, ethnicity and regional labour markets?
INSERT % (give reference)

INSERT OPEN ANSWER HERE (give reference)

- 2.5 * What is the relationship between different aspects of disadvantage (e.g. relation between low class background and education; or between gender and ethnicity etc.)? And what are the main predictive factors that are associated with disadvantage?

INSERT OPEN ANSWER HERE (give reference)

- 2.6 * Are there distinct groups addressed as ‘problems groups’ and how important are they? (please rate items from list on a scale between 1=no significant role to 5=very important, and add groups relevant in your country, but not listed, differentiate these ranks according to the 3 perspectives of a) Public debate and media, b) mainstream policy, c) research. By media and wider public we mean current public debates and the groups of young people being covered within them)

Importance by actor	Public / media	Mainstream policy	Research
Early school leavers			
Outdated qualifications			
Teenage/single parents			
Young people brought up in local authority care			
Migrants/Ethnic minorities			
Learning disabilities			
From workless families			
From disadvantaged areas			
Other:			

- 2.7 * How do institutional definitions distinguish between disadvantage resulting from individual deficits and from social segmentation (here, primarily definitions in programme guidelines are of interest)?

INSERT OPEN ANSWER HERE (give reference)

- 2.8 Are there qualitative studies on how young people explain (their) unemployment and/or early school leaving? What are key issues (Bullet list)

INSERT OPEN ANSWER HERE (give reference)

3. What are key transition problems of disadvantaged youth (ca. 8 pages) Key topics: Nature of early-school leaving;

- 3.1 What means early school leaving in your context ...
... according to official terms (before end of compulsory education or before end of post-compulsory education) ...

INSERT OPEN ANSWER HERE (give reference)

- 3.2 What is the relation between young people deciding themselves not to continue with education or being ‘pushed out’ by the education system

(e.g. in differentiated school systems like Germany selection processes at different levels are in-built into the system which means that the decision to increase human capital is not left to the individual but taken by the institutions e.g. via marks)

INSERT OPEN ANSWER HERE (give reference)

- 3.3 * ... and quantitatively? (in % of school leavers per year: total, male, female)

before the end of compulsory education: INSERT % HERE

before the end of post-compulsory education: INSERT % HERE

INDICATE source and year of data

- 3.4 Is there qualitative research about early school leavers? What are the key issues?

INSERT OPEN ANSWER HERE (up to one page; give references)

- 3.5 Potential overlap with 1.4.4b, please skip here What means youth unemployment qualitatively and quantitatively:

What age range is referred to as ‘young unemployed’

HERE age (source)

- 3.6 * Are they registered?

INSERT OPEN ANSWER HERE

INCLUDE OFFICIAL DEFINITION OF UNEMPLOYED YOUTH (whose definition is this; employment service, ministry etc??)

- 3.7 * Do they get unemployment benefits or social assistance and under what conditions?

INSERT OPEN ANSWER HERE (source)

How much? (% of adult rates, absolute amounts) HERE (source)

For how long? (months) HERE (source)

- 3.8 Is there a stigma attached to youth unemployment or it is perceived as “normal”? Is this different according to different perspectives (peers, state institutions, employers etc.)?

INSERT OPEN ANSWER HERE (give reference)

- 3.9 Do statistics distinguish between unemployed and in search for first job

YES [] NO []

- 3.10 What consequences has this distinction?

INSERT OPEN ANSWER HERE (give reference)

- 3.11 How relevant is long-term unemployment among youth?

HERE definition of long-term unemployment (in months; indicate source)

HERE % of all young unemployed

- 3.12 * Are there estimations about young people who are neither in work nor in education nor registered as unemployed ?

HERE % or absolute numbers (indicate source of information)

- 3.13 Is there information about reasons of unemployed youth not to register?
INSERT OPEN ANSWER HERE (give reference)
- 3.14 How are they referred to by policy discourses? What terms are used? Are there specific policies?
INSERT OPEN ANSWER HERE (give reference)
- 3.15 Is there information about youth consciously choosing unemployment?
INSERT OPEN ANSWER HERE (give reference)
- 3.16 * How are they referred to by policy discourses? What terms are used? Are there specific policies?
INSERT OPEN ANSWER HERE (give reference)
- 3.17 Is there qualitative research about unemployed young people? What are key issues?
INSERT OPEN ANSWER HERE (up to one page; give references)
- 3.18a * What is the relationship between low educational attainment, early school leaving and subsequent labour market integration? To what extent do those who experience early labour market problems, face long-term disadvantage and social exclusion? (explanatory note: in some countries youth unemployment is a ‘normal’ feature of transitions while after a certain period most succeed in entering stable employment while in other contexts early transition problems are likely to persist)
INSERT OPEN ANSWER and eventually % (give references)
- 3.18b To what extent are young people with upper secondary and higher education certificates concerned by unemployment? To what extent does unemployment affect their trajectory in terms of duration of unemployment, loss of human capital etc?
INSERT OPEN ANSWER and eventually % (give references)
- 3.19a * what forms of non-standard work arrangements do exist which are relevant for young people?
INSERT OPEN ANSWER HERE AND GIVE DEFINITIONS WHICH ARE RELEVANT IN YOUR CONTEXT (give references)
HERE % of active youth population if available (indicate source)
- 3.19b * To what extent can these be characterised as precarious (income level, stability, security etc.)?
INSERT OPEN ANSWER HERE AND GIVE DEFINITIONS WHICH ARE RELEVANT IN YOUR CONTEXT (give references)
HERE % of active youth population if available (indicate source)
- 3.20 * What role does the informal economy play? What forms do exist? Does young people’s involvement in the informal economy aid integration into the mainstream labour market or does it represent a trap?
INSERT OPEN ANSWER HERE (give references)

HERE quantitative estimations % of active youth population or absolute numbers
(indicate source)

- 3.21 Are there any impacts of unemployment to intra-national and international mobility of young people? Is this taken up by some policies?
INSERT OPEN ANSWER HERE (give references)

4. What impact do inclusion and active labour market policies have on youth transitions? (ca. 16 pages)

Key topics: Structure and outcomes of labour market and inclusion policies

4.1 YOUTH UNEMPLOYMENT

- 4.1.1 * What measures and schemes do exist for young unemployed?

FILL IN TABLE 1

Please add any comments to the measures listed in table 1 if you think this is necessary for understanding:

INSERT OPEN ANSWER (give references)

- 4.1.2 Are labour market policies for young people directly connected to the regular education and training system or separated?

INSERT OPEN ANSWER (give references)

- 4.1.3 To what extent do policies focus on preventative measures or are purely reactive to manifest problems?

INSERT OPEN ANSWER (give references)

- 4.1.4 * What is more frequent: policies aiming at young people's employability or policies aiming at developing opportunities in education, training, and employment? Is there a dominant type of policy measures?

INSERT OPEN ANSWER (give references)

- 4.1.5 * What role does 'activation' play? By activation policies are meant that aim at excluding the option of unemployment by forcing or motivating young people to active job search, participation in education or training or to accept any job (e.g. workfare policies). How is it defined in your context? To what extent are sanctions applied (and what sanctions) if young unemployed do not comply?

INSERT OPEN ANSWER (give references)

- 4.1.6 What are the main policies to "make work pay" and to what extent are young people concerned (this relates to conditions of entitlements of unemployment benefits or social assistance (see above)?

reduction of benefits minimum wage tax credits None

INSERT OPEN ANSWER (give references)

- 4.1.7 * Please describe in depth whether and how ‘individualised action plans’ (one of the key measures mainstreamed through EU-policies) are put into practise. Thereby, mechanisms of counselling and guidance are intended which are tailored to individual needs. This may include a contract between unemployed individual and employment service about concrete steps.
- Who are main actors (e.g. employment service)? HERE
- What means individualised?
- INSERT OPEN ANSWER (give references)
- 4.1.8 Please give some indicators for the quality of guidance
- Are they specifically trained? YES [] NO []
- How are they trained (subjects, duration)
- INSERT OPEN ANSWER (give references)
- How many cases (young people) do counsellors have to counsel on average? RATIO BETWEEN COUNSELLORS AND CASES HERE
- 4.1.9 What options are available to justify the attribute ‘individualised’? What follows after such orientation and counselling processes? Do young people have real choice?
- INSERT OPEN ANSWER (give references)
- 4.1.10/11 * Please describe three measures which you have valued as very important which you think could be recommended as a ‘good practice’; please give a reason why you value it good practice? At least two mainstream examples (see minutes of Tuebingen meeting); this may include examples which you have valued as very important which you however find problematic and/or not successful (max. 1 page per example)
- 4.1.12 * To what extent are measures successful/effective in reducing unemployment and/or reaching other goals?
- FILL IN TABLE 2 (MARK DIFFERENTIATIONS ACCORDING TO CATEGORIES LIKE GENDER, REGION, ETHNIC BACKGROUND ETC. WHERE IMPORTANT)
- 4.1.13 Do you agree with the success criteria prevailing in the different measures (column XX). What about practitioners’ views?
- INSERT OPEN ANSWER (give references)
- 4.1.14 * How are programmes evaluated?
- INSERT OPEN ANSWER (give official references and research opinion)
- 4.1.15 Are there qualitative evaluation data or studies on how young people do experience policy measures? What are the key trends?
- INSERT OPEN ANSWER (give references)..
- 4.1.16 How is young people’s work in the informal labour market perceived by public debate and policies (only negatively or...)?
- INSERT OPEN ANSWER (give references)

- 4.1.17 * What policies do exist with regard to young people's working in the informal economy and are they successful?
INSERT OPEN ANSWER (give references)

4.2 EARLY SCHOOL LEAVING

- 4.2.1 * What measures and schemes do exist with regard to early school leaving?
FILL IN TABLE 3
Please add any comments to the measures listed in table 3 if you think this is necessary for understanding
INSERT OPEN ANSWER (give references)
- 4.2.2 Are inclusion programmes addressing early school leaving part of regular education or separated?
INSERT OPEN ANSWER (give references)
- 4.2.3 Are there preventative measures that attempt to counter the effects of disadvantage through education with regard to family and ethnic background?
INSERT OPEN ANSWER (give references)
- 4.2.4 To what extent do policies focus on preventative measures or are purely reactive to manifest problems?
INSERT OPEN ANSWER (give references)
- 4.2.5 Do programmes include that (potential) early school leavers are orientated towards education certificates of lower status?
INSERT OPEN ANSWER (give references)
- 4.2.6 Please, describe the relationship between formal and non-formal learning in addressing early school leaving and how individual learning needs are considered.
INSERT OPEN ANSWER (give references)
- 4.2.7 Are there specific means to monitor learning processes in order to identify potential early school leaving?
INSERT OPEN ANSWER (give references)
- 4.2.8 Please describe in depth one other measure which you have valued as very important (in terms of quantity and political relevance and policy in table 3)?
INSERT OPEN ANSWER (give references)
- 4.2.9 * To what extent are measures successful/effective in reducing early school leaving and/or reaching other goals?
FILL in TABLE 4
For further comments INSERT OPEN ANSWER (give references)
- 4.2.10 Do you agree with the success criteria prevailing in the different measures (column XX). What about practitioners' views?
INSERT OPEN ANSWER (give references)

4.2.11 * How are programmes evaluated?

INSERT OPEN ANSWER (give references)

4.2.12/13 * Please describe in depth three measures which you have valued as very important which you think could be recommended as a ‘good practice’; please give a reason why you value it good practice? This may include measures valued as very important which you however find problematic and/or not successful? Give a reason why you find it problematic and/or explain why it is not successful:

INSERT OPEN ANSWER (give references; max. 1 page each)

4.2.14 Are there qualitative evaluation data or studies on how young people do experience policy measures? What are key trends? (up to ½ page bullet list/key words)

INSERT OPEN ANSWER (give references)

4.3 Regarding BOTH unemployment and early school leaving

4.3.1 How are key terms of EU policies interpreted and set into practice regarding youth unemployment and early school leaving:

- Employability: HERE (give official references)
- Lifelong learning: HERE (give official references)
- Participation: HERE (give official references)

4.3.2 * What is the relation between local, regional, national and European actors?

INSERT OPEN ANSWER (give references)

4.3.3 What roles do third sector organisations play? How do these organisations perform in terms of continuity, stability and professionalism? Are they acknowledged by state institutions as partners? Are there laws regulating their position?

INSERT OPEN ANSWER (give references)

4.3.4 How relevant are local partnerships? Are they stable and reliable? Who are key actors in such partnerships?

INSERT OPEN ANSWER (give references)

4.3.5 * Are there explicit anti-discrimination policies implemented concerning disadvantaged young people (especially with regard to gender and ethnicity) and how are they related to labour market policies and policies to prevent early school leaving?

INSERT OPEN ANSWER (give references)

4.3.6 Is integration of ethnic minorities in general addressed rather on a structural level (anti-discrimination policy, positive action policy etc.) or rather on an individual level by ascribing failure to individual lack adaptation?

INSERT OPEN ANSWER (give references)

5. What are causes of success or failure of educational reforms, social inclusion and active labour market programmes to support disadvantaged youth? (ca. 7 pages)

Key topics: Evaluation of key factors of success of policies for disadvantaged young people

- 5.1 * Is there a mismatch in terms of qualifications provided/demanded? Is this mismatch a general problem of education and training or especially with regard to measures for the disadvantaged?
INSERT OPEN ANSWER (give references)
- 5.2 * Is there a mismatch between structural (youth) unemployment and individualised measures resp. between supply-side and demand-side policies?
INSERT OPEN ANSWER (give references)
- 5.3 * What are expenses for active labour market policies in % of GDP? To what extent are young people included?
% of GDP (give official reference)
- 5.4 * Are the disadvantaged groups reached by the measures? If not why?
INSERT OPEN ANSWER (give references)
- 5.5 Is there knowledge about subjective reasons of young people to refuse participation?
INSERT OPEN ANSWER (give references)
- 5.6 What is done to raise the attractiveness of policies for disadvantaged youth?
INSERT OPEN ANSWER (give references)
- 5.7 * What hints of subjective motivations with regard to education, training, work and collaboration with institutions be found in studies of youth research? DESCRIBE!!
INSERT OPEN ANSWER (give references)
- 5.8 * How are policies for disadvantaged youth related to other policies addressing young people? Are there effects of synergies? Are other social or youth policies used to accompany educational, labour market and inclusion policies? Are there contradictions?
INSERT OPEN ANSWER (give references)
- 5.9 How are policies for disadvantaged youth related to other policies affecting the labour market: like active ageing, economic restructuring, public services etc.? Are there synergies or contradictions (e.g. with active ageing)?
INSERT OPEN ANSWER (give references)
- 5.10 * Are there any major changes, reforms or policy innovations planned with regard to early school leaving or youth unemployment?
INSERT OPEN ANSWER (give references)

References

Annex

Add additional tables if relevant

Are you sure that you have given enough consideration to the particular situation according to gender and ethnic background in each question?

Table 1: Overview of measures against youth unemployment (Question 4.1.1)

Type of measure	Importanc e: [*]	Specific youth measure (yes/no)	Age range	% of young people if measure addresses also adults	How many places / How many can participate (absolute)	How many do participate (% or absolute)	Budget in € per year 2003, 2004	Target groups**	Is the target group reached (yes, partly, no)	Main aims ***	Specific economic sector? Yes (which)/no	Methods, contents ****	Main actors of deliver *****	Main source of fund. *****
(Re-)orientation courses														
Pre-vocational education or training (preparation for training or employment)														
Work experience schemes														
Language courses for migrant youth														
Training schemes for unemployed youth (with certificate)														
Training schemes for unemployed youth (without certificate)														
Incentives/wage subsidies for employers														
Employment schemes run by public institutions														
... or by third sector organisations														
Self-employment programmes														
Other:														
Other:														

* Importance in policy terms; e.g. quantitatively or ideologically -> Does not exist = 0; Not relevant = 1; Quite important = 2; Very important = 3

** insert: all unemployed youth = 1, early school leavers = 2, ethnic minorities/migrants = 3, young women = 4, disabled = 5, long-term unemployed = 6, other = 7, please explain: (more than one answer if no priority)

*** insert: * insert: motivation = 0; personal/professional orientation = 1; Work experience = 2; Computer skills = 3; Literacy = 4; Language skills = 5; training qualification = 6; school qualifications = 7; unskilled job = 8; skilled job = 9

**** Insert: Counselling = 1, Workshops on life planning = 2, education = 3, training = 4, voluntary work = 5, placements = 6 (more than one answer if no priority); voluntary work 7

***** Insert; for example: state = 1, region = 2, municipality = 3, church = 4, foundations = 5, private sector = 6

***** Insert; for example: public institutions = 1; third sector/non profit organisations = 2, private companies = 3, public/private partnership = 4

Please, add references

Boxes can be stretched as much as you need but try to stay within 2 pages (without eventual comments; see below)

Table 2: Success/failure of measures against youth unemployment

Type of measure	Meaning of success (according to official programme guidelines)	Is the policy publicly seen as successful	Do you see it as successful	% of participants in training after measure (after 3, 6, 12 months)	% of participants in work after measure (after 3, 6, 12 months)	% of participants unemployed after measure (after 3, 6, 12 months)	% of participants not known after measure (after 3, 6, 12 months)	% of drop outs	Successful regarding other goals (yes/no)	Which ones**	What are participants likely to achieve**	
(Re-)orientation courses				3: 6: 12:								
Pre-vocational education or training (preparation for training or employment)												
Work experience schemes												
Language courses for migrant youth												
Training schemes for unemployed youth (with certificate)												
Training schemes for unemployed youth (without certificate)												
Incentives/wage subsidies for employers												
Employment schemes run by public institutions												
... or by third sector organisations												
Self-employment programmes												
Other:												
Other:												

* time indications if available

** insert: motivation = 0; personal/professional orientation = 1; Work experience = 2; Computer skills = 3; Literacy = 4; Language skills = 5; training qualification = 6; school qualifications = 7; unskilled job = 8; skilled job = 9

Please, add references

Table 3: Overview of measures against early school leaving

Type of measure	Importance: [*] Does not exist = 0 Not relevant = 1 Quite important = 2 Very important = 3	In school or out of school?	Age range/ school grade	How many places / How many can participate (absolute)	How many do participate (% or absolute)	Budget in € per year 2003, 2004	Composition of target groups ^{**}	Is the target group reached (yes, partly, no)	Main aims***	Methods, contents [*] ***	Main source of funding ^{****}	Main actors [*] of delivery ^{*****}
Counselling												
Help with homework												
Special classes												
Social work in schools												
Second chance schools												
Pre-vocational measures												
Transfer to special schools												
Educational maintenance allowance										Amount in €		
Other:												
Other:												

* Importance in policy terms; e.g. in quantitative terms or in terms of being ideologically important from a policy perspective

** insert: broad range = 0, ethnic minorities = 1, working class youth = 2; more boys = 3; more girls = 4; balanced according to gender = 5; in deprived areas

*** insert: motivation = 0; personal/educational/professional orientation = 1; Literacy = 2; Computer skills = 3; Language skills = 4; school qualifications = 5; training qualifications = 6; unskilled job = 7

**** Insert: Counselling = 1, homework = 2; special education = 3; non-formal education = 4; Workshops on life planning = 2, education = 3, training = 4, voluntary work = 5, placements = 6 (more than one answer if no priority)

***** Insert; for example: state = 1, region = 2, municipality = 3, church = 4, foundations = 5, private sector = 6

***** Insert; for example: public institutions = 1; third sector/non profit organisations = 2, private companies = 3, public/private partnership = 4

Please, add references

Boxes can be stretched as much as you need but try to stay within 2 pages (without eventual comments; see below)

Table 4: Success/failure of measures against early school leaving

Type of measure	Meaning of success (according to official programme guidelines)	Is the policy publicly seen as successful	Do you see it as successful	% of participants in training/ education after measure (after 3, 6, 12 months)	% of participants in work after measure (after 3, 6, 12 months)	% of participants unemployed after measure (after 3, 6, 12 months)	% of participants not known after measure (after 3, 6, 12 months)	% of drop outs	Successful regarding other goals (yes/no)	Which ones**	What are participants likely to achieve**	
Counselling				3: 6: 12:								
Help with homework												
Special classes												
Social work in schools												
Second chance schools												
Pre-vocational measures												
Transfer to special schools												
Educational maintenance allowance												
Other:												
Other:												

* time indications if available

** insert: motivation = 0; personal/professional orientation = 1; Work experience = 2; Computer skills = 3; Literacy = 4; Language skills = 5; training qualification = 6; school qualifications = 7; unskilled job = 8; skilled job = 9

Please, add reference

Annex IV

Compendium of Good Practice

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Introduction

In the process of data collection national experts were asked to identify policy measures which in their national contexts were referred to as good practice, either due to being successful in including disadvantaged youth or due to their innovative character.

Initially, it was agreed to concentrate on measures implemented on national policy level, of significant scale and that were thoroughly evaluated. During the process it revealed that this would have implied to leave out a series of innovative measures which – also if not yet completely evaluated – are good practice inasmuch as they reflect failure of previous policies and are based on a more in-depth analysis of disadvantaged youth.

Approximately six measures per country were collected (three with regard to early school leaving and three for youth unemployment). Over time those measures have been selected which were of interest with regard to the overall argumentation. Short summaries of the descriptions of many of the measures collected in this annex are included as examples in the main report. Here, descriptions which have been produced according to joint guidelines, are more detailed to inform about the necessary prerequisites and resources, practices and methods as well as the key actors involved. These guidelines were meant to allow a maximum of comparability in terms of making objectives on the one hand and contextual prerequisites on the other as transparent as possible. Key dimensions were the policy environment of the measures, the objectives and target groups, organisational structures, funding, the actors involved, the process of development and implementation, the processes of everyday practice and methods applied, and the results which had either been already assessed through evaluation or were expected to be achieved. The guidelines can be found at the end of this collection.

However, also with a standardised description good practice can not be transferred as such from one context to another. In contrast, de-contextualisation and re-contextualisation are necessary which means processes of ‘translating’ objectives, the meaning of success of a measure as well as the prerequisites. This implies also to deconstruct assumptions of normality on which policy measures are always based. For example, concepts of ‘work’ and ‘job’ may vary considerably between different contexts which may only emerge after extensive intercultural dialogue and exchange. Transfer – or better: learning from

difference – therefore cannot result from a collection of good practice. The latter can only provide ideas of measures which may be interesting with regard to specific problems and which – in one context – have proved to be effective. The process of learning and transfer however implies involvement of the ‘exporting’ and ‘importing’ partners, ideally mediated by a third, neutral perspective. Still, the embedding of policy measures in wider ‘transition regimes’ sets limits to transfer as such as they are interwoven with socio-economic structures, other institutions and cultural factors. A result of learning from good practice may be that the implementation of a specific measure – also if targeted to a specific issue – may require reforms of the school system or benefit entitlements.

These reflections are by no means meant to discourage intercultural dialogue and mutual learning. In contrast, social change has lead to challenges for which the grown repertoire of national welfare states is less and less sufficient and adequate. Extending the limitations of grown institutional arrangements requires questioning what has been seen as normal and natural. Comparative analysis and intercultural dialogue are key approaches in this regard. And dealing with ‘good practice’ may be the necessary incentive for institutional actors, policy makers, stakeholders and practitioners to do so.

The collection is divided in four sections: first, school-related measures to prevent early school leaving; second, compensatory measures aimed at providing early school leavers with missed qualifications; third, training schemes; fourth, counselling programmes; fifth, active labour market policies with regard to facilitating labour market entrance; and sixth, policies addressing disadvantaged youth in a coordinated, participatory approach.

1. School-related measures for the prevention of early school leaving

In the following as a first category measures are presented which refer to young people's attendance and performance in compulsory and post-compulsory school, that is measures which are either located in schools or are aimed at assisting families and children with problems related to regular education (see Volume 1, Chapter 5.2). Apart from the measures listed under this heading there are other measures which overlap with this section which are listed either in Chapter 2 (second chance education) or Chapter 4 (counselling).

Support Teaching (Greece)

This measure aims at supporting low achieving students of primary and secondary education to overcome their academic deficiencies, thus reducing school failure that leads to early school leaving and eventually to social exclusion (see National Report Greece, Annex II in this volume). It should be noted that Support teaching complies with the general social context, since it has taken into consideration family's schedule; support teaching ends when most of the employees in private and public sector finish their job.

1. Policy environment of good practice

Support teaching is implemented within the context of the Operational Programme for Education and Initial Vocational Training II (O.P. "Education" II), of the Third Community Support Framework. It constitutes one of the basic educational policies of the Axe 1.2: *Combating school failure and drop out with alternative types of learning*, within Action Line 1: *Promotion of equality in accessing the labour market for all and especially for those in danger of social exclusion*. The programme is funded by the European Social Fund (75%) and national resources (25%)¹.

¹ Ministry of Education and Religious Affairs, <http://www.ypepth.gr>

Support teaching was originally established in 1991 and is presently implemented on the basis of the 96734/Γ7/11-9-2003 decision of the Minister of National Education and Religious Affairs. It functioned initially as a pilot programme within the context of O.P. "Education" I while currently is characterized as a more long term policy and is implemented on a national level, free of charge. It constitutes a decentralised measure of the Ministry of National Education and Religious Affairs as it is run by the Educational Directions of each prefecture. More specifically, it is implemented in primary and lower secondary schools as well as in all upper secondary education (comprehensive and technical lyceums). According to the latest available data which refers to school year 2001-2002, there were 1.452 upper secondary schools throughout the country which offered additional educational support in 99.748 students. Moreover, 611 lower secondary and primary schools offered additional educational support in 31.272 students².

The main objective of this measure is to support students, who for any reason need help, to improve their performance at school, through the teaching of various school subjects. Specifically, through the implementation of complementary educational activities, it aims at helping students to:

- Expand their knowledge and their interests
- Develop learning skills and critical thinking
- Form a positive self-concept towards the requirements of the school environment

By providing students of low economic status and with low academic achievement the opportunity to compensate for their learning deficiencies, it facilitates their stay in school for longer periods, reducing in this way their risk of dropping out.

The main activities of this programme are the following:

- Implementation of support teaching programmes to school units
- Training educators and employees of the educational system, who participate to the programme

These activities define the indicators used for the evaluation of the programme, namely the number of school units that provide support teaching as well as the number of students attending it. For the effective implementation of the programme, external and internal evaluation has been planned. The main indicators for its evaluation are the decrease in the number of students abandoning school as well as their progress within the school context.

² Operational Programme for Educational and Initial Vocational Training, <http://www.epeaek.gr>

2. Description of good practice

Structures

In order to ensure the effective implementation of the programme, some structural factors must be taken into account. More specifically, funding must be allocated for:

The creation of new school units and/or the improvement of the existing ones in order to eliminate double shifts at schools (morning – evening classes) that do not allow the prolongation of the normal school programme. The funding will be provided from state expenditures, the European Fund of Regional Development and national participation.

The employment of part – time educators, in the cases where the number of the appointed educators is not sufficient for the provision of support teaching.

Actors

The actors involved in the implementation of the programme are:

- The Ministry of National Education and Religious Affairs, as the promoter and the main source of funding
- The Educational Directions and Offices at the prefectures and regions where the programme is being implemented
- The school counsellors
- School teachers and directors
- The part-time educators for the school units that do not have enough teachers
- Students

Process

The programme of support teaching starts at the beginning of the school year (15th of September) and finishes with the completion of the final exams at the end of the school year (15th of June). Students complete an application form, stating all the school subjects they need support with (there are no limitations as to how many subjects they can apply for). Support teaching is provided for the following subjects: Greek language, mathematics, physics, chemistry and foreign languages. Based on the students' needs, the teachers' council plan and organize the necessary support classes, each with a minimum of 5 and a maximum of 10 students. The analytical programme of the classes is developed, evaluated and revised on the basis of the specific needs and learning difficulties of the students. The daily programme covers 1 – 3 instructive hours that can be either during the

working school hours or after (evening classes). In the cases where part-time teachers are providing the support teaching, they are in close co-operation with the regular teachers of the students. In addition, the co-operation of the parents is requested in order to monitor the students' progress as well as to ensure their attendance. With the completion of the programme every school year, all teachers involved submit an evaluation report for each school subject to the teachers' council, the responsible Educational Direction and the school counsellors³.

Results

There is no available evaluative data or other information concerning the results/effects of the implementation of the programme. However, according to the results of the pilot implementation of the program, there was a reduction in the percentage of school failure as well in that of dropping out of school. We should note that the number of school units that are implementing the programme has almost doubled as is the number of students that enroll to it, supporting the conclusion that this measure is increasingly being accepted as an effective way of combating school failure and early drop out.

4. Conclusions

The key success factors of this measure may be summarized as follows:

- actors of the school system need to understand and accept the limitations of formal school teaching in reaching all pupils to the same extent as well as the limitations of many families to compensate for deficits resulting in school instruction;
- additional funding in the school budget to employ additional staff and provide sufficient and adequate space;
- training of teachers and/or additional staff in methods of inclusive education which includes elements of non-formal learning.

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Access to education for disadvantaged groups, especially Roma (Romania)

1. Policy environment of good practice (programme level)

In April 2001 the Government of Romania adopted its Strategy for Improving the Situation of Roma. The Strategy's objectives include the promotion of equal opportunities and the elimination of discrimination of any kind, in a climate of collaboration between central and local authorities and representatives of the Roma communities, with a focus on decentralised implementation of the national strategy through local authorities and participation of non-governmental organisations (see National Report Romania, Annex II in this Volume).

The Phare project "Access to Education for Disadvantaged Groups with a Focus on Roma", Europeaid/113198/D/SV/RO was launched in 2001, with a budget of 8.33 million Euro (Phare 7 million Euro, MER 1,33 million Euro). Having as main purpose to support the implementation of the Ministry of Education and Research's (MER) strategy of improving access to education for disadvantaged groups with a special focus on Roma, the project is part of the education policy reform. It is a national level project, part of a long-term policy, namely the Strategy for Improving the Situation of Roma, approved by Governmental Decision. The Project objectives are also part of the EU's social inclusion agenda, since at a more general level the project has been aimed at fighting social exclusion and marginalization, promoting equal opportunities and safeguarding human rights.

The project referred to as good practice in the context of this study has actually been the first phase (from September 2002 to October 2004), which is now being continued under a follow-up Phare project.

The project had two main components:

- Institution building, where technical assistance has been provided to support MER in designing and implementing the activities directly related to educational process (teachers and mediators training, educational materials development, community participation), and
- A grants scheme, through which 10 County School Inspectorates have been awarded grants to rehabilitate schools and undertake other measures to improve the educational environment for Roma children. The total budget of the Grant Scheme for projects initiated by county school inspectorates was 4 million Euro.

With regard to the scale of the project, the following figures speak for themselves: 11 projects implemented by 10 School Inspectorates; 74 schools included in the project (9759 Roma students); 80 teachers trained to become Teachers' trainers; over 1700 teachers trained in inclusive education; 55 Roma students trained to become teachers of Romani Language (distance learning courses); 67 school mediators working with pilot schools and Roma communities; 150 500 copies of various educational materials for kindergarten, primary education and second chance that were distributed to direct and indirect beneficiaries of the project (students, teachers, parents). The sub-projects to be financed under the project have been selected on competitive basis from among proposals received from all Romania's counties (41) and Bucharest City.

The project objectives have been the following:

- To improve practice in pre-school education in order to increase early enrolment, particularly for children from the Roma minority
- To improve practice in schools and to bring about a decrease in the number of Roma children who leave school before they have completed basic/compulsory education;
- To provide 'second-chance education' for young people who have dropped out of school but now wish to return and to complete their compulsory education.

The rationale behind these objectives was that education is a paramount factor for both personal development and participation of a person in society, and that investment in education and human resources development is a key factor of sustainable development. Assumption was made that the success of such a project will be highly dependent upon the existence and effectiveness of local support measures for children's participation in education, as well as on a very good cooperation at central and local levels between education institutions, local authorities, and specialised institutions in the fields of child protection and social assistance.

Although in the long run the target group of the project has been "disadvantaged groups", within this first phase the project was targeted on Roma children.

The initial target of the project consisted of 74 schools and kindergartens with high percentage of Roma children from ten counties (Arad, Bucureşti, Buzău, Călăraşi, Cluj, Dâmboviţa, Galaţi, Giurgiu, Hunedoara, Vaslui).

2. Description of good practice (programme and project level)

Structures

The necessary structural factors required for the Project to operate effectively were:

- Support to school inspectorates in implementing county strategies for the improvement of access to education for disadvantaged communities with a special focus on Roma;
- design and delivery of training programmes for: School Inspectors, Roma Inspectors, teachers working in communities with significant Roma population;
- revision of 'second chance' curricula, development of auxiliary educational materials for pre-school, primary, after-school and second chance programmes;
- Qualification, individuals from the Roma communities to be trained as primary school teachers via an accredited ODL (open distance learning courses at the University in Bucharest), individuals from the Roma communities to be trained as School Mediators;
- Design and delivery of training programmes for community capacity building;
- In order for the 11 projects selected for funding under the grant scheme to be implemented properly, 11 Local Implementing Agents were employed in the 10 counties that received grants. 3 regional offices were established in Bucharest, Arad and Galati to offer TA for activities under the scheme. The link between the two components of the project was made at county level, via the establishment of County Implementation Units (CIUs). The County School Inspectorates represent the principal

actors to implement the reform of education at county and local level. Roma inspectors have a key role in this process by monitoring Roma children's school enrolment and attendance; working with communities in order to increase school attendance. As part of the MER system of teacher training, the Teacher Training Houses have had an important role in updating and upgrading teachers' skills and competencies.

Actors

The key actors required for the project to operate effectively were:

- the Ministry of Education and Research, and the EC Delegation in Bucharest, as promoters and funders;
- the Consultants contracted to provide technical assistance and grant scheme management;
- County School Inspectorates
- School Teachers and Directors
- Students
- Parents
- Local communities
- NGOs
- Local Churches
- County and local authorities

The stakeholders were involved in all phases of the Project and contributed to the success of the training programmes, after school activities and the work of community action groups with Roma parents and students, as well as to conducting quarterly analyses, formulate strategies for education and social inclusion and develop educational materials.

Process

The key activities carried out under the project have been the following:

- Financing, starting with September 2003, of 55 scholarships for Roma youngsters from the Roma communities in the ten counties, for training Romani Language institutors at the Open Distance Learning College;
- Including in the educational system of Roma youngsters from Roma communities involved in the project (as unqualified teachers in the process of being qualified) to teach subjects from the additional Roma curriculum (Romani language and/ or Roma history and tradition);

- Including, starting with September 2003, in the educational system of 70 Roma school mediators for the schools in the ten counties from the project, that will be, simultaneous, trained through speciality courses in 2003 - 2004;
- Training of Roma and non-Roma teachers that work with Roma children and of the Roma and non-Roma inspectors;
- Offering school remedial classes for the Roma communities in the schools that are part of the project (especially literacy and/ or completion of the primary education);
- Enrolling Roma teenagers and youngsters between 15 and 30 years old (that have graduated at least 4 classes, in the “Second Chance programme, that offers the chance of completing the compulsory education (fifth to eight/ ninth grades) at the same time with acquiring professional skills;
- Training of Roma preschool pupils, that did not attend preschool education, during summer kindergartens that precede the enrolment in the primary education (3 weeks, in August - September, before starting first grade);
- Organising “Roma mother’s schools” in Roma communities near the schools involved in the project etc.

The duration of the process exceeds this first phase referred to as good practice in the context of this study. It is expected to continue until 2009.

Effective local partnerships and stakeholder involvement during project preparation and implementation have been important factors for ensuring ownership and sustainability, as well as for supporting and sustaining project outcomes. Beneficiaries and stakeholders have been involved in the policy formulation and decision-making processes in all phases of the Project and contributed to the success of the training programmes, after school activities and the work of community action groups with Roma parents and students.

From the available project documents, including the final evaluation conference, it seems that motivation of participants was not paid special attention. However, references to attitudes and mentalities were quite frequent in the Conference debates, but with special focus on teachers/trainers or on majority groups. This should be dealt with, *inter alia*, during the national hearing.

Besides classical methods of education specific to formal education systems, the project had to develop and experiment innovative methods and concepts, such as using the mediators role in bringing communities closer to the schools, teachers training on

inclusive education (using an Index for Inclusion), inter-cultural education, using the pilot schools that may become resource schools for future projects, pre-service teacher training of Romani community members via open distance learning, in-service teacher training, using effective local partnerships and stakeholder involvement during project preparation and implementation to strengthen relationships between school and community, learning support programmes to improve students' achievements at the primary and secondary level, successful information and counselling campaigns for parents and community members, etc.

Monitoring and supervision of the project implementation was ensured by project management units at central and county levels, as well as through joint quarterly assessments with stakeholders' participation at county level. The main indicators used for monitoring and evaluation purposes were:

- (i) enrolment rates in pre-school, primary and secondary education and Second Chance programmes;
- (ii) drop out rates; and
- (iii) student achievement (pass rates, improved communication, social skills, critical thinking and

problem solving skills). At the end of the project phase a stakeholders' conference was held, including four thematic groups: (i) Implementation Issues at the County Level; (ii) Implementation Issues at the School Level; (iii) Implementation Issues related to the Community; and (iv) Implementation Issues related to Training. Eight sessions on the four themes were conducted simultaneously. There were 25-30 participants in each group and the discussions focussed on: what worked well over the past year and based on experience what needs to change. The two groups on each theme convened and identified lessons of experience and recommendations for the future. The key conclusions and recommendations were presented in a plenary. The project results, as presented in the final conference, are summarized under the section below.

3. Results

Enrolment

- While overall pre-school enrolments (Roma and non-Roma children) increased by 12%, there was a 28.2% increase in pre-school enrolment of Roma children in the ten Project counties, with the highest increase recorded in Bucharest (105.8%);

- The number of Roma children enrolled in pilot kindergartens and schools increased by 8.5% as compared to a 1.1% decrease in overall (Roma and non-Roma) enrolment (2003-2004);
- If enrolment on Second Chance programme is included in the data, the overall increase in enrolment of Roma children and young people is 11.6%, as compared to 0.2% overall enrolment decrease;
- Calarasi and Bucharest achieved the highest increases in primary enrolment (33% and 24.6% respectively);
- While secondary school enrolment for the whole school intake decreased by 6.4% in the 74 Pilot schools, enrolment of Roma students at the secondary level increased by 0.8%.

Drop out

- In comparison with the 2002-2003 school year, aggregate (including pre-school, primary and secondary) drop out rates in 2003-2004 were lower in eight of the ten pilot counties;
- In six counties, no pre-school drop outs were recorded, in two others, the preschool drop out rate was reduced, while only one child dropped out of pre-school in Bucharest;
- In Dambovita and Hunedoara there was a decrease in dropout rate for all 3 levels: preschool, primary and secondary;
- In Arad, Buzau and Giurgiu the pre-school and primary drop out rate decreased, but there was an increase in drop outs at the secondary level;
- For Cluj, Galati and Vaslui there were no drop outs in the pre-schools and lower primary schools. However, the drop out rate increased at the secondary level;
- Overall, drop out for Roma children attending pre-schools decreased from 3.9% in 2002-2003 to 0.3% in 2003-2004;
- All Counties reported a decrease in primary drop out rates (4.8% in 2002-2003 to 2.5% in 2003-2004);
- Secondary school drop out rates were lower for 2003-2004 (8.5%) as compared to 2002-2003 (9.9%);
- The risk of drop out, as expected, was higher for Second Chance programmes (Second Chance programmes work mainly with disaffected students who have already dropped out of school one or more times). Comparative data for 2002-2003 were not available.

However, statistics from the largest Second Chance programme, in Dambovita, indicated that the drop out rate in 2003-2004 was 6.3% as compared to the European average of 6%. But in Arad all nine students registered for the programme dropped out.

Academic Attainment

- Available data indicated that the academic achievement level of Roma primary school students improved during the second semester of the 2003-2004 school year as compared to the first semester;
- The same was true of Roma secondary level students;
- 55% of Roma students in the Project schools achieved higher grades this year than in the previous academic year.

4. Second chance through education

The project „Second chance through education” is described in this section because after a pilot phase it has been integrated into the project “Access to education” described above thereby extending and complementing the range of activities aimed at enhancing educational participation and qualification level of young people with a Roma background. It was developed by the Ministry of Education, Research and Youth in cooperation with Centre Education 2000+, starting with the school year 1990/2000, as part of the „Programme for combating marginalization, social exclusion and professional exclusion of young people who have abandoned the compulsory education and have not achieved minimum competences to get a job”, approved through Order of the Minister of Education. It was implemented in 12 pilot schools from six counties (Cluj, Galati, Hunedoara, Iasi, Suceava, and Timis) and from Bucharest City.

The project was aimed at supporting young people who had abandoned because of social reasons the compulsory education through completion of basic education and provision of vocational training according to 1st level qualification, as to enable their social and professional insertion. Upon completion of studies under the project, graduates have received a certificate attesting graduation of compulsory education, which entitled them to continue education in post-compulsory stages, along with a document attesting the qualifications and skills achieved during this education process, provided that they had passed the graduation exam.

The educational recuperation has been accompanied by a vocational education offer for qualifications identified by the pilot schools and with due consideration of young peoples’

aspirations, such as waiter assistant, baker, tailor, car mechanic; carpenter; wheelwright; cooper; manual embroder; barber, hairdresser, etc.

In most cases, participants in the project had already passed the legal age for continuing the education within day-education (14-25 years old), for which reason evening classes were organised, combining theoretical education with practical activities. Based on cooperation contracts between educational institutions and economic agents, theoretical preparation and practical activity can be organised alternatively, and the duration of this education programme was 3 ½ years.

As mentioned above, the project has been continued under the Phare 2001 project „Access to education for disadvantaged groups, with a special focus on Roma”, which is more comprehensively described above. Within the Phare programme 2003 « Access to education of disadvantaged groups » (continuation of the programme Phare 2001 « Access to education of disadvantaged groups with a special focus on Roma ») the curriculum for « Second Chance » has been revised and adapted to the new Education Law: extension of the compulsory education from 8 to 10 grades, and extension of the “Second Chance” program at the level of primary education.

5. Conclusions

Summarising, the key success factors of the strategy to improve the access of young people from the Roma community to education are the following:

- a political will to combat forms of inequality despite of existing prejudices that the target group is self-responsible for their underprivileged social position (which in this case may be enhanced from external actors and funders); this implies an advance of trust in a situation of inter-ethnic relationships characterised by mistrust;
- social innovation based on the combination of pilot measures and legal foundations;
- a multi-dimensional problem analysis integrating structural as well as cultural aspects of disadvantage;
- a multi-level approach addressing the high policy level, regional administration, local communities, single schools, teachers and of course individuals and their families;
- additional funding which in this case primarily came from external sources.

Connexions (UK)

1. Policy context

The Connexions Service is a mainstream programme funded by the Department of Education and Skills and is aimed at all 13-19 year olds in England and Wales and was part of a reform of the old careers and youth service, combined with a major concern about the ineffectiveness of the proliferation of agencies working with young people at risk of social exclusion and a lack of coordination of these services. In this respect the Connexions Service represents an attempt to tackle the issue of educational disadvantaged through a holistic joined up policy perspective (see National Report UK, Annex II in this volume; see also Volume 1, Chapter 5 and 6). Although the policy departmentally falls within the field of educational policy there is a broader concern with young people's transitions to the labour market and social inclusion. It derived out of the work of the Social Exclusion Unit and its particular concern with joined-up thinking across traditional departmental boundaries (SEU, 1999). Although the overall direction and policy for connexions is provided by the Department of Education and Skills, it is delivered at the local level by 47 connexions partnerships within England. Local Management Committees are responsible for bringing together partnerships and the day-to-day running of the service within the local area.

It is a large-scale programme in principle covering all 13-19 year olds in England, its total annual budget is in the region of £500 Million. (approx. €750 Million). End of April 2005 344,000 young people were involved in interventions under Connexions.

The programme objectives are both broad and narrow. As a service it aims to provide general career and education and training information and advice to all 13-19 year olds, with more specific intervention for those deemed most at risk. Underpinning the overall aims of Connexions Strategy is a desire to increase the skills base and improve on the comparatively poor performance in participation in post-compulsory education and training. There are more specific policy concerns within the strategy in particular a concern to reduce the number of young people not in education, employment or training (NEET), reducing teenage parenthood with the intention increasing social inclusion and impacting on young people's involvement with crime (DfEE, 2000). The NEET group in the UK is defined for statistical purposes as all 16-18 year olds who are not officially registered as being in some form of education, employment or training. As 16 and 17 year olds except

under severe hardship are not entitled to unemployment benefits it includes all inactive (other unemployed, supporting family, ill or pregnant) 16-18 year olds and 18 year olds who are registered as unemployed. The calculations exclude those who are serving a custodial sentence, asylum seekers not yet granted citizenship or in an unknown situation, whilst gap year students and those involved in full or part-time voluntary work are counted as being in education, employment or training (DfES, 2004c). The specific objectives of the service are as follows (DfEE, 2000):

- raising aspirations - setting high expectations of every individual;
- meeting individual need - and overcoming barriers to learning;
- taking account of the views of young people - individually and collectively, as the new service is developed and as it is operated locally;
- inclusion - keeping young people in mainstream education and training and preventing them moving to the margins of their community;
- partnership - agencies collaborating to achieve more for young people, parents and communities than agencies working in isolation;
- community involvement and neighbourhood renewal - through involvement of community mentors and through personal advisers brokering access to local welfare, health, arts, sport and guidance networks;
- extending opportunity and equality of opportunity - raising participation and achievement levels for all young people, influencing the availability, suitability and quality of provision and raising awareness of opportunities;
- evidence based practice - ensuring that new interventions are based on rigorous research and evaluation into 'what works'.

2. Objectives

Target Group

Although in theory the Connexions Service is a universal service open to all 13-19 year olds a three-tier level of service is provided

- 1) Intensive and sustained support for those with multiple problems
- 2) In-depth guidance for those at risk of disengaging
- 3) For the rest advice on education and careers choices with minimal intervention

In practice the focus of the Connexions Service has tended to be more focused on the at risk group, rather than young people in general.

A number of activities operate through the Connexions Service. At the heart of the Connexions Service is a new profession and a network of approximately 8,000 Personal Advisers that aim to provide a single point of contact for the delivery of support to young people across a wide range of issues. If Personal Advisers can not directly assist the young person the idea is that broker advice through local partnerships.

Aside from the local delivery of the service through its partnerships a Connexions Direct Service provides a range of services to young people. This is a web-based information point on a range of issues (Careers, education and training, health, housing, rights, money, relationships etc). Connexions Direct Advisers are available from 8am to 2am 7 days a week to provide confidential advice to young people across the range of issues that affect their lives utilising a range of communication media (phone, SMS, on-line chat). If deemed appropriate Connexions Direct Advisers may refer callers to Personal Advisers in their local area. Young people may also apply for a Connexions card that provides for discounts and reward points for participation in Education and training and recognised voluntary activities.

Assessment of the programme has been widespread and ongoing evaluation of what works was an integral part of the programme design. and has taken a number of forms.

- Process and expert evaluations of the initial pilot schemes
- Out-come based targets as part of the Governments Spending Review Targets in relation to NEET. Local Partnerships are inspected by the inspectorate for educational standards (OFSTED).
- Local partnerships are required to provide ongoing needs assessments

National guidelines to Connexions Partnerships make it a key requirement that they involve young people in all aspects of the design, delivery and evaluation of Connexions, including hard to reach young people.

3. Description of good practice

Funding

Funding for the Service has two main components funding for Connexions Direct the centrally managed unit and funding for the local partnerships. Funding for local partnerships is based on a formula to distribute national funding according to certain criteria number of the age-group within the partnership area combined with other

indicators educational performance at age 16, numbers in NEET, unemployment among 18-24 year olds.

There is also an expectation that a range of in-kind resources is provided to support the service through both government and non-governmental bodies within the local partnerships.

There were two main models of Connexions local partnerships reflecting the former arrangements of the old Careers Service. Around half the partnerships were newly formed companies delivering the service through private sector providers, whilst the in the case of the other half Local Authorities acted as the lead body.

Actors

A national unit for Connexions based in the Department of Education and Skills oversees the work of Connexions Direct and provides support and strategic advice to the Local partnerships and approves the business plans of the local partnerships. Local Partnerships consist of a high level Board who are responsible for strategic planning, and should include Directors from the main statutory, public, private, and voluntary and community agencies involved in youth support. Whilst Local Management Committees oversee the day to day delivery of the programme at the local level.

A new profession of Personal Advisers are the heart of the delivery of the programme, recruited from qualified careers advisers from the old Careers Service, youth and social workers. A range of specific training programmes have been devised specifically for Connexions for Personal Advisers aimed to enhance the knowledge and skills in working with young people, inter agency working and reflective practice. Personal Advisers who are working with those who are most at risk should have completed the full training programme the Diploma for Personal Advisers.

Partnership working is central to Connexions work with the expectation of involvement with statutory, public and voluntary sectors. In the respect that Personal Advisers have a generic role they need to be knowledgeable about local provision across a range of services such as training and education, housing, benefits, and a range of health issues.

Process

The key activities of the Connexions Service is to provide general education and careers advice to all 13-19 year olds, with a more targeted and intensive advice to those at risk of disengaging. This is delivered through the one-to-one support from Personal Advisers.

Among those at risk of disengaging the aim was to provide holistic support to those with multiple problems and end the fragmentation of services for young people at risk. Personal Advisers would provide a single point of contact for an individual young person and broker advice or support from other agencies depending on the young people's individual needs. Specific methods of assessment of needs forms an integral part of Personal Advisers roles. Advisers are based in a range of locations Schools, Colleges Connexion Centres or One-stop-shops, outreach work is also common. They may be delivering universal careers guidance to a large case load or working with a more complex case load with those with specific problems or on special projects as part of a multi-agency team. Another more controversial aspect of the process is the tracking and monitoring of young people deemed at risk and the sharing of information among partner agencies.

4. Results

The Connexions Service represented a radical change in the structure and delivery of guidance services for young people in the UK. It is a highly complex programme both in terms of structure and delivery and its implementation at a time when there has been a proliferation of changing policies within the area of services to children and young people. At the current time the exact future nature of the Service has become uncertain with a major review of guidance services being undertaken and a green paper on youth overdue. Some have speculated that that will be a separation of the targeted aspect on disadvantaged youth and the universal provision of general guidance.

The programme has been subject to an intense range of targets, evaluations and research programmes at both national and local level and due to the various models due to its flexible design, it is difficult to assess the programme as a whole due to the diversity of ways in which it has been implemented and to separate out its specific effects from other recently introduced policy measures such as the introduction of the Educational Maintenance Allowances.

There are many good practice elements built into the design of the programme, such as involving young people in its design and delivery, learning and sharing best practice, encouraging advisers to be reflective in their work, the holistic approach it takes in dealing with the problems disadvantaged young people may have.

The various evaluations of the Service have generally highlighted the service is positively viewed by young people and other stakeholders (DfES 2004a; DfES 2004b; Deakin et al, 2004; Joyce & White, 2004). There is some evidence that the hasty implementation of the

Service resulted in the alienation of some of the key stakeholders in particular head teachers and parts of the youth work sector.

There have been a number of problems with its implementation and perhaps in particular with its design as both a universal and targeted service. With problems over the recruitment and resourcing over the number of Personal Advisers, which was well below that indicated as required in the initial pilot stages. This particularly seemed to impact upon the universal aspect of the Service and evaluations have indicated that general careers guidance is patchy and problematic. PA's and young people often reported a lack of time to deal with issues effectively due to high caseloads (Auditor General, 2004; Hoggarth & Smith, 2004).

Although evaluations showed that it had brought about significant improvement in inter-agency working, the effectiveness of partnerships has been highlighted as crucial for its success some difficulties have been experienced between traditional boundaries of work, different agencies priorities and in some cases a resistance to holistic work.

One of the main government targets for the programme was reduce the numbers in NEET by 10% between 2002-2004. The official estimates of the numbers of 16-18 year olds that are not in some form of employment, education or training at the start of this period was 10 per cent. Since 2002 the numbers in NEET, over the target period fell by 14%, although there were significant local variations (DfES, 2004c). Questions have however been raised over the difficulties in attributing this directly to Connexions, rather than broader changes within the education and training system and other socio-economic factors.

This target approach to reducing NEET has also been highlighted as itself a problem. Concerns have been expressed over the emphasis in getting people into any form of employment, education or training at the expense of what was in the long-term interests of young person. Other achievements that Connexions was making towards soft outcomes increasing self-confidence and self esteem were not acknowledged and were often identified as a prerequisite before harder outcomes could be achieved.

The sharing of information between agencies for tracking those at risk, has been criticised as infringing individual civil liberties, and certain partner agencies have been reluctant to share information citing Data Protection legislation (Coles et al, 2004).

5. Conclusions

Summarizing, the following key success factor of the Connexions programme can be identified:

- A declared and distinct political will to make education a priority and to increase investments to a significant extent;
- A community-based approach linking school with other agencies and actors such as youth work and youth services;
- Political power to reshape grown institutional boundaries and networks and to implement a new infrastructure;
- A combination of a national policy framework and local autonomous partnerships;
- Making counselling a priority reflecting that young people's learning biographies require subjective motivation;
- Accompanying counselling with financial incentives through Educational Maintenance Allowances.

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Integrated Municipal Intervention Against School Absenteeism, Sagunto (Spain)

1. Introduction

In Spain, initiatives are increasing on the local level that try to favour school and social integration of pupils (see National Report Spain, Annex II in this volume). To reach the objective they focus on certain activities: reduce school absenteeism (masked or intermittent), school failure and early school leaving, through the application of measures that favour integration of pupils and collective intervention of parents, children, teachers and public services. Other initiatives are directed to prepare young people to find a job and even have the objective of creating employments or helping and collaborating with companies that create these employments in the municipal area.

Characteristics of the introduced “good practices” that we would like to underline:

- Integrated local policies: Besides controlling school absenteeism, there is an intervention in all areas related to pupils like familiar situation, neighbourhood they live in, their situation in school and their relations with teachers and classmates. Community school-social Integration
- Experimentation with new learning methods and educational intervention

- Consolidation of the figure of the personal tutor, who accompanies and supports young people and coordinates the exterior/environment consistent of school, social services and the area of culture and education of the municipality
- Contracting of new professional figures that intervene in school and families: social worker and social educator
- Activities with young immigrants to enforce social and school integration
- Activities directed to facilitate/promote employability
- Introducing new mediation measures in conflicts

2. General Objective

Promote school and social integration of pupils with interventions in situations that could stop them from reaching the objective.

Reduce school absenteeism in compulsory education (specially in the stage of secondary education), offering alternatives and actions to prevent, detect and reduce school absenteeism, taking into account four main pillars that determine the reasons of school absenteeism: the pupil, the family, the school and the social environment.

The general objective includes immigrant pupils that go to schools in the municipal area.

Reduce training leaving of young people over 16.

3. Legal base

There exists a legal frame on a state, regional and local level:

- National level:
 - In Art. 5 and 65 of the **Organic Law 1/1990, 3rd of October**, General Regulation of the Education System (LOGSE)
 - **Royal Decree 299/1996**, Regulation of the actions directed to the compensation of the inequalities in Education
- Regional level:
 - **Royal Decree 246/1991, 23th of December**, Valencia Government, regulating Rights and Duties of the pupils (DOG V n° 1696, 3rd of January 1992).
 - **Legal Protection Decree** for minors (DOG V – n° 4008) 22nd of May 2001 of the Regional Ministry of Social Welfare (Art. 10 and 16)
- Municipal level:

- Regulation Law of local Regime Bases, April of 1985, Art. 25, offers the possibility to town-councils of “participating in learning programmes and cooperating with the educational administration in the creation, construction and maintenance of the public teaching institutions, and intervene in management organs and participate in the surveillance of compulsory schooling.

4. Funding of the programmes

The funding of the programmes is totally municipal, except they obtain some specific subvention from higher educational and administrative authorities. The funding includes expenses in infrastructures, common expenses and personal costs.

A) School Absenteeism Programme

Definition of absenteeism:

Under school absenteeism we understand sporadic, as well as frequent or total absence with no justification and while in period of compulsory education. There is a wide and diverse typology of school absenteeism that is taken into account in the described programme. The analysis of the reasons that lead or can lead to absenteeism is taken into account, too.

Activities:

The most important characteristic of all activities is: individualized attention, participation of the whole centre, of all municipal services and all new professional: social workers and social educators. Attention and intervention in the case of individual absenteeism; in the case of behavioural problems; attention to diversity programmes; educational and labour orientation, participation in alternative spare-time activities. The interventions are based on the following *work methodology*:

- **Educational intervention.** In training and advice to strengthen a change of the attitudes towards school reality.
- **Preventive intervention.** School absenteeism, as well as the prevention of the consequences and resulting behaviours of early school leaving.
- **Systemic and systematic intervention.** Analysis of the situation, taking into account all causes and the planning of the actions.
- **Coordinated and interdisciplinary intervention.** Implication and joint work between different municipal institutions.

- **Adaptable and tolerant intervention.** It is a priority to adapt the intervention to the characteristics and rhythms of the minor, the families and the educational centres.
- **Auto-evaluative intervention.** Constant and continuous evaluation.

The target groups of this programme are:

Young people under the age of 18 years who

- do not attend school.
- with behavioural problems and school adaptability difficulties.
- in a situation of risk of leaving the education system.
- that are not receiving any education and are not participating in any educational institution.
- that have left school too early and, as a consequence, do not have any certificate.

Continual evaluation and assessment of the programmes:

The programme is open and dynamic. It includes different experiences, meditations and evaluations about the biographies of the young people with regard to school absenteeism and assumes the proposals that contribute to a progressive reduction of this problem. In this respect, orientations, rectifications and the improvement of tools and procedures are necessary debate elements, that can be modified to implement them with optimal results. (Publication of annual evaluation Reports).

Outcomes:

After the experimentation phase, the demand of educational centres that want to enter the programme has increased.

In centres that participate at the programme the school failure rate (8%) and the absenteeism rate (12%) are now lower than the average of the region (Comunidad Valenciana; school failure rate: 12%; absenteeism rate: 18%)

Among the outcomes of educational innovation, we should underline that it is now clear that an individualized treatment is needed, as well as the combination of regular schooling and a specific treatment and the construction of adapted educational spaces. It is important to strengthen and develop quantitative and qualitative curricular adaptations, set up training and educational routes based on significant theoretical learning through practical experience.

B) Immigrant pupils integration Programme

This programme benefits from and is a consequence of the experiences and outcomes of the school absenteeism programme.

- Actions addressed to immigrant pupils in compulsory education with linguistic and contextual difficulties. The objective is to facilitate the integration and adaptation of immigrant pupils in school and the social environment.
- Pupils of upper courses that have been selected and enjoy scholarships participate in activities with young immigrants during their spare-time. These young people write a weekly diary that has the function of a monitoring and supervising tool. The young people take advise of social workers of the town-council. The control and supervision of this support is done by the tutor teacher of the immigrant pupil.

The actors that intervene in this activity are the tutor of the immigrant pupil, a social educator and youth educators. Indirectly, the School council of the centre, the parent-teacher organizations, the orientation services of the centre and the department of education and youth of the town-councils do intervene, too. The functions of this activity is:

- accompany the pupils to make them familiar with the centre, the installations, introduce them to other pupils that could know their language and, all in all, help them to feel sure and accompanied during the first days. Putting special emphasis on the relation with pupils of the same nationality.
- Support activities during out-of-school time: basic instrumental aspects and support to learn the language through oral and graphic activities directed by the teacher of the pupils and depending on the educational needs of the new pupil.
- Accompany the new pupil so that he gets to know his environment and the basic services related to sports, health, municipal library, municipal swimming pool, the youth information offices, parks and meet points, use of public transports, sanitary services, etc.

C) Activities related to training and labour insertion

Young people that leave school too early and do not get a certificate face greater difficulties when it comes to achieve a stable labour insertion. To facilitate employability, different activities directed to the orientation are developed with the aim of stopping school leaving of young people over 16. The personal situation of each young person is the

starting point, and from there different training and labour itineraries are individually developed.

The most important of these activities is orientation, guidance and individual monitoring. On the one hand, there is a guidance addressed to young people who stay in the educational system in order to enhance their motivation and help them to achieve the different educational levels; on the other hand, orientation and guidance activities are offered to young people who have left the educational system in order to increase their motivation and prepare them to return to it, in this case to the first level of vocational training.

The third level of activities is the one concerning orientation and support while looking for a job, which is developed by means of the programme “Jovempleo”(young employment), which works as an autonomous institution were young people who look for an employment can address. Together with orientation and guidance, it has a job database of companies offering job positions and young people looking for a job.

The professionals that develop this activity are the Youth Workers, the Social Educators and the orientation Team of the “Jovempleo” (Young-employment) service of the town-council of Sagunto.

Who are the addressees of the programme?

- Pupils of the last courses of compulsory education with a low performance in school, demotivated, a negative attitude towards the formal education system, little willpower or strength to achieve their objectives,
- young people that do not know what to do and/or are not interested in knowing the possible labour or academic alternatives they can choose
- and another group of young people that shows interest for jobs that require manual abilities, in contrast to jobs that require mental efforts.

Activities:

This plan of activities is divided into different levels:

- The participants in the first level are minors of lower secondary education that will be 17 during the course and show a high probability of school failure. The aim is to prepare them to be ready to start the first level of vocational training. The following actions are developed: collection of data, informative meetings with parents, auto-understanding

group sessions, individual orientation sessions, support lessons, entrance examination for formal vocational training.

- Those participating in this level are still included in the educational system and the activities involved take place at school.
- The participants in the second level are young people over 16 that have not finished lower secondary education and have not passed the entrance examination for vocational training. The actions to take are: collection of data; orientation sessions; training itinerary/labour itinerary; social-labour insertion itinerary, monitoring.
- Those participating in this level are not included in the educational system and the activities involved take place out of the school.

3. Mediation of conflicts that hinder school integration

The integrated policies for social integration that the town-council of Sagunto started with the Absenteeism Programme facilitates that fast political answers can be given to new problems. During past years, there has been a large increase of news about violence and conflicts in schools, even cases of suicides of pupils because of harassment in school.

The objective of this programme is to develop the capacity for the resolution of conflicts and the securing of satisfactory agreements that favour school integration. Another goal is to learn to manage daily conflicts, starting with the school reality, before they grow and explode. Prevent harassment in school and reduce the number of sanctions and expulsions of pupils, improving the cohabitation, the school integration and reducing school leaving.

The application of mediation activities in school centres is divided into three levels:

- ***Resolution of conflicts and mediation workshop.*** Tries to work with students to improve their abilities and to improve their knowledge of themselves and the others, respecting the differences and facing up conflicts peacefully and constructively. The contents are: expression of emotions, active listening, communication styles, self-esteem, empathy, respect.
- ***Mediation among equals workshop.*** Considers the selection of a group of students to create a mediation committee with the task of helping to manage conflicts between students.
- ***Global mediation programme.*** This programme trains students, teachers, parents... previously selected as educational mediators with the goal of creating a mediation committee responsible for the intervention in conflicts: between pupils and adults.

Mediation is a technique of preventive and formative character to resolve conflicts, where opposing parties have the support of a third neutral person.

5. Conclusions

Although school absenteeism and school failure have to be treated as soon as they appear, in school or at home, the plurality of causes makes the intervention and coordination between all participants necessary. The communication between agents is important to monitor the cases, to asses if the intervention and the organization of the resources are adequate, as well as evaluate if the actions are effective and efficient.

The town-council, after three years, still wants to move towards the establishment of precise criteria of performance, compromising responsibilities and resources of all involved parts.

The stability of inter-institutional collaboration is fundamental, as a mechanism to ensure the coordination of the agreed actions through the delimitation of independent action areas (educational centres, social services, parents). The coordination between social agents and actions is needed, since it is a unique treatment with the aim of exceeding the fragmentation of interventions.

Key factors to be considered with regard to transferability are the following:

- there is a legislation that can support the interventions;
- after defining the objectives, all services can be concentrated;
- all activities can be inter-related;
- programmes are not expensive because they facilitate the synergy of resources
- integrating policies on the local level allows for new answers to new problems

Reference

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2. Second chance measures

In this section we have collected to measures addressing those who have already left regular school in order to give them the possibility to make up with missed qualifications (see Volume 1, Chapter 5.2). Partly, this overlaps with measures listed under Chapter 1 inasmuch as they include specific pedagogical methods to compensate with students' negative learning experiences.

Teamteaching and open learning for immigrants (Austria)

1. Policy environment of good practice

This measure has been chosen as good-practice example because its target group is one of the most vulnerable ones (immigrants) and because it is one of the few examples which combines aspects of a preventative measure against early school leaving within the educational system itself and second chance education (see National Report Austria, Annex II of this volume; see also Volume 1, Chapter 5.2).

Due to the fact that commercial schools for employed persons are free of specific entrance barriers an increasing number of immigrants attends these schools in urban areas. Because of deficits in German (the normal language of instruction) many participants have problems following the lessons – especially during the first terms. Thus, the previous absence of additional pedagogical support can be held responsible for the high dropout rate among foreign-language pupils. This is the reason why special accompanying lessons both in the language of instruction and in the first language of the participants are offered. The aim of this implementation is to increase the possibilities of the immigrants on the labour market, furthermore to cut the drop-out-rate of foreign-language students.

The framework of this programme is ESF-Objective 3, it is a temporary or rather a pilot measure in the field of educational policy. The budget for the whole programme running for three years (1st February 2003 – 31st January 2006) amounts to 4 Mio. €. It is planned to support 1950 participants (in three years) split on 13 commercial schools.

The target group are students in commercial schools for employed persons, whose mother tongue is not German.

Table 1: Overview

Programme/Framework	ESF-Objective 3
Policy Field	Education Policy
Participants/Funding	634 Participants in 2004, Budget 4 Mio € (2003-2006)
Pilot or Long-Term	Pilot/temporary
In how many places?	13 selected school
Main objectives	Help students with foreign mother tongue to get a better position on the labour market enabled through assistance of a second teacher and mother tongue instruction
Target Group	Students in commercial schools for employed persons whose mother tongue is not German.
Main Activities	Instructing with a second teacher speaking the language of the students. Voluntary exercises for improving the knowledge of the students.
Evaluation/Monitoring	The Federal Ministry of Education, Science and Culture is responsible for the monitoring
Client participation	Active participation of the students is needs
What is funded?	4 Mio. € for the whole programme (2003-2006)
Organizational Settings	Commercial schools for employed can make an application at the Federal Ministry of Education, Science and Culture
Main actors	Commercial schools for employed persons, Federal Ministry of Education, Science and Culture
Personal involved in delivery	Teachers
Key activities	Instruction and assistance
Duration of Process	2 semesters
Active involvement of participants needed	High involvement
Motivation of participants	Advancement in communication and learning
Working Methods	Division in groups of the class, Teamteaching
Practice Monitoring	Current monitoring by four ESF-administrators
Involvement social environment	No involvement
Reach target group/DO	Good coverage in selected schools, but measure could be extended on more schools.
Acquired Skills	Better performance in all subjects.
Changes in Life	Better communication, better integration
Future Plans	Dependent on the funding, but extension is preferable.

Depending on the staff situation of the respective school, lessons are given by native speakers and/or German-speaking teachers in the form of team teaching models. The implementation is based on an “open learning” and “intercultural learning”-concept derived from experiences made by the BHAK Steyr und the schools of the vocational training institute (bfi-Vienna).

The actors had been involved in the process of planning. There had been meetings at schools informing the teachers and formulating convenient forms of education. In the planning process the following points were of major importance: common education for all students even in the case of a class division; that should improve the integration of the students. Secondly female students should get a special enhancement realised through new forms of teaching, learning and the creation of a tolerant climate of work and learning.

The teachers evaluate the measure by themselves with respect to the following indicators:

- usage of forms of teaching and learning, which help the students to acquire independence,
- qualified and intelligible instruction of the curriculum with respect to foreign-language students,
- creation of a working atmosphere assisting the integration of foreign-language students.

The results of the evaluation and possibilities for advancements are discussed with the students. Financial and administrative matters are controlled via the monitoring system.

This programme is good practice example because it is one of the few examples of a measure against early school leaving within the educational system itself. Because of (south-)eastern EU-enlargement, first language instruction is a forward-looking concept.

2. Description of good practice

The budget for the whole programme running for three years (2003 – 2006) amounts to 4 Mio. €. Commercial schools for employed persons can apply for implementing this programme. The application has to be made at the Ministry of Education, Science and Culture. Consequently the initiators of the project are the specific schools. In each school between 2 and 6 persons are involved in realising the programme.

The project workers are teachers, favoured are those who

- have additional qualifications in ‘open learning’,
- make use of new forms of teaching and learning,

- have attended advanced training of cross-cultural learning,
- are able to speak one of the immigrant languages (e.g. Croatian, Turkish).

Dependent on the schools different models are implemented, but on the whole following aspects are included in all of them: "Teamteaching" is implemented in the first two semesters in commercial schools for employed persons especially in those classes with the highest proportion of foreign students. In order to ease the school entrance the class is divided in groups in the subjects "German", "Business administration" and "Accountancy".

Four different ESF-administrators and the ESF-project manager monitor the activities at the relevant schools. Following tasks are monitored:

- permanent control of the number of school lessons held,
- regular review of proper register entries,
- control of information about the students on a semester basis,
- preparation of a report by the teachers on a semester basis.

In 2003 1.014 persons (59,5% females) participated, 634 participants (64,5% females) were counted in 2004. 13,4% of the participants dropped out of the programme in 2003, 14,7% in 2004. 82% of the remaining persons reached a certificate (meaning e.g. that they completed a year of schooling successfully and were allowed to carry on in the following year) in 2003, in 2004 even 95%.

The measure enables students whose mother tongue is not German to attend the lessons at school more intensively. Furthermore the work in small teams causes a noticeable advancement in the knowledge of German. In addition there has been an improvement of the knowledge of the students in other subjects because of the better communication. The overall high drop-out-rate of immigrant students had decreased because of the initiation of this measure.

The maintenance of the programme depends on additional funding which at the moment is not secured for the period after 2006. But the maintenance and even extension of the programme on all classes with foreign language students would be preferable.

3. Conclusions

In sum, the key success factors of the measure are the following:

- addressees have access to increase qualifications voluntarily, by own choice and decision;

- additional funding (yet, limited amount) and training of teachers;
- forms of non-formal learning are introduced into a formal education context;
- inclusive education in terms of organising special support within the regular education system.

Source:

Federal coordinator of the measure, Federal Ministry of Education, Science & Culture
ESF-Monitoringsystem of the Federal Ministry of Education Science and Culture

Second Chance Schools (Greece)

This programme offers the opportunity to those who have quitted school and are over 18 years old or adults of any age, to complete compulsory education, thus facilitating their access to the labour market. Second Chance Schools function as a reintegration measure for those who have not obtained a degree from compulsory education (see National Report Greece, Annex II in this volume).

1. Policy environment of good practice

Second Chance Schools were established by Article 3 of Law 2525 with the joint resolution of the Ministries of National Education and Religious Affairs and of Economics. The project started within the framework of the 2nd CSF when the first Second Chance School began its operation in Western Athens. Currently, SCS operate within the framework of O.P. "Education" II, Measure 1.1.: *Improvement of conditions for the reintegration at the educational system people in special categories*, within the Action Line 1: *Promotion of equality in accessing the labour market for all and especially for those in danger of social exclusion*. It is funded by the European Social Fund (75%) and National resources (25%).

The programme functions under the auspices of the General Secretariat of Adults Education while responsible for its implementation is the Institute of Continuous Training of Adults (IDEKE). IDEKE works in close co operation with the Pedagogical Institute for the development of the necessary educational material, as well as with the Local

Administrations in order to ensure the needed premises. The programme is implemented at a national level, and presently there are 32 Second Chance Schools in operation.

The innovative and flexible character of the programme aims at combating social exclusion for people who do not possess the essential qualifications and skills in order to respond to the needs of the labour market. More specifically, it aims at:

- Supporting the reintegration of people who have dropped out from compulsory education into the educational procedure.
- Creating cooperation networks between school and the local community, education and the labor market
- Supporting adults migrants in their effort to integrate into the Greek society by providing courses in the Greek language

The main activities of the programme are the following:

- Expansion and enhancement of the operation of Second Chance Schools
- Provision of Adult Education as well as Basic Skills and Key – Skills acquisition prerequisites for a successful occupational and social integration
- Provision of courses in Greek language for adult migrants

2. Description of good practice

Structures

The structural factors that must be taken into account are the following:

- The training of the educators focuses on the educational needs of adults as well as on the pedagogical methods more suitable to adult learners
- The development of the necessary educational material, especially for the instruction of the Greek language to migrants
- The supply of the proper equipment
- The information and sensitization of local community concerning the importance of adult education and life-long learning
- The employment of counselors of vocational guidance

Actors

The main actors implementing the programme are:

- The Ministry of National Education and Religious Affairs

- The Ministry of Economics
- The Pedagogical Institute
- The General Secretariat of Adults Education
- The Institute of Continuing Education of Adults
- The Local Administration and community
- Communities of migrants

Process

The pedagogical method used in SCS is based on a very strong personal individualized teacher-student relation, facilitated by the small number of students in each class. The use of the ‘project’ method, the opening of the school in the local community, the respect of the students’ needs, the laboratory work, the team-work, the innovative teaching methods, the alternative evaluation of students constitute an integral part of the operation of these schools. According to the Second Chance School’s curriculum:

- Serious attempt is made to fulfil the needs of adult education
- Extensive in-service education is provided to its staff
- The evaluation of students is conducted through alternative procedures
- Special time is devoted to the realization of projects by all teachers (interdisciplinary approaches)
- Innovative methods based on group education, mainly on New Technologies and the development of personal awareness, are encouraged in teaching (use of laboratory, field work, visiting of companies, case studies, etc).
- Educational methods are used that are different from those of the traditional school
- The individualized approach is the most appropriate for the target group since different needs as well as knowledge gaps must be met
- Emphasis is given in the development of the content to the skills in demand and job opportunities in the local labour market, in order to ensure reintegration
- Emphasis is also given in career and counselling guidance

Moreover, a long-term program of in service education has been realized where emphasis is given to the teachers’ practices as well as in the involvement and participation of the trainees. Indicative topics of this in service education are: the study program, different courses, adult education, action research, teaching methods, evaluation of school and students, etc.

Finally, the SCS Curricula incorporates the principles of Life Long Learning according to which formal, informal and non-formal Education is closely related and offer remarkable chances for Life Long Learning.

The total duration of the programme is 18 months (2 periods of 9 months) and after completion, diploma of lower secondary education is provided⁴.

3. Results

The increased number of people participating in SCS denotes the positive effects of the measure. However, it must be mentioned that although their original target group was young people of 18 and above (so the needs of the 16-18 age group were not being covered anyway), their operation brought into surface another serious educational need, that of people 30 years and above who have completed only primary education. As a result, Second Chance Schools in practice offer educational services to this group of people, who are both Greeks and non-Greeks while their majority is women⁵.

Evening Education (Greece)

Evening education aims at allowing students who can not attend the regular educational system due to various reasons, to complete compulsory education and/or proceed to upper secondary school. Since there are many working people who do not have a degree from compulsory education, evening education provides them with the opportunity to become holders of a school certificate, while at the same time they continue working (see National Report Greece, Annex II in this volume).

1. Policy environment of good practice

At the beginning of the century (1901) various commercial schools provided for the first time in Greece evening courses. Later on, in 1934/35 the first evening school began to operate and at that time, evening education was outside the formal educational system and

⁴ Institute of Continuous Education of Adults, <http://www.ideke.gr>

⁵ Second Chance Schools, <http://www.e2c-europe.org/2cschools/>

was privately funded. In the aftermath of WWII (1950s), evening education was established by Law 3094/54 & 3971/59 in an attempt to combat illiteracy. Nowadays, evening education is part of the formal educational system and is considered as the most effective measure for combating school failure. Evening schools addresses the educational needs of young people aged 14-18 who have not completed compulsory education, as well as those of adult workers, who had interrupted their studies. 80% of the people who attend evening schools are at the age group 14-24 which consists almost 6% of the total working population of this age group⁶.

There are evening school equivalents for all types of secondary education schools. According to the latest data, 67 evening lower education schools (Gymnasio), 51 evening upper secondary schools (Lykeio) and 43 evening Technical Vocational schools operate at the present. In addition, there are private evening schools and more specifically 6 lower education schools and 5 upper educational schools. Of a total of 28000 young people who attend evening schools, 10500 attend lower evening secondary education, 8500 attend upper secondary evening schools and around 9000 attend evening technical vocational schools⁷.

It should be noted that the students attending evening schools have faced in the past a number of educational failures and rejections within the regular schools. Taking this into account, evening schools provide them with the opportunity not only to complete compulsory education but to continue their studies to the upper secondary level. It is considered as a measure that facilitates the reintegration of early school leavers as well as an alternative for those needing to work, to do so without dropping out of school.

The indicators that are used in order to evaluate the programme are the number of people enrolling at evening schools, as well as, for the students of upper secondary education, their participation and performance to the national final exams, for entering tertiary education.

⁶ Education Research Centre of Greece (2003). [The Greek Educational System: Facts and Figures](#). Athens: Education Research Center Publications.

⁷ Work – School, <http://www.xkatsikas.gr/eleythera/eleyth2.htm>

2. Description of good practice

Structures

For the effective implementation of evening schools, important structural factors are:

- The specified training of the educators in evening schools, regarding their understanding of the students' particular situation
- The development of an analytical programme that meets their needs
- The application of educational methods that are different from those used in regular education, which many students has dropped out from
- The existence of specialised personnel (social workers, vocational counsellors) within the context of the evening school, for assisting and supporting students who are reintegrating into the educational system, as well as, working students, who try to balance their professional with their educational identity.

Actors

The main actors implementing the programme are:

- The Ministry of National Education and Religious Affairs, which provide the funding of the public evening schools
- Private evening school units
- The Educational Directions in the different prefectures and regions of the country
- The School Union and the teachers
- The students

Process

In order to register to an evening school, students must be over 14 years old and have a job. The duration of the programme is 3 years for the lower education schools and 4 years for the upper. The lessons take place between 19:00 – 22:30 in the evening. In order to facilitate the attendance of working students, there are legislative provisions allowing flexibility in their working timetable as well as taking more working permits, when needed⁸.

⁸ Workers and Students, <http://www.xkatsikas.gr/artrha/arthro32.html>

3. Results

The benefits of evening education according to a sociological research in Evening Schools of Attica, contacted by the National Centre for Sociological Researches in co-operation with the University of Piraeus, where the following:

- 53% of students appreciated and comprehended the value of lower education certificate
- The curriculum was flexible. Students could work and study at the same time.

Moreover, it should be noted that only 25% of the total participants for the year 2000-2001 are girls. This percentage should be explained by the fact that they are less represented among early school leavers. Although their participation presented a 50% increase in comparison to that of 1970, this percentage is still only half of that at normal education. This may be partly due to the still prevailing attitude according to which boys are perceived as the primary care takers of the family and partly due to the fact that not many girls at this age (14-18) enter labor market⁹.

4. Conclusions

Concluding, the following key success factors can be highlighted:

- Second chance education, especially evening education, has a central place in the education system rather than being marginalized and stigmatised;
- Sufficient funding and supply to meet a relative high demand;
- Accessibility in terms of space, time and format reflected by a high share of young people;
- Non-formal learning methods as well as integration of teaching with vocational counselling and social work;
- Specific training for teachers and other staff.

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⁹ National centre for Sociological Researches, <http://www.ekke.gr>

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Work – School, <http://www.xkatsikas.gr/eleythera/eleyth2.htm>

3. Preparatory and pre-vocational measures

In this chapter preparatory and pre-vocational measures are presented which address those who have left school with low qualifications but fail entering regular training or work. Potential overlap regards both second chance programmes (2.) and ALMP measures (6.; see also Volume 1, Chapter 5.2).

Getting Connected (UK)

Getting Connected has been established by the Young Adults Learning Partnership, a joint initiative between two NGO's in the UK, the National Institute for Adult and Continuing Education and the National Youth Agency (see National Report UK, Annex II in this volume).

1. Scale of the Programme

Since 2000 when there were 18 centres registered with Getting Connected it has witnessed steady expansion with 120 registered centres in 2004 (CEI, 2005).

As the programme is entirely flexible in terms of the agency of delivery, funding has been derived from a variety of sources in local delivery. The YALP partnership which has developed and promoted Getting Connected has mainly been funded by the Local Government Association and the expansion of the programme through grant applications such as the Community Fund.

The programme has been devised by the YALP partnership with the aim of opening a new route back into learning for disengaged young people aiming to enhance and fill a gap in existing statutory educational provision, it is therefore not part of existing statutory or legal frameworks. It is provided by a range of agencies e.g. Local Authority Youth Service, Further Education Colleges, Arts Projects etc. Due to the flexibility of the programme delivery it is difficult to assess the exact numbers of participants and although accreditation is optional, the number of accredited units has risen from 84 in 1999 to 999 in 2004 with almost 3,500 young persons having got their involvement accredited (CEI, 2005).

2. Objectives

Getting Connected seeks to achieve a closer fit between the policies and programmes of providers of learning and skills and the needs, interests and aspirations of young adults; for example, by developing ways of teaching, learning and assessment which enhance self-esteem, emotional literacy and the development of basic and key skills.

Through action research they seek to explore and understand the social circumstances and experiences that shape young adults attitudes to learning.

Target group

‘Getting Connected’ is a curriculum framework aimed at young people who have become disengaged with learning, with the aim of helping disengaged young adults to reconnect with learning and foster their personal development. The framework is intended to enhance the self-esteem and emotional literacy of those young adults outside the formal education system and it is aimed primarily at young adults aged 16-25.

3. Description of good practice

The success of the programme hinges on effective relationships between young adults and (mentors) practitioners working with them. It is intended to be delivered by a diverse range of practitioners’ youth workers, Connexions Personal advisers, health workers, probation staff, social workers or volunteers in a variety of contexts.

The programme is comprised of nine units:

- Knowing myself
- Coping with feelings
- Holding Beliefs
- Handling relationships
- Getting and giving support
- Exploring risks
- Managing myself
- Using information
- Rights and responsibilities

Mentors can either use the curriculum on an informal basis as a framework for working with young people, or they can use the curriculum to gain an accredited qualifications (NVQ Level 1)- mentors must have completed the training programme to go for accreditation. Each unit is accredited individually but to gain the overall qualification

'Getting Connected: Profile of Personal Development they must submit any 5 units for accreditation.

Actors

The promoters of the programme are the YALP both organisation that are partners have extensive experience in youth related issues and adult learning particularly in informal contexts.

The actors involved in delivery of the programmes come from a range of backgrounds reflected in the flexible approach of delivery, youth workers, college teachers, vocational trainers etc.

The skills and qualities of the mentors in building trust and using Getting Connected in a flexible way to suit different learning styles is paramount.

Practitioners saw participation in the relevant training as essential for those using the programme, this is a requirement to deliver the accredited programme, but practitioners can use and adapt the framework without formal training.

Process

The framework programme can be delivered across a range of settings ideally informally and young people who enrol on the programme can take as long as they like to complete it dependent of their learning needs.

Completion of accredited programme provides access to higher levels of training programmes at UK NVQ Level 2.

3. Results

An ongoing mostly qualitative evaluation of both mentors and participants in the programme conducted by the University of Warwick has highlighted both positive evaluations among both mentors and participants. Mentors felt the programme supported young adults' learning, improved behaviour; developed relevant interpersonal skills and confidence and made a positive impact in the way they were working with young people. Participants felt that the programme had assisted in the learning of various skills (writing, speaking, IT planning, budgeting and facts (drugs, rights and responsibilities, had made positive changes to their attitudes and improved their anger/stress management and confidence. They particularly liked the relaxed style of learning and enjoyed the feeling of

success from participation. Many had now moved on to mainstream education and training (CEI, 2003; CEI 2004).

4. Conclusions

In conclusion, as key success factors the following may be considered:

- Voluntary access of young people;
- Reliance on non-formal learning;
- A diversity of settings and a flexibility of application;
- Optional accreditation;
- Learner-centred and centrality of trust between learner and professional.

References:

- CEI (2003) Getting Connected National Evaluation: Phase One Report. Warwick: Centre for Education and Industry.
- CEI (2004) Getting Connected National Evaluation: Phase Two Report. Warwick: Centre for Education and Industry.
- CEI (2005) Getting Connected National Evaluation: Key Findings. Warwick: Centre for Education and Industry.

Production schools (Denmark)

In 1980 a special initiative developed under the Ministry of Education to combat youth unemployment. The initiative resulted in a new school form and a separate legislation in 1985 came into force (Act of production schools; see National Report Denmark, Annex II in this volume).

The production schools exist under a national framework but each school is free to interpret, construct and concretise aims and activities in order to meet special regional demands. Even though the production schools belong under the Ministry of Education they also relate to active labour market policies. Young people who do not complete a youth education are offered new and different education possibilities and thereby they hopefully later will be integrated on labour market.

1. Objectives

The primary target group of production school are young people up to 25 years of age who have not started or finished post-compulsory education. In the beginning productions schools were only for young unemployed. Now, everyone without upper secondary education can be accepted on the schools. Young people under 25 – whether they receive unemployment benefits from the state or activation benefits from the local authorities (see Chapter 5) – can be activated after a period of three months of unemployment. 30 hours per week are offered.

From the 1st quarter of 2004 to the 1st quarter of 2005 there has been a decrease in the annual pupil activity on 5 %. This primarily because of the fact that admission with state funds only applies to pupils who are considered to be in the target group. Whether the student is considered within the target group or not is a decision which is taken by a counsellor according to the new guidance reform. Before this new legislation came into force, the production schools were admitting a broader group of students, which means that “strong” students whom are considered strong enough to be integrated in traditional education system, were admitted to these schools, mostly as a result of poor (or lack of) guidance from school and education counsellors. This acknowledgement has resulted in a legal obligation for school counsellors to consider whether the student in question is included in the primary target group i.e. academic weak pupils or whether other (qualifying) alternatives than production schools should be taken into consideration. The target group can in general be categorised by following groups:

- Young people with difficulties in acquiring academic skills and difficulties in getting a qualifying education.
- Young people who has started but never finished a youth education, neither general nor vocational.
- Young people with massive social or behavioural problems.
- Young people who of one reason or the other can not find their way into the ordinary education system.

The production schools are build upon the idea that learning takes places through production work shops. The basic premise is learning by doing. Everything which is produced or manufactured is most often getting sold no matter if the product is a material product, a service product or for instance music- and plays. The important thing is that the young people get recognition for their work.

2. Description of good practice

At the moment there exist around 100 production schools in Denmark and 1,769 students are in 2005 enrolled in this form of education. The production schools are independent institutions and are established locally or regional and are regulated by Ministry of education. Each school has a committee, a school principal and teachers. The Minister of education invigilates and supervises the work at the schools. They are funded through following:

Municipal funds: A basic grant is given by local authorities or/and by the county council. The grant is obligatory in the establishment of the school and the amount of the obligatory grant is the same across municipalities. Local authorities can however give optional additional grants. In 2004 the municipal funds (obligatory) was 43.824 EUR. pr. school.

State funds: State subsidies are given towards running costs, including education costs, building costs etc. State subsidies are fixed according to annual finance budget. In 2004 the State funds made up 9.958 EUR per one-year nomination, i.e. per participant.

Students are not entitled to ordinary educational allowances (SU), but receive a “school-grant” from the school, which is to be considered as payment for working with production outputs. For students under 18 years the grant is 67 EUR pr. week for students over 18 years the grant is 134 EUR pr. week. The grant is considered a taxable income. If the student is late or do not show up, the school can make a reduction in the payment.

For students in activation specific rules exist considering the distribution of funds between municipality, state and employment service.

Process, activities and methods

The main educational goal is that each student get the opportunity to develop ones own life competency. Focus is not only on academic skills but also and in particular on social, personal and physical skills. Life competency is achieved through *life-learning* and through a *qualifying process*. Life-learning is a psychological adoption of norms, values etc. existing in society. It is a “hidden” process which is difficult to verbalise, predict and organise.

The education process is a process where personal competencies, practical skills and more formal knowledge are acquired.

Learning processes are organised through two forms of teaching: Workshop learning and ordinary teaching. Every young individual is free to organise an individual course which

fits to the student in question. The course can always be changed in the process. For some students it is more important to develop social and personal competencies, for others a strengthening of knowledge and skills seems most important. Courses are organised in terms of individual education plans. The educational process is not only formal as in school contexts but also involves informal learning. It is also important that each task fits the student in question. The task shall both be challenging but also reinforce sense of confidence, which means that the task must not be too difficult.

There exist a lot of different workshops depending on the specific school. Examples are carpeting, canteen, building construction, electronics, fitness and health, administration, tourism, textile, media, drama, metalwork etc. The workshops co-ordinate both with each other but also with other production schools and the local community.

In addition students are taught in math, language, computer etc. All classes are voluntary. Finally the students can do an 4 weeks apprenticeship in public or private contexts or participate in an exchange program. The apprenticeship period can be prolonged if the young individual benefits from it.

Every young individual participates continuously in the organisation of his or hers stay at the school.

There are no testing or exams and students can be accepted during the whole year. Students can parallel with their stay at the school attend classes in a qualifying education, up to 12 hours per week. This is a opportunity which is widely used.

An example from a catering workshop:

Staffing: 2 teachers and 15 students.

The task is to prepare food for 70 students each day and some times to arrange “take-outs”. Every Monday the students choose within which area they want to operate. The areas are baking, main course, salad and washing-up. If a student chooses baking, the task could be as following:

Bake a bread from a recipe. The recipe is for 2 persons so the recipe should be recalculated for 5 persons. Find the ingredients and make sure that temperature and amount of ingredients are appropriate. Bake the bread in the oven. In addition the student is taught hygiene, nutrition, planning etc.

As a participant in the catering course, the students also participates in the routines of a local butcher where they learn something about ecology. Finally excursions are made to ethnic restaurants, a chocolate factory, an ecological farm etc.

3. Results

A quantitative study carried out by the Ministry of Education showed that 35 % of those students who attended the production schools across the country in 1997-1998 were integrated in the labour market, 34 % were in education, 16 % were unemployed, 6 % were on leave, whereas information about the remaining 9 % was unknown. About 1/3 were doing the same job/education today as they did right after leaving the production school, whereas the rest has changed their path.

Out of a control group of students in regular upper secondary education it shows 1/5 are involved in regular education (entitled to education allowances), 1/5 were involved in other educational settings, 1/5 were integrated in the labour market, 1/5 were either unemployed or in activation, whereas no information existed for the remaining 1/5.

The duration of the stay at the schools seems important considering future paths. 50 % of the students who stayed between of 3 months and 1 year started an education right after leaving school, whereas students who stayed for less than 3 months to a greater extend became unemployed.

The production schools are a result of a long term policy and exist under a well established framework. A continuously evaluation is taking place because of the state supervision. In addition OECD made an evaluation report in 1994 where they concluded that the production schools are succeeding in motivation and challenging the young people in ways the formal education system can not.

4. Conclusions

In terms of transferability, key success factors of the measure are the following:

- Importance given to learning by doing and 'life learning' based on real work and embedded in relationships of external recognition through sale and/or public performance;
- Absence of pressure in terms of direct labour market placement rates;
- Individual and flexible training pathways;
- Recognised infrastructure for re-orientation rather than remedial scheme of compensation;
- Voluntary access;
- Shared responsibility for significant funding between state and municipalities;
- Allowances as wage for work and training.

Vocational preparation courses (Austria)

An instrument for dealing with problems on the youth labour market, apart from the subsidizing apprenticeship places, is the Youth Training Consolidation Act (JASG), which assigns to the Public Employment Service the task of compensating for the shortage of apprenticeship places by providing a suitable safety net.

1. Policy environment

The Vocational preparation courses are Part of the programme of action under the Youth Training Consolidation Act (Legislative basis: Youth Training Consolidation Act, BGBl. I No. 91/1998, as amended.) They have been chosen as good-practice example because their main aim is to build bridges back into the system, in a context where a rather small minority faces the risk of permanent exclusion (see National Report Austria, Annex II in this volume).

Table 1: Overview

Programme/Framework	NAP
Policy Field	Labour Market Policy
Participants/Funding	2003/04: 5.500 Participants, Budget 57 Mio. € / 2004/05: 6.800 Participants, Budget 71 Mio. €
Pilot or Long-Term	Long term
In how many places?	All over the country
Main objectives	Safety net for young people who don't find an apprenticeship place after compulsory education. Temporary bridging solution until a regular apprenticeship place is found.
Target Group	School leavers seeking apprenticeship places Participants of earlier JASG courses Disabled persons
Main Activities	Vocational training, counseling for girls, skills and knowledge, training in seeking apprenticeship places
Evaluation/Monitoring	The Public employment service is responsible for the monitoring
Client participation	There is no inclusion in planning of the participants because the measure is adjusted to the regional situation
What is funded?	2004/05: 53 Mio. € by the public employment service, 18 Mio. € by the federal states
Organizational Settings	Assignment of the Ministry of Economic and Labour to the Public Employment Service. The PES has to elevate the demand for the courses and to provide them.
Main actors	Educational institutions, Public Employment Service (AMS), Federal Ministry of Economic and Labour
Pers. involved in routine	Employees at the educational institutions and at the PES

Key activities	Courses, counseling and vocational guidance
Duration of Process	12 months are aspired, if no apprenticeship place is found, the measure can be extended.
Active involvement of participants needed	Moderate involvement
Motivation of participants	Bridging solution preventing unemployment
Working Methods	60 % of the courses should be practical training, additionally participants receive training in application for an apprenticeship place and counseling
Practice Monitoring	Public employment service
Involvement social env.	No involvement
Reach target group/DO	Round 55% of target group reached (unemployed youth and youth in search of an apprenticeship place)
Acquired Skills	First year of apprenticeship, personal stabilization and soft skills
Changes in Life	Stabilization in life structures
Future Plans	Programme should be maintained and even extended, 8.000 places are planned

2. Objectives

The provision of additional apprenticeship training places in special institutions is intended to give a chance of training to all young persons who have not found a suitable apprenticeship place after completing their compulsory education. In that context, the aim is to devote particular attention to the special situations and needs of certain young persons, such as scholastic deficits and personal disabilities, and to guide them towards future-oriented training (new regulations on vocational training, etc.). The chief function of these JASG programmes, in the form of 10-month courses¹⁰ with prior vocational guidance modules, is to provide a temporary bridging solution until a regular apprenticeship place can be taken up in an enterprise. The possibility of transfer to the course for the next training year, which is provided for in existing Public Employment Service guidelines, allows in principle longer participation in the action programme (until the entire apprenticeship period has been served).“ (TWENTY-SECOND REPORT on the implementation of Articles 7, 8, 11, 14, 17 and 18 of the EUROPEAN SOCIAL CHARTER, p.79f.)

The JASG is part of the NAP programme, therefore it is a labour market policy on the national level. In the year 2003/04 5.500 young people participated in the programme, 2004/05 even 6.800. 48% of the participants in 2004/05 were female and 18% had a

¹⁰ According to the federal coordinator of this measure courses last up to 12 months now.

migrant background. The overall budget in 2003/04 amounted 57 Mio €, the available budget rose to 71 Mio. € in the year 2004/05. The programme has the character of a long-term policy, which is realised all over the country. The target groups of the action programme are:

- school-leavers who are seeking apprenticeship places,
- Participants in earlier JASG courses who have not been able to find apprenticeship places despite intensive efforts.
- In line with labour market policy aims, special attention should be devoted to disabled young persons as well as to those with special placement difficulties (persons seeking apprenticeship places from earlier school-leaving years, the long-term unemployed, persons with learning difficulties as well as school dropouts).

The general prerequisite for participation is the registration of young persons at the Public Employment Service as seeking apprenticeship places and the evidence that they have made at least five unsuccessful applications for apprenticeship places.

3. Description of good practice

The amount of funding constituted 57 Mio. € in the year 2003/04 and 71 Mio. € in the year after, whereas 53 Mio. € are funded by the Public Employment Service and 18 Mio. € are contributed by the federal states ('Länder'). Main actor is the public employment service, assigned by the Federal Ministry of Economic Affairs and Labour. Task of the PES is to elevate the demand for vocational preparation courses nationwide and to provide and organise the courses in cooperation with educational institutions. In order to be commissioned to carry out vocational preparation courses the educational institutions have to make an application at the public employment service. Another function of the public employment service is to control the implementation of the programme.

The following types of action are taken under the action programme:

Vocational training preparation projects:

- Vocational guidance and/or vocational preparation: Clarification of individual occupational prospects for pre-course preparation (see below) or for the direct take-up of an apprenticeship place in an enterprise.
- Counselling of girls seeking apprenticeship places: Utilisation of counselling services specifically geared to this target group, with the primary counselling aim of expanding the range of occupational choices for girls, which is limited by gender-specific role

patterns. Particular emphasis should be placed on non-traditional future-oriented occupations.

Courses:

The courses are operated by training institutions and take up to 12 months to teach first-year apprenticeship skills and knowledge (and, in the event of extension of the course, those of later years), the share of practical training being at least 60%. In addition to imparting purely technical knowledge, the courses should also give training in procedures for seeking apprenticeship places or work and in job applications. According to labour market policy aims, JASG courses should be related to occupations actually in demand in the relevant regional labour market. With exception of two federal states the programme covers a broad range of different teaching-professions adjusted to the needs of the regional apprenticeship market.

The overriding aim is placement in a “regular” apprenticeship training place after one year. Where this is unsuccessful, despite intensive efforts, a course building on the most recent course attended should be organised in each case. If this aim is not obtained, another course could be attended and in single cases the participant is able to finish his apprenticeship within the programme (in average an apprenticeship ends after three years), but generally the transmission into a regular training place is striven.

Supplementary support:

To support the aim of training, additional technical and educational help can be provided by means of counselling enterprises commissioned by the Public Employment Service. This includes composing an application and seeking an apprenticeship place. Furthermore an important activity is to counsel the young people e.g. in occupational prospects and in particular to assist girls in order to widen their occupational choices. In that specific context co-operation exists with a counselling centre for girls (e.g. personality-related training, coaching or regular group sessions). Another important part of the programme is the preparation of the young people to take responsibility for themselves (Bundesrichtlinie zur Durchführung der Lehrlingsausbildung in Ausbildungseinrichtungen (JASG; BAG) durch das AMS; TWENTY-SECOND REPORT on the implementation of Articles 7, 8, 11, 14, 17 and 18 of the EUROPEAN SOCIAL CHARTER, p.79f.)

4. Results

The public employment service is responsible for the monitoring. Main indicators of success are firstly the number of direct transitions from the measure to an apprenticeship place. A second indicator is the distribution of graduates by relevant labour market positions like employment or unemployment.

12 months after participation in the measure 54% found an apprenticeship, 11% were employed and 12% were unemployed. (BMWA, 2004: 17f). Half a year before, that means 6 months after ending the measure 67% of the participants found an apprenticeship place. This means that 13% of the participants lost their apprenticeship again.

A survey among 300 participants, companies and representatives of the actors shows that another main effect of the programme is the personal stabilization and the extension of the soft skills of the participants. The experience of the companies with former participants is quite positive; therefore some of them had arranged additional apprenticeship places.

Due to the fact that there will be an undersupply of apprenticeship places also in the next years because of the demographic situation and the current economic development, the measure will be perpetuated and even extended. For the period 2005/06 8.000 apprenticeship-training places are planned.

5. Conclusions

The key factors responsible for the success of this measure are:

- linked to a large-scale training system which is directly linked to the labour market;
- flexibility between quick move into regular apprenticeship and completion of training in non-company based workshops;
- awareness for gendered disadvantage with specific counselling for young women;
- considerable investment (also in this case requiring ESF-co-funding).

Sources:

Arbeitsmarktservice Österreich: Bundesrichtlinie zur Durchführung der Lehrlingsausbildung in Ausbildungseinrichtungen (JASG; BAG) durch das AMS), Wien.
Bundesministerium für Wirtschaft und Arbeit (2004): Arbeitsmarktmonitoring 2004, Wien.
REPUBLIC OF AUSTRIA (2003): TWENTY-SECOND REPORT on the implementation of Articles 7, 8, 11, 14, 17 and 18 of the EUROPEAN SOCIAL CHARTER, Vienna.
Federal coordinator of the measure from the Federal Ministry of Economic & Labour.

4. Vocational education and training (VET) and Labour market training

Under the heading of training we collect both VET measures included in the formal education and training system and leading to formal qualifications and labour market training as well as training schemes addressing primarily unemployed youth without necessarily providing regular qualifications (see Volume 1, Chapter 5.2).

Apprenticeship system (Portugal)

1. Introduction and overview

One of the most important problems of Portuguese school and training systems is the week attractiveness of the vocational tracks (see National Report Portugal, Annex II in this volume). The Apprenticeship System was created to answer to that problem, offering the students that failed at school an opportunity to acquire dual certifications, to improve their qualifications and to enter into the labour market with good career perspective. The adhesion of the target youngsters exceeded the expectations, and therefore the system is considered a successful active labour market/education policy. However, it is not enough to solve the above mentioned problem, because of its small scale. It is also interesting because representing a quite successful example of importing the model of apprenticeship training established in Austria or Germany to a context traditionally characterised by school-based VET.

Policy field: Training/Education

Objectives and Principles (program theory): Apprenticeship is a specific youth training system for those who have crossed the age limit for compulsory education and have not reached the age of 25. This system includes an overall training, preparing for specific jobs in the labour market, giving professional (level I, II, III and IV) and ISCED certification (1,2 and 3). Steered by IEFP (the Public Employment Services), it operates in alternation from a vocational training centre and a company or corporation where the labour experience takes place. It is part of a set of offers in the education/training systems aimed at reduction early school leaving by diversifying the learning pathways and simultaneously

improving initial qualifications of young people with poor socio-economic background, in order to enforce the probabilities of good quality professional carriers.

Legal framework: Created in 1985, the Apprenticeship System is now ruled by the DL n.^o 205/96 from October 25th.

Scale of the programme: This system has covered over an average of 25 000 young people per year (ranging from 13.000 at the beginning in 1997 to 28782 in 2003) in different formative areas. According to the National Action Plan, the Budget for 2002 was € 92.729.000, from which € 59.999.000 from European Social Fund. The fact that apprenticeship involves no more than about 12% of its target age group explains why, in spite of the results achieved, the impact on early school leaving and on the rate of 18-24 under ISCED 3 is rather limited.

Duration (pilot/long-term policy): Long-term policy

Location: National

Target group: Young students particularly vulnerable to early school leaving, risking entering the labour market with no qualifications, in low quality jobs and with no perspectives of satisfying carriers.

Main activities: Training process that alternates vocational training in Training Centres and practical work-place training. The trainees receive a subsidy, what makes the system more attractive than other vocational training and education programmes.

Evaluation and assessment: The system was evaluated by an independent experts team after the first years of experience, in 1992. Since the launch of the National Employment Plan in 1998, until the NEP 2002, every year the numbers of attendants of the system were made public.

Client participation: Limited to the choice of the formative area.

2. Description of Good Practice

Structures: The budget for the year 2002 was € 92.729.000. This pays for trainees' subsidies, trainers in Training Centres and coaches in companies. The system is organized by IEFP, within the training centres.

Actors: The main actors are the National Commission for Apprenticeship, integrated by IEFP (in representation of the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs), representatives of other Ministries (education, economy) and representatives of the social partners, responsible for monitoring and globally orienting the system; IEFP is the responsible for the operation of the system; the training teams are constituted by trainers of the different

components of the courses (mathematics, Portuguese language, foreign languages, etc., vocational components, general components for employability) and monitors at the workplace; the process of final evaluation of young apprenticeship trainees (offering a qualification certificate with education equivalence) is the responsibility of Juries that integrate representatives of IEFP, companies and the social partners; the companies that participate in the funding of the system and that offer the best possible conditions for learning; the trainees.

Process: Incorporated into the Lifelong Learning (LLL) strategy, the apprenticeship system is a scheme for initial vocational training on an alternating basis. It has been progressively asserting itself as an important way of raising the (young) Portuguese population's educational and vocational qualification levels, since successful completion brings school (2nd and 3rd basic education cycles or secondary education) and vocational (levels I, II, III or IV) certification. The curricula is established by the Ministries of Labour and Social Affairs and the ministry of Education. It includes scientific and languages classes, vocational classes, general competence classes and practice in workplace. The duration of each level is equal to the one of education courses.

The system is based on a technical, organizational and financial structure that is underpinned by the central and regional IEFP services. Its principal features are as follows:

- a training process that alternates between the vocational training centre and the entity where the practical on-the-job training is carried out;
- entry and exit training tracks that conform to the personal profile of each of the young person;
- monitoring and strategic orientation of the system under the tutelage of the CNA (National Apprenticeship Commission), with a tripartite structure involving the trade union and employers' confederations, the various ministries involved in vocational training and dignitaries of recognized merit.

3. Results

Under the LLL strategy, Portugal set itself the goal of including 26,000 young people in the Apprenticeship System per year, a figure that was reached in 2002, as the following table shows. In 2003 a total of 28,782 trainees were reached (an increase of about 3000).

Training Body / Year	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004
Employment Centres and directly managed training centres	9.054	8.801	9.656	-	-
Shared management centres	4.121	3.972	3.656	-	-
External bodies	12.903	12.446	13.420	-	-
Total	26.078	25.219	26.735	25.201	26.907
Annual rate of variation	5%	- 3.3%	6%	-6%	7%

Source: IEFP (2003)

The system is increasing the numbers of trainees in the highest levels (mainly ISCED 3), with the corresponding decrease of the lowest levels.

Years	2002		2003		2004	
ISCED Level	N	%	N	%	N	%
ISCED 2	9.494	35,5	6.464	25,6	6.074	22,6
ISCED 3	17.241	64,5	18.737	74,4	20.811	77,3
ISCED 4					22	0,1
Total	26.735	100	25.201	100	26.907	100

Source: IEFP (2005)

Evaluation Results: The importance of the Apprenticeship System is especially related to stronger commitment to the forms of initial youth training that allow double certification, in order to contribute simultaneously to raising the Portuguese population's low educational levels and vocational qualification levels. Strengthened by the double certification options, this political commitment is fundamental to any increase in the proportion of 22-year-olds who reach secondary education level (the figure for 2003 was 47.6%, while Portugal's target is to increase it to 55% in 2006 and 65% in 2010) and is equally fundamental if the application of the planned rise in compulsory education to 12 years is to be possible.

The results in terms of success of the system can be measured by the difference between the trainees who initiated the courses by year and the number of the ones who reprove or abandon the system that same year. The numbers of certificated trainees in the third year is a proxy of the success of the system.

Situation of Trainees	2003	2004
Initiated in the first year	8.634	8.614
Abandoned	210	520
Reproved	530	155
Certificated in the third year	4.593	4.456

Source: IEFP, Department of Vocational Training (2003/2004)

4. Conclusion

The main strength of the system is the potential of employability. Other strong points are (i) the strong association between schooling progression, vocational qualification and practice in the workplace, during a long process of learning; (ii) the “practical” and vocational quality of the learning process when compared with other segments of the offer, namely of the school system; and the partnership with companies compromised with the quality of human resources

Some weaknesses can also be found, namely the duration of the courses when compared with other segments of the training offer that provide equivalent certification (for instance, Education and Formation Courses and the Education and Formation of Adults short term courses), what demands a rationalization of the whole lifelong learning system. The relatively high costs of the system, strongly dependent from the ESF, are another weak point.

In spite of being the main target, problematic youngsters tend to show relatively high levels of absenteeism and abandon in the first year. Improving of the pedagogical practice (insisting in the differentiation of the pedagogical practices) mainly in the subjects with a more theoretical content and the valuing and deeper involvement of companies, helping them to become learning organizations are, therefore, a necessity.

With regard to the perspective of transferability the most relevant success factors are:

- substantial involvement of companies in the provision of training;
- a contextualised and reflexive transfer of an apprenticeship system into a context without a grown culture of companies investing in training; the State not only sets incentives but also shares costs to a significant extent;
- significant investment;
- linking financial incentives for employers with offer of organisational development thereby embedding new training forms in new organisational cultures;

- flexibility of length and level of training.

Computer Training for Young People (Bulgaria)

This programme of the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy in Bulgaria started in 2003 and is planned till the end of 2005. It will be evaluated before a decision is taken for its continuation. The programme is a mainstream example in the field of labour market policy, with a national coverage, one of the most popular programmes among unemployed young people (see National Report Bulgaria, Annex II in this volume). It was chosen as an example of good practice as it addresses a serious lack in young people's transition from school to work and is well accepted by the young. While the first year was only a pilot stage, in the second year the number of young people involved in the programme was with a fifth higher than the planned one.

1. Policy environment

In the description of the programme by the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy, the preconditions and necessity of the programmes were seen in the demand for highly qualified workforce, particularly in the field of new technologies, as well as accent in the Lisbon strategy on the task to ease the integration of young people in the information society. The Ministry of Labour and Social Policy (2003) considers that the main difficulties met by young people in search of a job are the low level of vocational qualifications of the young, the insufficient and often incorrect vocational orientation and the lack of work experience. The programme sets out to tackle these barriers and increase young people's employability. In our opinion training in computer technologies should be offered by the educational system and not by the Employment Agency. However, under the conditions of under financing of the educational system at all levels and the untrained teacher staff, the strategy of the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy is necessary and welcomed by the young. We consider that the programme also meets the need to stimulate lifelong learning which is rather underdeveloped in the country (NSI, 2004), and it creates conditions for learning on the Internet and distance learning by the young.

2. Objectives of the programme

The programme has one goal and nine objectives stated which are very general from increasing young people's access to the information and computer technologies to the

development of the access capacity on the local and regional level, from preventing the young to fall into the group of long-term unemployed to the development of the information society in the country. The big number of tasks makes it difficult to evaluate the effectiveness of the programme. In essence, the programme is directed toward the employability of the young unemployed through IT training. Its main tasks are:

- To provide computer training for the young unemployed
- To offer apprentice places in the real economy for them
- To train trainers for the programme in order to ensure its effectiveness and sustainability.

The principles listed in the description of the programme are quite general, applied in most of the other programmes of the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy: equal access, visibility and openness, adherence to the law, resource provision, and social partnership. An important aspect is the voluntary principle of involvement which means that the young are not forced by fear of losing their benefits or rights of registration if they are not willing to enter the course. That is why the interest and aspiration of the young to get involved in the programme is a clear indicator that the programme meets client needs.

3. Structural factors and actors

The target group of the programme are young people with secondary and university education registered as unemployed in the labour offices. They enrol in training courses and then for the top ten per cent the labour offices provide placement as ‘trainees’ with employers in the real economy. In 2003 the programme started as a pilot project while for 2004 and 2005 it has a national coverage and is implemented by the involvement of the capacity of the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy, the Employment Agency and its regional and local agencies, the Bulgarian-German Centres for Vocational Training (in three towns), the Business and Information Centres created under the J.O.B.S. (employment through support for the businesses), the licensed training centres and regular schools and colleges. Thirteen institutions are listed as having responsibilities for the implementation of the programme, including local municipalities, employers and their organisations. An interesting part of the programme is the cooperation with Microsoft in Bulgaria. They fund and provide the practical training of the trainers for the programme. The main funding for the three years is provided by the state budget. The state funding is planned to be in the amount of 5 010 606 BGN (2 500 000 Euro) for the 3 years while the

resources of Microsoft allocated for the programme are not listed. The expenses are given as a total sum for each year but not in details according to the different activities.

4. Process

The process of the implementation of the programme covers three years, the first as a pilot project and then full national coverage for the second and third year. This time scale makes sense as it allows greater flexibility of the programme. The main activities in the programme are three:

- Training of trainers
- Training of young unemployed
- Encouraging employers to provide apprentice places for a part of those successfully finishing the training.

The first year of the programme focuses mainly on the training of trainers while involving only 161 young unemployed in the courses and providing 16 apprenticeship places. The National Action Plan for Employment in 2004 allocated to the programme a budget of 1 324 364 BGN (677 136.56 Euro). It planned to train 1470 young people and to ensure the opening of 150 apprenticeship places by employers. Additionally 100 trainers should be trained. The employers are stimulated to provide training places by receiving the following sums for the time of the apprenticeship but not longer than 6 months: full pay for the apprentice, the social security benefits, and the benefits for the yearly holidays. The young people receive a training wage as well as sums for travel if the training is done outside of their own town or village.

In the description of the programme the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy has included a paragraph for programme evaluation but the main tool of evaluation is the six-month and yearly reporting forms. They also plan surveys with the participants – young people and employers but have not allocated money for this activity in the budget, nor has any such survey been reported to have been done by mid 2005. Another planned task in this section is ‘monitoring of some basic indicators for effectiveness’ which are also not listed.

5. Results

The programme has not been evaluated, so we can judge by information collected in the course of Disadvantaged Youth study. The plan for its implementation has been fulfilled 121%. While the participation of 1470 unemployed young people has been planned, the yearly form of the Employment Agency reports that 1780 participants have been trained.

Additionally 138 young people have been placed in apprenticeships receiving employment contracts for six months. These activities were realised with a smaller sum than the planned budget. The sum spent in 2004 in this programme was 929021 BGN (475000 Euro). This was due to the fact that the Vocational Training Centres and colleges chosen in the tender had made offers for smaller sums.

According to the officers involved in the recruiting of young people, to whom we talked in May 2005, this programme enjoyed a lot of interest among young people aged up to 29 and there were not enough places for all those wishing to enrol. The share of the involved in the programme from the registered young unemployed is very small, but still this is one of the big programmes of the Ministry targeting young people in particular. Young people acquire skills for work with Microsoft Office (Windows, Word, Excel, Outlook Express, PowerPoint), for work with data bases and Internet. These are basic skills which however are not provided by schools and universities for all students, only for those in the specialised departments. There is no information to see how employers outside the programme evaluate such qualifications, they would surely require much higher skills if their business is in the IT sector. These skills are an advantage for the young if they apply for jobs in other economic sectors. The fact that the curricula for training both of the trainers and the young people are provided by Microsoft is a guarantee for the quality, although as a monopolist in the field the company offers training in somewhat narrow repertoire of applications.

The implementation of the programme in 2005 is guaranteed by a planned budget in the amount of 1 192 254 BGN (609 589.80 Euro). This is higher than the sum spent on the programme the previous year.

6. Conclusions

The success factors of this programme are the following:

- Provision of training in line with deficits in school education, labour market demands and interests of young people;
- Voluntary access;
- Involvement of software provider as well as of applying companies;
- Combination of training the trainers, training for young people and subsidised practical experience.

Incentives for employers to provide training to unemployed young people (Bulgaria)

This is another mainstream example of policy targeting the young unemployed (see National Report Bulgaria, Annex II in this volume). Unlike the previous one, this is a measure fixed in paragraph 41 of the Law for Encouraging Employment adopted in 2001. Its coverage is the country as a whole and all young people have equal access to the preferences provided with it. The measure has not been evaluated but was chosen as it enjoys popularity among both the young and the employers – in 2004 it provided employment for two and a half times more young people than the planned number. An additional factor for the choice of this measure was that it deals with a problem of the system of vocational education in Bulgaria – it is very theoretical and most often does not include training in real life settings (Ministry of Finance, 2005).

1. Policy environment

The Law for Encouraging Employment was adopted in 2001 at the height of the unemployment in the country, a very high share of which was youth unemployment. Public debates pointed at the mismatch between qualifications offered to young people in the labour market and the demands of the quickly changing economy. Social partners argued that even when young people had the qualifications required by employers they had left the educational system with only theoretical knowledge without developed skills and any work experience. The previous links between educational institutions and state enterprises had been severed in the course of privatisation and the sharp decline in output. Employers did not feel administratively or morally obliged to provide training places and preferred to recruit people from other companies rather than employ school graduates looking for their first job. They did not consider it advantageous and profitable to train young recruits (Ministry of Labour and Social Policy, 2003; MBMD, 2005).

2. Objectives of the measure

Paragraph 41 of the Law for Encouraging Employment aims at ‘encouragement of employers to open places for training and practice of young unemployed up to 29 years of age’. Its main objectives are:

- to provide employment for unemployed young people aged up to 29 for 6 months in order to achieve experience in real work settings, and
- to offer training for achieving a certificate for vocational qualifications.

Under the measure employers receive significant subsidies for 6 months: 75 BGN (38 Euro) for each young person employed on a half day basis plus all due social insurance benefits, payments for yearly leaves and others. The employers are obliged to provide a labour contract for at least 6 months and this opening should be on top of the monthly personnel number in the company, and to pay up to the minimum salary if the young person is employed on a fulltime basis.

3. Structural factors and actors

The target group of the measure are all young people aged up to 29 independently of their educational level, qualifications and previous work experience. They receive an employment contract for six months and additionally may receive training for vocational qualification. The main institutions implementing the programme are the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy and the Employment Agency. Employers are defined as being the main partners of the state in the measure. The social partners in the face of employers’ organisations, trade unions, and local municipalities are also involved.

The source of funding for the measure is the state budget. In 2004 the planned budget was 4 318 536 BGN (2 208 032.30 Euro). The expected results were employment for 3450 young people and training for 500.

4. Process

This is a permanent measure set up by the Law. Each year the state budget allocates money for it and the sums increase slightly each year. The young people included in the measure develop their practical skills and increase their experiences and the employers train them at the particular workplace according to their own business needs. The measure is flexible as it reflects the view point of the employers, rather than following a preset educational curriculum.

5. Results

In 2003 3566 young people were employed under this measure. The corresponding number for 2004 was 9674. Additionally 496 young people received training for vocational qualifications. The young people employed under this measure in 2004 were two and a half times more than the planned number. The sum spent under the measure was 6 900 419 BGN (3 528 128.20) which was also higher than the planned one. The increase was with 2 581 883 BGN (1320095.90 Euro) which means that money from other programmes has been transferred to this one due to the high interest among the employers and the young. In 2003 and 2004 there were more women than men in this programme, no data on education, region or ethnicity. The success of this measure lies in the interest of the employers and the young. However, there is not enough data to evaluate its sustainability – the share of the young people who are employed or in training after the six-month duration of the measure.

6. Conclusions

Success factors which may be considered especially by other countries with a structural deficit regarding vocational trajectories are:

- significant additional investment
- legislative framework for monitoring and avoiding displacement of regular jobs
- certificated training
- increase upon demand of both employers and young people

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Workshop Schools and Trade Workshops (Spain)

1. Introduction

Among the constellations of disadvantage, the role of education is important, especially absenteeism, in all its forms, school failure, school leaving, as well as the final stage of compulsory education without getting the corresponding certificate (see National Report Spain, Annex II in this volume). Researches introduce important concepts like the misunderstanding between young people and education system, the boredom, the lack of motivation, the wish to leave school as soon as possible and the wish to enter the labour market. Young people usually do not see, or sometimes do not want to accept, the importance of the subjects that are brought up in school for their labour future. They also underestimate the importance of an academic certificate.

The measure that we are going to introduce, is addressed to young unemployed people between 16 and 25 and is response to this situation: it combines the learning of a trade in real work situations and, at the same time, the participants acquire theoretical vocational training. In some cases, the objective is to prepare them to obtain the lower secondary education certificate.

The introduction of this offer on a national level, the collaboration as “promoters” of Local Entities and NGO’s, the combination of training and learning a trade, the orientation and supervision of personalized insertion plans, as well as high levels of insertion are the reasons why we suggest this experience as a “good practice”

2. Objectives

Schooling workshops or Trade workshops are training and working centres where young unemployed people between 16 and 25 receive theoretical and practical vocational training. The objective is to enable them to perform a job correctly and, thus, to increase the personal insertion possibilities at the labour market. The development of a more general training is also favoured. This makes it possible for participants to reach levels of compulsory education, as well as information, preparation, labour orientation and technical preparation to look for a job. Professional learning can be carried out in one of 22 professional families.

The highest degree they can obtain, if they don’t have it yet, is ISCED 02.

The supply of both Workshops Schools and Trade workshops does not replace that of the official vocational training.

The aim is to qualify young people to be able to develop their work in the new fields of the economy: professions related to the recuperation of old buildings (recuperation works with stones, book recuperation, recuperation of historic routes, etc.) or to attend to the new emerging social demands (to give an answer to social needs, not just to the economic needs) or learn necessary professions which are not taught any more (masonry, domestic services, agrarian activities, hostelry in rural areas, etc).

3. Description of Good Practice

This practice is included in the modality of improving employability, directed to the creation of professional insertion routes for young disadvantaged. It provides technical knowledge and knowledge about the organization of the labour world. It enjoys great acceptance among young people that decide to leave the education system and enter the labour market. The attention given to young people is personalized (training professionals, tutors or the people responsible to teach a trade) and acceptable levels of labour insertion are achieved.

Legal base

Regulated through the Ministerial Order of the 14th of November 2001 (B.O.E. number 279 of the 21st of November), that establishes the base for the concession of public subventions to these programmes, and the Resolution of the 7th of July of 1995 (B.O.E. number 179 of the 28th of July) of the National Institute of Employment (INEM). Each region belonging to the Kingdom of Spain has a specific regulation concerning the creation, the development and maintenance of Schooling workshops and Trade workshops.

Influence of the programme

This modality of vocational training for young people has an important influence on different annual programmes. In 2004, 55.040 persons received training, 32.118 of them in Schooling workshops and Trade workshops. 64,86% of them were males and 35,14% females. Up to 2.067 projects were developed with support of 12.434 professionals.

In these annual programmes, the level of insertion can be considered as very high. In 2002, the insertion rate was 76,61%; 81,75% were males and 67,16% females.

The programmes work nation-wide and they are managed by regional governments, being executed by town halls and NGOs.

Funding of the programmes

The Public Employment Services give subventions to cover expenses. All costs related to vocational training and the functioning of the training programmes: More concrete: wages and salaries and didactic and consumption materials; accident insurance and scholarships for the trainees during the first six months. The promoting entities (the ones working on the programmes) assume all costs that are not covered by Public Employment Services, like the acquisition of machinery, investments, other materials, etc.

Training and maintenance expenses are co-funded by the European Social Fund. The percentage can vary depending on the region where the projects are developed. The “Objective 1 Regions” have a 65% of co-funding. All other regions have a 40% of co-funding.

In the Financing Plan for the period 2000-2006, Schooling workshops and Trade workshops belonging to “Objective 1 Regions” are part of Axis 42: Occupational insertion and re-insertion of unemployed people, and within Axis 42, they are included in Measure 42.8: Offer professional insertion routes for young people.

Schooling workshops and Trade workshops that do not belong to “Objective 1 Regions” are part of Axis 1: Occupational insertion and re-insertion of unemployed people, and within this Axis, they are included in Measure 1.3: Offer professional insertion routes for young people.

In the year 2004, 493,76 millions of Euros were assigned to these programmes.

Young participants

This modality of vocational training is thought for young unemployed people between 16 and 25. To have access to these courses, they have to be registered at the Public Employment Services (that means, they are part of the registered unemployment) and fulfil the conditions of the contractual modality “training contracts”.

To have access there are no degrees or diplomas needed, although for some of the specialities of the 22 professional families a previous and specific cultural preparation is needed.

Activities

The activities young people do are divided into two levels:

- During the first six months, the trainees acquire theoretical and practical knowledge in the speciality they have chosen and they learn to work and to use preventive measures to avoid risks. During this time the trainees get a scholarship of 6 Euros per day. Those trainees that have not reached the objectives of compulsory education, have to start a special preparation with the aim of obtaining a certificate during the training process.
- During the second stage (between 6 and 18 months), the trainees sign a contract of employment for training with the promoting entity (the one responsible for the programme). They work on a job with public and social utility and get a salary of 75% of the established minimum inter-professional salary.

At the same time, they continue with the training process started at level 1, but focusing on the practical side. A counsellor will continuously be watching the work of the trainees, establishing patterns and correcting possible defects.

Selection of trainees

Young people get information about the programmes at their secondary education centres, at youth information centres or at public employment entities. It is also possible to ask for the inclusion at a Schooling or Trade workshop at the employment offices. This inscription is taken into account when the assignment to the courses is decided.

The selection is decided by the National Institute of Employment (INEM), or the regional employment services in collaboration with the promoting entities (public or private entities). A pre-selection will be made among all persons that, besides being under 25 and being registered as unemployed, comply with a certain profile needed for the offered profession. Special criteria are: to have not participated in previous Schooling or Trade workshop projects, to be a member of a group with insertion difficulties, like women or disabled people, to receive unemployment assistance or to be unemployed for a long time (long-term unemployment).

The participation of client or trainee

The assistants participate at previous decisions at the beginning of the course, as well as during the training process to determine objectives and at the subsequent activation.

The evaluation and assessment of the programmes

The programmes go through a evaluation process that is divided into different levels: a school level, a promoting entity level and a promoting and subsidizing administration level. In this evaluation process, the participation of different actors acquires special importance. The intention is that, at the end, participants should reach a professional qualification, some basic academic qualification, tools and knowledge to look for a job, be autonomous or create an own company, labour experience and knowledge about the real labour world, knowledge about security measures and prevention of labour risks with machinery, tools, equipment, products, etc. Advice to create a company and support during the first six months after finishing the workshop, as well as basic computer training.

A worrying information is the starting educational level. The usually low level among trainees of Schooling and Trade workshops is increasing. In 2002, the illiteracy rate (no minimum academic qualification) was very high. This increase is observable in Schooling as well as in Trade workshops.

The actors

The most important actors are the civil servants and the public employment service workers, the promoting entities and the young unemployed. Young people usually are assigned to a certain Schooling workshop according to the proximity to their legal residence. Sometimes they have to move to a different place, when there is not such a service at their municipality.

The team of technicians of the public employment services select the young people and give them support before, meanwhile and after the training process. Promoting entities that wish to start their Schooling or Trade workshop projects, besides meeting the requirements of public or private non-profit Organisation, have to present a report to the Public Employment Services; a report that includes a description of the project, the costs (including requested subventions), description of the task-planning, training plan. They have to present a report about economic strategies of the area, development strategies of the area and employment prospects for participants as well.

Training and insertion group

The technicians and the support group is made up of civil servants and workers of the public employment offices (social workers, psycho-pedagogues, sociologists,

administrative assistants, etc.), of the teachers that develop the course and supervise the young people and of the representatives of the promoting entities.

Of all jobs, we should underline those related to specialities: building work, agricultural activities, housing services, painters, agricultural labourers, fishing, construction, etc.

The highest number of hiring is registered during the first three months. The second period in numerical importance is from month six to month twelve. A high percentage finds a job at most six months after the end of the course.

Personal employment plan

The personalized employment or labour insertion plan completes the training plan. This plan is elaborated jointly by professionals, tutors and with participation of the own interested.

The plan starts with a collaboration agreement between the companies and the promoting entities. It is about obtaining work contracts that originally are temporary, but can become indefinite (This has to be distinguished from practices in companies that are a complement to the theoretical training in the courses).

5. The outcomes

Recuperation of architectonic and rural spaces, for example deserted villages, creation of tourist routes or recuperation of places declared as monuments of humanity; promotion of activities concerning elder people and disadvantaged social groups; integration of young people in their social environment, so they stay in their cities or towns; social animation of their zone of influence, promoting the use of those resources able to create more employment.

The outcomes are very positive and have a high grade of acceptance among young people: start after compulsory education, prepare young people for employability, have the accreditation of different researches, make insertion and the contact with the labour world easier, train young people in different employments demanded by the labour market, etc. The learning in real work conditions prevails and the rejection of school is surmountable through more personalized methodologies with diverse characteristics depending on previous knowledge.

Labour insertion after the programme is usually high (source : Escuelas Taller y Casas de Oficios Inserción Laboral 2002. Evaluación de Resultados, INEM (2004) (Instituto

Nacional de Empleo), and INEM (2005) Escuelas Taller y Casas de Oficio, Ministerio de Trabajo y Asuntos Sociales. www.mtas.es

- 12 months after the end of the programme the insertion rate is 76,61% (81,75% males and 67,16% females)
- 18 months after the end of the programme the insertion rate is 81,92% (86,23% males and 74% females)

Taking into account the variable age, the insertion rate is:

- young people between 16 and 17: 77,85% (82,25% males and 63,77% females)
- young people between 18 and 19: 75,97% (81,47% males and 66,91% females)
- young people between 20 and 24: 76,61% (81,75% males and 67,16% females)

Immigrants are about 1,1% of all participants. Of these, 79,43% find an employment (79,84% males and 78% females); physically disabled people are about 2,14% of all participants. Of these, 61,25% find a job (64,23% males and 53,10% females).

Results of evaluation 2002:

Labour insertion sorted by trained speciality:

- Only 39,10% related with training (48,72% males and 15,51% females)
- No relation in 60,90% of the contracts (51,88% males and 82,44% females)

Regarding the contractual modality:

- Only 6,46% of all contracts were indefinite (4,96% for males and 9,83% for females)
- 93,01% Fixed-term contracts (94,60% for males and 89,47% for females)
- Only 0,53% of all contracts were self-employed contracts (0,44% for males and 0,70% for females)

6. Conclusions

Strengths of this programmes are

- the length of the curriculum allowing for a solid training
- the dual approach between practice and theoretical instruction, between formalised and non-formal methods
- a training wage serving as incentive
- contribution to creating a training infrastructure

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Programme 10 000 (Slovenia)

1. Policy environment

Programme 10,000 part of the national programme for the development of the labour and employment market until 2006 (Ur.l.RS, št. 92/01); the strategic goals of this program include the enhancement of the educational level and skills, the reduction of structural discrepancies i.e. the reduction of the percentage of long-term unemployed persons to 40% and the percentage of unemployed persons without vocational education to around 25% until 2006; ensuring the inclusion in active programs of all unemployed young people who could not find job within 6 months of becoming unemployed, and all other persons who could not find job within 12 months of becoming unemployed.

The aims of the active employment policy for 2002 and 2003 and of the active employment policy programs in 2003 (adopted by the Government of the RS on February 28, 2003; see National Report Slovenia, Annex II in this volume). The goal of Pillar I (Promoting the Employability of the Population) and Measure 1 (Inclusion of Young People In the Labour Market) is to enable all young people to make a fresh start within the first six months of becoming unemployed; the goal of Measure 3 (Preventing the Transition to Long-Term Unemployment) is to enable a fresh start for all long-term unemployed persons who have been registered with the Employment Service of Slovenia for more than one year.

Other related policies and legal foundations are:

- The National Development Program 2001-2006 (adopted by the Government on December 5, 2001). The third set of priorities places emphasis on the importance of the education of young people and stimulation of life-long learning.
- Employment and Insurance Against Unemployment Act – Article 53.b and 53.c (Ur.l.RS, št. 5/91, 17/91, 12/91, 71/93, 2/94, 38/94, 69/98 and 67/02).
- Rules on the implementation of active employment policy programs (Ur.l.RS, št.64/01 and 31/03).
- Rules on Stipends (Ur.l.RS, št. 48/99, 43/00, 73/02, 85/02 and 40/03).
- Republic of Slovenia Budget Implementation Act 2003 (Ur.l.RS, št.103/01).
- Primary School Act (Ur.l.RS, št. 12/96, 59/2001).
- Professional and Vocational Education and Training Act (Ur.l.RS, št. 12/96, 44/2000).

- Gimnazije Act (Ur.l.RS, št. 12/96, 59/2001).
- Higher Education Act (Ur.l. RS, št. 67/93, 99/99, 64/2001).
- Adult Education Act (Ur.l.RS, št. 12/96).
- National Vocational Training Act (Ur.l.RS, št. 81/00, 55/03).
- Instructions for the Implementation of Program 10,000 for the school year 2003/2004 (št. CS 051 55, 21.7.2003), Employment Service of Slovenia.

The programme is a national policy. The institution responsible for operational tasks is the Employment Service of Slovenia; the implementation is carried out by schools and other similar institutions in cooperation with the Ministry of Education and Sports and the Ministry of Labour, Family and Social Affairs (see also Annex II).

2. Objectives

Programme 10,000 – Education for Unemployed Persons, is an active labour market policy designed to enable unemployed persons to receive formal education and national vocational training (certificates), and in this manner to enhance their employment prospects. In the school year 2003/2004 the basic goals of the program were:

- to enhance the employability of unemployed persons;
- to improve the educational level and qualifications of unemployed persons;
- to reduce the vocational structural discrepancies on the labour market;

Target groups and terms of inclusion

The programme is intended for unemployed persons in accordance with the Employment and Insurance Against Unemployment Act giving priority to:

- unemployed persons without vocational education, especially young people up to 26 years of age;
- unemployed persons with vocational or professional education, who cannot find a job in their field and have been registered with the Employment Service of Slovenia for more than 6 months;
- people older than 40 without vocational or professional education; the primary aim for this group is to acquire national vocational certificates;

Programme 10,000 was also open for workers who were made redundant and whose employment contracts were terminated for various operational reasons, or because of bankruptcy or a wind up of the employer's company, and who had previously signed an

educational contract with the employer. Such a person was covered the remaining part of educational program costs. It was designed by the state with a view to achieving the basic goals set out in key strategic documents, i.e. the enhancement of the educational level of the population and reduction of the percentage of unemployed persons without qualifications or professional education to 25% by the year 2006.

In the school year 2003/2004, 7,525 participants were included in the Program 10,000. Of these, 7,351 were included in the program aimed at obtaining formal education and 174 persons in the Project-Based Learning program. The inclusion in the program entitled Tests/Confirmation of National Vocational Certificates begins in the following school year. Of these, 4265 persons were younger than 26 years (Education for Unemployed Persons); another 174 persons were included in the PUM program; all persons were younger than 26. 10,062 unemployed persons were scheduled to be included in the Programme 10,000. 200 persons were planned to be included in the PUM program and 2,100 places were reserved for national vocational training.

Table 1: The realization of the plan by sectors:

	Planned inclusions 2003/2004	Realized inclusions 2003/2004	Realization in %
Acquisition of formal education	7,762	7,351	94.7
Project-based learning for young adults (PUM)	200	174	87
National vocational training (NPK)	2,100	0	0

The educational plans drawn by regional branches of the Employment Service were based on the document entitled “The Structural Characteristics of the Labour Market by Regional Branches of the Employment Service.” Its content included:

- An overview of the unemployment situation in Slovenia and its structural characteristics.
- An overview of the short-term trends in supply and demand on the level of the regional branches of the Employment Service.

Balancing local needs by types of qualifications, in cooperation with the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Slovenia and the Chamber of Crafts of Slovenia.

Table 2: Number of persons included by school years since 1998.

	01	02	03	05	06	07	Total
School year	Primary school and grammar school programs	Vocational schools	Secondary professional and technical schools	Post-secondary schools	Higher professional education	University programs	
1998/99	403	3.654	2.870	0	0	0	6.927
1999/00	312	3.012	2.099	14	91		5.528
2000/01	417	2.518	2.011	65	278	0	5.288
2001/02	463	1.836	1.489	153	251	76	4.268
2002/03	483	2.360	1.757	335	405	160	5.500
2003/2004	857	2.893	2.320	451	570	260	7.351
Percentage compared to 02/03	177%	122%	132%	134%	140%	162%	133%

In determining the number of persons scheduled for inclusion in the Program 10,000 in the school year 2003/2004, the designers of the program were guided by the needs of the labour market and by the wish to overcome the discrepancies on the labour market and improve the educational level by educating unemployed persons.

The programme operates on a national basis and is implemented by schools and institutions involved in adult education.

3. Description of good practice (programme and project level)

The basic condition for inclusion was the formulation of an employment plan prepared by the unemployed person and a professional employment counsellor. This plan delineated the activities related to job search and inclusion in active employment policy which the unemployed person has undertaken to carry out. A proposal to include an unemployed person in this program could be put forward by the Employment Service or the unemployed person himself/herself. The Employment Service was also responsible for the assessment of the justifiability of such an inclusion, while taking into account the following parameters:

- the situation on the labour market and within a specific occupation;
- personal, vocational and working characteristics of the unemployed person;
- prospects for a successful completion of the program;
- preferences of the unemployed person as to the type of the program, if these preferences were well-grounded and if they could be reasonably taken into account

with respect to the chances of employment in that specific environment and period of time;

- costs of inclusion in the program;
- the length of the program, generally lasting no longer than three years.

Among the regular activities carried out by the Employment Service in preparation of the inclusion of unemployed persons in the Programme 10,000, especially worthy of mentioning are the following:

- group informing and motivation of unemployed persons carried out by all employment offices and all info centres, as well as vocational counselling provided by the Employment Service.
- in-depth individual counselling and assistance with the planning of professional goals and employment plans for newly registered unemployed persons;
- team-based approach to unemployed persons with the participation of employment counsellors, professional counsellors and education organizers working for employment offices; the aim was to harmonize the interests of unemployed persons and to assess their prospects for inclusion in various educational programs;
- during the period of preparation for the implementation of the program in the forthcoming school year, the Employment Service selectively included potential candidates in the group motivation workshops and planning of professional goals; owing to the low self-confidence and their negative experience with past schooling, it is usually difficult for unemployed persons to return to educational programs;
- group-based acquisition or improvement of learning methods and techniques was also organized; the goal was to ensure better success;
- the regional branches of the Employment Service and employment offices, working in cooperation with employers, organized introductory presentations of various occupations; the goal was to increase enrolment in those programs preparing participants for understaffed occupations.

The status, the rights and obligations of unemployed persons included in Program 10,000 in the school year 2003/2004

Status of the participants

In accordance with the Employment and Insurance Against Unemployment Act, by joining this program the unemployed person acquires the status of a ‘participant of an educational program in accordance with Article 53b of this law.’ This means that such a person is no

longer registered as an unemployed person and his/her rights ensuing from the insurance against unemployment (financial reimbursement, financial aid) are suspended during the period of education.

A person included in an adult educational program on the elementary or secondary level acquires the ‘status of a participant in adult educational program’; a person included in a vocational educational program additionally has the status of an apprentice, in accordance with the so-called dual educational scheme. A person included in a post-secondary or a higher school program or a university program acquire the student status.

The rights of participants

The participants in elementary and secondary level educational programs, national vocational certificate programs, and project-based learning for young adults (PUM) were entitled to the reimbursement of:

- the costs of the required medical examination and work accident insurance, if this was a requirement ensuing from the type of program or work;
- school fees in the amount not exceeding five minimum salaries for one school year;
- public transport costs to/from the place of education;
- actual accommodation costs, but only up to the 20% of a minimum salary per month, if the place of education was more than one and a half hour away by public transport from the place of education;
- actual costs of learning materials and/or learning aids, as required by the program, but only up to the 20% of the minimum salary per one school year;
- costs of learning aids for disabled persons up to the total of 5 minimum salaries, or on the basis of the opinion of a medical expert if the person had serious disability, and costs of the assistance of another person up to the 20% of a minimum salary per month;
- contribution for medical insurance;
- insurance against a work accident;
- the costs of a certificate not exceeding five minimum salaries for one year of schooling;
- stipend¹¹ in accordance with stipend provision regulations;
- the costs of information programs and professional counselling if such were anticipated by the employment plan.

¹¹ Pravilnik o štipendiraju (Ur.l.RS št. 48/99)

Participants of the post-secondary and higher school programs and university programs were covered the following costs:

- school fees up to five minimum salaries for one school year;
- actual public transport costs to/from the place of education;
- actual accommodation costs up to the 20% of the minimum salary per month, if the place of education was more than one and a half hour away by public transport from their place of residence;
- a stipend in accordance with the stipend provision regulations.

A participant who entered regular employment before completing the program, retained the right to the coverage of school fees if he/she fulfilled the obligations required by the educational program or the educational plan.

Learning assistance is an integral and necessary part of Program 10,000, since the majority of participants who are unable to overcome the obstacles on their own would lose their hearts. Experience shows that participants postpone the most difficult exams as long as possible. They would not be able to overcome obstacles without assistance, so the number of unsuccessful participants would increase since unemployed persons would not be able to afford the expensive professional assistants. Consequently, the overall success of the program would certainly be smaller. Learning assistance is organized as a part of the Public Works program, which is a program of national importance commissioned by the Ministry of Education and Sports. In the school year 2003/2004, learning assistance was provided through 22 implementing institutions in Slovenia.

The majority of organizations implementing the Public Works program also have Centres for Independent Learning which provide for the users of learning assistance many opportunities to test and fortify their knowledge.

Obligations of unemployed persons

In the school year 2003/2004, the Employment Service signed a contract with every unemployed person included in the Program 10,000 on the basis of an employment plan. In addition to the rights of unemployed persons, this contract also stipulated their obligations. The contract was renewed on the yearly basis after establishing whether the person fulfilled his/her obligations in the previous year.

Funding

The funding for this governmental program is provided by the Ministry of Education and Sports and the Ministry of Labour, Family and Social Affairs.

- The Ministry of Education and Sports covers the costs of the vocational and professional educational programs for departments consisting of unemployed persons, as well as the costs of the primary education for adults. The Ministry has also undertaken the responsibility for the implementation and funding of training for organizations implementing the Program 10,000, organizers of education, teachers and counsellors. Being the commissioner of the Public Works program, it also covers the material costs of learning assistance implementation.
- The Ministry of Labour, Family and Social Affairs covers from its budget the costs of school fees for the participants (all individual participants and part of the costs for organized departments for unemployed persons), then the costs arising from the rights to which they are entitled, other costs of the implementation of the Learning Assistance program and the costs of the program promotion, evaluation etc.
- Funding of organized departments. The Ministry of Education, Science and Sports and the Ministry of Labour, Family and Social Affairs provide funds, through the Employment Service, for the implementation of the program in departments for unemployed persons on the basis of tri-partite contracts. The minimal number of participants required to set up such a department is 15 and the maximum is 25; in the case of primary education for adults and vocational education with the employer (the dual system), this number is 15. The minimal number of participants required to obtain funds from the said ministries is 20, or 15 for the primary school programs and vocational training with the employer (dual system). In the school year 2003/2004, the costs for one department were:
 - 3,755,640.00 SIT for one school year for secondary vocational education;
 - 3,645,180.00 SIT for one school year for secondary professional or technical education and grammar schools

If the number of participants in one department was smaller than the agreed minimum, the organization implementing the program received a smaller sum proportional to the number of participants. If such an organization requested the coverage of additional material costs and a request was based on good grounds (e.g. an inevitable renting of a new space, the

transport of participants to the place of practical implementation of the program), these costs were covered in exceptional cases.

In Slovenia, there is a long tradition of the “work and study” arrangement. In this case, the costs of education are paid by individuals or by employers. With this type of arrangement, persons without employment would have to pay themselves the costs of education, so they welcomed the opportunity provided by the Employment Service.

Among the activities carried out by the Employment Service in preparation of the inclusion of unemployed persons in the Program 10,000, especially worthy of mentioning are the following:

- group informing and motivation of unemployed persons carried out by all employment offices and all info centres, as well as vocational guidance provided by the Employment Service;
- in-depth individual counselling and assistance with the planning of professional goals and employment plans for newly registered unemployed persons;
- team-based approach to unemployed persons with the participation of employment counsellors, professional counsellors and education organizers working for employment offices; the aim was to harmonize the interests of unemployed persons and to assess their prospects for inclusion in various educational programs;
- during the period of preparations for the implementation of the program, the Employment Service selectively included potential candidates in the group motivation workshops and planning of professional goals; owing to the low self-confidence and their negative experience with past schooling, it is usually difficult for unemployed persons to re-enter educational programs;
- group forms of acquisition or improvement of learning methods and techniques were also organized; the goal was to ensure better success of the participants in the program; the regional branches of the Employment Service and employment offices, working in cooperation with employers, organized introductory presentations of various occupations; the goal was to increase enrolment in those programs preparing participants for understaffed occupations.

4. Results

Evaluation studies are underway, while individual monitoring of those included in the program has been carried out throughout the duration of the program.

Of the total number of 7,351 unemployed persons included in formal educational programs, 5,221 (71%) participants were successful. Of these, 2,495 (34%) acquired a new vocational or professional education, 30.7% found jobs (767 persons), and 2,726 (37%) successfully passed all exams in the past year.

Table 3: The success of the formal education program in the school year 2003/2004

School year	Total included	Education still in progress-successful	Acquired vocational skills/completed education; found jobs	Prolongations and suspensions	Interruptions	Total	Employment (not included in 100%)
2002/2003	5.500	1.975	1.351	1.947	227		615
%	100	35,9	24,5	35,4	4,1	100	45,5 *
School year	Total included	Education still in progress-successful	Acquired vocational skills/completed education; found jobs	Prolongations and suspensions	Interruptions	Total	Employment (not included in 100%)
2003/2004	7.351	2.726	2.495	1.822	308		767
%	100	37	34	24,8	4,2	100	30,7 *

* Note: The share of employed persons (in %) here represents the share of persons who acquired vocational skills, or completed education.

Clearly, the number of successful participants increased (data are based on the date of program completion), which is a result of better monitoring on the part of expert team and the quality of the Educational Assistance programme.

- Of the total number of participants, 308 (4.2%) interrupted schooling while 1,822 persons (24.8%) were prolonged the target date for completion for various objective reasons.
- There were 608 persons (11%) who found employment within 6 months of the completion of an educational program, of these 305 women. Of the total number of participants who completed education by August 31, 2004, 767 found employment by January 2005.
- Of the total number of persons who acquired new vocation, 58 (3%) were disabled persons and 1083 (62%) were women.

Those persons who failed to fulfil planned educational tasks were referred to professional counsellors. If the professional psychologists identified learning problems, or such problems were identified previously by the program organizer, the person in question was referred to the Educational Assistance program, as were all other participants who reported on their own specific problems in achieving the desired results.

Compared to the previous school year, in the school year 2003/2004 the share of participants who successfully completed the school year and continued with their schooling was greater by 1.1%, while the share of those who successfully completed the entire program was greater by 10.1%. In the school year 2003/2004, there was recorded a significantly lower percentage of prolongations or suspensions of schooling than in the previous year (lower by 10.6%). This can be attributed to good program organization, and especially to the initial in-depth approach to participants on the part of the expert team with the Employment Service.

The structure of participants who completed their educational programs in the school year 2003/2004

Of the total number of 7,351 persons included in formal educational programs, 4,454 persons (60.6%) successfully completed their courses; of these, 2,495 (34%) acquired new vocation or professional education, and some of them found jobs; 2,726 (37%) continue to attend educational programs in the current school year. There were 2,878 women among successful participants (64.4% of all successful participants or 39% of all participants included in the Program 10,000 in the school year 2003/2004). The share of women in the total number of participants of the formal educational programs was approximately 57% in the school year 2003/2004. Among those successful, 2,292 persons (51%) were younger than 26; 2,409 participants (54%) were without vocation or professional education; there were 140 (3%) disabled persons and 1,801 (40%) first-time job seekers.

This structure points to the well-known facts, i.e. that the priority group are young people who are more willing to learn, and that the percentage of women among successful participants has been slightly on the increase.

Learning Assistance for Unemployed Persons included in the Program 10,000 was a supporting activity first organized in the school year 1998/99 and maintained throughout the following years. In the school year 2003/2004, direct learning assistance in acquiring

the primary, lower and secondary level vocational education and secondary technical and professional education was provided by 106 mentors who were chosen from the registers of unemployed persons maintained by regional Employment Service offices. They were included in the Public Works program entitled “Learning Assistance to Unemployed Persons Included in Educational Programs.”

In the school year 2003/2004, a learning assistant/mentor was engaged 6.8 months on average. Of all unemployed persons included in the learning assistance program as mentors, 13 mentors got regular employment with the organizations implementing learning assistance programs. The qualification required for this position is a completed VI or VII level education. Most of the mentors (52%) had university level education, among these 11 had a degree in economy, 7 were professors, while others had degrees in social sciences or other fields. 38% of mentors had university education, and 7% had higher education, of these three mentors were elementary school teachers. 4% had secondary school education (grammar school graduates), and several had post-graduate degrees (MA/MSc).

There were 41,741 hours of learning assistance provided, an increase of 14% compared to the previous year.

The number of learning assistance users was 2,633, or approximately 219 participants per month (5.5% more than in the previous school year). Accordingly, the average number of learning assistance hours per participant amounted to 15.8. Learning assistance in mathematics (38%) was in the highest demand, followed by the assistance in English (20%), Slovene and German (9%). Other subjects accounted for 23% of the time, i.e. 9,469 hours. The monitoring of the demand for learning assistance in the past 3 years shows an increase in the demand for learning assistance in mathematics, English, German and Slovene, while demand for assistance in other subjects decreased. Throughout the four years under observation, these four subjects topped the list.

According to the available data, of the total number of 2,633 receivers of learning assistance, 1,731 participants (66%) were successful, and somewhat less than 9% unsuccessful. At the time of our inquiry, there was no data available for 637 (24%) persons receiving learning assistance.

Of the total number of participants in the FI in 2003/2004, 2,893 (39.3%) persons attended the lower and secondary vocational educational programs; there were 2,320 (31.5%) participants of secondary and technical schools, 1.81 (17%) of the post-secondary, higher and university programs, and 857 (11.6%) participants of general education programs.

The assessment of personnel needs by regional branches of the Employment Service (5,262 new inclusions have been planned) again showed that the segments of construction, metallurgy, wood processing and mechanical engineering are explicitly understaffed.

The participants of the program will have to be continually encouraged to seek employment by training them to develop job-seeking skills and by stimulating self-initiative. It would be necessary to include persons who have learnt a new vocation, but have not found a job within reasonable time, in job-seekers clubs organized by all Employment Service branches across Slovenia. The organizations implementing educational programs and the Employment Service will cooperate in organizing practical work with prospective employers. It will be necessary to expand activities relating to the program promotion by placing emphasis on the public conferring of certificates which will be attended by employers among others.

5. Conclusions

Key success factors of this measure are:

- a significant investment and size contribution to implementing education and training
- combining formal and non-formal education
- providing regular qualifications in diverse areas and occupations
- including youth specific strands within a general policy measure (allowing for flexibility)
- financial allowances serving as incentive

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Recognition, Validation and Certification of Skills Centres (RVCC) (Portugal)

1. Policy environment

Besides the shortage of certified qualifications, Portugal also had, until 2001, an absence of a system for the recognition validation and skills acquired in informal and non-formal contexts. The RVCC came to fulfil this empty field in the institutional design of education and training. The results are encouraging and the system tends to substitute some segments of the present offer, namely the second opportunity courses of the adults education system (see also National Report Portugal, Annex II in this volume).

Overview

Policy field: Education/Training

Objectives and Principles (program theory): The RVCC system is designed for adults, over the age of 18, who have not completed the basic schooling of 4, 6 or 9 years of education and wish to upgrade their school certification / vocational qualification levels and follow subsequent training options.

Legal framework: The system was prepared since the mid nineties, by ANEFA (National Agency for Education and Training of Adults) which was managed in partnership by the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs. The Ministerial Order No. 1082-A/2001 of 5 September created the RVCC Centres. In 2003 the ANEFA was extinguished and substituted by the new General Direction for Vocational Training of the Ministry of Education. The cooperation with the Ministry of Labour is ensured by structures of management of the RVCC in which it is represented.

Scale of the programme: The program enrolled 60.130 people (adults, including young people over 18) during the period 2001-2003. Being financed by PRODEP (Operational Program for Education of the third Community Support Framework), the budget for the period 2001-2006 is € 34.642.353.

Duration (pilot/long-term policy): Long-term policy.

Location: The RVCC Centres (56 operating in 2003) are spread all over the country.

Target group: Adults, over the age of 18, who have not completed the basic cycles of education.

Main activities: The Centres evaluate the skills comparing them with Key Skills Reference Guides, thus recognizing, validating and certificating candidates or, according to the gap, guiding them either to short term courses or to other schemes in order to acquire missing skills.

Evaluation and assessment: The main evaluation was conducted by an expert team in the framework of the mid-term evaluation of PRODEP, in 2003.

Client participation: The client has no special role besides the participation as client.

2. Description of Good Practice

Structures: The Centres of RVC of skills are located in selected public or private institutions that applied to manage them, and work under supervision of the Ministry of Education (ME) at local, regional and national levels. The budget mentioned above covers expenses with infrastructure, equipment and staff, besides administrative and functioning costs. In each Centre works a small team of about six trainers and professional counsellors.

Actors: The DG Vocational Training of the Ministry of Education manages and coordinates the system, with the support of PRODEP. Members of the network of Centres are public and private bodies (vocational schools, business associations, basic education and secondary schools, vocational training centres, associations of municipalities, etc.) that are duly accredited and have a substantial presence at a local, regional and national level.

Process: The RVCC allows those who have left school and have non-formal knowledge or professional skills to validate that knowledge and know-how. The Centres can also guide candidates to short-term Education/formation courses that complement the skills, in order to meet the requisites for certification. Regarding the strategy of life long learning, this system gives the participants the possibility of re-entering the school and/or training system. The creation and development of the RVCC system was justified by the low educational levels among the Portuguese and by the fact that a substantial part of them play social and professional functions and have responsibilities that imply knowledge and skills (acquired in informal and non-formal or non-official contexts) far above what is attested by their possessed certificates.

People in these conditions ask for recognition and certification of skills. These are evaluated in the Centres according to a Key Skills Reference Guide organized on the basis of 3 levels, equivalent to the 1st, 2nd and 3rd basic education cycles. Diverse tools (portfolios, interviews, tests), are used for that purpose. The skills are structured around 4 areas:

- Language and Communication;
- Citizenship and Employability;
- Information Technology;
- Mathematics for Life.

If the candidate meets the requisites, his/her skills are certificated. If not, he/she will be guided to short-term education/training courses or, according to the personal cases, other training/education policy measures.

Results: The importance of the Centres for RVC has been growing: the table below illustrates the development of people enrolled in these centres (2001-2003). Around 1600 were individuals under 25 years of age.

	2001	2002	2003*	Total
No. of RVCC Centres operating	28	42	56	56
No. of adults enrolled	7019	24459	28636	60130
No. of adults in recognition phase	2952	13471	19404	35840
No. of adults validated	496	3680	8300	12476
No. of adults certified	467	3287	7734	11488
No. of adults in complementary training*	130	4808	9020	13958

December 2003, Source: DGFV (2003); * people guided to short-term education/training courses or to other training/education policy measures in order to meet the necessary requisites for the envisaged certification.

3. Results

According to the PRODEP III evaluation report, the RVCCs are one of the most positive measures, not only because their activities are relevant to the Portuguese population's qualification deficit but also because their design and implementation methods are of a high quality. Through the case studies for this evaluation it was concluded, and confirmed in the field, that the centres operate efficiently. This efficiency is sustained by the specific training of the specialist staff, also considered very positive, particularly if we take into account its recent development.

4. Conclusion

The RVCC system has proved to be a good option in the Portuguese institutional arrangements for adults' education and training. The Key Skills Reference Guide for the level of upper secondary education (ISCED 3) is now being prepared. Key success factors are the combination of voluntary offers of assistance in preparing for the validation, the decentralisation of centres of validation and the access they provide to further education.

5. Counselling

In this chapter two models of counselling are presented which have relevance for both education and labour market related policies. It is obvious that also other measures include elements of counselling (see Volume 1, Chapter 5.2 and 5.3). In these two examples however counselling is central and applied principles and methods are described more in detail.

Guidance and counselling system (Denmark)

1. Objectives

In 2004 a new Danish Guidance Reform came into force obliging local and regional policy levels to provide counselling and guidance for young people (see also National Report Denmark, Annex II in this volume). The primary reason for this initiative was to assure adequate support facilitating young people to find and choose education and occupation (see Annex II). The guidance considering secondary education is placed under the municipalities, while guidance considering professional education and occupation is gathered under the regions. In continuation of this new initiative, a new common guidance education is supposed to replace former guidance education forms in order to qualify the training of counsellors. The main aims of the reform are that guidance shall:

- help ensure that choices of education and career will be of greatest possible benefit to the individual and society
- take into account the individual's interests and personal qualifications as well as the anticipated need for qualified labour and self-employed businessmen
- be targeted especially at young people with special needs for guidance
- contribute to a reduction of drop-out rates
- contribute to improving the individual's ability to seek and use information about choice of education and career
- be independent of institution- and sector specific interests
- improve qualifications and competencies of guidance counsellors

2. Description of Good Practice

In order to optimise the qualifications of the counsellors, a Centre of expertise for guidance has been established under the Ministry of Education. Main activities are:

- Collecting examples of best practice
- Initiating analyses, surveys and experimental activities
- Coordination among different types of services
- Quality development

The specific training of guidance counsellors consist of following programme:

- One common training programme, offered by 6 Centres for higher education
- Equivalent to 6 months full-time studies
- Minimum entry requirements: completed 2-year higher education programme and 2 years of relevant working experience
- Training courses in guidance theories, methods, ethics, ICT, etc.
- Training courses in labour market conditions, the education system, development of society and business, etc.
- Training courses in different target groups, human development, learning theories, etc.

It is not specified at the moment how many cases each counsellor shall manage.

Two types of guidance centres are established:

- 46 youth guidance centres where guidance in relation to transition from compulsory to youth education is offered. Municipalities fund and have the overall responsibility for the centres. At each centre there is a manager employed who is responsible for the daily management. The centres are obliged to cooperate with primary/lower secondary schools and youth education institutions in the area, regional guidance centres and local business life and public employment services.
- 7 regional guidance centres where guidance in relation to transition from youth education to higher education is offered. The majority of the centres are consortia of different educational institutions. They are obliged to cooperate with partners in their regions such as youth education and higher education institutions, youth guidance centres and social partners and industry and commerce.

Even though the centres are placed regionally they are obliged to manage nationwide counselling. The guidance is ought to be independent of region-, sector- and institutions

interest. It is expected that The Ministry of Education annual will spent 5.226.971 Euro in running costs of these centres.

In addition a national guidance portal is established www.ug.dk, where information about education, training, labour market issues, professions and possibilities abroad are given. Every student is given a personal log-on and possibilities for a-mail based enquiry service are given.

Finally a national dialogue forum is established ultimo 2003. The main aim of this forum is to secure cross-sectoral dialogue and to develop the level of quality in Danish Guidance and counselling. 3 times at year 11 members and representatives from 12 organisations and 5 ministries meet to discuss the actual guidance taking place.

3. Results

In order to evaluate and to quality control the new guidance reform, a quality control system has been established. The findings are published on the internet, where findings and results from the different centres can be compared. The system evaluates and controls methods, employee qualifications, effect and results of activities.

Evaluation of this quality control system concludes that a tightening of objectives are needed, especially when it comes to disadvantaged youth. The conclusion is that activities and objectives are not clearly directed towards disadvantaged youth, which is one of the main aims of the new guidance reform. However it is too early to make manifest conclusions because of the fact, that the guidance system itself has not yet been evaluated, only the quality control system has.

Regarding guidance and counselling, specific numbers following the new guidance reform on how many young people who have access to and who uses this, are hard to get any overview of. Therefore following figures are estimated annual figures based upon figures from August 2004 – December 2004.

Table 1: Young people from 15-19 years in youth counselling in Copenhagen.

	<i>Absolute numbers</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
In education	5316	73,3%
In job	718	9,9%
Target group	1223	16,8%
Total	7257	100%

Source: Youth counselling, Copenhagen December, 2004; Citizens between 15-19 years old in Copenhagen in total = 22.606

Table 2: Young people in counselling distributed over language in Copenhagen.

<i>Language</i>	<i>Pupils in numbers</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
Pakistani/Indian	348	4,8%
Turkish/Kurdish	255	3,5%
Arabic	436	6,0%
African	143	2,0
Yugoslavia	237	3,3%
Other languages	525	7,2%
Danish	5313	73,2%
Total	7257	100%

Source: Youth counselling, Copenhagen, December, 2004

The figures show that immigrant youth account for 26,8 % of the young people receiving counselling, which at first glance seems in fact satisfying. However it must be taken into account that immigrant youth represent a larger percentage of youth in general in Copenhagen compared to other parts of the country, which of course to some extent distorts the overall picture. Another explanation for the apparently large number could be the fact that the new guidance reform specific is targeted towards disadvantaged youth, which in accordance with the regulations, is young people below the age of 19, who are not in education or in job, young people whose life situation suddenly changes, young people with physically or psychological handicaps, people who attend special classes or receive special education, people with heavy social problems and especially immigrant youth. This of course affects the distribution as well. Even though immigrant youth seems well represented in the youth counselling system, following issues still remain and need to be taken into considerations.

In principle – most public guidance and counselling services are accessible for all young people, depending on their involvement in the education system and personal situation. For some young people however guidance and counselling is not used or young people do not pay much attention to the service or the help they are receiving.

Reasons for not using the guidance service or for paying less attention can be many. Especially for disadvantaged youth the guidance system sometimes provides poor guidance or counselling – for example regarding further education – when a counsellor points to an educational lower level for immigrant youth or especially for immigrant women. The gaps between the individual wishes of a education as well as individual competencies and the ones counsellors point to in the guidance service might be very big. This could be seen as a problem also stemming from policies for disadvantaged, where lower education

opportunities as for instance social and health assistants are widened in order to absorb disadvantaged people.

When the guidance and counselling system is closely attached to the educational system it can be regarded as not very trustworthy, as the counsellor might at the same time be part of the teaching staff - and thereby be seen as somebody talking from the perspective of the institution - no matter whether this is the case or not.

It seems that a growing part of the ethnic minority in Denmark have scepticism towards or even show distrust in authorities or public administrative systems.

Other guidance and counselling services – mainly the ones acting more autonomously are experiencing an increasing number of immigrant youth, who seek guidance and counselling.

In that respect one tendency is clear. If people are expected or even obliged to have guidance/counselling – disadvantaged youth (and especially immigrant youth) seems to be under-represented. On the other hand guidance and counselling services sought on a voluntary basis and most often done in settings outside formal institutions attract more disadvantaged youth (including immigrant youth, which in these settings are over-represented compared to the overall percentage).

4. Conclusions

Key success factors of this measure which need to be taken into consideration in case of mutual learning:

- a legal framework ensuring an infrastructure establishing young people's right for counselling;
- voluntariness and confidentiality as key principles;
- reflecting the centrality of the local level;
- flexible local networks starting from individual needs;
- combining the provision of services with development of adequate training;
- combination of face-to-face and online access to counselling.

Total Counselling (Slovenia)

1. Policy environment

The basis for the Total Counselling program, aimed at young people who left (or quit) school early and have not subsequently joined active employment policy programs, have been laid down by the project with the same name, part of the Leonardo da Vinci (LdV) project funded by the EU. In a survey the counselling services for young people who left school early and have not registered with the Employment Service of Slovenia, which implements an active labour market policy programme (Programme 10,000) providing opportunity for young people to re-enter the educational system, were analysed (see also National Report Slovenia, Annex II in this volume). The Employment Service also offers other types of assistance geared to this population segment. This analysis was the basis for the setting up of the “total counselling network” (abbreviated to ISM in Slovene) (A Handbook of Holistic Counselling, 2003).

The results of the LdV pilot project including the proposal for the TC network implementation were delineated in the Single Programming Document 2004-2006: “... a high dropout rate and repetition; one of the conclusions is that the dropout rate is still very high on all educational levels (compulsory primary schools, three-year secondary schools, four-year secondary schools, especially vocational and tertiary education). The consequence is a higher supply of the labour force that cannot easily find jobs on the labour market, since finding employment is even harder for persons without formal education. Young people who leave school before completion are at a greater risk of social marginalization” (EPD 2004-2006, 2003, str.163; see also Annex II in this volume).

The activity is defined in the EPD under Priority Task No. 2 (Knowledge, Human Resources Development and Employment), Measure 2.3.: “The development and expansion of the IKT network - local/regional centres for life-long learning that ensure support for those participating in learning activities, vocational guidance for adults and young people, primarily women and persons who have not completed education, with the aim of facilitating and accelerating access to new forms of learning with a special emphasis on informal learning (EPD 2004-2006, 2003)

2. Objectives

The main objective of the programme is to provide a holistic counselling and guidance to the young people who have dropped out from school and have not registered with the employment service. The new service is taking young people's whole life-situation into consideration while providing the service. In addition, the aim of the programme is to provide a common platform where specialists from different fields of work (guidance counsellors, financial advisors, sexual educators, social counsellors, school counsellors), can go beyond the usual boundaries of their professions and work towards the common goal of assisting young people.

The target group are young people between 16 and 25 who have dropped out from the educational system and have not registered with the Employment service, so called young people with the 'status zero' position (in numbers, 5000 every year).

3. Structural factors and actors

The responsibility for the implementation of total informing and counselling has been undertaken by the Ministry of Education and Sports. The RS Center for Vocational Education and Training is responsible for the coordination and development of activities on the national level. The organizations implementing these activities on the regional level were selected through a public tender. The activity is carried out in six regions, through five Resource Centers Vocational Guidance and one private organization involved in adult education and counselling for adults. ISM counsellors in various regions are directly responsible for the implementation. The tasks on different levels are as follows:

Development

The process began with a pre-project phase developed within the LdV Total Counselling program. It comprised the analysis of the state of affairs and the basis for the introduction of the program, and its integration into the Single Programming Document.

The program covers the period from September 2004 to the end of 2006. It consists of three main phases.

- a) Further conceptual development of the activities that is based on the continual monitoring of field activities; preparations to ensure the funding of the activities from an integral budget and expansion of activities carried out in other six regions.
- b) Field work (specific work with young people and the development and maintenance of the network involved in the work with young people).

c) Reviews and evaluation of activities. A review is carried out every third month, while a comprehensive evaluation is scheduled to be carried out halfway through the program and upon its conclusion, in 2006. The reviews and evaluation are carried out by the national coordination unit and the Ministry of Education and Sports. The segments that are monitored are: direct results of informing-counselling activities and the wider implementation of ISM tasks on the local and national levels. Evaluation looks into the wider effects of these activities on the inclusion of young people in the educational system and the labour market.

The sum earmarked for the implementation of these activities is 81,000,0000 SIT or 321.666 €.

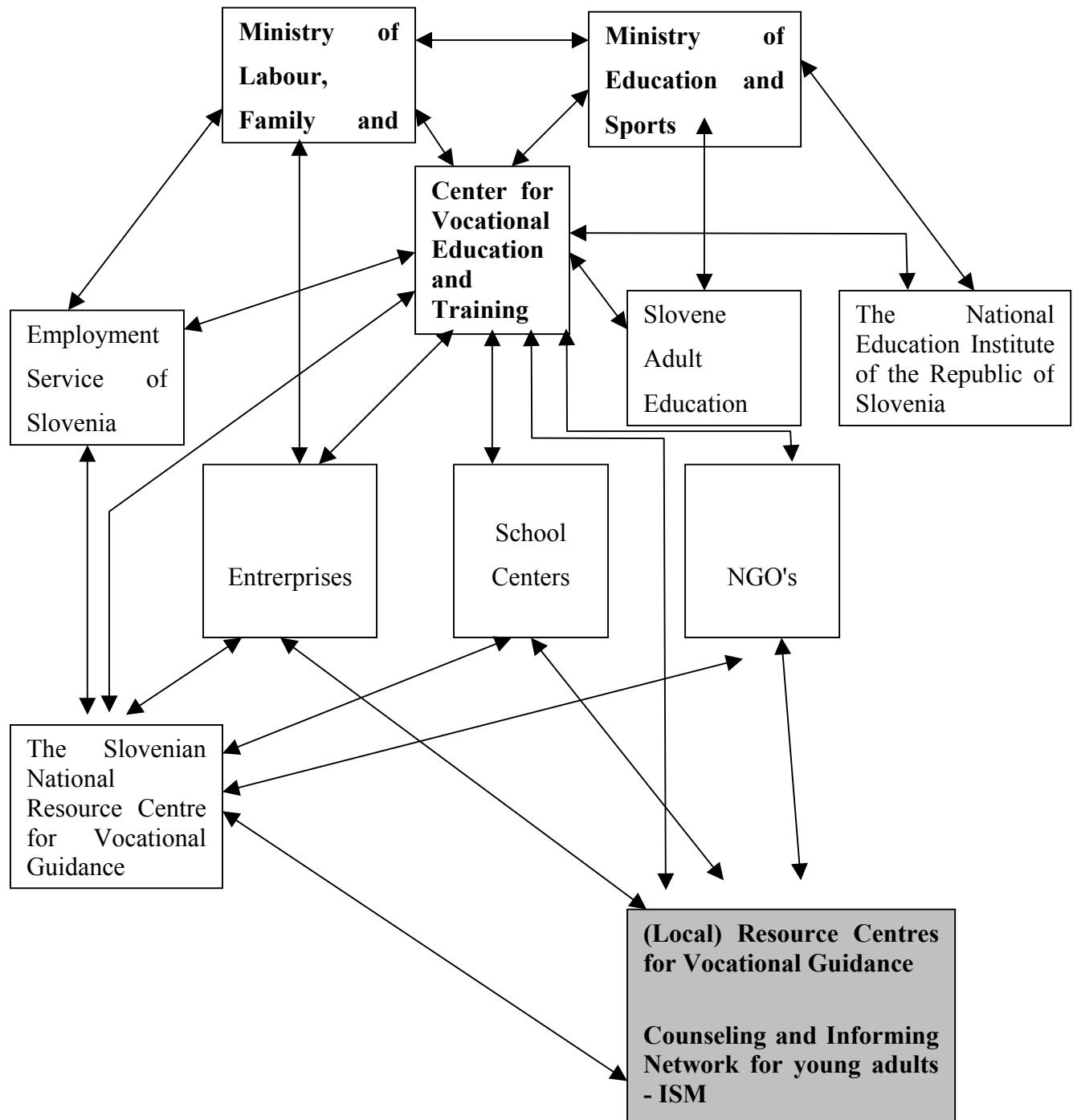
Coordination on the national level

Responsible institution is CPI. Other participants are Slovene Adult Education Centre, Employment Service of Slovenia, the Ministry of Education and Sports, the Ministry of Labour, Family and Social Affairs, and a representative of NGOs (see figure 1). The tasks at this level are:

- Upgrading of professional basis for the development of activities (upgrading of the ISM concept through the monitoring of young people's needs).
- Systemic responsibilities:
 - the status of individuals participating in ISM activities,
 - the status of a counsellor and definition of standards and norms.
- Collaboration with local organizations in organizing activities.
- The development and implementation of the training program for counsellors (carried out by the ISM coordinating group and collaborators).
- Preparation and implementation of the training program for experts who are directly responsible for ISM project implementation (120 hours)
- preparation and implementation of the training program for experts participating in the network (18 hours).
- Preparation of written materials..
- Establishment of international contacts.
- The development of a common document database in support of the activities (development and upgrades of the web portal containing information on employment and schooling options in Slovenia and abroad; available at www.virtuorientation.net)

- Evaluation and monitoring of activities.

Chart 1: Total counselling organisation on the national level



Local organisation carrying out the implementation of ISM activities

- Setting up of a workspace for ISM counsellors (an office, computer and a mobile phone at which young dropouts can contact the organization) and creation of the conditions for the work of counsellors.
- Setting up and coordination of the network on the local level (the network includes local counselling services intended for young people, i.e. individual counselling, professional counselling, counselling in education).
- Cooperation with national organizations.
- Organization of local databases containing information on early school leavers who have not joined the labour market.
- Cooperation with the national ISM-participating organizations.
- Promotional activities in the local environment.

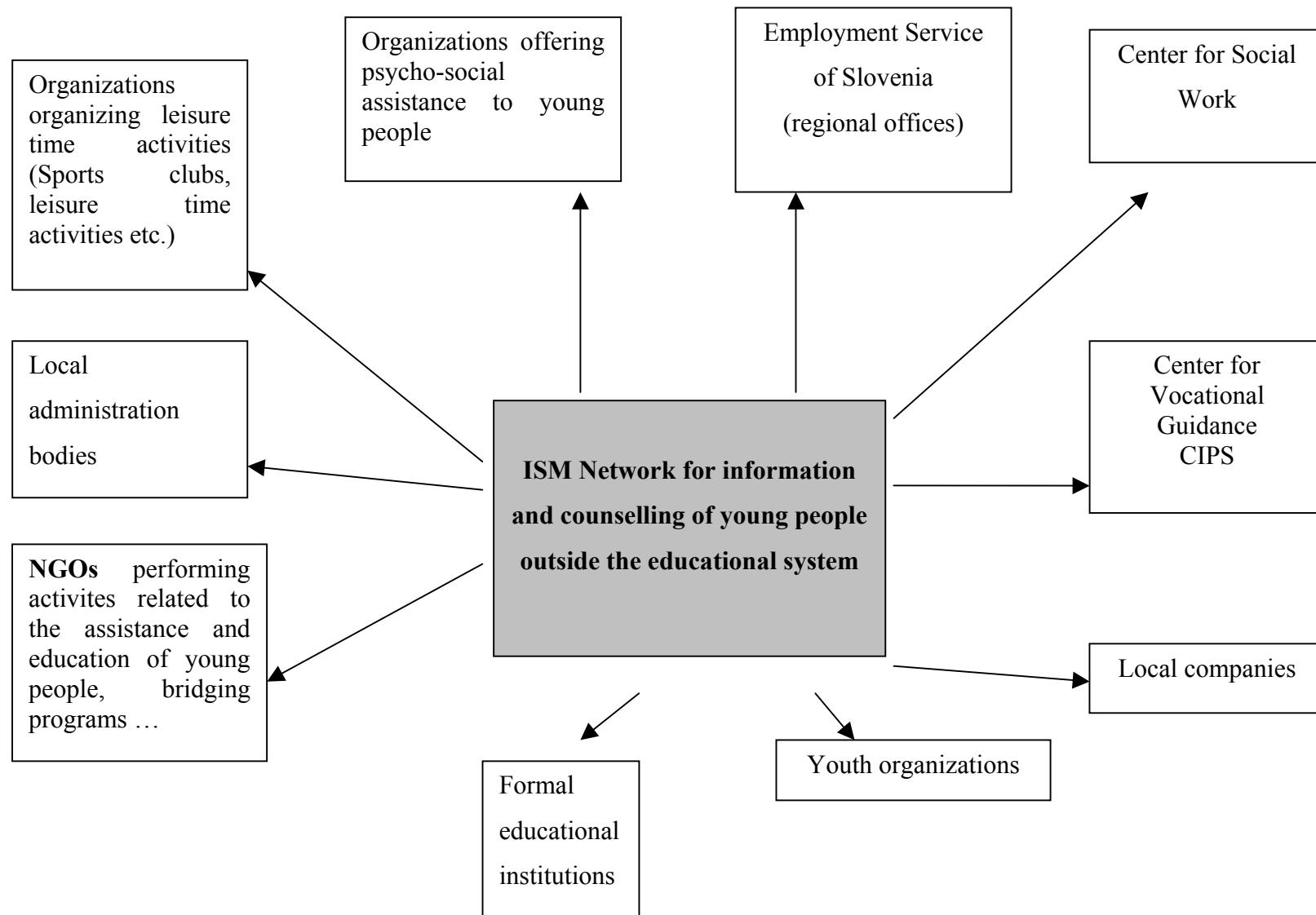
The tasks of the counsellors implementing ISM activities – ISM counsellors

On starting his/her work, a counsellor establishes contacts with all important institutions that could lead him/her to the target group, or could be of assistance later in dealing with the target group. During the initial two months, the counsellor establishes contacts with counsellors working for primary and secondary schools in the region, the Centre for Social Work, the Employment Service of the RS, Counselling Centres, sports clubs, youth organizations, health institutions and governmental and non-governmental organizations.

The counsellor maintains and expands these contacts continually. In addition to setting up and maintaining the local partner network, counsellor's other tasks include:

- coordination of the work of partners in the network;
 - monitoring and encouragement of counselling activities within organizations dealing with the target group;
 - reporting to the partners on his/her activities;
 - harmonization of the needs of various partners in the network;
 - preparation of the annual plan of activities in the local environment;
- informing the partners about the options of professional education in the area of total counselling.

Chart 2: local organizations included in the Total Counselling Network



4. The Counselling process

Inclusion in the programme: The task of the counsellor is to find young people who are not included in education, training or employment programs. This information can be supplied by any network partner (e.g. a secondary school) with the consent of a person in question. In addition, a counsellor may seek to meet these young people at other places as well (in parks, at sports fields and other gathering places). Another important task is the promotion of total counselling activities, so that young people, their parents, friends and other significant persons know where they can seek help. The goal of information gathering and field work is to attract the greatest possible number of young people to join the ISM program. Total counselling activities comprise information, counselling, representation, evaluation, monitoring and training, and various methods of work.

Individual work: Individual programmes should be attractive for every individual, so he/she should always be included in the shaping of such a program.

Individual counselling consists of the following stages:

- The counsellor establishes the first contact, meaning an appropriate counselling relationship with the early school leaver. The client should be acquainted with the goals of inclusion in such a program; his/her expectations, hindrances, reservations and wishes should be verified and basic rules agreed (presence, excuses etc.).
- The counsellor and the client reach an agreement about the inclusion (verbally or in a written form) and thus also about the duties and the rights, goals and expected results, as well as the manner in which the client can check these results on his/her own.
- The counsellor helps the client to identify the obstacles and his/her strong points, i.e. potentials (the emphasis is on the latter) that can be mobilized in resolving the existing situation. This may be an interest in a specific field, for example, sports, arts or other forms of socialization.
- The counsellor helps the client to define the goal and shape activities that should gradually lead to that goal. The emphasis here is on the activities, since progress should be made in small steps as this is the only way to monitor it. The monitoring of the progress (self-evaluation) is a crucial task, because it leads to better self-image and better self-confidence, both representing good motivation for further activities.
- The counsellor monitors the entire process of counselling and assesses the success (or lack thereof) of each counselling process as a whole.

During these phases a counsellor may carry out various orientation/guidance activities and may use various methods and forms of work. Counselling proceeds from the relationship established between the counsellor and the client, and this relationship is based on an equal footing (meaning that each may object if disagreeing with a proposal of the other). The client has the right to decide and the counsellor is obliged to respect such a decision. The counsellor and the client commit themselves to confidentiality. The role of the counsellor is to create room and a suitable atmosphere, and to empower the client to consider all the options and thus take the best decision possible in the given moment. One should keep in mind that in this case clients are people who experienced failure after failure and who developed strong defence mechanisms guarding them against the feeling of failure (passivity, aggressiveness, haughtiness, dependence etc.). The counsellor should be able to observe and reflect the events occurring during the counselling process (here and now) and through this to enhance the counselling relationship.

Work with third parties

Frequently, other people play a significant role in the counselling process, for example, parents, relatives, partners, peers etc. At times it is this “third party” who contacts the counsellor on his/her own initiative, or the initiative is given by the counsellor. Persons who are important for the client may prove to be an additional supporting pillar, but what is important is that the client consents to their involvement and that he/she knows which information the counsellor will communicate to such a person.

Promotion

The promotion of the ISM counsellor’s work is important primarily for the establishment of contacts with young people who dropped out from the educational system. The aim is to inspire trust in young people and their parents that there is someone out there to whom a young dropout may turn for help.

Participation of young people

Immediate target group: The program has been conceptualized in such a way that the document defining the activities is a live document and may be supplemented and adjusted to the needs and opinions of young people. These are collected by the ISM counsellors. Young people continually evaluate the work of counsellors and report on how their needs were met during the counselling process. They also propose changes that would make them fully satisfied with the counselling service. The monitoring group collects these suggestions and upgrades the concept.

Participation of a wider target group: Peers participate in the programme as informants and also take part in the shaping of promotional materials.

5. Results

Evaluation results are going to be available in March 2006. The monitoring of the service is carried out every three months. The first data based on the monitoring in implementation period (March-September) show that there were 143 organizations included in the ISM network; there were 852 information-oriented interviews conducted and 372 counselling sessions. All in all 920 young people were reached by the service in the fist six months.

The total counselling programme has been selected for introduction because this is a new service in Slovenia that transcends the existing offering of type counselling services (counselling in education, professional counselling and individual counselling). The emphasis is placed on the needs of a young person and the service is adjusted to the overall situation in which he/she found himself/herself. At the same time, the place and time of counselling are also adjusted to the needs of the client. The total informing and counselling network is also the first global activity targeted at the young population in the so-called “status zero” position and it is specifically adjusted to their needs and wishes.

Expansion of the activities to other six regions in scheduled for the period 2007 to 2113.

6. Recommendations for transfer

With regard to the development of the policy necessary requirements which should be taken into consideration with regard to transfer are:

I. Identification of the needs and an overview of existing institutional solutions

1. Clearly identified need

Example: Several research studies pointed out the need for a counselling service for young people who are not included in the educational system, i.e. Report on Developments in Vocational Education and Training in Slovenia 1998, Quality of Life of Young People in Slovenia, Study of the Problem of Young Drop-outs.

2. An overview of existing institutional solutions:

a) delineation of the existing institutional environment;

b) an overview of the systems implemented in other countries. In this specific case, the OECD research study entitled “Policies for Information Guidance and Counselling” was launched simultaneously and it included the National Questionnaire for Slovenia.

II. Development of new solutions:

- a) in-depth study of the systems in other countries with the focus on effective measures of information and counselling for youngsters in status zero position,
- b) in-depth work with the guidance workers in different guidance settings in Slovenia aimed at young people with the aim of identifying already successful factors and measures in the existing system, and identification of possible solutions on the content as well as institutional level / and proposals for modifications of content or organizational forms.
- c) Preparation of the methodology of total counselling and its integration into the system.

In this particular case this was possible through the Leonardo da Vinci project “Total Counselling.”

III. Integration into the system

- a) keeping abreast of the development of pertinent policies in Slovenia and the EU,
- b) continual comparative scrutiny of the proposals put forward by practitioners and policy makers, and joint search for the ways of their integration into the given political context; if needed, the modification of the proposed integration into the system.

Emphasis: cooperation of experts from various areas and on various levels; a smooth information flow; a clearly defined proposal.

To achieve a lasting solution it is necessary to establish a transparent monitoring and evaluation system covering various levels; the key factor is positive feedback from the immediate target group.

6. Activation

Under this heading we will present how in three different countries – Denmark, Finland and the UK – the current trend towards activation is interpreted and implemented. By activation we understand how rights and responsibilities of young job seekers are implemented with regard to benefit entitlements, counselling procedures or so-called Individual Action Plans and ALMP measures (see Volume 1, Chapters 5.3 and 6.1).

Benefit entitlements in the context of activation (Denmark)

1. Policy environment of good practice

The activation programmes are part of the Act of Active Employment Effort (Law no. 419 10/06/2003) and belongs under the Ministry of employment. Activation programmes started as an initiative for young unemployed (Youth Effort) but are now effective for all unemployed with capacity of work, but there are special rules for activation of young people (see also National Report DenmarkPortugal, Annex II in this volume).

2. Structure

The employment effort is distributed among two parallel systems. The insured unemployed belong under the governmental employment service (AF) and the uninsured belongs under the municipality, which refer the unemployed to the governmental employment service (AF). It is important to notice that this system will change in 2007, when the counties are closed down, the structure reform.

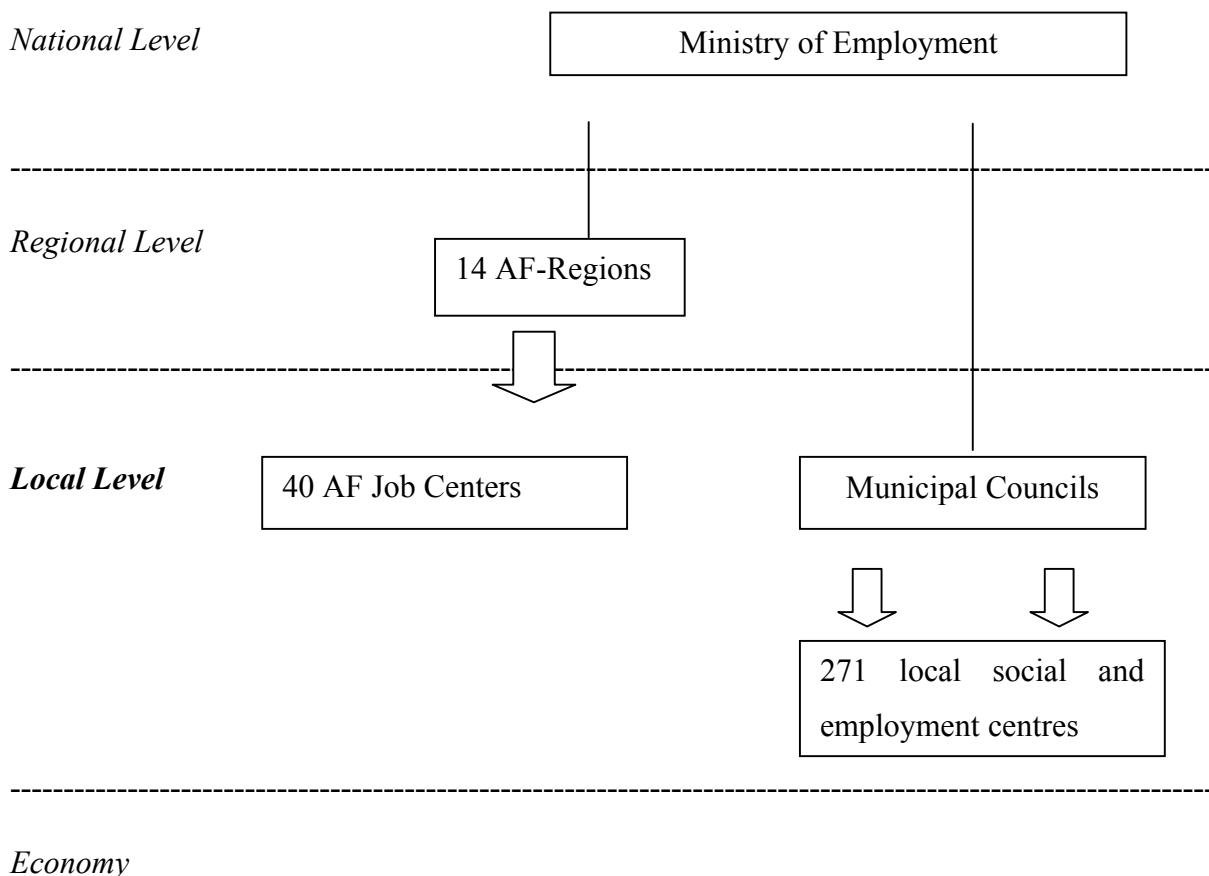
The national employment service

The national employment service (AF) has 40 job centres situated all over Denmark and in each of the 14 counties exists a regional AF-centre which surveys the efforts of the job centres and a labour market council where different labour market partners are represented.

The municipality

In Denmark 271 local social and employment centres exist under the municipal councils.

Figure 1: The current system



Economy

3. Activation rules

In Denmark everyone is obliged to participate in activation, otherwise benefits are cut or suspended.

The Danish unemployment benefit system for the insured (national employment service):

All under the age 30 years you have the right and duty to activation after 6 months of unemployment and after 12 months if are older 30.

Activation under the unemployment benefit system (the Government) can consist of:

- Individual action plan
- Individual education plan
- Apprenticeships
- Education

The Danish social benefit system (municipalities):

Individuals who have not been included in the social insurance system have the right and duty to receive an employment offer not later than 13 weeks of social benefit if under 30 years of age and after 12 months if older than 30 years.

- For unemployed under 30 without upper secondary education that entitles to an unemployed insurance activation shall last 18 month and at least 30 hours per week.
- If unemployed under 30 with an education the activation shall last 6 month at least 30 hours per week.

Activation under the social benefit system (the municipalities) can consist of:

- Guidance
- Action plans
- Job training
- Job rotation
- Education
- Voluntary work

Percentage of young people (all) in the two benefit systems for 6 month min. in 2004

Table 1: The Danish unemployment benefit system (national employment service):

18-19 Years old	0,03 %
20-24 Years old	1,43 %
25-29 Years old	3,75 %
Total	2,3 %

Source: Danmarks Statistik

Table 2: The Danish social benefit system (municipalities)

18-19 Years old	3,13 %
20-24 Years old	4,77 %
25-29 Years old	4,42 %
Total	4,36 %

Source: Danmarks Statistik

These numbers do not include young people who receive salary grants.

4. Conclusions

Key success factors of this policy approach are:

- Obligation motivated by positive incentives (benefits and choice of activities) rather than negative ones
- Individual rights according to citizenship status of young people in transition
- Broad concept of activity (not exclusively employment)

Early rehabilitation of adolescents and One-stop-shop joint service centres (Finland)

In singling out examples of good practices that exist in Finland, we have focused on examples of both preventing youth unemployment as well as school drop-out and at the same time also focused on more structural long-lasting reforms. Some of these have not yet been evaluated but are in the process of evaluation. Examples of good practices as practical models are the *Early Rehabilitation Pilot for Adolescents* and the *One stop shop service centres*.

1. Policy environment

The early 2000s have been a period of many reforms concerning youth unemployment and school leaving. For instance, the Act on Rehabilitative Work Experience (2001), the Early Rehabilitation Trial for Adolescents (2001–2003), the Youth participation program (2002), and recently the Youth Society Guarantee (2005) have all aimed at finding solutions for disadvantaged youth (see also National Report Finland, Annex II in this volume). Measures that have been put forwarded include an integrating of services, offering young people activity or rehabilitation plans, career plans, training, guidance, and work projects. Supportive measures for growth in the demand for labour are still lacking. For instance, the evaluation of the Act on Rehabilitative Work Experience showed that only half of those who took part in the activity plans eventually found a job.

Structural reforms are not often mentioned when it comes to good practices even though structural reforms are necessary elements in enabling developments of good practices. In a Finnish context one structural reform needs to be emphasized, namely the *Youth Society Guarantee*. The youth society guarantee, which aimed at reducing and preventing youth unemployment, was introduced as part of the Employment Programme launched by the Government for the period 2003–2007. In this inter-sectoral employment programme, the labour authorities have the principal responsibility for implementing the society guarantee for unemployed young people while the education authorities are responsible for the education and training guarantee (see National Report Finland, Annex II in this volume).

The Youth Society Guarantee is composed of intensified labour services, inter-sectoral service co-operation, labour market measures and programmes for young people. The guidelines for the services were approved by the Ministry of Labour in December 2004. The main aim of the guarantee is that every young person should be offered a place in further education, practical training, or a workshop activity after a period of three months

unemployment. It is hoped that the transition to further education will be more effective, the application system will be easier, student- and vocational counselling will be intensified, and more practical information about working life will be made available. The aim is for 96% of those who finish compulsory education to continue in upper secondary education and for the workshop-activities to be permanent, both by 2008. The youth society guarantee includes:

- Fast screening of the needs of the young unemployed
- Job application plan about the service that the youth society guarantee offers
- The youth get service that's not only interrupting his/her unemployment it also should improve his/her opportunities to get multi-professional services.
- The employment agencies should charge on their personnel and employ youth counsellors. They should establish a youth-team.

The evaluation of the youth guarantee service will be followed up by the employment agency every third year. In 2006 the Ministry of Labour and different regional offices (TE-keskus) will evaluate the youth unemployment situation and the implementation of the youth society guarantee.

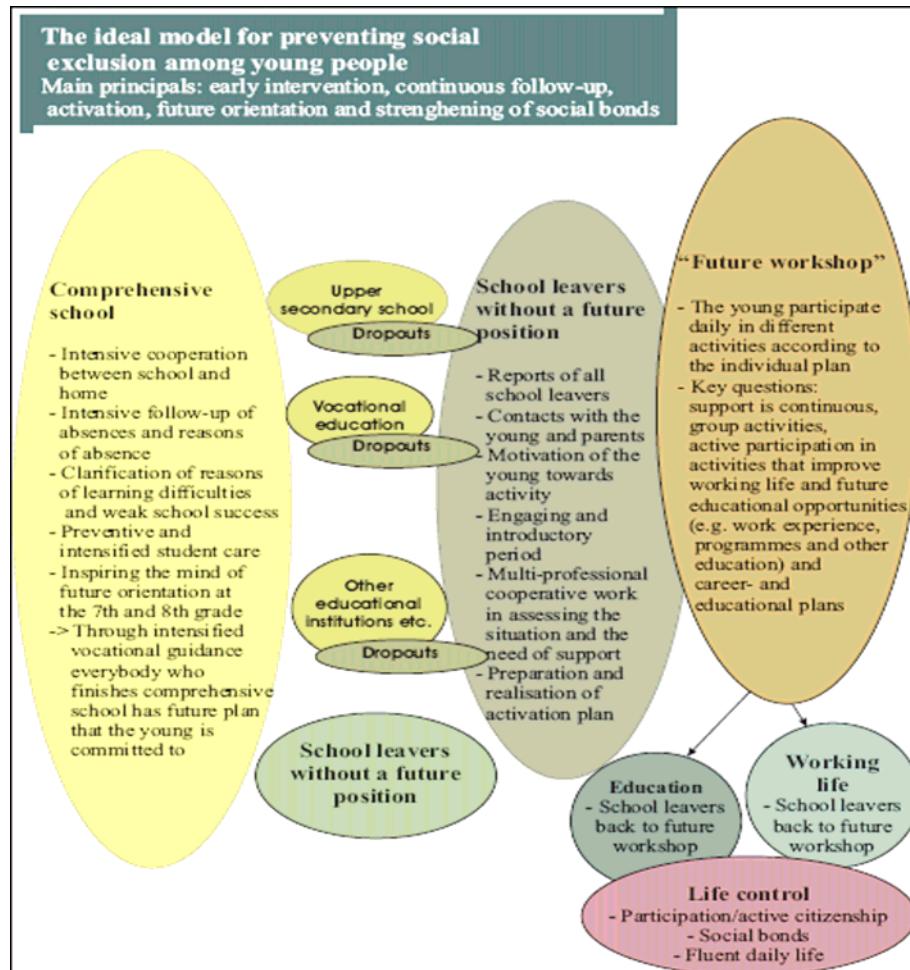
2. Early rehabilitation trial for adolescents

The Working group on Active Social Policy proposed in its memorandum a three-year trial early rehabilitation for 15–17-year-olds at serious risk of social exclusion. The Social Insurance Institution (SII) working together with municipal education, the employment, social and health, and youth administrations have put the proposal into effect by arranging a rehabilitation trial for adolescents (2001–2003) involving 18 projects. The target group of the trial was young people who had dropped out of comprehensive school or vocational education or who were likely to drop their studies or end their comprehensive school early because of low grades. One objective of the trial was to develop and disseminate good models of co-operation and action. The trial aimed to 1) survey the need for legislative reforms in operations and financing, and 2) to create a permanent service model for young people at risk of social exclusion.

Evaluation of the trial showed that there existed professional skills and a strong endeavour in municipalities to support young people at risk of exclusion. There were good prerequisites for cross-sectoral co-operation. However, problems were posed by poor co-ordination, by an undeveloped co-operation culture, scarcity of resources and lack of obligations and agreements related to the division of labour and responsibilities. The evaluation also showed that it is possible to do some preventive work within the framework of existing resources, but

full-time employees are needed to co-ordinate the co-operation. In addition, some legislative amendments are needed to eliminate the factors hampering co-operation and to motivate young people to plan their education and work careers (Suikkanen et al., 2004).

Figure 1: The ideal model for preventing social exclusion among young people (Suikkanen et al., 2004)



This ideal model, that was developed during the trial, is based on the experiences of the rehabilitation trial, the memo of the working group on Active Social Policy and the aims of the rehabilitation pilot, and also partly on youth research, information from different research projects and practical experience. The basis of the suggested model is that it could be realized and incorporated as part of the existing service system. The model can be adapted to suit the different service systems in the municipalities. The model is based on three factors:

1. Identifying the target group and their need for support
2. Supporting the youth
3. The co-ordination of the services and the development.

The school has a central position in identifying those young people in need of support.

Ongoing conversations with young people are important, as well as engaging their enthusiasm and actually accompanying them to a student care group before it is too late. The aim is to prevent social exclusion among the young at an early stage. The employment office is reasonably good at screening unemployed young people but the problem is that those at risk do not sign up as job-seekers. Screening through local networking has given very good results.

In the ideal model, support of the youth should be based on multi-professional work. The central feature of support is to engage the young person, develop a confidential relationship and to get the young motivated. The aim is to make an activation plan and support the young person to make a vocational choice or find an interesting and suitable education. Continuous individual counselling processes are important.

It is impossible that only one sector in the municipality should take care of the youth at risk. To identify the youth at risk and to support them requires co-operation from different sectors. In the ideal model the comprehensive school has the principal responsibility: in particular, the special education teacher, the form master, the subject teacher, the student counsellor, the school social worker and the school nurse. After comprehensive school, the responsibility shifts to the labour- and social services and to the post-comprehensive educational system. The youth and leisure services, the SII and health services should be in a multifaceted co-operation group sharing the responsibility through their specialised knowledge. To enable the model to work, it is necessary to have a co-ordinator.

The research pointed out the importance of developing the legislation. The fundamental problem in the legislation is that young people between 15 and 17 who are in the need of support are not covered sufficiently by social benefits. A young person in the transition phase who has completed or left comprehensive school, upper secondary school or vocational education without any future plan will be left alone with no resources. Some structural changes based on the experiences of the rehabilitation pilot should be made.

The ideal model is now being made permanent and implemented nationally.

3. 'One-stop-shop' Service Centres and a youth experiment called "Vinssi"

An important development in the strategy to help hard-to-serve job-seekers in Finland has been to collect the relevant authorities together as a one-stop-shop to solve the problems. These kind of joint-service centres have been created by the employment offices, the municipalities, and the Social Insurance Institution together at local level on an experimental basis in 2002 and 2003. The number of one-stop-shop service centres will be increased to 40

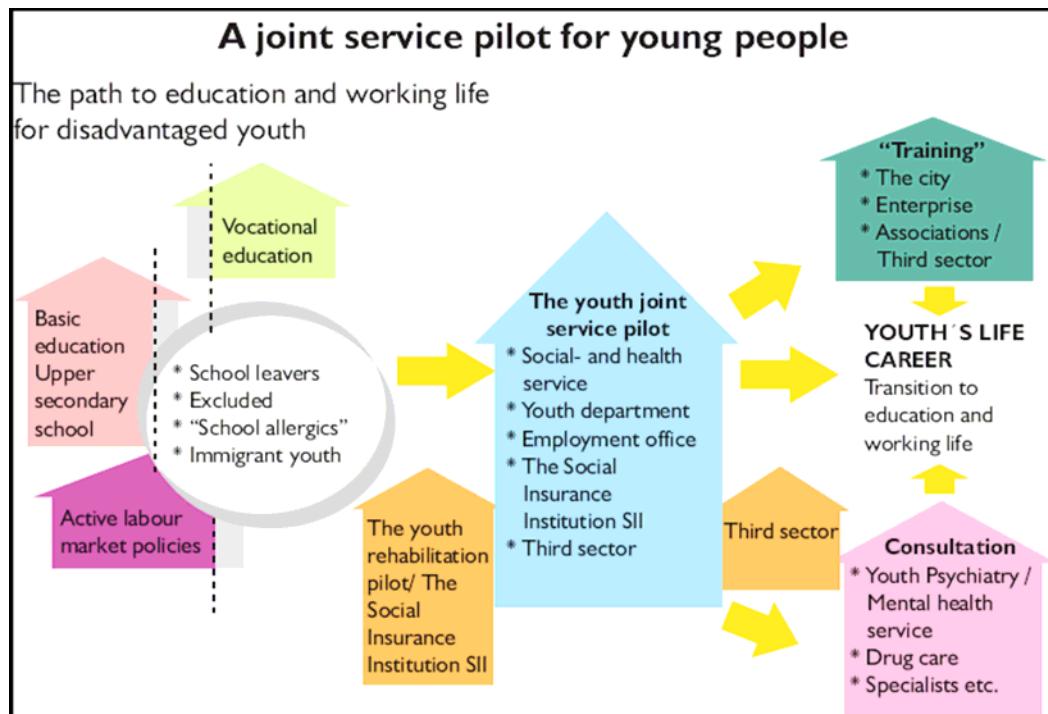
by 2006 (currently at 36) and the concept will be developed further and established on a permanent basis. Probably the most important part of this new development is the creation of a new service structure with possibilities for the networking of other public services within an integrated model. The strength of these centres is their large capacities to buy external services and support for their clients. These centres have during their experimental phase been evaluated (Arnkil et al., 2004) during two years. The evaluation showed that the project was a collective learning process where an integrated model was developed.

For 60% of the clients an activation plan was drawn up. For an effect study the evaluation time was too short as client processes are long. Many of the clients were still unemployed or information was lacking. Lack of systematic monitoring between the different sectors was also a hindrance for effective evaluation. Still, the evaluation showed that activation rate was rather high as it showed that one fifth of the unemployed were employed. This is somewhat higher than compared to unemployed on labour market support. The main reason for this is the intensive co-operation and the resources available in these centres.

These centres have, however, not yet succeeded in reaching young people, as the majority of participants are still over 25. Nevertheless, there are examples of centres which are focussed on young people. According to the Youth Society Guarantee the one-stop-shop service centres are encouraged to establish youth services teams or departments when appropriate. Basic services for unemployed young people are always provided at the Public Employment Service.

The one stop shop service centre Vinssi was one of the Ministry of Labour's joint service experiments for youth in 2002–2003. In January 2004 the activity was established on a permanent basis. Vinssi is a co-operation between the employment, the city of Lappeenranta (a middle sized town) and the Social Insurance Institution's joint service point for youth. The multi-professional team consists of one-stop-shop instructor/adviser, special one-stop-shop-advisers, social workers, social instructors, employees of the social insurance institution, youth instructors, and joint service secretaries.

Figure 2: "Vinssi" (Hoist in English)



Structure

Vinssi is meant for young people under 25 that need counselling and support in education, working life and building a future. The young people are mostly directed to Vinssi by the employment office, the social- and health authorities or by the Social Insurance Institution. Among the young people referred are the unemployed, school leavers, outsiders, "school allergics" and immigrants. There is also a service point that offers services for young people, parents, for organisations and for those who work among the young. From this service point one can receive information about hobbies, studies, living, economy and health.

One aim of the joint service centre is to be accessible were the young can get information, counselling, and support for education, working life and questions about life control. Also of importance is receiving co-operation from different authorities, both active and functional. The client should be the most important thing, not the bureaucracy.

Process

The operation model is based on teamwork by multi-professionals, and the young people together with the authority finds the solutions for their problems in related to education and working life. The process includes four steps: 1. Interview 2. Activation plan 3. Offer of rehabilitation 4. Continuous follow-up and 5. Portfolio. The young person is called for an interview, where the situation is assessed and an activation plan is made up for the future. The

purpose is to find adequate work, education, rehabilitation or something else that is suitable for the young client. The basis of the activation plan is the motivation of the young. The plan is followed up and supported individually. The target is that at least 60% of the clients should get a more permanent solution for their situation after Vinssi.

Evaluation

During the first period in 2002 there were 153 clients at Vinssi, with a total number of visits of 1484. The client processes are rather long depending on the nature of problems and the increase of multi-problems among the clients. This sets demands on longitudinal evaluations. The centre Vinssi is monitored according to directions from the Ministry of Labour. This includes following up the young persons portfolios, which contain details on living costs, visits to the one-stop-shop, plans etc. A more thorough evaluation of the outcomes of the services is under process.

4. Conclusions

The key success factors of these policy measures which need to be taken into account in terms of transferability are the following:

- Multi-professional, client-centred approach based on an analysis of the multi-dimensionality of disadvantage;
- Youth specific approaches within the framework of general policies
- Developing a culture of inter-service co-operation by
 - Legal framework,
 - Training and organisational development for formerly separated working staff and agencies;
- Declared intentions of longitudinal evaluation.

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New Deal for Young People (UK)

1. Policy environment

The New Deal for Young People was the first of a series of major reforms at tackling unemployment introduced first in 1998 as part of a major welfare to work reform and since then other New Deal programmes have been developed to cater for a range of other groups including lone parents, long-term unemployed adults and the disabled (see also National Report UK, Annex II in this volume). It is funded through central government initially through a ‘windfall’ tax on the profits of the privatised utilities and operates in all UK regions.

2. Objectives

It is a national active labour market programme with coverage of all eligible 18-24 year olds who experience over 6 months unemployment in the UK, for whom participation in the programme is mandatory. Total participation in Great Britain at March 2005 was 72,790 persons. The national budget for 2004 was £170 Million (€ 246 Million).

3. Description of Practice

The programme is delivered in local areas through a series of local partnerships under the coordination of Job Centres Plus (formerly Employment Service). The main objectives of the programme are to increase the employability of the young unemployed, help them into jobs and to reduce long-term benefit dependency. It also aims to balance the rights of the unemployed with responsibilities and benefit sanctions apply to those who turn down the offer of help. The underlying assumptions of the programme is to help unemployed people become more employable, through the provision of employment and training programmes, which in turn should reduce wage pressures in the economy enabling it to operate at a higher level of overall employment without creating inflationary pressures.

The New Deal consists of a complex mix of activities involving intensive individual help with counselling, guidance training and directed activity. After 6 months continuous unemployment under threat of benefit sanctions all 18-24 year olds must enter the programme. The programme has 3 key stages,:

- Gateway
- New Deal options
- Follow through support.

Gateway

On entry to the New Deal each participant enters the Gateway, which is designed to last up to four months. Here each participant is allocated a ‘Personal Adviser’ who provides personalised guidance and assists in the drawing up of an action plan tailored to the needs of the individual’s particular circumstances. Levels of support vary according to qualifications and experience, from providing some help with job search or careers advice to more intensive support. Following the Gateway period those deemed to require further help with employability are required to enter one of the New Deal options. Personal Advisers try to take account of the individual’s needs and desires in placing them in an option, dependent on the local availability of provision, although without agreement referrals can be mandatory.

New Deal Options

- A subsidised placement – six months subsidised work experience with an employer, the employer receives a £60/week (€86) subsidy towards wages and must provide training of at least one day a week towards a nationally recognised qualification.
- Full-time education or training of 30 hours per week up to a year (52 weeks) leading to a nationally recognised qualification, intended to address vocational qualifications and basic skills barriers to employment.
- Voluntary Work – a voluntary work experience programme, whereby an additional £15.38 (€22.50) is paid on top of any unemployment benefits and they are entitled to at least one day per week for education or training.
- Environmental Task Force – an environmental programme, that includes a top up payment as above and entitlement to time off for education or training.

Follow Through

Follow Through Support – continuing support from a personal advisor is provided while in the options to aid completion and job search and is also provided is a participant returns to unemployment after New Deal.

Participation in New Deal for young people is mandatory and a progressive system of benefit sanctions of 2, 4 and 26 weeks suspension can be applied for non-compliance.

The New Deal for Young People programme has been evaluated through a variety of methods particularly in the first few years of operation; these have taken the form of econometric studies of the impact on outflows from unemployment, evaluations of young people’s

employers and advisers experience of the programme. It is subject to Core Performance Targets and there is ongoing monitoring through a national statistical database.

The programme has adapted and changed with modifications being made as the programme has evolved and responded to research evaluation and other evidence, these include:

The development for New Deal for Musicians which in the light of the importance of the music industry in the UK was created to cater for budding musicians in recognition that mandatory mainstream provision for the New Deal could inhibit the development of a successful musical career. The New Deal for musicians puts those who have a serious interest in developing a musical career in contact with a mentor from the music industry and access to a tailored educational course providing music and business skills. In its first three years of operation professionals from the music industry have mentored more than 10,500 young people.

In response to a lack of flexibility through the centralised planning of the programme not taking account of local labour markets additional flexibility has been built into the programme, by providing more discretion and increased budget flexibility for District managers to decide what training and support is needed to address local problems and meet individual needs (DWP, 2004).

Although the majority of participants are referred to the programme following 6-months unemployment, certain groups may access the New Deal early on a voluntary basis. These include (ex-offenders, Refugees, Homeless, People affected by drug or alcohol addiction, people who have been in residential care, ex-regular members of the armed forces and those with language, literacy or numeracy problems).

A significant proportion of young people do not gain jobs through the New Deal and many were entering the New Deal for a second or third time (Finn, 2003). As a result a number of specific initiatives have been added in pilot areas to assist with those who have specific or multiple problems associated with employability. StepUp for example is a one year subsidised job placement targeted at high-unemployment areas, whilst Progress2work was initially designed for those with a history of drug misuse, but was extended to include those with other specific problems e.g. ex-offenders, homelessness or alcohol problems. This provides those with significant barriers to work with more intensive support and advice through a dedicated support worker.

In the past year further changes have been introduced in pilot areas to take account of the evidence of the effectiveness of the current range of New Deal Programmes. This includes a

greater flexibility for Advisers to tailor support to each individual through a more modular based provision. The modules are as follows:

- Jobsearch – help focusing on job search resources, CV, letter writing
- Career Guidance – Advice and guidance about types of work available locally
- Motivational Assistance (Mentoring) –Helping to address individual motivational barriers to work
- Employability Skills – Addressing generic skills such as self-presentation, team work or understanding customer service
- Gateway to work – An intensive two week course to make participants aware of the qualities, attitudes and experiences and behaviours employers expect of their employees, combined with job search advice and guidance
- Skills Training – Work-focused training linked to current and anticipated labour market demand.
- Work Experience – Work experience placements providing an opportunity to develop work experience and job skills
- Literacy and Numeracy – Tuition in basic skills required to work, reading and writing skills.
- English for Speakers of other Languages
- Self-employment. Training and advice for those wishing to run their own business, and the opportunity to undertake a period of ‘test trading’ to experience the realities of self-employment, whilst receiving support..
- Specialist Support for those with Health Conditions and Disabled People
- Specialist Support for the most Disadvantaged People – Providing through specialist advisers assessment, action planning, and tailored packages of help to those with acute and multiple barriers to work, such as former drug or alcohol users, ex-offenders, and the homeless.

Although New Deal is a National Programme run by the Department for Work and Pensions, delivery is coordinated through local Job Centre's Plus, with New Deal options and other services delivered through local partnerships involving, employers, local authorities, voluntary organisations and others. Local provision has often been enhanced through additional funding provided through the European Social Fund. Different models of provision within the prescribed national framework have emerged.

Personal Advisers are employed by Job Centre Plus and are at the heart of the frontline delivery of the programme, to be effective they need a broad range of generic skills, counselling, careers guidance, partnership working and knowledge of the local labour market and training and education provision.

The duration on the New Deal is largely dependent on the success of finding unsubsidised employment, with around one in ten young people leave the New Deal before the first interview with a personal advisor, and a small majority leave during the 4-month Gateway period. In reality the Gateway get take longer than the prescribed 4-month period before after which time young people are placed on one of the New Deal options, around one in five young people leave from the programme from the follow through at the end of the options.

4. Results

Much of the independent research evaluation of the programme stems from the first two years of operation of the programme and the programme has evolved in response to many of the issues raised.

The programme was introduced at a time when the UK economy was relatively buoyant and has remained so since. Econometric modelling of the outflows from unemployment for the first two years of the programme was used to assess the early impact of the programme. This demonstrated that it raised the outflow rate from unemployment with no clear adverse effect on other groups of workers, with a reduction of between 35,000-40,000 in youth unemployment, and an estimated 15,000 in jobs as a result of the New Deal (White & Riley, 2002). Overall the macro evaluations indicated a welfare gain to the economy as a whole, after taking account of a reduction in benefit payments and higher taxation raised through employment, this was worth about £3 (€4.40) for every £5 (€7.32) spent, the annual cost for each extra person in employment was estimated to be between £3,000 (€4392) and £7,000 pounds (€10,238) (White & Riley, 2002).

Results of qualitative evaluations with participants, employers and those involved in the delivery shows the scheme is viewed positively by all those concerned (O'Connor et al 2001; O'Connor et al, 2000; Elam & Snape, 2000). Where criticisms have mainly emerged is through the inappropriate placement of young people in the New Deal options. New Deal advisers are one of the more innovative aspects of the programme and overall have been well received by young people although the relationship with adviser was key to young people's good or bad assessment of the programme. The effectiveness of advisers was sometimes hampered through heavy caseloads, their caseloads varying between 40 and 90 clients.

There has been some criticism over the performance target in relation to those entering unsubsidised employment, which may focus Personal Advisers attention on those who are most employable at the expense of those with more complex barriers to employment.

The main success of the programme has been in assisting those who are job ready with additional assistance in job search and careers advice, although many of these young people are likely to have found jobs without assistance, the macro evaluation confirmed that some jobs were directly created through the programme and a reduction in the period spent unemployed. The programme has been less successful in helping those with multiple barriers to employment and also success has been disappointing among ethnic groups. As the programme has evolved it has tried to enhance provision for those with multiple problems, through initiatives like StepUp and Progess2work.

A perhaps undesirable hierarchy has also emerged within the options, with young people favouring the subsidised Employment and Education or Training options, over the Voluntary or Environmental Task Force options which have become perceived as a last resort for those who cannot be placed in one of the more preferable options.

With the high demand among young people for the employment option one of the challenges has been to promote greater employer involvement in the programme. In the early stages of the programme some employers complained of a lack of job readiness among some of those being placed in the employment option. As a result an intensive 4 week programme to improve job readiness has been added to the Gateway period. Various attempts have been made to promote greater employer involvement such as the creation of national employer task forces.

Greater flexibility has been added in the training requirements, which has been seen by some employers as too inflexible and a relaxation of the requirement to provide training towards a nationally recognised qualification.

The Full Time Education and Training option has also had mixed success. One of the difficulties has been the provision of courses by further education colleges that provide the flexibility required by the programme for roll-on, roll-off provision, rather than according to the normal periods of study (Tavistock Institute, 1999). Although there are examples of good practice there have been problems of retention and criticisms over the readiness and assessment of the suitability of some participants to enter a learning environment. Course provision has tended to focus on relatively short-term courses focusing on basic skills and prevocational provision and there have been difficulties over completing some vocational courses over the prescribed maximum 52 weeks for which funding is available. Some better-

qualified young people resent the fact that they cannot use the option to gain higher-level skills as the provision is generally restricted to courses at NVQ2 or below (Millar,2000).

The mandatory participation and resultant benefit sanctions have been another controversial aspect of the programme, although it has been argued these sanctions are only applied in the most extreme cases. In total around 13,000 young people in Great Britain are sanctioned each year mainly for failing to attend a place on a training scheme or employment programme or for losing a pace through misconduct (DWP, 2005).

5. Conclusions

If looking for key success factors of the Neal Deal the following may be considered:

- Large-scale programme based on considerably increased investments
- Possibilities of choice
- Centrality of person-centred counselling
- Comprehensive evaluation resulting in further development, especially the intensification (Employment zones) and flexibilisation (Tailored pathways) of provision

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7. Single ALMP measures

Compared to the activation programmes presented in the last chapter, in the following policy measures will be presented which aim more specifically to the labour market entrance of unemployed young people (see Volume 1, Chapter 5.3). While in principle they could result from activation and counselling processes, the examples relate to contexts in which activation policies have not yet reached a significant coverage and comprehensive shape.

Incentives for employers to employ (young) graduates (Romania)

1. Policy environment

For the purpose of stimulating the entrepreneurs to employ young graduates and support them in surpassing the disadvantage given by the lack of experience, the state provides subsidies from the unemployment assurance budget for the entrepreneurs that hire both graduates and graduates with disabilities that affect their working capacity.

The measure is part of the National Programme for Employment developed by the National Agency for Employment (NAE) annually in the implementation of the National Action Plan for Employment, developed by the Ministry of Labour, Social Solidarity and Family, and approved by the Government in 2002 (see also National Report Romania, Annex II in this volume).

The measure is implemented at national level. According to the NAE Annual Report for the year 2004, the target was to provide employment to 13,500 graduates during that year, with a budget allocation of ROL 661.9 billion (almost €1.9 million). The achievements exceeded that target, 21,634 young graduates having been employed under the measure, with total expenses of ROL 489.4 billion (almost €1.4 million). Unfortunately, no breakdown by categories of beneficiaries was available in NAE Annual Report.

The target group includes all categories of graduates (until 2004 the subsidy was the same, regardless the level of graduation, i.e. 1 gross minimum wage/economy). At present the subsidy is provided for 12 months for graduates without disabilities and for 18 months for the graduates with disabilities. The condition for the employer to receive these subsidies is to maintain the labour contract for minimum 3 years. The value of the subsidy differs according to the level of education as follows: 1 gross minimum wage/country at the time of

employment for ISCED 2, 1.2 gross minimum wages for ISCED 3 and 4, and 1.5 gross minimum wages for ISCED 5.

The main activities under the measure include information campaigns, identification of employers willing to hire graduates under the measure and concluding written agreements between local employment services (LES) and those employers, providing employers with lists of graduates, hiring graduates by those employers and providing the LES with lists of employees from among graduates along with statements of taxes to be paid to the state social insurance budget, which are than forwarded to the financial and budget department at NAE for compensation with taxes or payment of subsidies as the case may be, monitoring and supervision by LES of employers' compliance with employment agreements.

Good cooperation between LESSs and employers, as well as between LESSs and local education institutions is highly important for the good functioning of the measure. Besides, LES contacts with beneficiary graduates and providing them with information on available facilities is very important since during the 3 years time period of employment, young graduates could benefit from training courses organized by the employer and the costs of these courses could be supported, upon demand, from the unemployment insurance budget.

2. Description of good practice (programme and project level)

The key structural factors required for the good practices to operate effectively are: availability of funds, extended network of LES and suitable staff strength, good information system within NAE structures and between these structures and partner institutions (specifically County School Inspectorates, but also training providers).

Actors

The key actors required for the good practice to operate effectively are the LESSs and employers willing to hire graduates. Because additional training may be provided during the 3 years period of graduates' employment under the measure, accredited training providers also play an important role. Networking and partnership relationships with education institutions are important for the effectiveness of the measure, since update information on estimated numbers of graduates and of their profiles helps both LESSs and employers to prepare their agreements from a well informed position. Supervision is ensured by LES staff.

Process

The main categories of activities needed for the operation of the measure have been mentioned above. In more detail, they are as follows:

- Provision of potential clients with information with regard to availability of subsidies, duration and conditions under which it could be granted;
- LES provides interested employers with updated lists of graduates from their databases;
- Employers willing to hire graduates under the measure conclude with LESs, on annual basis, agreements for each series of graduates, and submit monthly statements on their obligations to the state social insurance budget, and lists of graduates actually employed;
- LES review the documents submitted by employers against applicable legal requirements;
- Employers who organise vocational training for graduates hired under the measure conclude with LES addenda to contract agreements based on which LES covers the expenses incurred by training for graduates, upon request by employer;
- LES reimburse the expenses incurred by the training courses following their completion, based upon a documentary evidence (table with trainees, copies of training certificates, breakdowns of expenses by trainees);
- LES forward the documents submitted by the employers to the Financial and Budget Execution Department at NAE for review and compensation of subsidies/training expenses with taxes due by employers or payment to employers, as the case may be;
- Supervision by LES of employers' compliance with terms and conditions of the measure over the contract agreement period.

The active involvement of beneficiary employers is encouraged, since this results in timely submitting the required documents and subsequently in timely payment of subsidies or compensation of duties with subsidies as the case may be. As regards motivation, one cannot rely on employers' intrinsic motivation, but subsidies seem to be sufficient reason for extrinsic motivation, which makes the measure work.

3. Results

Out of 129,537 graduates recorded by LES in 2004, 43,926 had been employed through active measures carried out by NAE and its local agencies, of whom 21,634 under this measure. Additionally, 14,567 graduates had been employed based on open-ended work contracts and 5,062 based on fixed-term contracts through other measures (without job subsidies), among which job fairs for graduates played an important role.

With the aim of diminishing the risk of long-term unemployment among young people, NAE have undertaken diligences as to ensure participation of those people in an active measure for employment at least once within the first six months of unemployment. According to NAE Annual Report for the year 2003, the participation rate of young unemployed in active measures for employment (activation rate) during the first six months of unemployment was 45.65%, which is comparable to EU member states (no data available in this regard for 2004).

4. Conclusions

In sum, the programme represents a significant attempt of influencing employers to hire young job seekers. Key success factors are:

- A considerable size and investment given the restricted financial means
- Tri-partite contractual basis
- State finances training on top of subsidies to facilitate human capital building and skill acquisition.

Tripartite contracts and the “First Work“ programme (Poland)

1. Policy environment

The implementation of the national programme for professional activation of graduates named „First Work“ started in 2002. The objectives, forms of activity, agents and funding were laid out in Annex 2 of the Government’s social and economic strategy „Entrepreneurship-development-work“ of January 2002. Up to June 1, 2004 the legal framework was provided by the legislation on combating unemployment and legislation on facilitating employment of graduates (see also National Report Poland, Annex II in this volume).

The funding which was earmarked for the First Work Programme when it originally started in 2002 was at the level of 330 million zlotys (then – about 75 million euros). These came from the following sources: the Labour Fund, PHARE’s Social and Economic Cohesion, World Bank loan for activation of rural areas)¹².

¹² “Pierwsza praca”, program aktywizacji zawodowej absolwentów, Aneks nr 2 do Strategii społeczno-gospodarczej Rządu SLD-UP-PSL “Przedsiębiorczość - rozwój - praca”, Warszawa, styczeń 2002. No financial data is available in the 2002-2005 report from the implementation of the Programme, such as: Raport z realizacji Programu “Pierwsza Praca” w okresie od czerwca 2002 r. do marca 2005 r. □Tabele z danymi dotyczącymi realizacji Programu “Pierwsza Praca” w okresie od czerwca 2002 r. do marca 2005 r. □“Pierwszy Biznes”.

2. Objectives

This programme operated within the scope of labour market policy for registered young unemployed graduates and those graduates who various reasons fail to register even though they actively seek employment. The target group is broadening and the implementation is with the labour offices. In 2004 there were important changes in the implementation of the programme, caused by a new (June 1, 2004) set of legislation on promotion of employment and institutions of the labour market, which increased the number of beneficiaries of the programme and significantly extended the scope of supporting measures. Those who were eligible now include not only the unemployed with a graduate status, but also those with a long record of unemployment aged 18-4 and youth which did not meet the scolarity obligation (obligatory schooling) up to the age of 18.

3. Description of practice

The scope of the programme was extended (beside labour market policy) to educational policy and its implementation (beside labour offices) was extended to other partners on the labour market, such as the Voluntary Labour Corps (or OHPs, which previously were running job counselling and job centres for youth, training and programmes with youth not attending schools for a variety of reasons, but which as an organisation or institution were not enumerated among labour market institutions), school career centres, local (community) information centres and academic labour offices, the creation of which was possible through grants from the Ministry for the Economy and Labour.

Tripartite agreements, dual training and volunteer work corps (which were discussed in more detail in the report) acted as essential instruments in the achievement of „First Work“ Programme’s objectives, providing traineeships, on-the-job training and other forms of preparing for a profession.

As of 2005, the Programme no longer had a pilot status (even though in some areas, such as dual professional training, it is still in the experimental stage), but is seen as a long-term activity. It was located in local labour offices (48 at the voievodship level and 447 at the province level) and their partner institutions, such as OHPs and the emerging School Career Centres, Community Information Centres and Academic Labour Offices.

The main objectives of the Programme included greater opportunities for gaining professional experience and taking up first employment by young people. The programme theory was that accession to the Programme would:

- Allow young people to gain knowledge of the contemporary labour market

- Teach them how to plan a professional career
- Motivate them to further increase their professional qualifications
- Give them practical skills indispensable in effective job-seeking
- Give them a professional experience
- Allow them to take up their first employment

Main forms of activity used in the programme included graduate traineeships, individual and group counselling, professional information and job fairs.

These activities were regularly monitored with respect to:

- 1) the number of participants or the number of persons undergoing ‚activation‘ through a given activity
- 2) the percentage of participants as compared to the whole population undergoing ‚activation‘
- 3) the number of graduates undergoing a given form of activation‘
- 4) the percentage of graduates involved in a given form of ‚activation‘ when compared to the total number of ‚activated‘ graduates (exact number for Jan-May 2004 and June 2002 – June 2004 are featured in the Annexes A and B)

For example, from January until May 2004 various forms of professional activation embraced 322,192 persons, of which:

- a) active labour market programmes – 77,534 persons
- b) supporting activities, such as professional information, counselling and job centres – 244,658 persons

The programme and its forms of activation are the object of monitoring on a quarterly, half-year and annual basis.

The role of OHPs in the implementation of goals enumerated by the legislation on promotion of employment of June 1, 2004 was at the time of compiling the report still difficult to appraise as this was just starting (even though some elements of monitoring were already in place and reports are available for June-September 2004, such as workshops on individual action plans (IPD).

The tripartite agreements involved the following partners: (a) **young unemployed person** (graduate, person aged 18-24), **local** (province, not commune level) (b) **labour office** (the legislation points to the head of the province’s administration, who had authority over the labour office) and (c) the **employer**. The traineeship with the employer could not take longer

than 12 months. The labour office could direct the young unemployed (up to the age of 25, without qualifications, with a long record of unemployment) to a professional preparation course (i.e. to learn a profession) with the employer for a period of up to 6 months without a formal employment contract.

The implementation of both of these forms of activation (traineeship, preparation for a profession) included the following elements:

- 1) the placement with a given employer according to the contract (location)
- 2) the programme should specify: the name of profession or specialization, scope of activities to be carried out by the unemployed, type of qualifications or skills to be acquired, the procedure for certification (official assessment of these skills or qualifications), person responsible for the trainee
- 3) general supervision over the whole training with the employer – this was the responsibility of the labour office
- 4) after the training: the employee provided the unemployed with an opinion about his achievement of the training's objectives, acquired skills and qualifications
- 5) the head of the local government (provincial level) provided the unemployed person with a certificate on completion of professional preparation or training
- 6) during the time of traineeship, the unemployed was entitled to a scholarship equivalent to 40% of the unemployment benefit
- 7) an NGO could act as an employer
- 8) local (provincial) government was represented by the authorised head of the provincial labour office

4. Results

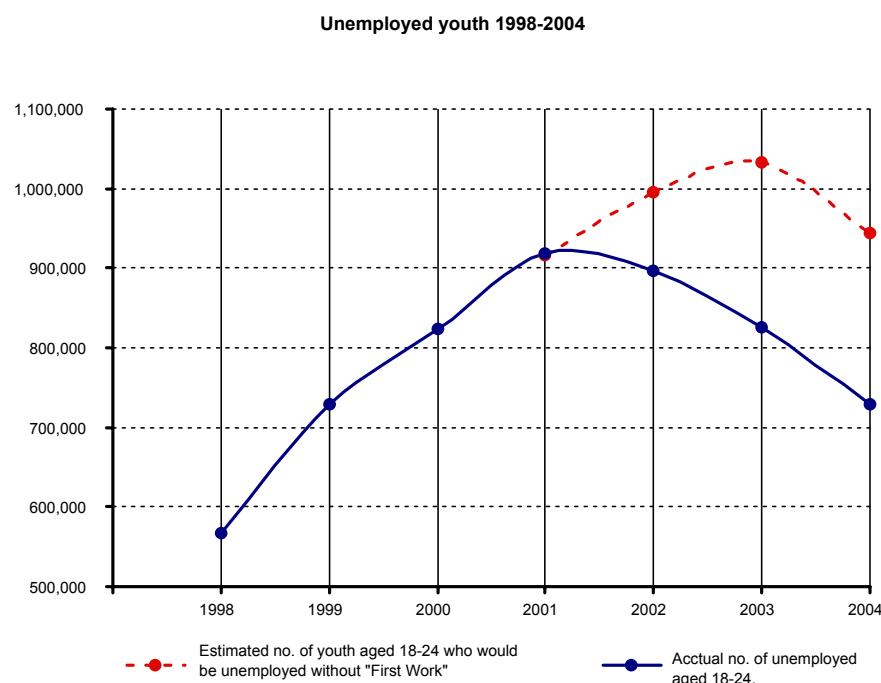
Internships were the most sought-after form of active labour market programmes in Poland. From June 2002 until May 2004 they embraced some 212,000, or 55% of all those participating in the „First Work“ Programme. In all, in the given period 384,488 young unemployed (i.e. unemployed with a graduate status, or long-term unemployed aged 18-24) were included in the active labour market programmes, but over the entire 2002-2004 period 551,481 young people were addressed by active measures of the programme.

Table 1: Most popular forms of activation under the First Works programme (2002-2004)

<i>Form of activation</i>	<i>No. of persons under activation</i>	<i>As % of the total under activation</i>
Internship	333 573	57,7
Training	90 500	15,6
Refunds for employment	53 915	9,3
Intervention works	37 753	6,5
Public works	19 528	3,4
PAOW and PHARE programmes	16 212	2,8

Source: Ministry for the Economy and Labour ([Tabele z danymi dotyczącymi realizacji Programu "Pierwsza Praca" w okresie od czerwca 2002 r. do marca 2005 r. □"Pierwszy Biznes"](#))

Overall, according to the Ministry for the Economy and Labour, the implementation of the „First Work“ Programme helped some 1 872 200 young people to enter the labour market through measures such as support of job brokers, vocational information and professional counselling. It also claims that the effect of the „First Work“ were tangible enough to state that if not for this programme, the probable level of unemployment among young people in the years 2002-2004 would have been about 20% higher, as shown in the graph below:



This is supported by the information coming from the regional labour offices which showed that employment was taken up by 183 000 young people who followed active labour market measures included in the „First Work“ package¹³.

5. Conclusions

Key success factors of the programme is

- the concentration of funds on a large-scale measure which is internally diversified
- involvement of a broad range of actors diversifying access and pathways
- allowances paid for attendance
- certifications of attendance and acquired skills

Orientation stages (Italy)

1. Objectives

The orientation stage is a formative experience that offers to young people the possibility to acquire specific skills and knowledge aimed at facilitating professional choices and the *real* insertion in the labour market. It has a limited duration and it is addressed to the following targets:

- students who attended secondary school;
- university students and young people who just finished university;
- students of the professional/vocational institutes and training courses;
- young people in search of their first occupation or who are unemployed,
- young people with physical or physiological handicap or other social disadvantage.

2. Policy environment

Framework, policy field, objectives and principles

Orientation stages were already present in the outline of active labour market policies in early nineties, but they received a great stimulus from the Law 196/97 the so called “Pacchetto Treu” that represents one of the most important reforms of the Italian labour market in the last

¹³ Ministerstwo Gospodarki i Pracy, Departament Rynku Pracy, „Informacja o realizacji programu aktywizacji zawodowej absolwentów w okresie od czerwca 2002 roku do marca 2005 roku“, Warszawa, czerwiec 2005 roku

decade. This law, in fact, introduced new regulatory instruments like – for example – temporary work arrangements or reformed the discipline of working time, and promoted several *ad hoc* measures to support youth employment (see also National Report Italy, Annex II in this volume).

In the two-years period after the approval of the Treu Law, the orientation stages project involved more than 150 Public Employment Agencies and around 11.600 trainees in over 4.700 firms. A little over 60% of the schemes were implemented in the North, equally divided between the North-West and North-East, over a quarter in the centre and the remaining 13% in the south.

Main objective of orientation stages is to guarantee to young people a formative experience in order to acquire a concrete experience at the workplace. These schemes involve a short period of training (the highest duration of a training period is 12 months) that can be carried out both in public and private structures.

Orientation stages are aimed to all young people that are experiencing or are approaching the transition from school to work like and that had attend the compulsory school.

The training period during an orientation stage does not constitute a work relation in formal terms and the trainees do not receive money. Nevertheless they have a legal status that allows them to learn about a specific activity and to develop concrete professional skills.

3. Description of the practice

Structures and actors

The orientation stages schemes are based on agreements between three actors: a) promoting body; b) host firm and c) trainee.

- *The promoting body* (mainly PES, professional/vocational schools, secondary schools and universities) has the following goals: 1) to promote the training projects, 2) to inform the trainee and the host firm about the rules of the training program, 3) to monitor the correctness of the training, 4) to guarantee every possible support – also in terms of training – to better accomplish the training program. To better coordinate its activities with others actors involved in the project, every promoting body defines a teaching tutor (tutor didattico) who aims at guarantying the correctness of the implementation of the program, as well as at supporting the trainees and evaluating if the training plan and the actual content are coherent.

- *The host firm* accommodates the trainee and has to develop relevant steps to achieve the objectives agreed upon in the training agreement. It has also to guarantee that trainees respect all regulations. Every host firm must name a tutor (firm tutor) who is in charge of inserting the trainees at the work place and contributes to the definition of the training project. The firm tutor has to support trainees in their formative and socialization moments, to illustrate them the formal steps of the working process.
- *The trainee* follows a period of training on the base of a training agreement signed by the subject promoting the training and the host firm, respecting a specific project aimed to guarantee a formative path in order to facilitate the first labour market access.

The duration of orientation stage changes with respect to the characteristics of trainees:

- secondary school pupils: 4 months;
- young people who are unemployed and also registered within mobility lists (a specific measure targeted to unemployed): 6 months;
- professional/vocational school pupils and students from specific professional and vocational courses: 6 months;
- university student and student that have attended university path: 12 months;
- young people with physical o psychological disabilities: 24 months.

4. Results

A national survey, carried out on 700 host firms that adhered to the project between the 1998 and the 1999 reveals that around 44% of trainees have continued their activity in the host firm, establishing an employment relationship, although in the majority of cases it was not a permanent one. The data provided by the firms interviewed shows that another 20% of trainees have found work with another firm (sometimes interrupting the training in progress), 14% were not working, and there was no information available for about 21%. The overall results are encouraging, since for at least 65% of those benefiting from the training activity it represented an important step into the labour market.

Both basic similarities and profound differences between the various regions were revealed. Similarities concern the procedures for promoting the initiative and the difficulties in implementing the external tutoring as well as a lack of control over the recipient selection processes. The differences involve both the "quantitative" capabilities for implementing the interventions and the attention devoted to monitoring and evaluating the initiatives. In many

regions framework agreements plays a fundamental role enabling trainees to be placed in firms within the framework of a general agreement between the promoting body and employers' associations.

Further information on the results of this practice can be derived at local level from a survey on a sample of 700 trainees of the region Emilia Romagna. Data shows that most trainees are women (58%) with a high educational level (52 % has reached at least the secondary school degree). The main motivation to follow an orientation stage is to acquire formative credits to complete the educational path. In fact, the reform of Italian school system started with the law 144/99 has introduced the possibility for students to acquire the credits required to reach a school degree also spending part of their formative path in working experiences.

About 1/3 of trainees are instead youth unemployed with a previous job experience that use the orientation stage in order to find a new job.

The survey shows also an increased interest of the firms in latest years in accommodating trainees in order to realize a pre-selection of their future employee. Functional and productive areas where trainees find many opportunity for their orientation stages are: administration offices, marketing, sold offices and customers assistance.

5. Conclusions

The key success factors of this measure are the following:

- accreditation of experiences and possibility of integration into formal education
- long-term subsidies increasing the probability of continued employment after expiry of subsidy
- tri-partite contracts allowing for monitoring and control.

Support to self-employment and entrepreneurship (Italy)

1. Policy environment of good practice

Framework, policy field, objectives and principles

The Legislative Decree 185/2000 enacted on April 21st 2000 and titled "Support to self-employment and entrepreneurship" was intended to boost economic activities, especially in

Southern Italy, by using formal entrepreneurial structures very widespread in the country (see also National Report Italy, Annex II in this volume).

As a matter of fact, levels of self-employment are very high in Italy and small enterprises are spread all over the country. Many of the most successful economic activities are based on SME networks (see tab.1 below). Even though some scholars underline the frailty of this system, SMEs have been generally supported by different means: labour laws, direct and indirect incentives, tax regimes, and (before Euro replaced Lira) monetary devaluation in order to support export.

Legislative Decree 185/2000 follows – and eventually innovates – an endurable path of Laws supporting juvenile entrepreneurship. Among them:

- Law 44/1986 “Actions aimed at boosting juvenile entrepreneurship in deprived areas”
- Law 236/1993 “Urgent actions aimed at boosting employment”
- Law 95/1995 “Urgent regulations for the restart of entrepreneurial activities”

Thus, self-employment is considered to be – per definition – a good solution also for deprived areas, if adequately supported, in order to achieve a modern management, infrastructure facilities, network activities, and innovation.

Hence, the Legislative Decree 185/2000 is aimed at:

- developing the production system, the employment and the self-employment in deprived areas by the boosting of an entrepreneurial structure
- promoting equality and equal opportunities in economic activities
- fostering social and agricultural activities.

These main goals have to be achieved supporting new entrepreneurs (especially young, women, unemployed and/or disadvantaged) - also in cooperative firms - and their training and skills; facilitating the admittance to the credit system; steering them toward innovative economic fields.

As shown in Table 1, among OECD countries Italy ranks 3rd for the business ownership rate – with its 4,935,000 self-employed – and it has the second smaller average number of employees per firm.

Table 1 - BLISS Compendia (2002)

country	business ownership rate	employment per business owner	business owners (self-employed)
	rate	persons x 1	persons x 1000
Australia	0,184	4,8	1.831
Austria	0,115	6,8	460
Belgium	0,124	6,0	552
Canada	0,132	5,9	2.244
Denmark	0,079	8,7	225
Finland	0,111	6,3	292
France	0,096	7,1	2.605
Germany	0,094	8,4	3.768
Greece	0,289	2,9	1.263
Iceland	0,157	5,0	26
Ireland	0,161	4,8	294
Italy	0,203	3,8	4.935
Japan	0,113	7,9	7.543
Luxemburg	0,063	13,7	18
New Zealand	0,175	4,2	348
Netherlands	0,122	7,1	1.014
Norway	0,085	8,4	202
Portugal	0,229	3,5	1.203
Spain	0,154	4,9	2.820
Sweden	0,092	7,0	404
Switzerland	0,101	7,8	414
U.K.	0,113	7,3	3.368
Usa	0,104	7,9	15.142

2. Description of the good practice

Activities, target groups, funding and participation

The L.D. 185/2000 provides for different kinds of activities:

- sunk grants and business management;
- facilitated loans;
- technical assistance and tutorship at the beginning of the entrepreneurial activities and in the implementation of investments;
- training and upgrading of the entrepreneurial skills in order to achieve the goals of the project.

These provisions are differently targeted according to the type of firms and subjects involved. In fact, the Law differentiates between “*auto-imprenditorialità*” (entrepreneurship) and “*auto-impiego*” (self-employment).

The first case includes production (and production-oriented) new enterprises, service enterprises; agricultural enterprises and social cooperatives made up by people aged 18-35, or at least with a majority of shares owned by people aged 18-29. Furthermore, they have to be residents (and the firm has to have its seat) in Objective 1 or Objective 2 areas (including phasing out ones, so that 74% of the Italian municipalities are included). Projects overcoming an expenditure threshold, or not innovative or unable to create new employment aren't taken into consideration.

The second case includes autonomous workers, small enterprises and franchisees individual firms whose owner was unemployed. Residents limits are in this case less binding.

Structures and actors

The administration, management and implementation of L.D. 185/2000 is entrusted to *Sviluppo Italia*. *Sviluppo Italia* is a national governmental agency – the last protean transformation of the notorious “*Cassa del Mezzogiorno*” – aimed at developing entrepreneurship and attracting investments. Its actions are based on a network of incubators (i.e. institutions aimed at boosting the development of new firms), 177 shareholdings with mixed private and public capital (in 55 cases in a controlling position), 17 regional offices and other ten controlled instrumental agencies.

The yearly budget sums up to more than 2,500 millions/euro. Some 1 million euro is used to fund 57,000 enterprises. Including controlled firms, shareholdings and funded firms, *Sviluppo Italia* involves 121,000 employees (106,000 due to the sole funding of firms. Data refers to year 2002).

Sviluppo Italia manages also other actions targeting youth self-employment. Among the side actions intersecting L.D. 185/2000 provisions, many are aimed at specific sectors, like tourism (SLOT Action – Local systems of Tourist Offer; Literature Theme Parks) or social cooperation (*Fertilità*, a program providing start-up support for Third Sector organizations for both recipients and sponsor agencies)

Processes

Sviluppo Italia manages all the steps, from the application to the supply of funds and services. The training activities provided for by L.D. 185/2000 are carried out by agencies controlled

by *Sviluppo Italia* itself, even if often they involve public and private stakeholders (Universities, Chambers of Commerce...).

Bridging private and public is one of the main strategies put into practice by *Sviluppo Italia*. As far as the L.D. 185/2000 is concerned, the main bridging activities with private actors concern the promotion of the relationship between agreed franchiser firms and franchisees.

3. Results and evaluation

In 2004 *Sviluppo Italia* supported 14,136 firms, 95% of which with measures based on L.D. 185/2000. Among them, 11,830 were individual firms owned by autonomous workers and 1,651 were small enterprises.

From its first implementation¹⁴, the effort on self-employment boosting generated 67,457 employees in 61,784 firms, mainly in Southern Italy (94,5%).

In the last years, the measures are progressively improving their performance: the gender divide has diminished and now women count for more than 40% of the recipients; also the admission and programme-completion rates are getting better, thanks to the change of the application system, which forces applicants to design a realistic and grounded business plan.

In 2004 three applicants out of four became recipients, the mean of the decade is only 37%. As far as the support to franchisee is concerned, it is a very new measure (only two years old): in its second year, it started to run fully and now *Sviluppo Italia* sponsors 114 franchisee firms (employing 224 workers). Even though 63 franchisers asked to be qualified for accreditation, only 17 succeeded, and this is actually putting back the action.

In the last ten years, 1,754 Million € were allocated to fund measures aimed at fostering self-employment, and the investment for 2004 comes to 275 Million € for individual firms, 166 Million € for small enterprises and 8 Million € for franchisees.

Measure	Investment per employee (x 1000)	Sunk fund per employee (x 1000)
Individual firms	20	14
Small enterprises	40	27
Franchisees	28	26

Source: *Sviluppo Italia* (2005) *Performance 2004. I risultati di un anno di attività. Vol. II – Analisi per ambiti di attività.* www.sviluppoitalia.it

¹⁴ Dating back to the mid-eighties, because L.D. 185/2000 is only the last step of dating back policies: the support to individual firm is the oldest measure, while the ones concerning franchisees and small enterprises are a direct consequence of the year 2000 legislative action.

The expenditure per employee is in a downward trend, but it is becoming more and more effective: in 2004 the surviving firms (the ones able to achieve the goals agreed with *Sviluppo Italia*) were 87% of the total.

Anyway, it has to be said that all the indicators are worse in Southern than in Northern Italy, mainly because of a much more difficult economic situation in the *Mezzogiorno*, but also for less effective business plans applied (and funded) there.

Critical issues

The cost-effectiveness – as a proxy can be considered the expenditure per employee – seems to be not very good, even though the performances are getting better through the time. This is also due to the diversification of the measures and to a growing concern for tutorship and accompaniment. Anyway, the poor role of follow up actions and the lack of more structural measures aimed at the competitiveness of the whole system make difficult to foster a long-term and self-sustainable development, especially in Southern Italy.

A strategic steering action, aimed at guide new enterprises toward competitive and innovative sectors, is poorly implemented: even though much attention is paid to some specific sectors (mainly tourism, agriculture and social cooperatives), actions capable of generate enduring development are numerically inconsistent.

As a matter of fact, 40% of the supported firm are in the trade business, and some 40% in other services: this very unbalanced composition has dubious effects on the building of an equitable economic system, especially in Southern Italy, where the market profile is not likely to sustain autonomously such an increased offer of traders and sellers.

4. Conclusions

Success factors of the programme are

- considerable funding at disposition;
- a structure-related approach aimed at overcoming structures of labour market segmentation, especially with regard to age and gender;
- combining education and training, consultancy and financial support.

References

Sviluppo Italia (2005) *Performance 2004. I risultati di un anno di attività. Vol. II – Analisi per ambiti di attività.* www.sviluppoitalia.it

8. Coordinated policy approaches

In the final chapter of this collection of good practice we will present policies which are characterised by bridging not only single types of measures but also policy sectors. Such policies are either routed in youth policies or address target groups acknowledged as facing multiple disadvantage (see Volume 1, Chapters 5 and 6).

Assistance for the integration of youngsters from public care (Romania)

1. Policy environment

Support and assistance service for community integration of youngsters and teenagers within placement centres – ANCHOR – was established as public service under the Direction for Child Protection of 3rd Sector of Bucharest in July 2003, though project started in 2002. At that time, in the Placement Centre no. 3 were hosted 58 youngsters aged between 18 and 24 years who had to leave the institution and who cannot be integrated in society. In this situation the Local Direction for Child's Protection form the 3rd Sector, together with their partner organisations took the initiative to create a services who offers alternatives for social integration of youngsters and teenagers who live in residential institutions, including accommodation in social dwellings and job placement (after retraining, if necessary). It relates to both education and employment policy (see also National Report Romania, Annex II in this volume).

It is a new service promoted together with three Romanian NGO's: Community for Child Support Association, The Feed the Children – Romania and Federation of Manufactures Industries Employers, which have good experience in the field. At present the service is taken over and financed by the local authorities. The programme's beneficiaries are:

- 24 youngsters from the Placement Centre no. 3, who leaves the placement centre
- 70 teenagers from the Placement Centres no. 3 and 7
- 20 teenagers from the families in need

Programme staff includes the programme management team and 40 educators from the Placement Centres no. 3 and 7., 3rd Sector of Bucharest.

Funding: € 278.000 for the 1st year (This is a long-term programme.)

2. Objectives

- The creation of new alternative services for youngsters and teenagers from the placements centres
 - facilitation of social integration for youngsters from the placement centres
 - fighting against the social discrimination of these youngsters
 - reducing negative behaviour effects caused by long-term institutionalisation
- The creation of opportunities for the restructuring of the Placement Centre no. 3:
 - reducing the number of beneficiaries
 - professional qualification of the staff
 - improve the relations between the institution and the children's parents
 - improve the life standard
- Combating the prejudice given the youngsters within placement centres
- Change community through raising awareness and developing sustainable community in the assimilation process.

Principles

- Individualized approach,
- Respect for one's opinion,
- Confidentiality,
- Knowledge and esteem for the past,
- Involvement of beneficiaries in all of the decisions regarding themselves, pedagogic assistance in solving their problems,
- Developing their personal autonomy,
- Encouragement of initiative and opinion,
- Transparency,
- Respect of intimacy,
- Becoming responsible in solving the problems.

Target group

Boys and girls aged at least 12 who live in residential institutions and from the families in need.

3. Description of good practice

Structures

According to the categories of beneficiaries (teenagers and youngsters from the placement centres) and considering the problems they encounter, the service is structured as follows:

- **The residential component** – for the youngsters aged at least 18 and who have to leave the institution. This component consists in a network of social transition apartments where the beneficiaries can stay for a limited period (maximum 6 months). In the transition houses, youngsters have the opportunity of expressing their autonomy in all aspects of independent life (house cleaning, choosing and meeting friends, managing pocket money, spending free time, etc).
- **The Community Resources Centre Component** – for adolescents from institutions and youngsters hosted in social houses.

Actors

The promoters / initiators of the project: Direction for Child Protection of 3rd Sector of Bucharest, Romania, in partnership with three Romanian NGO's: Community for Child Support Association, The Feed the Children – Romania and Federation of Manufactures Industries Employers.

- The persons involved in the routine activity of the project such as
 - 1 project manager
 - 1 project assistant
 - 2 social workers
 - 1 psychologist
 - 5 specialized educators
 - 1 administrator
 - 1 accountant
 - Founders: December 1st 2002 – present – local authorities of 3rd Sector, before this date the program was financed by PHARE and the local authorities of 3rd Sector.

Process

According to the categories of beneficiaries (teenagers and youngsters from the placement centres) and considering the problems they encounter, the service is structured as follows:

- For the youngsters form the placement centres

- a network of social transition apartments where the beneficiaries can stay for a limited period. In these transition houses, the youngsters have the opportunity of expressing their autonomy in all aspects of independent life (house cleaning, choosing and meeting friends, managing pocket money, spending free time etc)
 - professional orientation for profitable domains
 - professional orientation and qualification
 - job search
 - facilitation of access to the labour market
 - sustaining in developing community relations
 - improve the relation with the biological family
 - improve the health
 - For the teenagers
 - developing life skills, especially self-care
 - the limits for spending free time
 - counselling for over passing the crisis
 - information on different domains (legislation, civic rights, community resources, work opportunities, health etc)

The main services delivered:

- Accommodation
- community support centre
- support for education
- professional training and qualification
- job placement
- material/financial support for autonomy improvement
- life skills counselling
- psychological and social support

Being aimed at improving not only the material conditions but also the individual potentials for successful transition of teenagers to adult live, the programme requires active involvement from participants as a basic prerequisite of success. In this respect, the motivation of participants is paramount, and one could say that intrinsic and extrinsic motivations are closely interrelated. On the one hand, the target of achieving economic independence is highly valued by participants, while on the other hand benefiting from counselling and other

support services is perceived as a means to achieve that target. Nevertheless, facilities made available to participants in the programme incur themselves high motivation, yet of extrinsic type.

Working methods applied:

- reference person
- support to solving the personal problems
- personalized evaluation and interventions
- developing life skills
- encourage of initiative and opinion
- developing personal autonomy
- becoming responsible in solving the problems
- contractual relationship – the admission in the social house is based on a services contract agreed between the young/teenager and the Local Direction for Child's Protection
- Co-management method
- Non-formal education method
- Teamwork method
- Personalized treatment method
- Permanent evaluation of the activity, of the results and the costs method

The programme is being continuously monitored by the programme team, based on accurate records of participants, services delivered and their beneficiaries, personal achievements of participants, and costs incurred.

Relationships with and participation of stakeholders, such as families, local communities, employment services, employers, etc. are very important for successful implementation of the programme, as well as feedback received from these stakeholders. Therefore, developing and maintaining relationships with stakeholders is an important activity of both project manager and project assistant.

4. Results

The expected results have been the following:

- creating of a Community resources centre for teenagers and youngsters;
- purchasing of 6 apartments – transition houses;
- professional reorientation for 12 youngsters;

- facilitation access to the labour market for 24 youngsters;
- participating of classes for developing life skills for 70 teenagers from Placement Centres;
- counselling for 25 youngsters from the community;
- reducing the number of beneficiaries form the Placement centre no. 3.

The results actually achieved so far are presented below.

Beneficiaries – teenagers.

- 70 teenagers for the institutions have participated in activities aimed at developing life skills: taking the dinner in the public houses, use of the postal services, use of the phone, use of the medicines, etc.
- 70 teenagers have participated in activities aimed at becoming familiar with community and public institutions (railway station, bus terminal, airport, port, bank, mayoralty, frontier, penitentiary etc)
- 70 teenagers have participated in leisure activities.

Beneficiaries – youngsters:

- 24 youngsters have been supported to find a job;
- 16 youngsters have been supported to change the job;
- 9 youngsters have been supported to obtain floating domicile;
- 7 youngsters have been supported to obtain stabile domicile in their families;
- 16 youngsters have been beneficiaries of food allowance;
- 10 youngsters have been re-qualified;
- 2 youngsters have been supported for finalization of secondary-school;
- 24 youngsters have been beneficiaries of programs concerning the developing life skills, especially self-care.

5. Conclusions

The key success factors of this measure are the following:

- cooperation between public agencies and NGOs;
- a comprehensive and holistic approach towards young people's independence;
- combination between provision of service and training for staff and external practitioners and policy makers;
- a community-based approach;
- external funding needed to create an added value.

EMPLOYMENT – LIFE: re-insertion of ex-drug-users (Portugal)

1. Policy environment

The employment-life program was created as a strategic tool in the context of a new national strategy to fight against drug addiction. Its main innovation was the cooperation between treatment services and Public Employment Services. The concept and the practice of mediation are the key tool for cooperation. The program improved in a dramatic way the efficacy of the reintegration of people with experiences of drug abuse (see also National Report Portugal, Annex II in this volume).

Policy field: Fight against drug addiction.

Objectives and Principles (program theory): The objective of employment-life Program is to complete the treatment of participants by reintegrating them into employment and society. If the effort of reintegration does not succeed there are great probabilities that they addict drugs again, thus loosing the efforts made within the programmes of treatment.

Legal framework: Created by Council of Ministers Resolution No. 136/98. The programme formed part of a new “National Strategy to Fight Against Drugs and Drug-Addiction.”

Scale of the programme: 4.530 Beneficiaries of specific measures, 615 beneficiaries of “general measures” between 1999 and 2002 (no data available for more recent years)

Duration (pilot/long-term policy): Long-term policy.

Location: National, with five Regional Agencies.

Target group: ex-drug addicts ready to initiate the reintegration process.

Main activities: Intermediation for training and employment (personal coaching); Social and Occupational Integration Traineeship; Social and Occupational Integration Program; Employment Support; Self-employment Support.

Evaluation and assessment: Independent evaluation in 2004.

Client participation: The beneficiaries participate with “Mediators” their own integration trajectory.

2. Description of Good Practice

Structures: The Programme, with a total budget of € 17.579.144 in the years 1999-2002, is based on the co-operation between the IEFP (Portuguese Public Employment Services) and the IDT (Institute for Drugs and Drug-addiction). IEFP pays all the costs (staff, logistics and measures). The structure includes:

Five Agencies, located in the five regional agencies of IEFP, composed of five servants each (a coordinator and other four members).

A network of mediators (about 300 in the whole country), located near by the Agencies and, mainly, in the health services specialised in drug-addiction treatment;

Public Treatment Centres of IDT and private Therapeutic Communities.

Actors: The Agencies are responsible for the co-ordination and administration of the Program. They also ensure, at regional level, the mediation between IEFP and IDT. The Public Treatment Centres of IDT use Agencies' "mediators" and the private Therapeutic Communities can hire (with the support of the measure "Intermediation for training and employment") these professionals, who have specialized skills for coaching the beneficiaries and for establishing with companies and other employers a network of support, mediating the relation between treatment services and beneficiaries, on one hand, and the labour market, on the other hand. They help the individual to design a trajectory and to get a job. Mediators go on accompanying the beneficiaries and the employers, for a period considered necessary for full integration. The treatment services and their medical staff are responsible to ensure that the participant is prepared to enter, progressively, the labour market, and to follow-up the process, from a medical point of view. Employers are supported in order to receive the beneficiaries and to integrate them. In the period of "Social and Occupational Integration Traineeship" they can benefit from a subsidy for each trainee and also to provide a experienced worker who will coach the trainees in the work-place.

Process: The Employment—Life Programme is intended for people in the last phase of drug-addiction treatments. It develops opportunities for social and professional integration based on close co-operation between IDT, IEFP and the community, especially businesses. The programme has a philosophy of differentiating the measures directed at individuals undergoing rehabilitation, within the general context of active employment and training measures, on the basis of the central notion of "intermediation", arising from a triple focus on the fight against the social exclusion of drug addicts, employment—training and treatment.

Five distinct measures have been developed for this programme:

- Intermediation for training and employment – Support for hiring mediators, within the intermediation framework of the programme for institutional intermediation (treatment units and intermediation for employment)
- Social and Occupational Integration Traineeship –training in the workplace (9 months)
- Social and Occupational Integration Payment (2 years maximum) – Support for employers who hire a beneficiary with a short-term contract;

- Employment support – Support for employers who hire a beneficiary with a permanent contract (must last at least 4 years);
- Self-employment Support – Support for business initiative.

The Mediators' role is strategic. Working in close co-operation with treatment services (both public and private), they receive from therapists the beneficiaries considered prepared for integration into the labour market, which is supposed to consolidate the treatment. According to each candidate's profile, a plan is prepared. One of the actions can be guiding the participants to the mainstream measures of training and employment. The most common actions, however, are the guidance of beneficiaries to one of the distinct measures of employment-life programme. Usually the process begins with Social and Occupational Integration Traineeship, followed by Social and Occupational Integration Payment or Employment or Self-employment Support. Measures can be sequential but not accumulated. The mediator accompanies the beneficiary – each mediator can not have on charge more than 15 beneficiaries – during the whole process, ensuring the connections between therapists and employers.

3. Results

The Employment—Life programme represented a notable innovation in social and employment policies, as it considered a new kind of intervention aimed at strengthening inter-institutional co-ordination and upgrading intermediation within the strategies for the rehabilitating of drug addicts.

The action theory underlying the intervention is based on a sequence of measures for integration and especially on the role of mediation. This theory has proved its potential effectiveness in pursuing its objectives. The evaluation finished in 2004 identified multiplier effects in the different areas of the beneficiaries' lives:

- An improvement in family and personal relationships;
- Entry into the labour market (62% of users working after participation in the programme);
- Job stability (on the survey date, 32% of the beneficiaries were still working in the workplaces where they were originally placed).

In spite of the levels of drop-out, the results are not comparable with previous integration programmes. In fact, the advantages of the Employment—Life Programme are remarkable in terms both in terms of treatment of drug addiction and of integration into the labour market. Indeed, the innovative nature of the programme opens a new door for the social and occupational re-insertion of participants. Furthermore, the favourable opinion of employers

and drug addiction treatment units testify in favour of the quality of the new alternatives generate by the measure. The Employment-Life programme also has a multiplier effect in public bodies and entities, in particular the local administration, generating new initiatives for the fight against drug addiction.

4. Conclusion

Although the evaluation has clearly shown that the efficacy and the innovative nature of the programme are high, it also identified two aspects that can deserve improvement. The first one is the involvement of therapists in the integration process itself, by a closer follow-up of the beneficiaries, supporting the work of mediators. The second one is about the mobilisation of other support instruments – like housing – needed for a systemic approach to social and occupational re-integration. Apart from this key success factors are the following:

- Including specific measures into mainstream policies and institutions on a regular basis;
- Centrality of mediation and accompaniment;
- Considerable investment;
- Flexibility and diversity of measures and pathways.

Youth Participation Project (Finland)

1. Policy context and objectives

The aim of the youth participation project that started in spring 2002 is to develop permanent practices and models of operation in order to advance youth participation intensifying local and regional co-operation and increasing collaboration between administrative bodies. It was initiated by the Finnish Prime Minister on that time, Paavo Lipponen. The project to promote young peoples' opportunities to influence and participate – primarily targeting pupils in final stages of their compulsory education and young people who have had difficulties in being admitted to educational institutions or in launching a career – is due to continue into 2007. The three principal aims of the project are; to establish co-operation models and permanent practises that can be disseminated throughout the country to develop youth participation and living conditions, to draw up a youth participation development strategy with a jointly defined action policy, programmes, resources and key actions for further development and to apply

and disseminate best practices learned from other youth projects, create networks for currently active projects and advance youth participation.

2. Description of practice

Actors

The Ministry of Education, that is responsible for practical coordination, has selected a total of 39 municipalities or federations of municipalities to be part of the collaborative experiment. Subsequently, a total of more than 60 municipalities will join the networks. Allianssi, the Finnish Youth Co-Operation, funds to the project and for consultancy involving youth work. Nationally steered local authorities will be responsible for development and coordination at the level of local authorities and federations of municipalities. The Ministry of Education has granted state subsidy for the project to those local authorities responsible for project coordination at a local level. The Finnish Youth Research Network will participate in the project's research activities.

The primary target groups include pupils in the final stages of comprehensive school (7th to 9th form) and young people who have completed their compulsory education and are in transition from primary to secondary education. Particular attention is paid to pupils who have problems with their studies, life management or finding work or a study place in secondary education - such as pupils who have not submitted applications to the joint application system or who have not been admitted to training. The young target group also includes young people who interrupted their studies at an early phase or those who are considering doing so. The aim is to guide these individuals towards activities that promote their health and well-being, readiness to continue their studies and employment possibilities. Attention will also be paid to parents' responsibility for their children attending school and what they do in their leisure time.

The structures

The Youth Participation Project includes intensified co-operation between education and employment, the school, and the labour market. The educational authorities are responsible for the education and for the transition from education to employment by e.g. developing student and education counselling. The labour authorities are responsible for the whole youth society guarantee. Young unemployed under 25 are the participants of the project. The youth society guarantee should offer youth services that focus not only on employment but also on multi-professional services. Employment agencies are meant to employ youth counsellors and establish a youth-team. More concretely the activities consist of:

- Increasing guidance and local co-operation to prevent marginalisation in basic education and in the transition from primary and secondary education
- Measures to monitor individual students' progress will be intensified and efforts will be made to prevent students from dropping out of vocational education
- Providing language training and integration plans for immigrants to enable them to adjust into society
- Versatile development of school as a growth and living environment for young people
- Increasing co-operation between school and home
- Increasing children's and young people's possibilities to influence
- Enhancing teachers' readiness to identify problems and early intervention methods
- Establishing the status of youth workshops
- Co-operation between employers and educational administrators in developing career and recruitment services for the transitional phase from school to employment- implementing child and youth policies across sectoral borders
- Transferring project experiences and models to basic functions
- Development of youth work and providing a job description for the position of youth Secretary
- Initiating an extensive collaborative experiment in municipalities.

The process of the project

Local authorities will ensure inclusion and participation of all young people in the municipalities taking part in the project through:

1. Early identification of learning difficulties, co-operation between home and school, versatile teaching methods, effective student welfare, recreational activities and development of the school as a growth environment in a way that ensures that all young people obtain good basic education and their comprehensive school leaving certificate.
2. Ensuring everyone a place in further study after comprehensive school, primarily at upper secondary schools, in vocation education or in some other school form. If there are no study places available, local authorities will take the appropriate action.
3. Providing a change for young people to receive counselling without a study place or work. The counselling shall include drawing up a personal study programme or a participation plan including supplementary education, preparatory and rehabilitative training, workshop activities, apprenticeship training or other educational or labour market services. Local authorities will organise the provision of service and the required co-operation.

4. Further personal counselling or guidance that is provided by multi-professional co-operation including, for example, services for substance abusers, persistent offenders, mental health, housing and rehabilitation services etc. as necessary. Recreational activities are supported according to the principle that all young people should have at least one positive recreational activity.
5. Local authorities will also apply other measures to develop the living conditions of young people and to advance co-operation between the different parties involved. Local authorities are committed to the improvement of basic functions through their strategic programmes.
6. The possibilities for young people to participate will be improved and young people will be encouraged to participate in planning and decision-making. Naturally, this also applies to actions involving the Youth Participations Project itself.
7. As per national guidelines, the local authorities will organise extensive monitoring in terms of the placement of the age group finishing comprehensive school.
8. Research will be focused according to the objectives of the Participation Project by the Finnish Youth Research Network.

Forms of action

1. Development of basic education and equal educational services projects.
2. Support for young people with immigrant background.
3. Projects to develop special needs education.
4. Projects to prevent dropping out of vocational education and activation projects.
5. Projects to develop the living conditions of young people.
6. Projects to increase the participation possibilities of young people.
7. The International Award for Young People – challenging young people everywhere.
8. Workshop development projects.
9. Early identification of problems.

Evaluation

The evaluation of the youth guarantee service will be monitored by the employment agency every third year. In 2006 the Ministry of Labour and different regional offices will evaluate the youth unemployment situation and the implementation of the youth society guarantee.

3. Conclusion

While the success of the measure can not yet be fully assessed the approach itself is promising and in line with our analysis of the prerequisites of sustainable inclusion of disadvantaged

youth (see Volume 1, Chapter 6). In this regard factors which are held responsible for achieving and implementing such a policy approach are the following:

- Combination of a national framework and a local integration/coordination of policies;
- Integrating formal and non-formal learning in a comprehensive policy framework;
- Developing the social infrastructure with regard to young people;
- Including possibilities of participation of young people – both with regard to their communities and their involvement in the measure itself.

Promotion of rights and opportunities for children and young people (Italy)

1. Policy environment of good practice

Framework, policy field, objectives and principles

The law no. 285/97 enacted on August 28th 1997 and titled “Provisions for the promotion of rights and opportunities for childhood and adolescence” was intended to set a wide-ranging policy environment to put into practice the principles included in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989, enacted in Italy through the Law 176/91).

As such, it was not intended as a sector-related policy targeting solely school or training problems of youth, but it put forward an innovative organic approach to face problems in a multifaceted way (see National Report Italy, Annex II in this Volume).

The legislator paid attention not only to protection and provision issues, but also to participation. As a consequence, the policy wasn’t solely aimed at evident problems, but mainly at more borderline problems and at everyday life of children and adolescents, with a strong prevention character.

Law 285/97 put forward a policy style quite ground-breaking in the Italian institutional *milieu*: the beneficiaries weren’t seen only as passive recipients of social policy measures and bearers of problems. Rather, in a distinctive combination of both social and citizenship policies, local communities, children and adolescents were intended as skilled actors able to cope with their own problems and needs if only the possibility to interact, participate and enhance their ability was given in the daily life. The empowering of recipients is seen by the legislator as a way of granting full citizenship and as a way of preventing the raise of social

problems, including children as a resource for local and national community (Focosi 1999; Ferrucci 2001).

2. Description of policy

Activities, target groups, funding and participation

The 285/97 law instituted the *National Fund for Childhood and Adolescence* and has foreseen funding for projects developed within four major areas of intervention, addressing:

- the relationship between parents and children for counteracting poverty, violence and institutionalization (Art. 4);
- innovative social and educational services for children (Art. 5);
- recreational and educational services for the spare time (Art. 6);
- promotion of children' and adolescents' rights and well-being (especially in the urban environment and with attention to cultural, gender and ethnic diversity) (Art. 7).

The law, encouraged also projects foreseeing monetary transfers and in-kind provisions for families with disabled children.

Funding for this Law represent one of the biggest financial efforts for child policies ever enacted in Italy. Actually, it allocated a total of more than 686 million Euro in 5 years (1997-2001), distributed to all the Regions and to 15 large cities¹⁵: indeed, a share (30%) of the fund has been dedicated to large cities, according to criteria relying on quantitative indicators and aimed at targeting investments where children are most numerous, where conditions of hardship are most evident, and where the services for children are most backward (Moro 2000).

At local level, using both quantitative and qualitative data, local authorities were recommended to provide similar (and even deeper) contextual analysis for a better fund allocation to single programmes.

According to the national criteria, Regions which received the largest share of funding are Campania, Sicily and Lombardy: their share is more than $\frac{1}{4}$ of the total (40% if we include also funds targeted to the large cities in these regions).

The four areas of intervention received in the first three years' period a differentiated share of resources: 41% for projects aimed at Art.4; 30% at Art. 6; 17% at Art. 7 and 12% at Art. 5. Nearly 70-80% of the funded projects were addressing *normality*, everyday life of children

¹⁵ After 2001 Law 285/97 has been partly funded for other two years, and then included into the wider frame of Law 328/00 and its National Social Fund, summing up all the resources for social policies.

and families more than deviance, situations at risk and overt social problems. Childhood attracted more resources than adolescence, while parents were the main target for one project out of four.

The extensiveness of the project is reflected also by the high number of estimated people directly involved in the first three years: 1,350,000 people were involved as recipients and users of services and in-kind provisions implemented according to Law 285/97. The people employed in the implementation were about 50,000, distributed in 257 local areas and 2,819 executive projects (Presidenza del Consiglio dei Ministri – Dipartimento per gli affari sociali 2000; 2003).

In the local planning process, many actors were involved, mainly public: Local Health Units (96% of the cases), juvenile courts (54%), local administrative officers (78%), associations and voluntary organizations (both 75%), schools... It has been remarked, however, that a real participation process involving also children was quite occasional in the planning process.

In the implementation process, the contribution given by networked actors was substantial: 47% of projects were managed by the third sector, whilst only 34.5% were managed directly by the local authorities; even if the latter planned the projects (for some 50% the sole Municipality, 19% associated municipalities, 16% the Province). In 80% of the cases a wide-range coordination board was established (Barachini et al. 2001; Ciampa et al. 2003; Ciampa et al. 2004).

Structures and actors

Law 285/97 foresees that various levels of government and various actors are involved in the definition of the policies to be implemented. State, Regions, Local authorities and other stakeholders are involved in a complex interaction process institutionalising governance practices, in line and even anticipating many reforms in Europe.

The State and the Regions

The Department of Social Affairs – an agency of the Prime Minister's Office – manages:

- the allocation of funding to regions and cities;
- the monitoring and mid-term control of the expenditures;
- training, support and counselling through the *National Centre of Documentation of Childhood and Adolescence*.

Regions are the key regulating and steering actor in the process. In order to access the *National Fund for Childhood and Adolescence*, they must:

- identify a competent body (e.g. a department, etc.), which is responsible for the whole proceedings at the regional level;
- establish the local areas (“Ambiti”) of intervention, providing guidelines for their social planning activity;
- examine and approve the local plans of intervention;
- prepare the regional social plan harmonizing the allocation of funds.

Regions are the real fund managers: the National fund is allocated to them, and they can eventually supplement it with their own resources. Then, they decide allocation standards and release calls which local authorities can apply to: Regions are also responsible for the choice of local plans and actions to be implemented and of their evaluation.

The Local Authorities and other stakeholders

Local Authorities must draft the local plans of intervention (executive projects) and approve them through so called “programme agreements”, which foresee the involvement of stakeholders in the process through a negotiated participation. The latter *must* involve the wider number of public and non-profit actors possible. The main role of local authorities is considered to be the networking of activities and the provision of resources. The “third sector” can co-operate with public institutions both in planning and in carrying out projects, either agreeing to the proposals of Local Authorities or making proposals on their own.

Local Authorities must draft and implement the local plans grounding them on local guidelines and priorities and defining the most appropriate allocation criteria for local budgets, develop evaluation schemes criteria for addressing expenditure (Moro et al. 2000).

Then, the local plans must be sent to the Regions for a control on congruity and on the observation of the regional and local targets and programmes.

Processes and new methods

This scheme put forward an innovative vision in the Italian policy context, usually characterized by passive subsidiarity, high categorization of recipients, weak inclusion of vulnerable groups, *ad-hoc* policy, top-down and emergency-led policy styles.

Hence, new methodologies in policy design and management were required. The new forms of social action foreseen by the law are redefining the concept of public space and public interest: *public* is less and less a term used for government authority and its exclusive administration tasks. Rather, it is more and more used for the mobilization of actors in the local community, in the civil society and in the associational fabric, having the administrations a role of steering, guarantee and coordination – a role of *governance*.

In particular, the three main areas of methodological innovation are related to the:

- networking activity;
- adoption of mid-term strategies;
- periodic and integrated evaluation.

Networking

With law 285/97, for the first time, non-state actors are considered to be fully involved not only in the implementation, but also in the planning of the action plans. Hence, the networking becomes one of the most important concerns: vertically, the wider territorial institutions interact with the narrower one; horizontally local institutions co-operate one another and with the other local actors (associations, non-profit organizations...), through a process of “participated negotiation” and a range of institutional tools aimed at supporting networking practices, such as the programme agreements. This allows the pooling of more resources and knowledge different in kind, and a rationalization, systematization and improvement of measures in an integrated system of programs otherwise implemented on a sporadic and localized footing.

Summing up, the pursuit of a linking action between various public and private actors connects a motley number of local administrations, schools, associations and organizations in order to create an integrated local network of programs for childhood and adolescence, so that educational, environmental, housing and health policies are steered in a consistent direction.

State and Regions provide a frame for local action and a support for their implementation, while interventions are advanced from the bottom and through a grass-roots mobilization: the general purposes are agreed at a national level, while the specific solutions are tuned according to local needs, so that a common goal can be achieved through different means.

Mid-term planning strategy

In general terms, *planning* cannot be taken for granted in the Italian policy process, dominated by emergencies, government frailty and a charity tradition. From this point of view, Law 285/97 introduces the concept of project-work, leaded by time, mean and cost stakes.

The planning has a three-year span and is based on a National Plan, which provides a general frame of reference. The real planning heart are the Regions for they have a wide autonomy in defining the fields of intervention, by allocating their share of national funds according to their own criteria. Every third year the Region and the Local Administrations must define the regional targets and, on a yearly basis, the procedures for the distribution of funds.

As a matter of fact, it is a Regional Law the source of the local organizational layout, defining the role of local institutions, the modes of coordination and the most adequate territorial level for programs and interventions. Besides that, the law requires local authorities themselves to plan and manage the local participation patterns, through the above-mentioned *Local Plans for Children*. This means that regional plans are made up by regional guidelines (according to national principles) and local level action plans coordinated at different inter-municipal level (province, district, zone...) and involving a wide range of public and private actors.

The Local Plans include a survey over the local context and the living conditions of children and adolescents in the area; needs, standards and projects with their financial budgets; the programmed agreements binding institutions included in the community planning (municipalities, health units, youth law courts, education offices, Mountain Communities...) to the completion and attainment of the obligations undertaken in the Plans.

This structure is aimed on the one side at providing responsiveness to grassroots needs and on the other at guaranteeing the duration of projects through targeted endowments and resources.

Periodic and integrated evaluation

As far as evaluation is concerned, art. 9 states that every year the regions must address the National Government a report about aims and measures funded by the Law 285/97 and their implementation, effectiveness and consequences: it is probably the first Italian Law foreseeing the institutionalisation of evaluation activities and, up to that period, surely the only one implementing it.

Although the text of the Law is not very clear on the way to carry out the evaluation (no procedures or implementation guidelines were given at the beginning), the basic idea seems to be some form of monitoring aimed at supporting future planning. After the first three years only 40% of the local actors carried out the foreseen evaluation. Considering, however, the novelty of the approach and the existing territorial disparities, the result is quite satisfactory, also because the Regional and Provincial evaluation procedures helped to reach higher levels. In the end, 3 Regions out of 4 carried out a wide monitoring activity.

After the first phase of implementation, evaluation activities have been better specified through the *National Centre of Documentation and Analysis for Childhood and Adolescence*. An information campaign was carried out; an advice and technical assistance service for local

bodies was activated and two handbooks about planning and management were disseminated. These guides provided also suggestions and examples of *ex-ante* and *ex-post* evaluation. Furthermore, a data base with the classification of all the projects financed was set up and every year a number of publications analysed outcomes and results reached (see references). In co-operation with the Regions, a system for collecting information on the state of implementation of the Law was constituted and yearly reports for the Parliament were prepared.

Critical issues

The implementation of an innovative law like the 285/97, within the traditional Italian social policy context, is not easy. The path-dependent nature of the institutional context influences the implementation process and the outcome of the single projects as well as the emerging forms and patterns of governance and co-ordination arrangements.

The main problems have been observed in relation to the following issues (Raggio & Anoni 1999):

- the *planning* activity in the initial phase;
- the *evaluation* activity in the final phase;
- the *territorial fragmentation* of the overall impact of the law.

a) As far as *planning* is concerned, the greatest obstacle is the lack of expertise among the different actors: how to network with other bodies, professionals and competences? In particular the networking with the private sector was quite difficult to develop *ex-novo* in contexts where it was not already established. A wide range of training activities was addressed precisely to this issue targeted to the (mainly public) actors involved.

The planning activity has been made more difficult by the fact that law 285/97 required a complex set of procedures and documents to be produced within a rather short period time. All that took place in a context which was still characterized by organizational inflexibility and the existence of different priorities/aims for different services not used to co-operate.

These problems were potentially present in the text of the law and emerged during the first implementation period (1997-1999) when there was still no balance between top-down guidelines and bottom-up experimentation (Moro 1998; Baraldi 2001; Lo Schiavo 2000).

One explanation of the above mentioned difficulties is given by the fact that 93% out of the nearly 8,100 Italian municipalities has less than 25,000 inhabitants. Coordination problems and a weak networking tradition provide a very fragmented policy process.

This occurred not only at the institutional level among administrative bodies, but also in relation to the involvement of the non-profit organizations, which were hardly involved in planning activities¹⁶. Conflict relations, self-referential planning and externalisation are some resulting strategies not consistent with the vision of law 285/97.

Many problems in planning were also caused by an underestimation of the contextual analyses which had to be carried out in order to recognize social needs and local resources.

b) As far as evaluation is concerned, the problems are related to the fact that it is carried out with inconsequential instruments and practices. Professional cultures and methodological approaches were often inadequate: actually, the prevailing idea is that evaluation is a kind of control and de-valuation, i.e. a vertical power relationship. Thus, cultural limits intertwine with unclear law formulation that gives no methodological guidance.

c) As far as the territorial fragmentation is concerned, the scenario is highly diversified, both in terms of north/south divide and local political cultures. The starting gap was very relevant bringing about a situation in which many southern areas were engaged in filling that gap, while many northern areas were experimenting innovative services.

Nevertheless, good practices are given also in Southern regions showing an important process of expertise and know-production also in underprivileged areas. Anyway, an overall evaluation of Law 285/97 success in Southern Italy should take into account the starting-point: Law 285/97 hasn't filled the gap (at least in the large majority of Southern areas), but it has been moved forward. Actually, the difference is shifting from presence vs. lack of services to innovative-effective vs. traditional services.

The considerable autonomy of the Regions (enhanced by Constitutional changes in 2001) makes it more difficult to create a nation-wide social citizenship, which is one of the aims of law 285 bringing about a high differentiation in local welfare settings. National assessments have pointed out that it was hard to have comparable accounting and reporting from all the territorial level, because regional policy cultures are becoming more and more differentiated.

16 The few cases where this happened were mainly due to local traditions of co-operation and networking preceding law 285/97.

3. Results and evaluation

As it can be easily understood by the structure of this Law, school problems, drops-out and early school leaving are not the real focus of the provision: anyway, the idea of education and prevention of disadvantage in a wider sense put forward by Law 285/97 has had consequences also on this problems:

As a matter of fact, at the national level early school leaving has been considered one of the main topics to take into account: one of the indicators for the allotment of the national fund was the official drop-out rate and the national handbooks for the implementation of 285/97 provisions considered the right to education as a basic feature of well-being – a kind of problem to be properly coped within Law 285/97.

In the end, projects included in the category “Schooling and training support” summed up 6,6% of the total number of projects carried out, involving 15 out of 20 regions and 10 out of 15 large cities. School-oriented projects were carried out mainly in Southern (51%) and North-Eastern Regions (19,5%), where the problem is more substantial. School-oriented projects pertain mainly (72%) school support and counteraction of early school leaving, through the creation of interdisciplinary teams, counselling centres in the schools, second-chance classes and workshops for dropped-out youngsters and home education services.

In the projects considered by the National Documentation Centre as good practices, the school aspires to prevention, in order not to be a worsening factor for youngsters' problems. Hence, the aims are the reduction of risk factors through trust and support given to pupils' resources and skills and the networking of many social actors. Family and personal social isolation are considered negative factors: relational interventions are widely considered.

Actions take place both inside (as an integration of traditional educational skills thanks to the role played by external players: mediators, tutors, training and counselling for parents and teachers, sensitization and information campaigns with group methodologies, workshop experiences) and outside schools (in this case, actions put forward non-school educational activities, with a wide range of alternative methodologies and skills, from training and apprenticeship to meeting centres).

In an indirect way the Law put forward an idea and a project of youth support able to remove causes of disadvantage, uneasiness and maladjustment affecting a proper participation in the school system. As a matter of fact, schools were some of the most active actors in the planning and implementation of Law 285/97 programmes, so that in many cases they became opener, more receptive and responsible institutions. The active role played by education

institutions in planning and implementing local plans are clearly shown by the figures from the national database of Law 285 projects: schooling institutions were involved in some 75% of the local plans, with a strong relationship with the Provincial school offices (66%), school directors (49%), school districts (31%), teachers (25%).

Hence, on the one hand direct actions against early school leaving were promoted, while on the other hand many projects with an educational aim (in a wider sense) has seen a focal role played by schools, as one of the most important public spaces and as a networking agency, where children and other players could easily match.

Among the local projects considered as good practices, with special attention paid to projects carried out in the 15 main Italian cities (having a budget on their own different from the one managed by the Regions), where early school leaving was a top priority, we can consider:

- the Provincial plan against early school leaving in the Province of Bari: Law 285/97 allowed different policy actions carried out by single institutions (Provincial School Office, Municipality, Health Service, Prefecture, Juvenile Justice Centre) to be coordinated and integrated. A new common Observatory was set up and a Programme Agreement was signed, so that target people, service rooms and shared procedures were decided. In a disadvantaged area like the Municipality of Bari, where problems intertwine intricately (juvenile criminality, mass youth unemployment, high early school leaving and drop-out rates, drug addiction, family problems...), Law 285/97 gave a frame and the opportunity to match many little interventions and languages, in order to deal with multifaceted problems in a more qualified way;
- the Chance Project in Naples: teachers form three public schools, coordinated by the Provincial school office and funded by their own budget and Law 285/97 funds, together with psychologists and educators from the University of Naples and local artisans carried out a project for education and training of dropped-out adolescents (aged 14-16) outside schools' walls. Active in the most disadvantaged Neapolitan neighbourhoods, street teachers involve adolescents in a second-chance education, through short classes and training. The aim is to allow dropped-out adolescents to obtain a compulsory school diploma and, at the same time, acquire professional skills and possibilities of labour integration and a basic wage. The result was very positive, because in two years 135 recipients were involved, achieving an adequate level of attendance almost for all, with surprising results especially for the cases considered more problematic.

4. Conclusions

As key factors of this policy the following need to be seen:

- a legal framework reflecting the political will to validate and integrate non-formal learning;
- involvement of various actors already in the planning of the policy measure;
- contribution to creation of a social infrastructure for young people.

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Annex V

Guidelines for documenting Good Practice

Guidelines for documenting good practice

1. Operating environment in which good practices are being followed

This section should contain a description of the operating environment (either a routine activity or a development project or environment) in which good practices are being followed. It is important to make clear why the practices have been judged to be good. You should describe the operating environment and the process involved by using the applicable parts of the following list:

- place where good practices are being followed,
- persons involved in the routine activity or the project,
- main features of the activity (if a routine activity),
- background, principles and aims of the project and the initiator of the project (if a development project),
- assumptions made in advance concerning the impact of the procedure etc. (programme theory); these could be positive, negative, direct, indirect or side effects,
- assessment of the practices. Based on which indicators and/or objectives was the good practice assessed? What kinds of assessment methods were used? Methods could include randomised trials, process evaluation, outcome-based evaluation, monitoring, expert evaluations, client assessments, etc.
- client participation. How was the client viewpoint taken into account in the planning and implementation of the routine activity or development project?

2. Description of good practices

This section should contain a description of the good practices in terms of the key actors, structural factors and processes. You should describe the different factors in sufficient detail so as to ensure the practice is as easy as possible for others to implement. You should consider the factors that would be necessary to successfully apply the practice in the working environment. You should also describe the results achieved (as identified in the assessment) and the plan for ensuring that the practice remains in place.

Actors

Who are the key (or necessary) actors required for the good practice to operate effectively? These actors could include the following: client, social worker, supervisor, other professional, family, spouse, etc. Wherever possible, you should also describe the attributes that each actor should preferably possess. These may concern, for example, special skills or knowledge required for the good practice, or the gender of the actors. If the practice requires certain networking or partnership relationships with other actors, these should be specified as well.

Structures

What are the key (or necessary) structural factors required for the good practices to operate effectively? You should specify and describe the factors essential for the particular practice in question. You should also explain why these factors are so important. Such structural factors may include the number of employees needed, the particular tools or premises required or the hygiene requirements. The basic requirements needed for all types of social work do not need to be described here.

Process

This section should contain a description of the operational aspects of the good practices. Wherever possible, you should specify the different stages of the practices and the action required from each actor at each stage. From the client's viewpoint, this may mean active involvement of some kind or may mean the manner in which an action is performed. For social welfare professionals, it could be a question of the type of working methods used, such as investigative work or individual case work, pair work, or family or group work, and how to proceed accordingly. At management level it may be a matter of ensuring that no mistakes, delays or losses occur, and that the relevant guidelines are followed. For the family of a client, it may concern the way in which they participate in the social work or the way in which they or the client are given support.

Results

You should describe the results achieved after following the good practices in the routine activity or development project in question. Give details of the results in relation to the objectives set for the activity or project. The information you give must be sufficiently detailed and must indicate both the positive and negative results of adopting the good practice from the viewpoints of the actors involved, such as the client. The results may include changes in the life situation, circumstances, or health of clients. You should also describe the plan devised for ensuring that the good practice remains in place.

Annex VI

Evaluation of the validation process

Evaluation of validation on national and European level

A key element of the Thematic Study was a process of validation of interim findings in dialogue with national and European policy makers and stake-holders. This process was organised on two levels and at two different stages of the study:

- a) *National validation processes* were carried out after six or seven months. In most cases, workshops were organised; in the case of three countries consulted experts provided written feedback. The national validation was primarily directed towards policy makers on the local and national level but included also stakeholders, practitioners and other researchers. The range of experts involved was between 4 and 40 per country. For this purpose, a draft document was prepared which consisted of a comparative part produced by the coordination based on explorative analysis of the national information gathered through questionnaires and analysis of European data; and a national part resulting from the national questionnaires. These documents were sent to all experts invited for the consultation process and discussed during the workshops (or in written communication). On the basis of this process, the national reports were finalised while national experts also documented the workshops themselves (Annex II in this volume).
- b) *European validation process*: After nine months (one month before the end of the contract) a European seminar was held involving national and EU policy makers as well as representatives of European organisations, especially NGOs but also social partners. For this seminar a summary of the comparative findings achieved so far was produced and distributed among the participants of the seminar in advance. The seminar was scheduled for two half days and consisted of presentations regarding the comparative findings as well as selected good practice measures. Participants were invited to raise comments and critique both during the sessions as well as afterwards in written form.

In terms of evaluating the process and the respective means of validation we want to refer to the dimensions of timing, of target groups and their response, working forms and involvement during the process, and side-effects such as dissemination and networking:

- *Timing*: with regard to the working process – and especially the short duration of the study contract (10 months) – the timing of the national validation was more helpful for the consortium than of the European seminar. Due to the earlier stage of the study – and also the smaller scale of events – the drafts produced for the national validation process did not need to be elaborated to a very high extent but could be discussed in terms of work in progress. The later stage of the European seminar and also its greater visibility created a much higher pressure to produce ‘presentable’ products at a time where the process of analysis was still not yet completed. Thereby, the consortium had to work on a double track inasmuch as presentations for the seminar needed to be prepared while analysis, preparation of the national reports and the final report had to be proceeded in parallel. At the same time this pressure – but also the advanced stage of the study process – made it difficult for the researchers to perceive the situation as open enough to formulate concrete questions towards the participants which were meant to contribute to the analysis and production of the final report. An earlier seminar would have left more time to integrate dialogue and comments more consciously into the analysis process and the production of the final report. This would have also allowed for a more interactive format of the European seminar.
- *Target groups*: In most countries national experts had no problem at all in convincing experts to participate. Where this was not the case, this was either due to problems of timing while some national policy makers felt already occupied enough by the ‘normal’ obligations resulting from EU policies. Participation of national policy makers proved to be more difficult with regard to the European seminar. Potential reasons for this can be the fact that many of the persons invited had already participated in the national validation processes and/or did not feel to have time enough to engage in European events beyond regular meetings. The added value of the European seminar in this regard was the presence of European NGOs and other European organisations such as social partners.

- *Working forms and involvement:* On the national level the process took a variety of working forms. Due to close connections between experts and participants, the smaller scale of events and/or the familiarity of the attendants with the issues, the documentation of this process proved a very intense involvement. During the European seminar, researchers had the impression that the engagement of the participants was not that lively. This may on the one hand result from participants not feeling equipped for discussing issues in an international (rather than national) perspective. On the other hand, the prevalence of plenary sessions might have had an impact as well. Both – the differences in English language proficiency and the perceived pressure to make contributions reflecting a European or comparative rather than national knowledge of the topic - may have contributed to a reluctance to engage more actively.
- *Side-effects:* Apart from the validation as such the national and European processes on the one hand provided a very good means of dissemination; both with regard to the interim findings and in terms of announcing the report. Effects of networking resulted especially from the national validation processes. In many, cases participants agreed to continue collaboration and exchange. In this regard, the Thematic Study has contributed to the creation of communicative infrastructures between policy, practice and research.

All in all, more than 200 persons have been involved in this process across Europe which as such is a significant achievement contributing to the relevance of the findings of the study.