Thematic Study on Policy Measures concerning Disadvantaged Youth

Study commissioned by the European Commission,
DG Employment and Social Affairs in the framework of the Community Action Programme to Combat Social Exclusion 2002 – 2006

Contract No. VC/2004/0139
Coordinated by the Institute for Regional Innovation and Social Research (IRIS), Tübingen

Final Report

Volume

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Tübingen, October 2005

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Acknowledgements:
We want to acknowledge and thank all those who have collaborated in this study without being listed by name for their efforts in collecting and analysing national data and producing case studies in good practice policies.

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Executive Summary

The mid-term review of the EU's Lisbon Strategy to achieve a competitive and cohesive knowledge-based society has shown that young people have profited less from inclusion and active labour market policies than other age groups. In the Framework of the Social Inclusion Programme the inclusion of disadvantaged youth became a key priority in 2003 and a Thematic Study on Policy Measures concerning Disadvantaged Youth was commissioned to contribute to the Process of Open Method of Coordination. This study was coordinated by the Institute for Regional Innovation and Social Research in collaboration with a network of experts. The study involves 13 member states and accession countries – *Austria, Bulgaria, Denmark, Finland, Greece, Italy, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain* and the *UK* – each of which was represented by a national expert.[1] Focusing in particular on youth unemployment and early school leaving[2] it centres around four *key questions*:

1. What are the socio-economic characteristics of disadvantaged youth?
2. What are the key problems of the transition of disadvantaged youth from school to work?
3. What impact do both inclusion and active labour market policies have?
4. What are the causes of success or failure of policies to support disadvantaged youth?

In spring 2005 the European Council adopted the European Pact that provided momentum for a crosscutting perspective on youth-specific aspects of disadvantage and of inclusion and active labour market policies, with one of the aims being to "renew employment pathways for young people".

The analysis is based on three types of data:

- national information and data gathered according to joint guidelines;
- European statistical data, mainly drawn from the Eurostat Labour Force Survey;
- case studies of policies identified as good practice.

A key element of the study was a dialogic process of validation with national and European policy makers. A first occasion in this regard were national workshops after half of the project and a second one a European seminar with policy makers and stakeholders at the end.

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[1] Mario Steiner (Austria), Siyka Kovacheva (Bulgaria), Torben Bechmann Jensen (Denmark), Ilse Julkunen (Finland), Penelope Stathakopoulos (Greece), Yuri Kazepov (Italy), Bohdan Jung (Poland), Luis Capucha (Portugal), Octav Marcovici (Romania), Ladislav Machacek (Slovakia), Mirjana Ule (Slovenia), Andreu López Blasco (Spain), Andy Biggart (UK); additionally, we thank all collaborators of national experts involved in producing the national reports and good practice case studies.

[2] Eurostat definitions were applied according to which early school leavers means the 18-24 year olds without upper secondary qualifications while youth unemployment refers to young people out of work who actively seek a job (whether registered or not). The youth unemployment *rate* refers to the share of unemployed among the 15-24 year old labour force, the youth unemployment *ratio* to the 15-24 year old population.

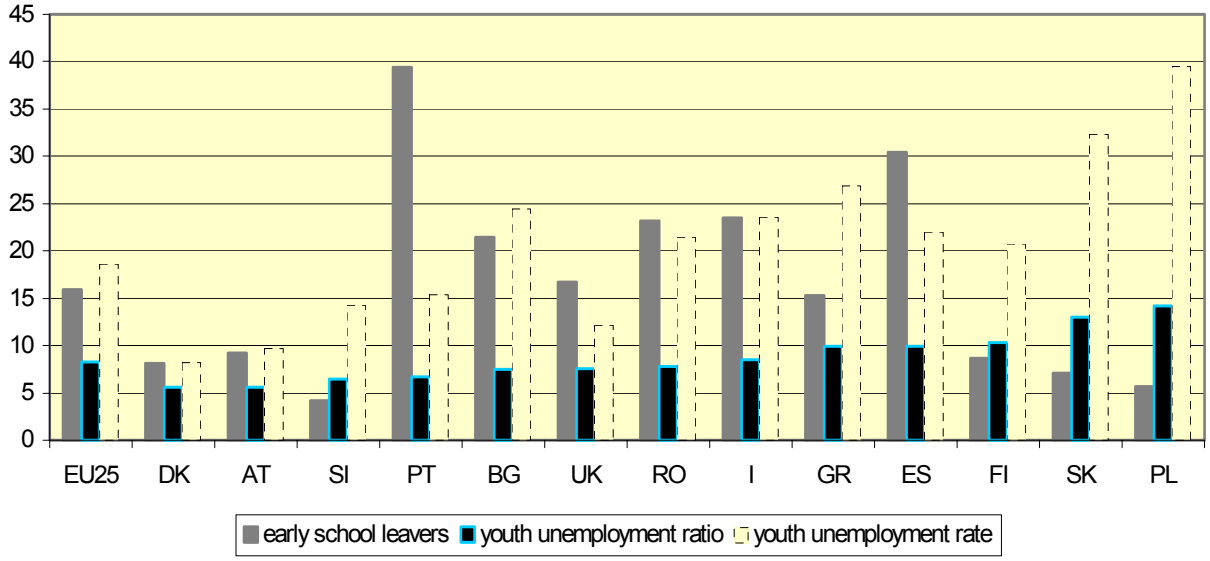
The analysis was based on an understanding of disadvantage in youth transitions that can be summarised as follows:

- *Youth transitions* are structured have become increasingly de-standardised which calls for a diversification of recognised and supported 'employment pathways' in a holistic, life-cycle perspective;
- As a consequence *Social inclusion* needs to be seen in a holistic way as the relationship between social structure and individual agency and is broader than labour market integration with subjective *motivation* as the central aspect of this relationship;
- *Disadvantage* stands for unequal opportunities and the risk of social exclusion in school-to-work transitions. It is described as the interplay between a *structural* lack of accessibility, manageability and relevance of transition opportunities and *individual* lack of resources. Referring to *constellations of disadvantage* rather than 'problem groups' avoids structural problems becoming individualised.

Constellations of disadvantage in youth transitions

Figure 1 relates to the performance of the countries involved in the study according to their levels of unemployment and early school leaving in 2004 with youth unemployment ratios ranging between of 5.6% in Austria and Denmark and 14.2% in Poland. Rates of early school leaving range between 4.2% in Slovenia and 39.4% in Portugal (Eurostat data).

Figure 1: Early school leaving and youth unemployment in 2004 (Eurostat, LFS)



A perspective on constellations of disadvantage means prevalent clusters of unemployment and early school leaving are examined– including also crosscutting aspects of precariousness – in the different countries. 'Old' structural categories of inequality according to class,

education, ethnicity and gender need to be analysed according to new lines of segmentation and transition structures that lead to 'new' forms of disadvantage. It is therefore important to relate socio-economic indicators with the variety of forms of disadvantage. The most important aspects in this respect are as follows:

Social inequality influences the way in which parents can support their children's educational careers; high social inequality (Gini-coefficient) correlates with high early school leaving in particular in Italy, Portugal, Romania, Spain while in Austria, Bulgaria, Greece and UK the relationship is weaker; findings which correspond to the recent PISA studies of the OECD.

Structures of education and training differ in the way social inequality is reinforced or balanced; how early school leaving is distributed according to different routes; whether integrated national qualification systems allow for transfer between general, vocational and higher education; how individual learning needs are acknowledged; and to what extent vocational routes are school- or company-based.

This relates to general *labour market structures* and employment prospects according to which pupils and school leavers assess the use and value of investment in education; however, contracted labour markets and structures of mismatch between education and the labour market – reinforced by age-related segmentation due to young job seekers' lack of experience – have different effects. While in Slovakia and Poland young people stay in education to avoid unemployment ('discouraged workers' effect also relevant in the UK), in Italy or Spain (as well in Portugal) they prefer to leave education as soon as job opportunities arise even if they are precarious and/or in the informal economy. Correspondingly, in some countries early school leavers display well above-average levels of unemployment (Austria, Bulgaria, Finland, Slovakia, Slovenia, UK) whilst in other contexts particularly in Southern Europe but also in Denmark, Poland and Romania they are not over-represented among the unemployed. In most cases higher education is a worthwhile investment at least in the long-term, school leavers with post-compulsory education but weak family resources are more likely to become disadvantage the longer their job search fails.

Ethnic minority and *immigrant youth* are particularly affected by early school leaving although the picture is highly differentiated across Europe which makes comparison difficult. In many cases disadvantage is mainly ascribed to cultural factors (e.g. language, values) it should also be taken into account that most immigrants and ethnic minorities have a lower socio-economic status while institutionalised discrimination includes a higher risk of school failure (or being placed in special schools where these exist for those with learning difficulties). In terms of labour market opportunities the effects of educational disadvantage

are multiplied by discriminatory practices from employers and also within active labour market policies; whilst unclear legal status increases risks of being trapped in precarious jobs.

The role of *gender* is another determinant which requires differentiation: across Europe early school leaving is primarily a male problem; in terms of youth unemployment it differs between Southern European countries (as well as in Austria, Poland, and Slovenia) where females are disadvantaged and Northern European countries (plus Bulgaria, Romania and Slovakia) where unemployment rates of young men and women have been reversed, partly due to the economic shift towards the service sector. Young women are in general are more likely to experience disadvantaged resulting from atypical work arrangements (see below). Inactivity rates also remain higher for young women while gender pay gaps and restricted upward mobility continue to persist.

Regional disparities are less pronounced in terms of early school leaving than in the case of youth unemployment. This relates to rural-urban divides but also to the imbalance between dynamic centres and stagnant peripheries, the most striking example being the South of Italy where youth unemployment rates exceed 60%. In addition, regional or spatial differences also affect access to infrastructures such as access to education and labour market services;

Contexts differ with regard to the *duration* of unemployment; in opposition to widely held belief that youth unemployment is normally of a shorter duration in most countries more than one third of the unemployed have durations exceeding 12 months (Bulgaria, Greece, Italy, Poland, Romania, Slovakia, and Slovenia).

A key issue of youth unemployment that remains invisible and difficult to target, are young people who are neither in employment, education, or training nor registered as unemployed these are referred to as the *'status zer0'* group. Whilst it is difficult to assess methodologically, one approximate indicator may be the difference between those recorded as 'inactive' (excluding those in education or training) with high rates particularly in Bulgaria, Romania, Spain and the UK. Potential reasons for disengaging from the transition system are limited benefit entitlements, lack of trust in public employment services, pressure and degrading treatment by institutional actors, alternative options such as informal work.

For a smaller group of young people unemployment can be seen as part of a wider context of *'multiple disadvantage'*. Causalities are difficult to determine in so far risk-laden lifestyles (e.g. drug use) can be strategies for coping with limited life perspectives, while contributing further to the dynamics of marginalisation (e.g. bad health, homelessness). However, constellations of poverty and segregation as experienced by Roma communities especially in Bulgaria, Romania or Slovakia also nurture vicious circles of deprivation.

Poverty does not only concern those without work – depending on benefit entitlements – but increasingly also the employed. According to the European average the poverty rate among young people is higher than the overall average (19% compared to 16% in 2001), a difference of 10% in Slovenia and 25% in Italy. In particular among young people, atypical employment – mainly *fixed-term contracts* and *part-time work* – has increased in some contexts to well over half of the youth labour force (especially in Finland, Poland, Slovenia, and Spain). In Northern European countries in particular this most often coincides with young people's choices, whilst in Central, Eastern and Southern Europe young people are more often forced to accept these as the only opportunities available; undeclared work also plays an important role in Greece and Italy and is also gaining importance in Central and Eastern Europe.

There are clear links between social inequality, educational level and (un)employment, but the situation is more diverse and complex than expected with regard to education and unemployment or between unemployment, employment and precariousness. In fact, structural, individual and institutional factors act together in the reproduction of disadvantage.

Policy-mixes

What policies are being put into practice to tackle disadvantage in youth transitions and to what extent are they successful? How do they interpret the task of renewing employment pathways for young people and how are they compatible with the need to become broader and more diverse? Before outlining a perspective on constellations of disadvantage it is important that structural, institutional and individual needs are discerned, in order to avoid ascribing disadvantage solely as an individual deficit and one where the individuals are held personally responsible. A first level of differentiation therefore is between

- structural versus individualised measures; and between
- preventative and compensatory measures.

A second level differentiates sectors of intervention: school, training, and active labour market policies, which refer to two main policy discourses: lifelong learning and activation. These discourses stand for a shift from policies oriented towards a life course that was standardised by the State, especially through the regulation of education, work and welfare. Arguably, structural unemployment has caused a shift towards labour market flexibilisation while responsibility for learning and finding work has become increasingly individualised. This trend means that disadvantage is primarily addressed at the individual level while the distinction between prevention and compensatory intervention is becoming increasingly blurred.

School-related measures

Among policies aimed at *preventing* early school leaving, first of all *school reforms* need to be highlighted. A minimal reform is to simply extend the duration of compulsory education (Bulgaria, Italy, Portugal, Romania, Spain), whilst making general and vocational curricula more relevant to labour market demands is an issue in all countries. Other countries aim to make school, training and university in general more inclusive by increasing permeability between routes (Denmark, Finland) and developing national qualification frameworks (Slovenia, UK). *Educational allowances* are aimed at reducing the impact of social inequality. Entitlements are universal in Denmark and Finland where education is an element of citizenship; they can be means-tested (especially in the UK but also in most other countries, albeit at very low levels) or, as a negative incentive, tying family benefits to children's school attendance (Portugal, Slovakia). Another very basic approach is the provision of free meals and school books for disadvantaged groups like the Roma (Bulgaria, Greece, Romania, Slovakia).

Within regular school a low-threshold approach to inclusive education is *counselling* to identify problems and influence individual educational decisions. Quantitative coverage and quality differ between teachers with an advisory function, social work in schools, and specialised school staff providing counselling for all pupils as a means of coping with learning demands; good practice are the municipal counselling system in Denmark or the total counselling network in Slovenia because they start from the individual's needs. Increasingly special needs pupils are given more *support teaching* in terms of personalised education, additional (specialised) staff and flexible classroom procedures. In the case of ethnic minorities *assistant teachers* from the same community are trained and employed (Romania, Slovakia) or methods of intercultural education are applied as in the Austrian practice of 'Team teaching' in commercial schools. Inclusive education however also needs to be included into general teacher training (examples relate to including the Roma in Romania and Slovenia). At the same time it needs to be highlighted that in some countries special education still relies on a segregated system of special schools where often ethnic minority youth are over-represented (especially Slovakia but also Austria, Finland, Poland).

Second chance and *evening schools* address those who have already left school in a compensatory way. Programmes have to be compatible with work or family and they often apply formal teaching and non-formal learning as well as vocational practice.

Among those countries with low levels of early school leaving such as *Denmark, Finland* and *Slovenia*, approaches can be characterised as structural and preventative. The main policies

are reforms increasing the permeability of qualifications and the design of national qualification frameworks, educational allowances and personalised counselling also play a key role. Among the countries showing the largest decline *Greece* applies primarily individualised support teaching and compensatory approaches, with 6% of the 14-24 year olds enrolled in evening schools; the *UK* combines diversity within upper secondary educational provision, education allowances and intensified counselling. In *Poland* and *Slovakia* low levels are the result of widening access to higher education, although limited access to labour market entry may have adverse effects in the near future.

Training

The case of *Austria* is explained by reference to *training* which is a policy area that relates both to early school leaving and youth unemployment. The dual system of apprenticeship system provides a high share of school leavers with access to upper secondary qualifications, which provide direct links to the labour market. While such a system has developed historically, and is embedded within the national economy and culture, and in this respect it cannot easily be transferred to other contexts, however most countries aim to increase and upgrade vocational routes. Four main types of measures can be discerned:

All countries try to modernise and upgrade *vocational education and training (VET)* to overcome low qualification levels and labour market mismatch. While some countries have introduced small-scale *apprenticeship systems* (only in Portugal and UK this extends to upper secondary qualifications) others aim to modernise *school-based VET*. In fact, the case of Denmark shows that this does not exclude work practice and the involvement employers in the steering and delivery of VET.

In contrast, *preparatory and pre-vocational measures* aim to compensate for socialisation and learning deficits; only some measures provide certification, whilst others focus on personal competencies and practical learning with an inherent risk of becoming mere holding patterns. Good practice are ‘Getting Connected’ (UK) and the ‘Production Schools’ (Denmark) as they leave leaving young people with the space to experiment and learn by doing; the ‘Vocational Preparation Courses’ (Austria) are good practice in accrediting pre-vocational education which leads to later apprenticeship training.

Labour market training is distinguished from VET as it primarily addresses the unemployed in a compensatory perspective. It is often steered by employment services and does not always lead to regular qualifications. In fact, in some cases their scope is limited to the provision of work experience and the creation of a subsidised low wage youth labour market.

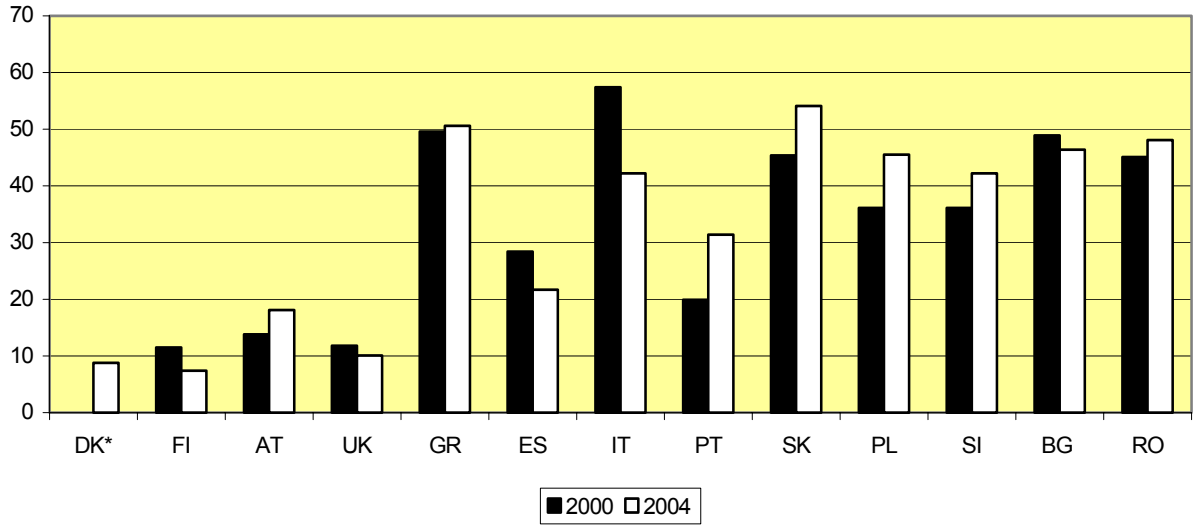
Whilst this can be a first step towards creating a training "culture", quality standards need to be monitored as well as the extent to which they provide actual bridges into regular work (Bulgaria, Greece, Poland, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, UK). *Recognition of informal skills* can balance a lack of formal qualifications and provide access to further education or employment; good practice are national qualification systems (see above) and the Portuguese 'Recognition, Validation and Certification Centres'.

There is an apparent contradiction between the increase of vocational routes and the fact that the phenomenon of dropping out is more common in vocational than in general education. Apart from the differing quality of vocational routes also the fact needs to be considered that weaker pupils tend to vocational rather than general or academic routes. Measures have to ensure that training provides individuals with relevant skills rather than being simply 'more of the same' through a combination of counselling, job creation or work experience as well as extending provision beyond the manufacturing sector to include the service sector.

Active labour market policies

Policies that address youth unemployment have undergone a dramatic shift from passive to active labour market policies (ALMP). However, assessment of outcomes is difficult due to long-term effects and the need to consider non-labour market related factors, in particular cases of multiple disadvantage. An indicator that at least highlights how efficient ALMP's are in reaching unemployed youth (without assessing the quality of outcomes) is the development of long-term youth unemployment over time (see Figure 2).

Figure 2: Long-term unemployment (>1 year) among young unemployed under 25 years in 2000 and 2004 (Eurostat LFS)



** For Denmark no data for 2000 available.*

Activation combines approaches of personalised counselling with incentives for active job search and/or training. Incentives can be negative in terms of reducing benefit levels and applying sanctions such as cutting or suspending benefits in the case of non-compliance or positive in terms of choice between different options or activation allowances exceeding benefit levels. *Individualised action plans* are the operative basis of activation policies. Here, approaches can be distinguished in terms of coverage, but also in quality, whether they primarily aim to recruit young unemployed for ALMP measures or aim to counsel and assist individuals to become reflexive actors of their own biographies. Relating the dimensions of incentives and counselling together five different models of activation are evident:

- *supportive* activation based on universal benefit entitlements and counselling aimed at personal development in a holistic perspective; priority on education (Denmark, Finland);
- *workfare* (coercive activation) characterised by a priority of employment; counselling aimed at recruitment and controlling compliance by sanctions (UK, partly Slovakia);
- *limited* activation due to limited benefit entitlements; counselling primarily as means of recruitment, partly complemented by multi-disciplinary and coordinated services (Austria, Portugal, Slovenia, Spain, Slovakia; in Bulgaria and Romania low coverage of PES);
- *no basis* for activation due to low coverage of PES and virtual lack of benefit entitlements of young people (Greece, Italy).

The success of counselling depends on the options of progression available. Apart from education and training (see above) important measures in this respect are *subsidies* for employers. A first type is aimed at school graduates (first time job seekers), often with upper secondary and higher education, which play a key role in Central, Eastern and Southern Europe (but also the New Deal in UK) to compensate problems of mismatch and age and gender segmented labour markets. A second type aims to provide long-term unemployed with work experience (Denmark, Finland, UK, Greece, Portugal). A negative side effect of subsidies is that regular jobs may be replaced and displaced thereby contributing to a hidden deregulation of youth labour markets (see below).

Job creation is aimed at making young people's transitions independent from the demand side of the labour market by creating additional work opportunities. While job creation in the public sector is decreasing, *self-employment* programmes have increased especially in contexts structured by age and gender-related segmented labour markets (e.g. Greece and Italy). *Job creation in the third sector* is regarded as a successful way engaging the more hard-to-reach groups and those with disabilities, health or psychosocial problems (Austria, Denmark, Finland, Greece, Italy, Poland).

Deregulation of labour market entrance through a reduction of labour protection and the promotion of atypical work may be seen as a structural and preventative way of increasing access to the labour market. However, except for some countries where this has been accompanied by social rights (Denmark, Finland, Slovenia) this is closely related to an increase in precariousness, especially in the case of Portugal and Spain where although youth unemployment has fallen poverty rates have increased.

Factors for the sustainable inclusion of disadvantaged youth

The overall objective of the Thematic Study is to provide evidence for a youth based approach to inclusion and active labour market policies, therefore contributing to the objectives of the European Youth Pact. In the following a comprehensive policy model for the sustainable inclusion of disadvantaged young people is outlined starting from the normative and conceptual level and ending with specific factors of policy implementation and delivery.

Both the life-cycle perspective on youth transitions and constellations of disadvantage in which structural and individual factors are interlinked require a holistic approach that coordinates different policies within a framework of *Integrated Transition Policies*. A policy perspective may speak of 'mainstreaming youth', however, lessons learned from gender mainstreaming imply the risk of standards and awareness developed through positive action fading away. Is 'youth everywhere' really better than 'youth nowhere'? Or under what conditions? This means that mainstreaming youth requires both: specific approaches as well as mainstreaming mechanisms. According to the White Paper on Youth the key to such an approach is the principle of citizenship and one that is based on individual entitlement to support that allows for autonomy, meaningful education, training and employment and active participation. Relating participation to the transition from school to work requires that firstly young people are involved in the process of policy (not only restricted to leisure time facilities); second, young people need to be endowed with negotiation rights towards institutions, an aspect that is not covered in most countries' interpretation of activation.

Integrated Transition Policies require a cross-sector perspective that starts on the macro-level. Inclusion and active labour market policies can only improve young people's lives if

- *school systems* share accountability for the life chances of young people as well as for social disadvantage;
- *social policies* enable families to assist their children in achieving relevant skills and qualification;
- *economic development* includes binding social criteria as regards training and employment for young people affected by social disadvantage.

More specific, five key success factors of policies for disadvantaged youth can be identified:

Funding: Sustainable inclusion measures require sufficient funding to cover all those who need support in their transitions from school to work, as well as providing quality services in terms of sufficient, trained staff, accessible premises and allowances as positive incentives. A comparison of national expenditure on education and (overall) ALMP as a percentage of GDP shows significant differences. Table 1 shows a clear relationship between expenditure for education and early school leaving, both in positive and negative terms, which also has consequences for unemployment. While this is less obvious with regard to ALMP expenditure, expenditure on social protection also needs to be taken into consideration, especially in relation to families, child and individual (not insurance-based) benefits.

Table 1: Expenditures on education and ALMP 2002 as % of GDP (Eurostat, OECD)

Education / ALMP	Low (< 5%)	Medium (5 – 6%)	High (> 6%)
Low (< 0,5 %)	GR, RO, SK	AT, PL, PT, UK	SI
Medium (0,5 – 1%)	BG, ES, IT		FI
High (> 1%)			DK

Coordination: To allow mainstreaming Integrated Transition for youth policies need to be implemented and delivery coordination among different policy levels as well as the state, market and civil society. In this respect, the balancing of power differentials among national policies on the hand and youth organisations on the other are crucial, because they give young people a voice (here also trade unions need to play a greater role) and provide them with opportunities for non-formal learning. Trust among partners also depends on partnership not merely being imposed as a condition for access to funding. In contrast, training policies reveal the necessity of positive incentives to increase the engagement of economic actors and effective coordination requires flexibility both on the policy level and within measures.

Access: Inclusion and active labour market policies are only effective if they actually reach their target groups. Especially, immigrant and ethnic minority youth as well as young women both are often under-represented in measures – or they profit less in terms of meaningful outcomes. Access depends first on the coverage of measures, which itself is dependent on funding. Second it requires the decentralised distribution of measures that allows for low-threshold access. Third access requires reliable communication networks between institutions as well as between young people and institutions. Fourth, access depends on the conditions of attendance: flexible or unconditional access helps to ensure that individuals do not remain excluded from meaningful support due to bureaucratic rules. Fifth, anti-discrimination policies may be a tool to claim improved access (and supply) for immigrant and minority youth, as well as according to gender and age. Finally, the persistence of the phenomena of

status zer0 suggest that limitations are not only structural and administrative, but also related to a lack of perceived value of the measures in the eyes of potential participants.

Reflexivity: If policy implementation and delivery requires higher flexibility as suggested above this also implies different processes and procedures within policymaking, whereby effect and side effects in each individual case are reflected upon rather than simply monitored (and evaluated ex-post). A higher reflexivity of institutional actors first requires changing the mechanisms of evaluation to become more comprehensive and to include qualitative and longitudinal elements as well as being integrated within everyday practice. Second, it requires a higher level of trust in the interaction between young people and institutional actors so that users feel able to give direct feedback whether they find the help offered meaningful or not; rather than resulting in strategic behaviour and in some cases eventual disengagement.

Empowerment: Empowerment in the sense we use the concept is best understood as an approach centred on the motivation of individuals, in this case the motivation of young people to actively engage in their transitions. Motivation requires first the identification with a goal and second a feeling of control in reaching this goal; therefore relating subjective and structural factors. With regard to disadvantaged youth motivation requires trust towards institutions and professionals, spaces for self-experimentation, (non-formal) learning approaches that start from the individual strengths and interests rather than demanding the compensation of individual deficits, and finally and most importantly the possibility of choice. Active participation within inclusion and active labour market policies in this respect is a paraphrase of empowerment. Em*power*ment therefore cannot be restricted to including young people in any kind of measure but implies that they are provided with rights and resources that enable them to take over responsibility for their transitions.

In so far as the Thematic Study is embedded in the context of the Open Method of Coordination of the EU Social Inclusion Process concluding remarks need to be made with respect to the possibilities of mutual learning that arise from comparative policy assessment. On the one hand, it is obvious that mechanisms of path dependency set clear limits to the potential to learn from good practice. On the other hand, mutual learning creates a space in which national policies both are influenced by alternative concepts and approaches and also come under the pressure of legitimacy in cases where performance is poor. Such spaces may be further developed in terms of assisting single countries in the search for functional equivalence for good practice that is being successful in other contexts. In order to increase institutional reflexivity however this implies that mutual learning is not organised top-down but also involves national as well as local, public, private and NGO actors.

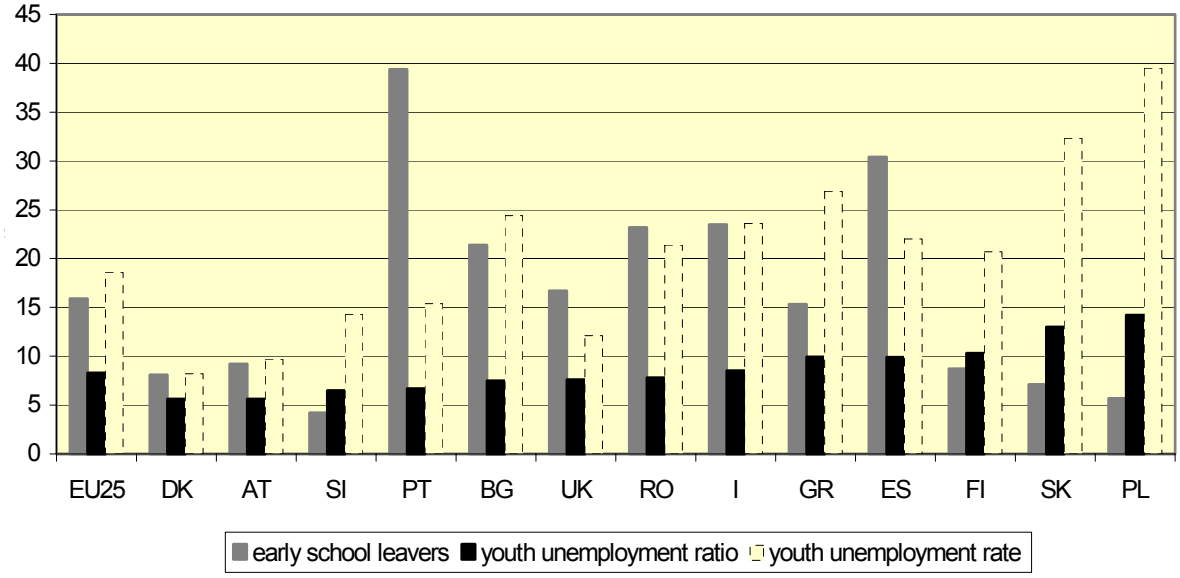
1. Introduction

Over the past few decades young people's transitions from education to work have undergone fundamental changes and have become an important focus of policy and research. Since the 1980's youth unemployment has increased to a level, which in the European Union is double the rate of all-age unemployment. The increased competition on labour markets, the shift of low-skill production to low-wage countries and the shift towards the knowledge economy – promoted through the EU's Lisbon Strategy of 2000 – has increased the importance of education on the labour market and attention has increasingly focused upon early school leaving. While the changes have had an effect on all young people, it is clear that some young people are more vulnerable than others to social exclusion in the form of early school leaving, unemployment, and precarious employment. From the beginning of the 1980s, or in the case of Central and Eastern European transformation societies the 1990s, increasingly governments started to restructure youth transitions and to develop policies aimed at securing the transitions of so-called 'disadvantaged youth'. However, these policies have not significantly reversing the average level of youth unemployment in the EU and overall early school leaving remains rather high.

This report documents the findings of the Thematic Study on Policies concerning Disadvantaged Youth that was commissioned in 2004 by the European Commission. It is located in the framework of the EU's Social Inclusion Process, which was launched as one element of the Lisbon Strategy in 2000. This process operates according to the key guidelines that are implemented and monitored through the Open Method of Coordination. As the Joint Social Inclusion Report 2003-2005 (EC, 2003a) highlighted a focus on disadvantaged youth as one of the six key priority areas, this thematic study is expected to provide the Programme Committee with a differentiated evidence base.

The study involves 13 member states and accession countries; ten of these were selected due to their above average rates of either youth unemployment, early school leaving or both, (Bulgaria, Finland, Greece, Italy, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain and the UK). Three countries were then selected due to their better than average performance on these measures: Austria as a country in which school-to-work transitions are structured by a strong apprenticeship system, Denmark as an example for the inclusive Nordic model, and Slovenia as one of the better performing Central and Eastern European new member states (see Figure 1).

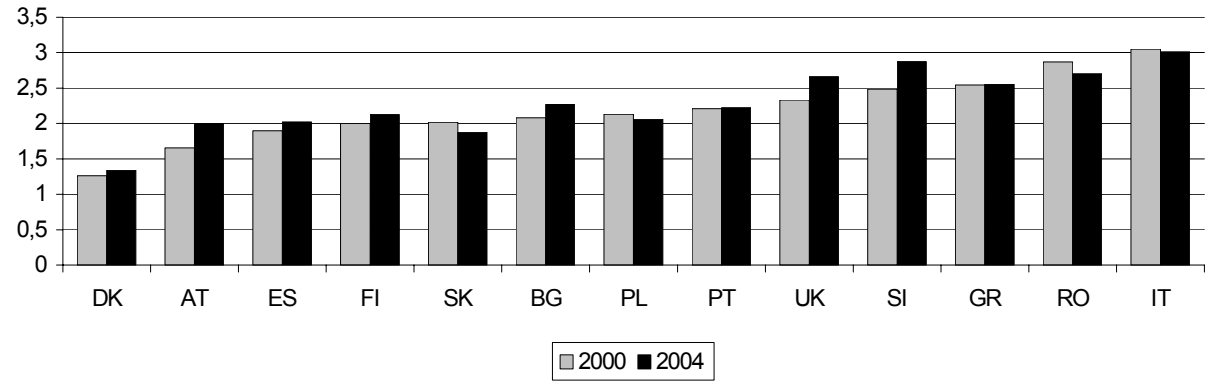
Figure 1: Youth unemployment (< 25 years) and early school leaving (2004; Eurostat LFS)*



* Early school leavers: % of 18-24 year olds with less than upper secondary education currently not in education or training; unemployment ratio: % of the 15-24 year old population out of work seeking a job; unemployment rate: % of the 15-24 year old labour force out of work but seeking a job (see Chapter 2).

The policy context of the study is further marked by the mid-term review of the Lisbon Strategy which showed that the major benchmarks on the way to achieve a competitive and cohesive knowledge-based society such as an overall employment rate of 70% and a reduction in early school leaving to 10% appear to be harder to achieve by 2010 than was initially expected. The review and related publications such as the Kok-Report (EC, 2004a; 2004b) highlight that young people have profited less from inclusion and active labour market policies than other age groups while already the Joint Employment Report 2004 (EC, 2004c) highlighted a deficit of active labour market policies in attracting and including young people. In fact in most countries between 2000 and 2004 youth unemployment increased more than overall unemployment (see Figure 2).

Figure 2: Ratio of youth unemployment to overall unemployment 2000 and 2004 (Eurostat, LFS)



Concerns about early school leaving and youth unemployment refer in particular to the negative consequences that arise from early school-to-work transitions and both the consequence for the individual and society at large. Factors such as career stability, income levels and access to lifelong learning, but in addition the consequences in terms of self-esteem, confidence and a sense of citizenship (cf. Kieselbach et al., 2001; Hammer, 2003).

Four *key questions* were posed in the call for tender for this study:

1. What are the socio-economic characteristics of disadvantaged youth in relation to unemployment and low educational attainment?
2. What are the key problems of the transition of disadvantaged youth from school to work and the main obstacles for their sustainable integration into the first labour market?
3. What impact do both inclusion and active labour market policies and their interaction have in fighting youth unemployment and in promoting smooth transitions from school/vocational training to work?
4. What are causes of success or failure of educational reforms, social inclusion and active labour market programmes to support disadvantaged youth?

However, the concern expressed in documents such as the Kok-Report is not restricted to young people's potential contribution to higher employment rates and the envisaged demand for knowledge and skills, but also extends to the question of future contributions in terms of pensions and social reproduction. As a result in spring 2005, the European Council adopted a European Pact for Youth, which the European Commission has interpreted as a need for a "renewed endeavour to build employment pathways for young people" in a life-cycle perspective (EC, 2005a, p. 4). This means that young people's transitions from school to work need to be related to the question of young people's position in society, or in other words their citizenship status. Therefore, the objective of this study was complemented by a crosscutting question: What is youth specific in social disadvantage and what does a specific youth approach of inclusion and active labour market policies actually mean?

The main potential of the study is to identify the blind spots in which youth specific factors have been overseen or neglected so far by inclusion and active labour market policies. Mainstreaming youth into inclusion and active labour market policies implies both to take youth specific factors of disadvantage into consideration as well as youth specific policy objectives and mechanisms of delivery.

A youth-centred perspective towards disadvantage and social integration has been developed in earlier EU-funded studies and conferences such as:

- Misleading Trajectories. Evaluation of labour market policies concerning non-intended side-effects of social exclusion (Thematic Network funded under the 4th Framework Programme for Research, Technology and Development; 1998-2001; cf. Walther, Stauber et al., 2002);
- Young People and Transition Policies in Europe, a conference aimed at a dialogue between researchers and policy makers, held 2002 in Madrid where six EU-funded comparative studies on the relation between young people in transitions to work and respective policy measures were presented and discussed (Accompanying Measure under 5th Framework Programme; cf. López Blasco et al., 2003);
- Youth Policy and Participation (YOYO). Potentials of participation and informal learning for young people's transitions to the labour market (Research project under the 5th Framework Programme, 2001-2004; cf. Walther et al., 2004), based on biographical interviews and case studies of good practice policies aimed at enhancing the motivation of young people by participatory approaches.

These studies share an understanding of social integration which integrates the systemic perspectives of institutional actors and the subjective views of individuals, whereby young people also need to be viewed as experts regarding their transitions; especially, if adopting a citizenship perspective. Young people themselves also confirm the analysis made in the Joint Employment Report 2004 about active labour market policies failing to attract young people. Although this thematic study centres on the analysis of socio-economic indicators, institutional structures and policy objectives, by way of conclusion to this introduction some quotations of young people interviewed in the framework of the YOYO study are presented. They provide accounts of their de-motivating experiences of restricted choice, due to lower qualifications or contracted labour markets, that in particular disadvantaged youth tend to experience with institutions during their transitions to work (Walther et al., 2004).

De-motivation starts within school, most lately in lower secondary education where young people perceive a lack of relevance of what they are taught, individual recognition and personalised relationships:

"A lot of theory and almost no practice" (ROM, female, 21).

"[Teachers] do not make demands on you as a person, only on your abilities" (DK, female, 18)

This continues with regard to professional orientation and careers guidance, which is frequently experienced as being forcing into certain directions rather than assisting them in finding out what they want and what they are good at. Some were even openly discouraged:

"For the girls: only placement offers in hair-dressing, retail and child-care." (D, female, 17)

"He said to me 'you have no hope, son, you'll never be anything'." (UK, male, 19)

This is even more pronounced in terms of the employment service where they feel treated as cases rather than as individuals and they do not expect any effective service:

"It is an administration after all … Just staring into your file, going bah, bah, they treat you like a cow …You feel they do not like their job "(D, male, 18 and 21)

"While I am unemployed ... I'm invisible, I'm a number that doesn't exist. Because I am not getting any benefit". (ES, male, 25)

This also applies to the training and work experience schemes which they are sent to participate in by Employment Services which rarely correspond to their interests, whilst they are also skeptical in terms of the outcomes and the relevance of these schemes:

"…a poxy job where you're treated like a slave" (IE, male, 21)

"Not everybody wants to become a driver or tailor … they should ask people." (RO, female, 20)

Some of them, in general feel they have no prospects, at least not in their home country:

"… in this country, there are no possibilities." (ROM, male, 21)

*"I think I'll just be a f***ing victim" (UK, male, 17)*

"We are alone! If you are lucky enough to have some friends, fine, otherwise …" (IT, female, 19)

While the objective of including the younger generation in a sustainable way necessitates taking account of 'hard' socio-economic and institutional factors, it is unlikely that policies aimed at reducing early school leaving and youth unemployment will succeed if such messages remain unheard. It is therefore one of the key objectives of this report to include them as much as possible and to relate them to policy-related perspectives.

This report is structured as follows:

Chapter 2 outlines the methodology of the study in terms of project structure, data collection procedures, analysis and validation, types of data and information utilised, and the scope of the potential outcomes.

Chapter 3 introduces the key concepts used in the study, especially regarding a life-cycle perspective on youth transitions and disadvantage. This includes an understanding of social integration, social inclusion and social exclusion, which integrates systemic or structural dimensions with the subjective views of young people.

Chapter 4 presents findings regarding constellations of disadvantage in terms of early school leaving, unemployment and precariousness, where different types of indicators are related and clustered according to similar patterns.

Chapter 5 contains findings regarding the different policy approaches adopted in the countries under investigation describing existing policy measures, presenting examples of good practice and relating specific policies to the respective constellations of disadvantage.

Chapter 6 concentrates on the factors of success in policies aimed at the social inclusion of young people in a sustainable perspective. The main sub-headings are funding, access to measures (in objective and subjective terms), coordination of policies and reflexivity of institutions.

Chapter 7 provides a comparative analysis of country-specific constellations and policy mixes. The question whether adopted policies are adequate is related to a model of transition regimes whereby similarities and differences are interpreted and the scope for changing national policy pathways are assessed.

Chapter 8 concludes by outlining a policy of youth mainstreaming which aims at reconciling the perspectives of employability, social inclusion and citizenship. The prerequisites of such an approach include general as well as country-specific policy recommendations.

The report also includes a series of Annexes. Annex I in this volume contains the contact details of the national experts involved on the study as well as a list of other experts from policy, practice and research who have been consulted throughout the study process. In the second volume Annex II contains brief national reports giving account of youth disadvantage and respective policies in the countries involved in the study, Annex III provides the questionnaire on the basis of which national experts collected national data and information, Annex IV is a collection of detailed descriptions of good practice policies, while Annex V presents the joint guidelines according to which these descriptions have been produced. Finally, Annex VI provides a description and evaluation of the process of national and European validation of intermediate findings.

2. Methodology and Procedure

In the following we will give a brief overview over the way in which the Thematic Study on Policy Measures concerning Disadvantaged Youth was structured in terms of collaboration and procedure. It will be further explained what kind of data have been gathered, in which way this was done and how they were analysed. Before this backdrop the nature of findings and outcomes of the study will be outlined.

It is obvious that assessing disadvantage of young people and respective policy measures in 13 countries is a very complex task, especially if the duration is limited to ten months; from End of December 2004 until the end of October 2005. It was therefore crucial to structure the process as tightly as possible. As regards the organisational structure, roles and relationships within the research group were divided as follows:

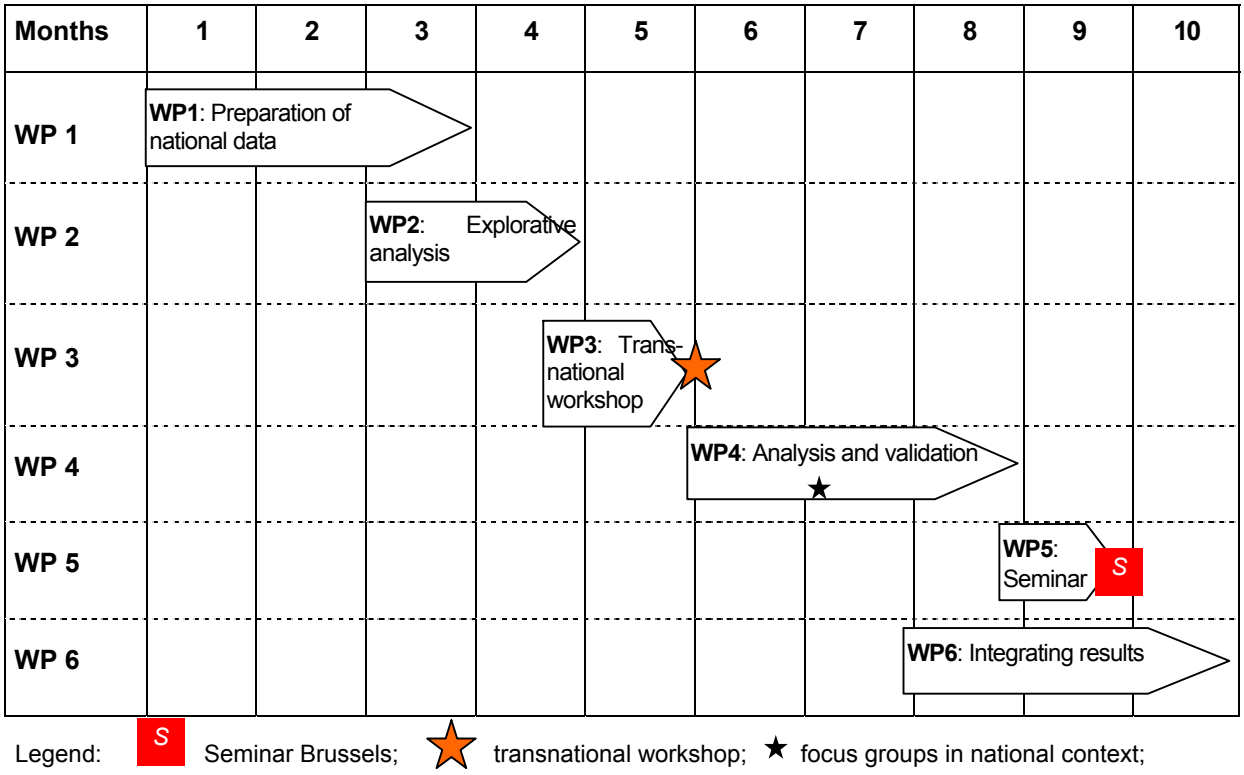
- each of the countries covered by the study was represented by a *national expert* (see front page as well as Annex 1) whose task was to provide national information, to carry out the analysis of country-specific data and to provide the study coordinators with feedback regarding the fit between the national and the comparative analysis;
- four national experts, coming from different European contexts (Bulgaria, Finland, Italy, UK), formed a *steering committee* assisting the coordination in the cross-country analysis and with the production of the final report;
- the *coordination* finally had the task of managing the process while also carrying out the major part of the analysis work and the reporting; given the large number of countries involved and their split between countries performing under-average and contrasting countries, it proved as an advantage that the coordination did not represent a country under investigation.

As regards the process of data collection, analysis and reporting, the work was divided into six steps (see also figure 3):

1. The key questions were differentiated into common guidelines according to which the national experts provided country-specific information and analyses; in parallel, cross-national European statistics were analysed (see Volume 2, Annex III);
2. The second phase consisted of exploratory analysis of national and cross-national information and data to find patterns of disadvantage and distinct policy mixes;

3. Third step was a trans-national workshop with all national experts where both characteristics and first findings emerging from exploratory analysis were discussed to deepen the common conceptual and analytical framework;
4. The fourth phase consisted,
   - first of deepening the comparative analysis,
   - second, in providing analytical descriptions of good practice policies (see Volume 2, Annex IV and V);
   - third in producing draft national briefing papers on the basis of the questionnaires (see Volume 2, Annex II);
   - and fourth in a validation process on the national level: draft national reports were discussed with other national experts (see Annex I in this volume and Annex VI in Volume 2).
5. The fifth step was a European-wide seminar to discuss provisional findings with European and national policy makers as well as representatives of European organisations (see Volume 2, Annex VI);
6. The final and sixth stage was the completion of the final report taking the discussions at the seminar into account.

Figure 3: Timetable



The sample of countries involved was partly pre-defined inasmuch as the programme committee had agreed on focussing on ten member states or accession countries displaying ratios of early school leaving *or* youth unemployment above EU-average: Bulgaria, Finland, Greece, Italy, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Spain and the UK. Apart from that three contrasting countries were selected representing a Nordic country, a country with an apprenticeship system and a well-performing new member state. Apart from their good performance with regard to both issues, Austria was chosen for a more flexible and permeable apprenticeship system than Germany, Denmark for its combination of flexicurity with an 'education for all' strategy, and Slovenia due to its ambitious lifelong learning reform.

As regards the key issues of early school leaving and youth unemployment definitions by Eurostat and EU policies were adopted although they sometimes differ from nationally used concepts:

- *early school leaving:* the proportion of 18-24 year olds with qualification at or below lower secondary education (ISCED 2) who currently are neither in education nor training; in some countries however, focus lies on those dropping out before completing the stage of education they are enrolled in, especially if during compulsory education (e.g. Portugal, Romania).
- *youth unemployment:* 15-24 year olds who have not been in work for the last four weeks and are looking for employment whether or not registered as unemployed. There are two measurements which both are being referred to: the unemployment *rate* indicates the percentage of unemployed in relation to the active population which however differs considerably itself among member states; The unemployment *ratio* is the number of unemployed in relation to the whole population of the respective age bracket which may be seen as a more reliable indicator of the 'size' of the problem of youth unemployment in a certain societal context. The youth unemployment ratio is especially helpful if related to employment, education and inactivity rates providing an overview over the distribution of main status across the youth population (cf. O'Higgins, 1997).

While also taking account of recent research literature regarding disadvantage of young people in terms of school failure, unemployment and precarious life conditions, the analysis is mainly based on three types of data and information:

- *national data and findings* gathered by the national experts according to common guidelines agreed with several experts from different units within the EC (see Volume 2, Annex III). These guidelines covered a wide range of sources: national education, social inclusion and labour market statistics and related research findings, structures of education

and training, target group definitions, mainstream as well as innovative policy measures with regard to early school leaving and youth unemployment, and current policy discourses. In some countries information was not easily accessible and therefore expert interviews with key policy-makers e.g. in national ministries were used to evaluate the latest developments. National information was primarily used to outline national policy-mixes and priorities while – comparable to other European research aimed at relating existing national data bases (IARD, 1998; Hannan et al., 1999) – national statistics and findings from national surveys were less useful for trans-national comparison; also because not always corresponding to EU definitions and age ranges. Based on the common guidelines, brief national reports have been produced (see Volume 2, Annex II).

- *European statistical data*, especially from the Labour Force Survey database (for some issues reference was made to the LFS adhoc module 'transitions to work' from 2000; Müller & Kogan, 2003), and structural indicators regarding education and training (Eurydice, 2005); this was complemented by OECD data from the PISA studies in 2000 and 2003 on reading literacy and mathematic skills (OECD, 2001; 2004), as well as the OECD database on labour market policies.

- *Case studies of good practice policies* elaborated according to a common set of guidelines (see Volume 2, Annex V) including quantitative information on participants and funding; qualitative information on objectives, target groups, methods, policy environments; and – where available – evaluation data on outcomes. Reference was not only made to measures which have been operative for some time but as well to more recent examples also if not yet completely evaluated. Otherwise policies which are innovative in terms of learning from the failure of previous policies and building on a more thorough assessment of the situation of disadvantaged youth could not have been included. The concept of good practice needs further to be differentiated as the meaning of 'good' depends on the respective context. Where previously no policies for disadvantaged have existed the introduction of measures for yet untargeted groups were regarded as good practice; where measures exist the term either means that outcomes have improved (quantitatively or qualitatively) or that categories of young people are involved who were not reached before. While short descriptions of selected examples are included in Chapter 5, see Annex IV in Volume 2 of this report for more detailed results of the case studies.

As regards analysis, *constellations of disadvantage* have been developed by relating performance indicators (early school leaving or youth unemployment) to both indicators such as education level, gender and poverty and to institutional factors related to the structure of education, training, welfare or labour market policies in the respective countries. Unfortunately no relevant indicators for ethnic minority are available at the EU level which would take account of the diversity of ethnic minority situations (cf. Schwarz & Vollmer, 2003). In order to visualise constellations, overview tables have been structured by sorting countries according to three levels of performance (high, medium, low).

As regards *policy mixes* a similar approach has been adopted. However, due to the lack of reliable and/or comparable data regarding single policy issues, the importance of different types of policy measures and their quality in terms of implementation and delivery had to be interpreted from available quantitative and qualitative information, partly drawn from descriptions in the national reports, especially with regard to measures identified as good practice. While there is a an important body of comparative literature on policy areas such as labour market policies, there is no comprehensive work done on the issue of disadvantaged youth.

Differences between national constellations of disadvantage and policy mixes have been interpreted by referring to a heuristic model of transition regimes. This is meant to contextualise the findings with regard to the wider socio-economic, institutional and cultural contexts which determine the extent to and direction in which factors of disadvantage and structures of school-to-work-transitions actually can be changed; and how experiences made in other contexts with other policy measures can be used in making social inclusion of disadvantaged youth more sustainable.

What can one expect realistically from this study? If one analyses the broad range of research literature regarding the evaluation of active labour market policies one finds on the one hand evidence of the ongoing search for ways of measuring effects of policies as precisely as possible; especially, as regards employment outcomes and cost-effectiveness of active labour market policies. On the other hand, it reveals that scepticism prevails even with regard to single policy measures. Not only labour market developments, dead weight effects, but also differences among addressees need to be controlled by means of control groups or statistical matching methods; which however rarely is being done (which has also been stated in the framework of the peer review process on social inclusion). However, inasmuch as single policies are always embedded in complex systems of socio-economic development and policy

dynamics interfering influences only partially can be excluded. This aggravates if thinking of measuring effects of national policy-mixes; and of course in an internationally comparative perspective. With regard to all types of measures – be it benefits, counselling, training or subsidies – different studies have come to contradicting or not easily transferable findings.

Another argument which may be even more relevant is that evaluation depends on the criterion of success against which policies actually are being evaluated: is it the rate of participants of a policy measure who enter a job afterwards or those who keep a job or progress to higher-qualified and better paid jobs over time? What about other effects of policy measures apart from getting a job or not. These are sometimes hardly quantifiable and research that tries to do so on a long-term scale tends to be rare because of the high costs. Even trends towards monitoring and quality management according to fixed standards in social work seems to have experienced a significant decline (yet only after having served as legitimacy to reduce funding). In fact, many authors argue that without a mixture of qualitative and quantitative, adhoc and longitudinal instruments even effects of single measures can hardly by assessed (cf. Martin & Grubb, 2004; Schröder, 2004; Speckesser, 2004).

In sum, while the reliability of the outcomes of standardised measurement of inclusion and active labour market policies can be doubted, it may also be seen as dangerous in general because giving way to reducing comprehensive policy objectives of social integration to measurable aims of short-term labour market integration.

Given the large amount of countries, the complexity of the topic, the amount of issues and single policy measures it is of course not possible to do all phenomena justice, to take all policy measures into consideration and to calculate their effects. Some important aspects of youth disadvantage have been given less attention because they have been covered by recent European studies with similar methodical approaches, but a more specific focus on single target groups of fields of policy, like the situation of the Roma (EC, 2004e), the state of labour market policies for people with disabilities (EC, 2002), of policies against child poverty (Hoelscher, 2004) or on homelessness (Edgar et al. 2004), as well as on undeclared work (Renoy et al., 2004). What can be achieved with our rather broad thematic approach is to combine small-scale realities to broader clusters, assess their relation with existing policy mixes and can compare these constellations with general socio-economic indicators. From those situations in which there is an apparent fit and especially from the broad range of good practice descriptions it is possible to derive essential factors of policy success. A specific

potential outcome of the study is to seek for blind spots in which youth specific factors have been overseen or neglected so far by policies. Mainstreaming youth into inclusion and active labour market policies implies both to take youth specific factors of disadvantage into consideration as well as youth specific policy objectives and mechanisms of delivery.

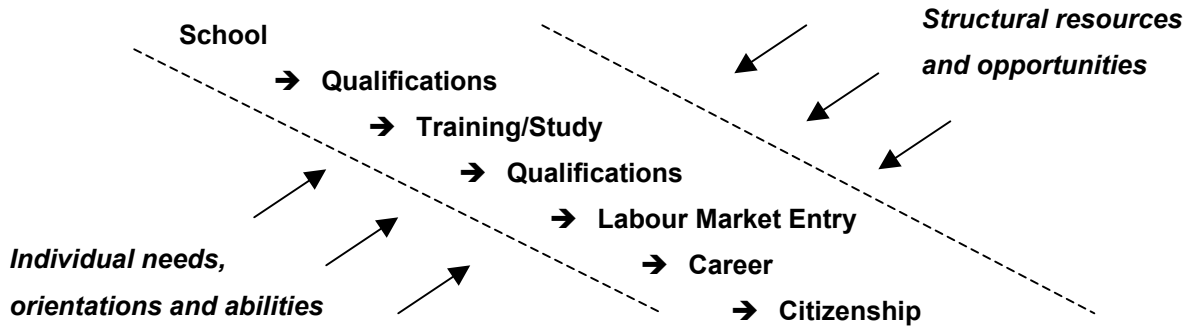
3. Youth transitions and disadvantage in Europe: concepts and perspectives

Before entering into a detailed discussion of the findings this chapter seeks to clarify some of the key concepts and perspectives that have guided the analysis. In particular we focus upon the concepts of youth transitions and disadvantage and the underlying understanding of social integration/inclusion[3] and social exclusion. In addition as a background comparative perspective we also introduce the model of transition regimes that is expected to provide explanatory potential in terms of cross-national differences and similarities as well the scope for policy change within the different contexts.

3.1 De-standardisation of youth transitions

Traditionally, the integration of young people into society is imagined and institutionalised as a sequence of steps: school, involvement in training or studies which correspond to the demands of certain occupational positions which in turn provide citizenship status. This relates to a standard life course model that centres around an adult status based on paid work and the family.

Figure 4: 'Normal' transition model



While such linear transitions have never been the normality for all they are increasingly being replaced by de-standardised and prolonged transitions which not only take longer to complete but are also diversified and individualised. Young people are increasingly less able to rely on collective patterns and orientations but instead have to take decisions themselves and are made to feel responsible for them despite of the unequal access to resources, opportunities and

[3] While there are no clear-cut definitions we understand the current use of the terms in the sense that *social integration* as a more sociological term refers to both the process and the state of societal reproduction while *social inclusion* is mainly used to describe policy processes aimed at the goal of social integration; normally it is restricted to those groups or individuals who are identified as being at risk of or affected by exclusion.

risks. Transitions are also fragmented in so far as the steps involved may have to be withdrawn while family formation, housing, partnership or lifestyle transitions no longer are a logical consequence of the transition to work but follow their own different rhythms. This means that young people's lives oscillate between autonomy and dependency, youth and adulthood like 'yoyos' so that assessing transitions to work both in terms of research and policy requires a more comprehensive perspective and it may be more appropriate to refer to 'young adults' than to youth (Walther, Stauber et al., 2002; López Blasco et al., 2003).

Education and (un)employment have a paradoxical role in this process. On the one hand educational levels are rising and there are increasing difficulties with labour market entry, factors which have contributed to prolonged and de-standardised transitions, on the other hand de-standardisation reinforces vulnerability to unemployment and exclusion due to the lack of reliable trajectories and the risks inherent in taking wrong decisions. Whilst education and employment have been decoupled, education and training no longer provide a guarantee, however the accumulation of skills, knowledge and qualifications remain central to securing a sustainable career.

In this situation of increased individual self-responsibility individual subjectivity has gained importance, in other words: the relevance of individual agency in relation to socio-economic and institutional structures has become increasingly visible; the motivation to take one decision or another: to continue with education or to drop out, to adapt to labour market demands or to wait for the right job to come, to build a family or to postpone parenthood.

This relates to an understanding of *social integration* that corresponds to the interplay of structure and agency while implying (in a normative perspective) the ideal of a balance (Giddens, 1984). Individuals' lives are structured by access to resources and opportunities but also by the way in which they perceive, interpret and cope with their life situation. Institutional perspectives in most cases interpret *social integration* in terms of *social inclusion* resulting from increased qualifications and labour market integration. However, integration does not occur in a mechanical way by 'putting' young people into education or work but is dependent on individual decisions and active engagement in the construction of ones own biography. Motivation as the internal process of decision-making may be considered as the key to this interplay which has for some time been underplayed in the process of policy making (see Walther et al., 2004). While current activation policies do refer to individuals' motivation, they appear informed more by common sense rather than by theoretical and empirically grounded evidence (van Berkel & Hornemann Møller, 2002; Serrano Pascual,

2004). Psychology explains motivation as the result of the relation between two factors with both of them being a *sine qua non*:

- the subjective relevance of a certain goal for the actor and
- the extent to which he or she believes to have control over reaching this goal: resources and opportunities in subjective perspective (cf. Heckhausen, 1991; Bandura, 1997).

The relation between social structure and motivation is clear: those with higher qualifications have both the resources and opportunities to choose meaningful goals while those with low qualifications and weak family resources have neither the means to cope with nor the access to subjectively meaningful careers. Withdrawing from formal institutions, dropping out from education or accepting a position of status zer0 may be the only way to act autonomously.

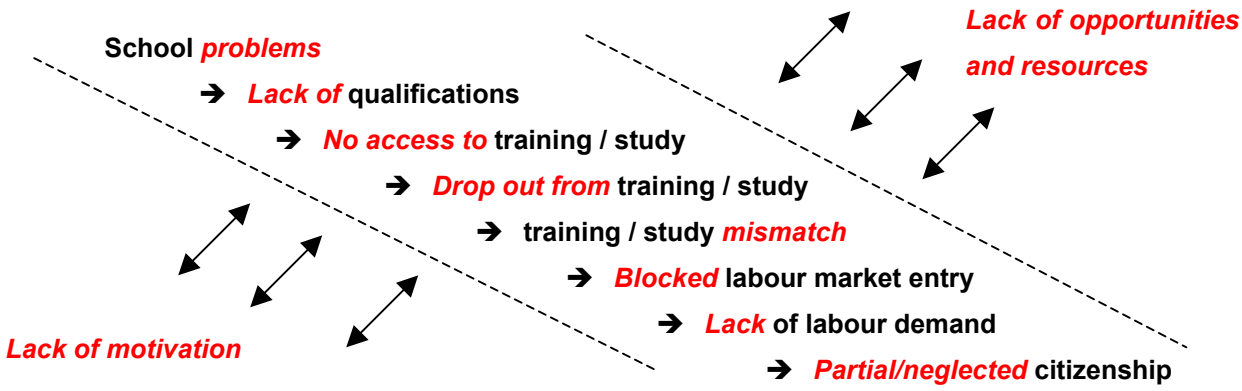
This means that a such a perspective on the social integration of young people into society should not solely be restricted to institutional or systemic criteria such as qualifications, employment or income but needs to include subjective satisfaction that may, or may not, coincide with such systemic criteria. Such a perspective of inclusion therefore needs to be extended to include both systemic and subjective risks (Walther et al., 2002).

In sum, if thinking in a life-cycle perspective as suggested by the European Youth Pact the sustainable inclusion of young people implies that 'employment pathways' are broadened to social integration pathways with work as a key element but one that needs to be subjectively compatible with the other dimensions of social integration. It may be necessary to reflect upon the meaning of citizenship – conceptualised by Marshall (1950) as civil, political and social rights – in terms of young people. With the prolongation and fragmentation of transitions from youth to adulthood in general, and from school to work in particular, it becomes increasingly problematic to postpone access to social rights, because the consequence is that it excludes great shares of young people from full citizenship. For inclusion and active labour market policies this creates a dilemma. On the one hand, youth policies aim to instil a sense of citizenship in young people; on the other inclusion and active labour market postpone the fulfilment of such rights, in so far as they adopt procedures of integration which many young people subjectively perceive and experience as humiliating (cf. Walther et al., 2004). A youth approach implies to apply citizenship principles such as active participation and social rights not only to those in employment but also to the mechanisms of labour market integration itself.

3.2 Disadvantage: concepts and policies

What does 'disadvantage' mean in terms of youth transitions? One may refer to young people as disadvantaged if the central prerequisites for a standard biographical transition process – following the perspective of structure and agency – are lacking (see Figure 5). The relationship between the two may be summarised as a lack of accessibility, manageability and relevance of education, training and employment opportunities.

Figure 5: Disadvantage in youth transitions



The *socio-economic structures* of disadvantage are related to young people's resources to cope with their transition to work that derive from educational attainment, family support, gender, ethnicity and space (region). Rather than being a directly related variable the issue of social class can be seen as one that influences educational attainment and family support while it is also interrelated with gender, ethnicity and space or region. While the perspective on individual characteristics explains the results of competition (different competitiveness), a structural perspective deals with the reasons of increasing competition for scarce positions characterised by inclusion and based on quality jobs. Therefore the socio-economic perspective needs to include the structural opportunities young people have access to in order to enter employment or training, which are related to structures of labour markets and education and training systems (e.g. OECD, 2001; ETF, 2003; EC, 2004d; 2005b; Eurydice, 2005; cf. Hannan et al., 1999; Smyth et al., 2001; Hammer, 2003).

In their socialisation process individuals incorporate socio-economic structures in terms of personal resources such as skills and knowledge which in turn are reflected through educational credentials and/or professional qualifications. At the same time however, young people also have to actively cope with the demands arising from education or labour markets. With de-standardardised transitions increasing, they simultaneously have to deal with contradictory demands that arise from different aspects of life whereby career-related

decisions become more and more complicated, especially if resources and opportunities are limited, and to take decisions for which they are made to feel responsible. While surveys of young people confirm they remain highly committed towards work and a career they also provide evidence of decreasing levels of trust among young men and women in public institutions (cf. IARD, 2001; Eurostat, 2001). *Individual orientations and strategies* related to disadvantage are reflected by 'drop out' rates from education or training or by young people withdrawing from the transition system, preferring a 'status zer0' position (Williamson, 1997; Jung, 1997; Kieselbach et al., 2001; du Bois-Reymond et al., 2002; López Blasco et al., 2003).

It is obvious that a bi-focal perspective of socio-economic structure and individual agency is simplistic and reductive with regard to disadvantage in youth transitions but needs to be complemented by the level of institutions and policies that aim to mediating between labour markets and individuals. Thereby, disadvantage is influenced and reproduced by regulating access to education, training, labour market and welfare – but also by the way disadvantage is conceptualised and addressed. It is here that the difference of the terms social integration as the general interaction between structure and agency and social inclusion as the measures taken to connect those who are at risk of exclusion to mainstream society. Yet, there are two ways of interpreting (diagnosis) and addressing (policies) disadvantage:

Table 1: Individualising versus structural approaches to disadvantage

Policies / Diagnosis	Individualising *(focus on employability)*	Structural *(focus on access and opportunities)*
Individualising *(lack of adaptation to labour market demands)*	Pre-vocational measures, Workfare'	Enlarged and supported access to regular education and work
Structural *(Lack of opportunities)*	Pre-vocational measures, Re-training	Job-creation, subsidies, assistance for self-employment

1. 'young people are disadvantaged because they are unemployed'; a structural diagnosis that call for a structural policy that increases demand for labour, this has for some time been particularly relevant in countries with high youth unemployment;
2. 'young people are unemployed because they are disadvantaged'; a diagnosis that refers to individual deficits, a lack of skills or unwillingness to work and policies that aim to adapt young people, increase their employability (or trainability) which predominates in countries with lower youth unemployment while – through EU policies – currently also replaces the more-structural approaches in the other countries (see also Table 1).

While these two are ideal type interpretations of course intermediate constellations can also be found in terms of reacting to an individualised diagnosis with increasing options in the regular system while equipping them with flexible support (e.g. special needs education within regular school) – or by conceiving structural causes of disadvantage and still forcing individuals to adapt and re-orientate which is particularly the case among young women who often have to accept lower status routes despite of above-average qualifications.

This means, we start from an understanding of disadvantage as a social construction by which society and institutions justify and distribute specific resources and opportunities.

Such a constructivist perspective towards disadvantage, tends not only to cause contradicting interpretations and conclusions, but also implies misunderstanding that is most evident in the case of the relationship between disadvantage and *disability*. Especially in contexts which – due to high youth unemployment – at least in principle all young people are seen as vulnerable, the term disadvantage is reserved for those with physical, mental or sensory disabilities. Corresponding to the prevalence of a structure-related view of youth unemployment compensatory individualised measures are reserved for this specific target group. One may distinguish between the disabled as objectively disadvantaged and those young people who are referred to as disadvantaged due to their lack of success in the competition for scarce training and jobs. In fact, particularly in Southern European contexts some researchers and policy makers argue that young unemployed with university degrees have also to be regarded as disadvantaged. In this report however, we will not focus specifically on disabled young people, as in most contexts there exist specialist institutions providing special education as well as protected work places. Intermediate examples are those who have been attributed with specific learning disabilities, they may either be addressed as weak pupils with restricted career opportunities due to their difficult starting positions or alternatively through a clinical perspective that interprets weak performance in terms of measurable psycho-physical deficits (cf. Stone, 1992; Walther, 2002).

Disadvantage is obviously an ambiguous concept. On the one hand it justifies socio-political intervention in order to balance social inequality and injustice and to counteract risks of exclusion. This includes individualised approaches that may be adequate in a variety of cases, especially where chances are restricted by objective disabilities. On the other hand, disadvantage can be and often is used as a mechanism for 'cooling out' young people's aspirations, channelling them to lower status routes and segregating them in specialised services. Addressing young people in this way, as 'losers' is likely to undermine their motivation, especially where no jobs and opportunities of career progression are available.

Therefore, policies aimed at tackling disadvantage turn into the mere management of social inequality and risk and result in 'misleading trajectories' that reinforce disadvantage instead of alleviating it (Walther, Stauber et al., 2002).

A conceptual distinction needs to be made between individualised and personalised measures. Whilst 'individualising' measures tend to ascribe deficits to the individual and expect individuals either to downscale their aspirations or to compensate their deficits before entering regular pathways, 'person-centred' measures relate to policy approaches that tailor provision to the individuals needs.

Our main perspective in this study is one of *constellations of disadvantage* rather than addressing distinct problem groups defined by their individual characteristics. Constellations of disadvantage implies to look at the complex interrelationships and to distinguish between socio-economic, institutional and individual factors. Such constellations therefore may be understood as zones of vulnerability and risk that structure individual trajectories. In addition a perspective of constellations of disadvantage is also useful in terms of comparative analysis in so far as in the different contexts different constellations of disadvantage prevail.

3.3 Regimes of youth transitions across Europe

A key question in comparative analysis of youth transitions and policies for the disadvantaged is whether structures and measures are genuinely comparable – and more than that transferable – given the diversity of the wider contexts of transitions and transition policies. This extends to the question whether wider socio-economic and institutional contexts of disadvantage can be influenced at all by inclusion and active labour market policies; not only due to the effects of a global economy but also due to mechanisms of *path dependency*. This concept is used in comparative social policy to explain that fundamental differences between welfare states tend to persist despite of the global processes of modernisation. It refers to the power of historically developed structures due to their interrelationship with other structures and their legitimation through cultural patterns (cf. Pierson, 2000; Cox, 2004). In so far as transitions are influenced by labour market structures, institutional arrangements and the decisions of individuals in navigating their pathways, one may speak of 'transition regimes' as the interplay between socio-economic, institutional and individual dimensions influences the cultural dimension of what is held to be normal, acceptable and legitimate in a given context.

The concept of transition regimes has been inspired by research on *'welfare regimes'*. While there are different models of welfare regimes (Titmuss, 1974; Esping-Andersen, 1990; 1999; Gallie and Paugam, 2000; Ferrera and Rhodes, 2000), distinctions have been developed for example according to gender (Lewis & Ostner, 1994; Sainsbury, 1999) and original regime types have been revised and/or extended. There is also a more general critique against a welfare regime approach that argues that a broad approach cannot do the single case justice and in fact one may argue that there are as many differences within regimes than between regime types. It is also argued that data are often interpreted in such a way to make them fit with regime types therefore concealing differences rather than explaining them (cf. Arts and Gelissen, 2002).

According to us there is some misunderstanding of what a regime is and what a regime model can explain. A first point is that comparative analysis that exceeds two or three countries is reliant on a way of clustering in order to cope with the mass of data related to single policy issues. This means that welfare regimes need to be distinguished from substantial descriptions of specific welfare states but refer to broader welfare arrangements and welfare cultures (Pfau-Effinger, 2004); cultural patterns interrelate with socio-economic and institutional structures resulting in an overall rationale or 'Gestalt' of how individual needs and collective demands are related. This of course does not mean that empirical verification by performance indicators is not necessary but it means that variations on the level of single policy issues may not necessarily contradict an association with the same regime type. The similarities are rather located on the level of policy objectives and the degree to which changing to new approaches is possible. What is also important if applying a regime model is not to neglect socio-economic dynamics and its impact on the relation between path dependency and path deviation. Especially, under the conditions of accelerated change in the context of economic globalisation and political Europeanisation – which is most obvious in terms of the transformation of Central and Eastern European societies – it needs to be taken into consideration that historically developed structures are increasingly challenged by new demands. In fact, comparative research, together with European integration shows differences between countries in terms of policy change. It has been suggested by social actors who refer to this conflict that the discrepancies between structure and culture can reach a critical point that may facilitate path deviation (Pfau-Effinger, 2004).

In order to assess different regimes types regulating young people's transitions from school to work aside from welfare systems in a strict sense other additional aspects need to be included such as:

- Education, e.g. selectivity and stratification (Allmendinger, 1989; OECD, 2001);
- Training, e.g. standardisation and company based vs. schools (Lasonen & Young, 1998);
- Labour market entrance (organisational vs. occupational; Shavit & Müller, 1998);
- Mechanisms of doing gender (Sainsbury. 1999; Julkunen & Malmberg, 2003);
- Explanations of and policies against youth unemployment (Furlong & McNeish, 2001);
- Concepts of youth and disadvantage (IARD, 2001; Walther, 2006).
- Policies of dealing with ethnic minorities and migration (Castles & Miller, 2003)

In this respect while reflecting on the use and the limitations of a regime approach it has been suggested to distinguish between at least four clusters of transition regimes (McNeish & Loncle, 2003; Walther et al., 2004; Walther, 2006; see Table 2):

- the *universalistic* transition regime in Scandinavian countries where universal welfare rights are tied to young people's citizenship status, comprehensive schooling, a flexible training system, broad access to higher education as well as to the labour market due to a large public sector; extensive offers of counselling to facilitate young people's personal development; high level of equal opportunities according to gender;
- the *liberal* transition regime in Anglo-Saxon countries: diversity of access due to high flexible education, training and labour markets, focus on individual responsibility through 'workfare' with increasing risks and inequality; the meaning of 'liberal' is restricted to the overall aim of making young people economically independent as early as possible while state intervention has constantly increased, especially with regard to education;
- the *employment-centred* transition regime in continental countries: selective school and standardised training – covering high rates of school leavers – relate to the occupational segmentation of social positions; few alternatives of entrance and social security for disadvantaged youth with pre-vocational routes often not being accredited but stigmatised while social assistance is not universally accessible;
- the *sub-protective* transition regime in Mediterranean countries: comprehensive school but lack of training routes and of access to benefits; fragmented active labour market policies; long dependency on families of origin; informal work and precarious jobs play a significant role; strongly gendered trajectories; young people lack a clear social status; especially in welfare and labour market terms Portugal is less and less typical for this type;
- the transition regime(s) of *post-socialist* countries in Central and Eastern Europe need further comparative analysis before inclusion in the model – either into existing regime types or in the development of new ones; they share a past in which trajectories where rigidly steered but reliable; since the 1990s most countries aim to restructure towards the liberal or the employment-centred model, yet some of them have sub-protective structures.

Table 2: Modelling Transition Regimes across Europe

	School	*Training*	*Labour market*	*Social security*	*Female employ-ment*	*Explanation of youth unemployment*	*Concepts of youth*	*Change towards …*
EU 15								
Universalistic (DK, FI)	Compre-hensive	Flexible Mainly school	Flexible and open (public sector)	State	High	Lack of orientation	Personal develop-ment	Activation (liberal)
Liberal (UK)	Compre-hensive	Flexible mainly school	Flexible but risky	State / Family	High (strong increase)	Dependency, lack of employability	Early indepen-dence	Workfare and lifelong learning
Employment-centred (AT)	Selective	Standardised Mainly companies	Regulated but closed	State / Family	Medium	Individual socialisation deficits	Allocatio n to social positions	Limited change towards liberal
Sub-protective (ES, GR, IT, PT)	Compre-hensive	Mainly school-based	Closed and risky	Family	Low	Mismatch, segmentation, lack of jobs and structures	Status vacuum	Employ-ment-centred, liberal
Post-socialist countries								
(BG, PL, SI, SK, RO)	Compre-hensive	Mainly school-based	Regulated, risky, rapid change	Family / State	Low (strong decrease)	Mismatch, segmentation, lack of jobs and structures	Status vacuum, social innovator	Employ-ment-centred, liberal

While in Chapters 4 and 5 the main findings are presented without reference to this typology (except of country order in figures) in Chapter 7 we will relate performance-based clusters to the transition regimes. Apart from a scientific added value of contrasting institutional with socio-economic indicators this helps us to contextualise the general recommendations such as ‘increasing x’ or ‘removing y’.

4. Constellations of disadvantage in youth transitions

Constellations of disadvantage as conceptualised in Chapter Three can be analysed in terms of background indicators and their consequences for social integration. Although with some degree of overlap we will therefore relate background indicators such as socio-economic background, gender, ethnicity and regional and economic contexts, before analysing the problems of disadvantage. This coincides with a focus on factors of early school leaving in the first section in so far as school performance relates to earlier stages of the transition biography while in the second section the focus lies on forms of unemployment and precariousness which emerge in later transition stages. It does not need to be said that such an exercise can never be complete as depending on a certain degree of generalisation and selectivity.

4.1 Key background indicators: factors of early school leaving

In the process of social reproduction education has gained the role of a decisive intermediate factor (Bourdieu & Passeron, 1977; Furlong & Cartmel, 1997; Kogan & Müller, 2003). It is widely held that higher qualifications provide protection against unemployment while low or or a lack of qualifications make individuals vulnerable to social exclusion. A current focus of research and policy on early school leaving (see Chapter 3) however is also motivated by the drive towards the knowledge economy.

Table 3: Comparison between early school leaving and competence proficiency*

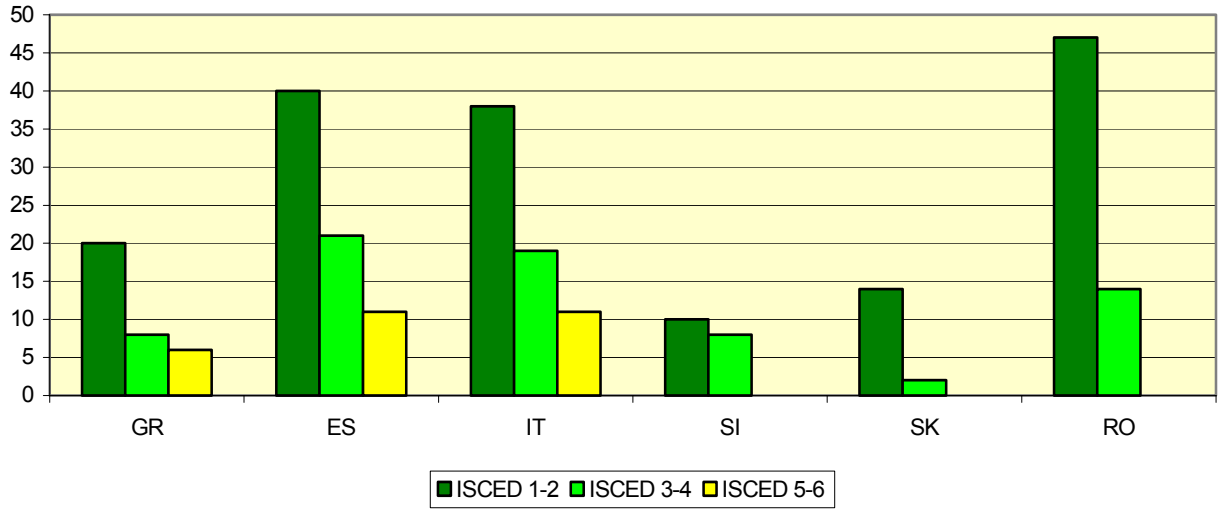
Country	*Early school leaving ranking (rate 2004 in %)***	*Ranking by % of students below level 1 proficiency in reading (PISA 2003)****	*Ranking by % of students below level 1 proficiency in mathematic (PISA 2003)*****
PL	1 *(5,7)*	7 *(8,7%)*	6 *(10,7%)*
SK	2 *(7,1)*	n.a.	5 *(10,2%)*
DK	3 *(8,1)*	6 *(5,9%)*	2 *(7,1%)*
FI	4 *(8,7)*	1 *(1,7%)*	1 *(2,5%)*
AT	5 *(9,2)*	4 *(4,4%)*	3 *(8,1%)*
GR	6 *(15,3)*	7 *(8,7%)*	9 *(21,3%)*
UK	7 *(16,7)*	2 *(3,6%)*	n.a.
IT	8 *(23,5)*	5 *(5,4%)*	7 *(15,1%)*
ES	9 *(30,4)*	3 *(4,1%)*	4 *(10,1%)*
PT	10 *(39,4)*	9 *(9,6%)*	8 *(16,4%)*

* Ranking refers to countries involved both in this study and in PISA 2000 and/or 2003; ** Eurostat 2004 (in brackets % of 18-24 year olds max. ISCED 2); *** OECD, 2001 (in brackets % of 15 year old students below level 1 proficiency); **** OECD, 2004 ((in brackets % of 15 year old students below level 1 proficiency)

If one compares the rates of early school leaving with the results of the PISA studies carried out by the OECD (2001; 2004) parallel outcomes regarding qualifications and competencies can be identified only for Austria, Finland, Italy and Portugal but not for Demark, Greece, Poland, Slovakia, Spain and the UK. This means that education systems may achieve a high level of equality of life chances for school leavers while the level of knowledge and skills they have acquired may not be in line with the post-modern demands of human capital; and vice-versa (see Table 3). In terms of the career chances of school leavers clearly the extent to which they achieve recognised qualifications is more important. Therefore, in the following key factors for early school leaving will be discussed based on the evidence provided international research literature and European statistical data:

- *social inequality:* Educational achievement is strongly related to social factors among which the socio-economic status of the family of origin is seen as crucial. Socio-economic status influences the resources that families have to support their children in coping with the demands of education but also over the extent to which they can subsidise their children and whether they see education as an intrinsic and/or extrinsic value (cf. Bourdieu & Passeron, 1977). The influence of social background on educational attainment accounts especially for members of ethnic minorities (see below). At the national level inequality can be measured by the difference between the highest and lowest incomes (Gini co-efficient) and the overall poverty rate, while the reproductive effects of education can be analysed by comparing the qualification levels of children with parental educational level (see Figure 6; cf. Kogan & Müller, 2003). The PISA study also highlights a clear relationship between socio-economic status and the acquisition of reading and mathematic skills (OECD, 2001; 2004).

Figure 6: Early school leaving and parental education – selected countries (LFS, 2000)

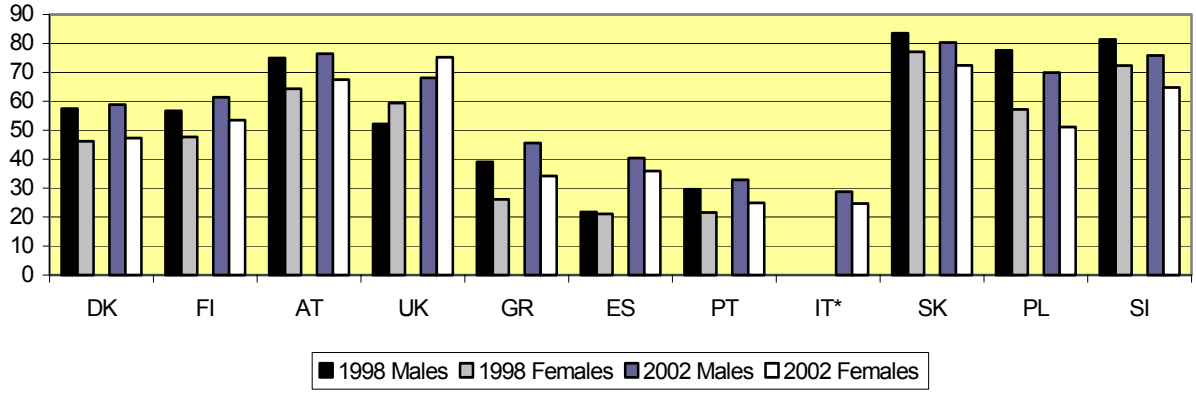


The link between social background and early school leaving highlights how school achievement is not only dependent on developments and conditions of early childhood but also is inherited from generation to generation (Shavit & Blossfeld, 1993).

- Differences in the *structures of education and training systems* are also a factor of social inequality which has been demonstrated both by comparative analysis (Allmendinger, 1989) and international statistics (OECD, 2001; 2004). In addition, there are differences in the ways in which they are linked to the labour market and thereby provide real career opportunities (Shavit & Müller, 1998). And finally, differences in the openness for the interest and engagement of pupils as well as of the wider community has an impact on learning experiences and learning biographies of young people (Bloomer & Hodkinson, 2000). Therefore school systems influence early school leaving through factors such as:
  - selective versus comprehensive access to different post-compulsory routes;
  - broad versus narrow access to higher education;
  - the status of general versus vocational post-compulsory education;
  - company- versus school-based vocational education and training (VET);
  - availability of support within school and training according to individual needs.

  In general, weaker pupils are more likely to fail in selective school systems and in those where vocational training routes are under-developed and/or are largely school-based. At the same time however, national research findings indicate higher levels of dropping out from vocational routes compared to general education (IARD, 1998).

Figure 7: Post-compulsory students in vocational routes by sex in 1998 and 2002 (Eurostat)



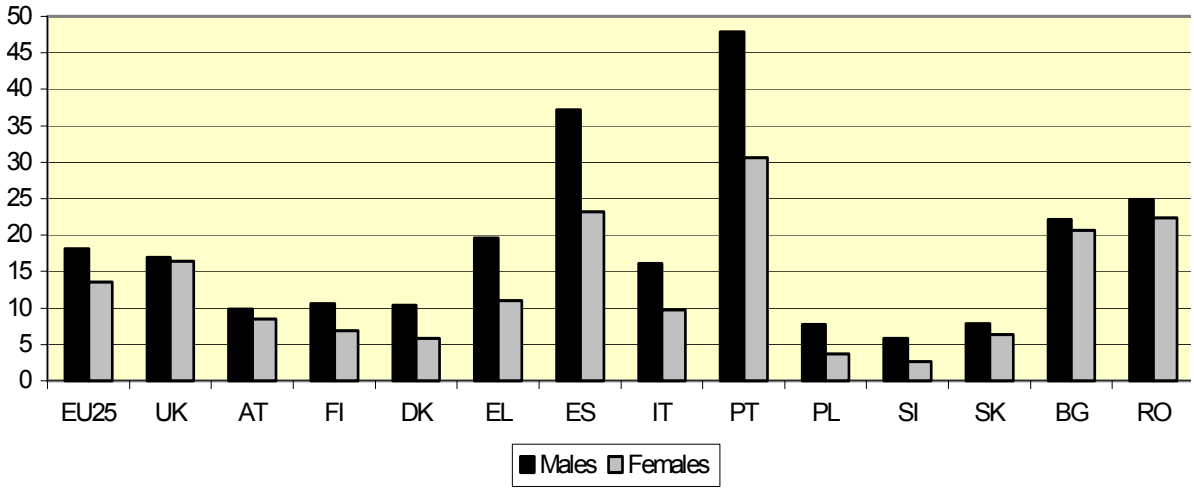
* No data for Italy for 1998 available

While pedagogical aspects may also be relevant it should also be taken into consideration that weaker pupils are more likely to enrol in vocational courses. In fact, despite of efforts

to increase the attractiveness of regular VET (Lasonen & Young, 1998), participation rates are either stagnant or decreasing (except Spain and UK; see Figure 7).

- Research also has highlighted the way in which *labour market* signals influence educational choices. Especially, in the UK where increasing numbers of young people remain in the (comprehensive) school system (where progression is not restricted according to achievement) has been interpreted as representing a 'discouraged worker effect' (O'Higgins, 1997; Biggart, 1998) whereby young people stay in education to avoid entering contracted labour markets. However, at the same time in Southern European countries the opposite effect can be observed. Where at least in the short-term higher qualifications do not protect against unemployment and lengthy job search. Here young people may decide to leave school as soon as job opportunities arise – even if they are precarious (Checchi, 2004). This means that young people actually take the labour market situation into consideration although this may work in different ways in different contexts.
- *Gender* differences are most clear in terms of females' better performance at school compared to the males who are over-represented among early school leavers. While this reflects the general trend of young women increasingly outperforming young men the reasons for this are still under-researched. Yet, there are a series of hypothesis such as the male breadwinner role, whereby those with lower qualifications prefer direct access to work, especially where these are available like in the case of Southern Europe. The distancing from and devaluation of education among lower class young men is perceived as undermining their masculinity; and the modernised socialisation of young women who have learned to manage their motivation in order to profit from the socio-cultural promises of emancipation (Pugliese, 1996; Cohen, 1997; du Bois-Reymond & Stauber, 2005).

Figure 8: Early school leaving according to gender (Eurostat, 2004)



- *Ethnicity, race and/or immigration* is often associated with disadvantage, especially in terms of early school leaving but it is also related to youth unemployment. However, it is important to differentiate between 2nd or 3rd generation descendents of immigrant workers in Western and Northern Europe, the new phenomena of legal and illegal immigrant workers in Southern Europe, citizens from former colonies, refugees and asylum seekers as well as indigenous ethnic minorities such as the Roma in Central and Eastern Europe (partly also Southern Europe) (Szeleny, 2000; Castles & Miller, 2003). Whilst there is OECD data on the percentage of 15 year old pupils with immigrant backgrounds this neglects the ethnic and cultural diversity among European youth (see Table 4 and Table 5); especially, with regard to the Roma reliable statistics are lacking which makes comparison difficult if not impossible (cf. EC, 2004e). While finding a common definition is problematic as neither race nor nationality nor migration applies to all minorities, there is however a broad agreement that *ethnic minority* is a term applicable in most cases; although it has to be said that referring to a person's ethnic origin entails the danger to individualise disadvantage resulting from structures and experiences of discrimination.

Table 4: Constellations of immigration and ethnic minority youth in Europe

Type of minority	*Characteristic and Key problems*	*Countries*
Second and third generation immigrant workers	• Over-average early school leaving and unemployment • Partly low SES • Sub-cultural coping strategies • Language problems	AT, DK
New phenomena of immigrant workers	• Partly illegal residence status • Precarious work arrangements • Education systems not prepared • Language problems	ES, IT, GR, PT
Citizens from former colonies; repatriated emigrants	• In most cases coinciding with low SES • Over-average early school leaving and unemployment (except parts of Asian communities in UK) • Normally no language problems (often 2nd or 3rd generation)	GR, PT, UK
Refugees and asylum seekers	• Unclear / illegal residence status • Often devaluation of previous qualifications (older ones) • Problem of not accompanied juvenile refugees • Language problems	Increasing in all countries but especially in UK, FI
Traditional ethnic minorities (especially Roma)	• Low SES and poverty • Prejudice, discrimination and segregation • Low school attendance • Very high unemployment in all age groups • Partly language problems	BG, ES, GR, PL, PT, RO, SK, SI

Table 5: Percentage of 15 year old pupils with immigrant background (OECD, 2004)*

DK	FI	AT	GR	ES	IT	PT	PL	SK
6.5%	1.9%	13.3%	7.4%	3.4%	2.1%	5.0%	0.0%	0.9%

* immigrant background by place of birth abroad or that of their parents; might include repatriated emigrants

This is especially true for the underachievement in school of youth from ethnic minorities as highlighted by PISA (OECD, 2001; 2004). Even in the Nordic countries where socio-economic background determines school performance to a lesser degree, it is ethnic minority youth who attain significantly lower qualifications compared to nationals and/or those belonging to the majority culture. Such failure is most often ascribed to factors resulting from cultural difference such as language problems or traditional family values. While these aspects clearly play a role it should at the same time be taken into account that most ethnic minorities have a lower socio-economic status that affects school performance in general. Additionally, in some countries minorities experience a situation of segregation – with regard to social infrastructure, housing and to school in particular (e.g. segregation in special schools which is especially the case with the Roma in Slovakia (EC, 2004e) but also 2nd generation immigrant children in Austria). The issue of non-recognition of earlier qualifications (e.g. in the case of refugees or repatriated emigrants) applies only to a small minority of young people compared to older immigrants.

Drawing the different categories together the following constellations can be identified:

- In *Denmark, Finland* and *Slovenia*, low early school leaving correlates with comprehensive school systems; the share of students in vocational routes which are largely school-based but with relevant practical elements in companies is medium to high; links to the labour market are close or at least becoming closer, the rate of those in higher education is medium to high. Social inequality is relatively low while the relation between education of parents and children is less strong than in other countries.

- In *Austria*, the school system selects children early to different tracks reproducing a medium level of social inequality reflected by limited access to higher education. Rates in VET are high and as the apprenticeship system is still receptive and linked to the labour market it provides relevant career options; also because (in contrast to Germany) it is balanced by school-based routes which are relevant in quantitative and qualitative terms.

- In *Poland* and *Slovakia*, social inequality is medium; participation in VET (largely school-based) has been decreasing since the opening of access to higher education. The key problem is both a mismatch between qualifications and labour market demands and an apparent lack of jobs. In terms of a worst-case scenario for these countries the case of Eastern Germany should be mentioned. In the early years after re-unification early school

leaving was lower than in the West but rates have doubled since. With persistent high unemployment more and more young people do not believe that education pays off.

- In *UK* and *Greece*, early school leaving is at a medium level reflecting a relatively high level of social inequality. In both countries education is organised on a comprehensive basis and VET rates – although mostly school-based – have increased considerably. In the UK post-compulsory routes are integrated and accredited within a national system of qualifications while rates of higher education have reached medium to high levels.
- Early school leaving is high in *Bulgaria, Spain, Italy, Portugal* and *Romania* where social inequality is medium to high. School systems are comprehensive, participation in higher education spreads between low and high. Participation in school-based training increases (especially in Spain) but does not match labour market demands. In general the demand for young labour is low (see also Volume 2, Annex II).

Table 6: Constellations of early school leaving

Early school leaving	Countries	Social Inequality*	School System	PISA: SES Effect**	Training Coverage	Training Structure	Access to Higher Education***
Low (< 10%)	AT	Medium	Selective	High	High	Apprenticeship	Low
	DK, FI, SI	Low	Compre-hensive	Low****	Medium-High	Mainly school but close(r) to labour market	Low – Medium
	PL, SK	Medium	Compre-hensive	Medium	Medium (decrease)	Mainly school, mismatch, lack of jobs	Low – Medium (increase)
Medium (10-20%) decrease	GR	High	Compre-hensive	High	Low (increase)	Mainly school, mismatch, lack of jobs	High
	UK	High	Compre-hensive	Medium	High (increase)	Mainly school, modularised	Medium
High (> 20%) decrease	BG, ES, IT, PT, RO	Medium-High	Compre-hensive	High	Low (increase)	Mainly school, mismatch, lack of jobs	Low – High

* according to inequality of income distribution Gini coefficient for 2001 (Slovakia for 2003): low = <25; medium = 25-30; high = >30 and overall poverty rate (2001): low = < 14; medium = 14-17; high = > 17 (Eurostat); ** Effects of socio-economic background on students' performance in mathematics; OECD, 2004); *** % of 20 year olds in higher education (low = < 35%; medium = 35-50%, high = > 50%; Eurostat); **** higher for ethnic minorities (OECD, 2004)

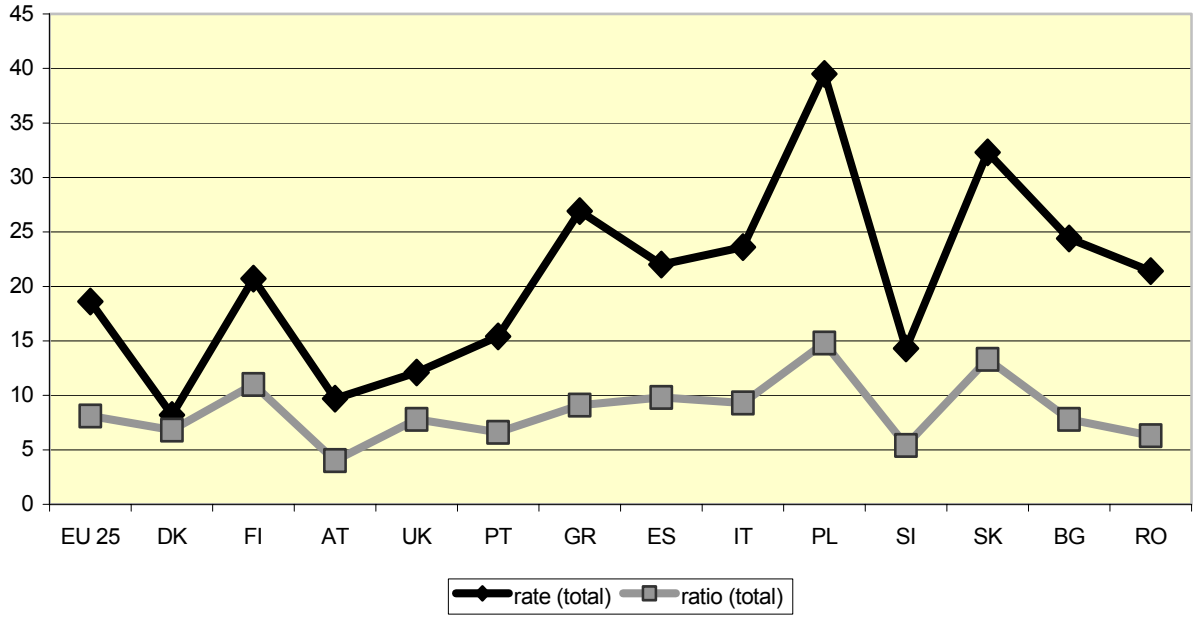
4.2 Key problems in transitions to work: factors of youth unemployment and precariousness

In the standard life course education is the preparatory phase while employment is the backbone not only of the central life phase of adulthood. Therefore, traditionally youth unemployment has been the most obvious and most critical aspect of disadvantage. When it

comes to explaining youth unemployment certainly young people's school career comes into play representing young people's competitiveness for scarce occupational positions, which are attractive, stable and recognised by society. However, there are other structural factors that are more closely connected to labour market entrance.

How is youth unemployment measured? Due to the significant differences between countries in the way in which the unemployed are registered, the most reliable comparative indicators are provided through the Labour Force Survey; which at the European level is further facilitated through the harmonised Eurostat Labour Force data. There are two key measures of unemployment the rate and the ratio. The *unemployment rate* refers to the share of unemployed in relation to the active labour force of the respective age group, whilst the *unemployment ratio* reflects the share of the whole population of the age group.

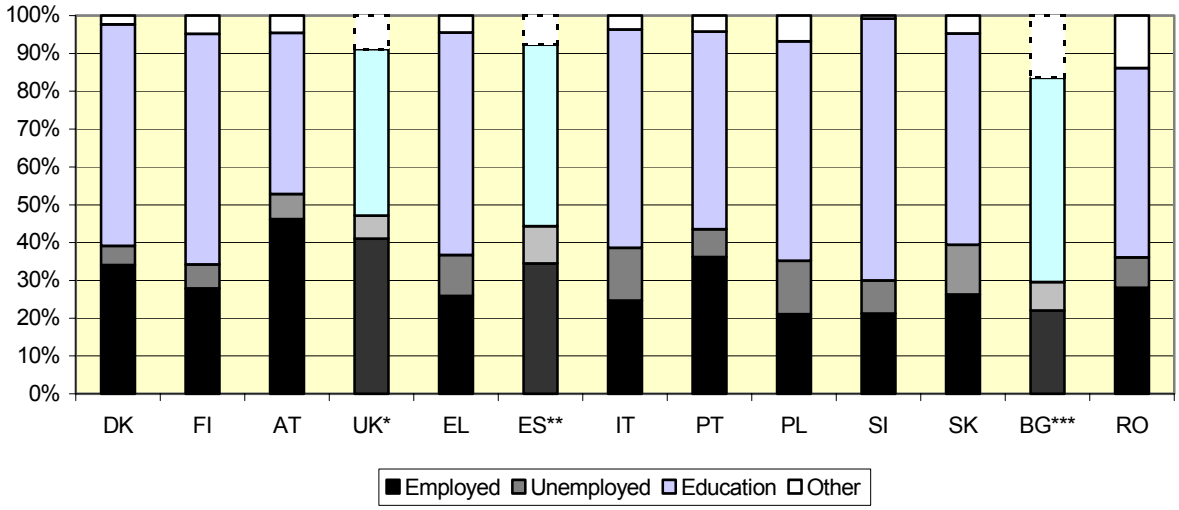
Figure 9: Youth unemployment (< 25) rates and ratios in 2004 (Eurostat LFS)



Comparing these two measures, one may argue that the youth unemployment ratio provides a more realistic assessment of the size of the problem in a given context. However, one can argue that the validity of this information depends on the knowledge regarding different levels of participation in education and training as well as the inactive population. Figure 9 shows a correspondence between the rate and ratio although the differences are bigger where the unemployment rate is high compared to contexts with low rates of unemployment. One reason for this is that among the countries included high unemployment rates go hand in hand with low activity rates so that the proportion of unemployed in relation to the active population is much higher than compared to the total population; or: the more 'discouraged workers'

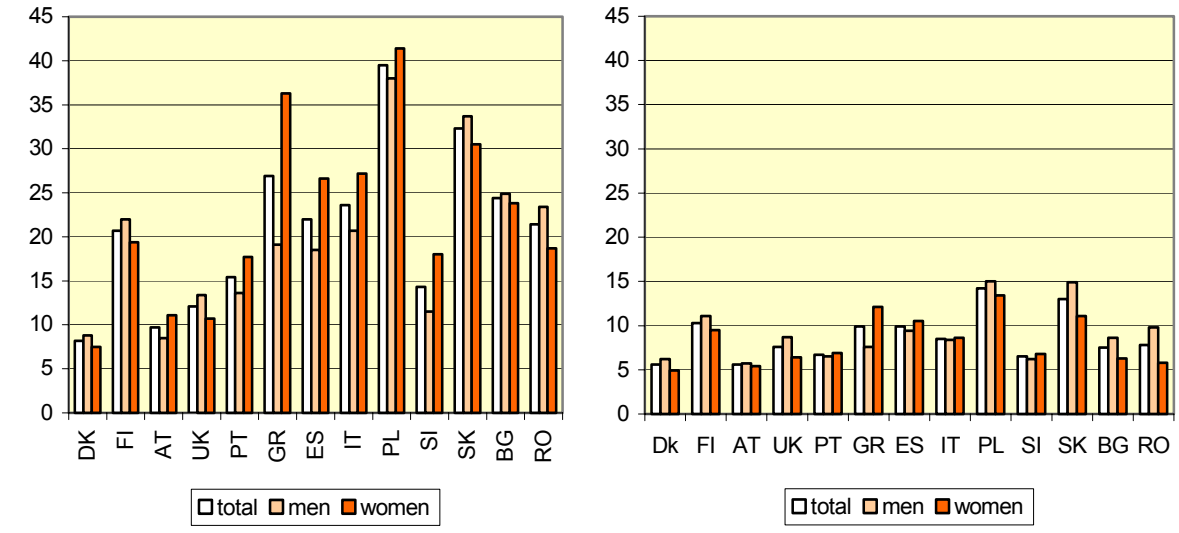
(whether inactive or staying education or training) the lower the youth unemployment ratio. If taking Southern and Eastern European countries with high unemployment and low activity their education and training participation and completion rates are not higher than in Austria or Denmark (see above). The relation between rate and ratio therefore needs to be analysed in relation to any other status or activity of young people (see Figure 10) in order to distinguish whether the inactive ones are active in education or training or in a status zer0 position; which of course may include working in the informal economy (cf. O'Higgins, 1997).

Figure 10: Main status of young people 15-24 in 2004 (Eurostat LFS)



* own estimations according to national LFS on 16-24 year olds and 15 year olds in education according to Eurostat; ** 15-29 year olds according to National Youth Report 2004; *** own estimations according to 16-24 year olds according MBMD survey 2004 and education rate according to Eurostat.

Figure 11: Youth unemployment rates (left) and ratios (right) according to gender 2004 (Eurostat LFS)



Youth unemployment is *gendered*, albeit with a highly diverse situation between national contexts and bearing in mind females generally higher levels of qualification, which suggests a complex relationship between individual and structural factors leading to three main constellations (see

Figure 11 and Table 7):

- Higher female youth unemployment in the South and East of Europe.
- Higher male youth unemployment in Northern Europe (especially UK) and increasingly also in Central and Eastern Europe;
- Balanced unemployment according to gender (for example Austria).

The differences are lower if the unemployment ratio is considered which is influenced by the lower activity rate of young women who are more often engaged with both education and family obligations. Key factors for gendered disadvantage are the general structures of labour market segmentation such as the level of youth unemployment across different education levels (see below), the relevance of (public and private) service sectors, labour regulation oriented towards (male) breadwinners or towards individuals and the availability of public child care facilities. A cross-cutting cultural factor is the heritage of different religious values which connects structural factors with individual life and career plans. In fact, in countries with lower female youth unemployment like Denmark, Finland and the UK all share high levels of employment within the service sector as well as Protestant cultural traditions.

A specific gendered aspect of disadvantage is the situation of single parents. Single parenthood concerns primarily young women who in all countries they are associated with high risk, especially in the 15-24 year age group. While in Southern Europe the topic neither statistically nor in public opinion plays a major role, this is different in Nordic countries and especially in the UK which has the highest rates of teenage pregnancy (4% of 15-17 year old women in 2003; DWP, Resource Centre; www.dwp.gov.uk; cf. Berthoud & Robson, 2003).

Table 7: Factors and constellations of gender differences

Youth unemployment acc. to gender	*Countries*	*Employment in service economy**	*Public child care (age 0 – 3)*	*Labour protection****
Higher female unemployment	ES, GR, SI, IT, PL, PT	Low	Low in IT, ES Medium in PT, SI	Breadwinner
Higher male unemployment	DK, UK BG, RO, SK	High in DK, UK Medium in SK Low in RO	High in DK Low in UK, SK	DK, UK: individual BG, RO, SK: breadwinner
Balanced	AT, FI	Medium	Low in AT Medium in FI	FI: individual AT: mixed

* low = < 60%; medium = 60-70%, high = >70% (no data for AT, BG; EC, 2004d) ** no data for BG, GR, PL, RO and SI *** cf. Sainsbury, 1999; Pascal & Manning, 2000

The differences in unemployment according to *ethnicity,* in a broad majority of cases, is likely to be at least partially attributable to the consequences of earlier school failure. However due to the different status of different ethnic minorities (noted above) it is difficult to analyse in a comparative way. While in some countries national labour statistics distinguish between nationals and non-nationals or even according to country of origin, this is more difficult for minorities with a status of national citizens. This applies to the Afro-Caribbean and Asian communities in the UK (although the Office for National Statistics (2002), documents unemployment rates among ethnic groups which range from 18% among youth of Indian origin, to 28% for Black Africans and 41% for Bangladeshi youth), and to African minorities in Portugal or the Roma in Central and Eastern Europe. In the case of Slovakia unemployment in some Roma settlements is estimated to be nearly 100%. Key factors beside low school achievement are discriminatory recruitment practices of employers. The Roma in particular face strong prejudices among employers, which may be referred to as racism contributing to a situation of ethnic segregation. While statistics do not single the Roma out, official estimations on overall Roma unemployment range between 13% in Romania, 90% in Bulgaria (2001) and 87,5% in Slovakia (2003) (cf. European Commission, 2004e; Kolev & Saget, 2005; Craig et al., 2005). In the case of refugees or asylum seekers disadvantage may also be related to legal status. In some countries they have a right to work until their case is assessed, however many, especially those who are illegal immigrants, are forced to work in the informal economy (MISEP, 2001).

Territory is a clearly structural factor of disadvantage. One aspect is the divide between rural and urban areas. Unemployment tends to be higher in some rural areas (especially relevant in parts of FI, GR, PT, PL, RO). However, specific attention is being paid to urban forms of multiple disadvantage (which often is accompanied by drug problems, homelessness etc.) mentioned primarily in AT, FI, PT, UK. Even more obvious are disparities resulting from a historical relation between centre and periphery (IT, ES, SK) or from de-industrialisation (BG, PL, RO, UK). Structural weaknesses and economic dependency result not only in a 'geography of unemployment' (REF) but also in limited access to social infrastructure – despite the higher need in weak areas. Regional youth unemployment rates in 2003 (Eurostat LFS) ranged from a low of 4,5% in Tyrolia (AT) to 30,3% in Andalucia (ES), 41% in Východné Slovensko (SK), 45,4% in Poludniowo-Zachodni (PL), 58,4% in Campania (IT).

In so far as regional disparities also exist between national economies it is important to keep in mind the broader national *economic context* as a key factor which influences the actual

demand for labour, which effects affecting both adults and young people (O'Higgins, 1997; Kolev & Saget, 2005). In this respect one may relate the dynamics of macro-economic development (in terms of GDP and productivity growth), the growth and existing rates of overall employment and the quality of jobs (fixed-term contracts and working poor; Table 8):

- Dynamic: above-average growth of GDP and labour productivity is reflected by above-average employment growth on a low overall employment level: BG, GR, RO, SK (minimal above-average growth) and ES (high rate of atypical employment);
- Stable: above-average growth of GDP and labour productivity with only average or minimal employment growth on a high employment level: DK, FI, PL, SI and UK (considerable atypical employment).
- Stagnant: below-average growth of GDP, labour productivity and employment: AT, PT (both high employment level) and IT (low employment level)

Table 8: Overall economic contexts and developments

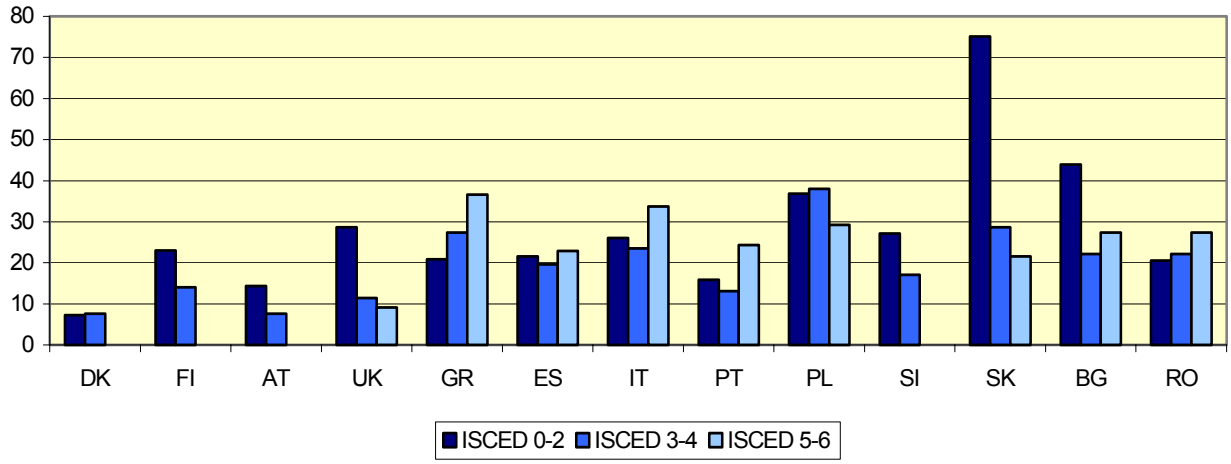
*GDP growth (2004)**	*Countries*	*Employment Growth (2004)***	*Employment rate (2003) ****	*Fixed-term contracts (2004) *****	*Working poor (2001) ******
Over-average	BG, ES, GR, RO, SK	High	Low	High: ES Low: BG, GR, RO, SK	High
Average	AT, DK, FI, PL, SI, UK	Medium	Low: PL Medium: SI High: AT, DK, FI, UK	Low: AT, DK, UK, Medium: PL, FI, SI	Low in DK Medium in AT, FI, UK
Below-average	IT, PT	Medium – Low	High: PT Low: IT	Low: IT High: PT	High

* Stagnant = < 1,5%; Average = 1,5 – 2,5%; Dynamic = >2,5%; Productivity growth: Low = <1,5%; Medium = 1,5-2%; High = > 2% (Eurostat, 2004); ** Occupied population: Low = < 0,5%; Medium = 0,5-1,5%; High = > 1,5% (Eurostat, 2004); 2001 (EU 15); *** Overall employment rate (15-65): Low= < 60%; Medium = 60-65%; High = >65%; **** Low = < 10%; Medium = 10-20%; High = >20% (Eurostat LFS for 2004); ***** Overall rate of working poor (EC, 2005b)

Dominant discourses suggest a relatively unanimous phenomenon of youth disadvantage across Europe according to which a weak social background leads to school failure which in turn results in youth unemployment. However, not only theoretical assumptions but also empirical evidence suggests one can assume different consequences and problems resulting from different indicator constellations. If one looks at the composition of youth unemployment according to *education* one finds that among the economically active 15-24 year olds early school leavers are clearly more affected by unemployment than those with higher qualifications in Bulgaria, Slovakia, Slovenia but also in Austria, Finland, and the UK. The picture is more or less balanced in Denmark, Poland and Spain while unemployment rates are lower for early school leavers in Greece, Italy, Portugal and Romania (see Figure 12; see

Volume 2, Annex II). It should however be said that in Southern Europe there is a demand for unskilled labour while employment in the service sector is below EU average.

Figure 12: Unemployment rates according to education level in % 2004 (Eurostat LFS)



* LFS does not provide unemployment ratios according to education level (rates for ISCED 5-6 in DK, FI, AT and SI not available)

This is to underline that the relation between education and unemployment is less clear than often suggested; at least in the early stages of labour market entrance. The other side of the coin implies that in the latter countries those with higher qualifications, especially those with university degrees, are also strongly affected by unemployment. Many young people prefer to wait for a job that corresponds to their educational level – subsidised by the family – rather than accepting to start a career below ones own aspirations (Checchi, 2004). At the same time however, the situation can be described as a vicious circle in so far as young people, especially in Greece, Italy and Spain but increasingly also in Poland and Slovakia choose higher education to bridge the gap of insecure transitions and therefore contributing to a considerable over-qualification in contexts where there is considerable demand for low-skilled labour (Walther, Stauber et al., 2002; Cachón Rodriguez, 2003).

The relation between education and unemployment also depends on the match between demand and supply with regard to types of qualifications and skills. Rapid economic and technological change has resulted in an increased *mismatch* between jobseekers and the demand from employers. While to certain extent this represents a general phenomenon it particularly applies to contexts with a low involvement of employers in the steering and delivery of training. Among the countries involved in the LFS adhoc transition module 2000 the level of mismatch was highest in Italy and Greece where 47 and 40% of recent school leavers, respectively, work in a job outside their field of education. Levels of unemployment as well as national interpretations suggest that the level of mismatch is as high or even higher

in Bulgaria, Poland, Romania and Slovakia (Kogan & Müller, 2003). In Greece and Italy this is primarily due to a modernisation lag in the education and training system, whilst in new member states and accession countries it is aggravated by a rapid economic change.

Table 9: Factors and constellations of blocked labour market entrance for high-qualified youth

Young unemployed > ISCED 3	*Countries*	*Overall youth unemploy-ment*	*Employment in the service sector**	*Mismatch***	*Female youth unemployment*	*Fixed-term contracts****	*Forced part-time work****
Low (<10%)	AT, DK	Low	Medium: AT High: DK	Low	Lower in DK Medium in AT	Medium	Low
Medium (10-20%)	ES, FI, PT, SI, UK	Medium	Low: ES, PT Medium: FI, SI High: UK	Low-Medium	Lower: FI, UK Higher: ES, PT, SI	High (Low in UK)	Low (High in ES, PT)
High (>20%)	BG, GR, IT, PL, RO, SK	High	Low: BG, GR, IT, PL, RO Medium: SK	High	Lower: RO, SK Higher: BG, GR, IT, PL	Low (SK), Medium, High (PL)	High (medium in PL)

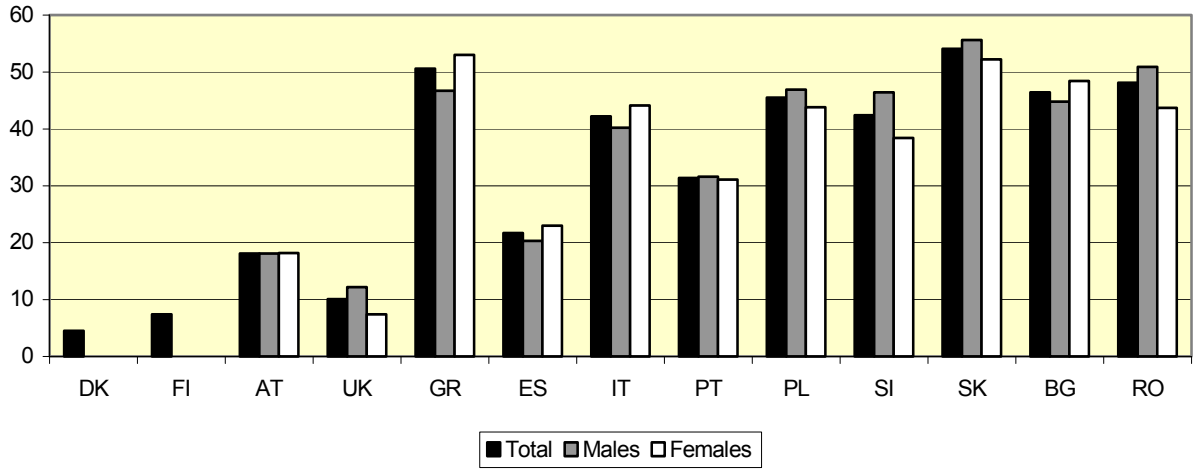
* low = < 60%; medium = 60-70%, high = >70% (no data for AT, BG; EC, 2004d; ** according to LFS transitions adhoc module (Müller & Kogan, 2003); *** see figures 13 and 14

An aspect connected to high youth unemployment across qualification levels that prevails in Southern, Central and Eastern Europe is labour market segmentation according to *age*. Two key factors are relevant in this respect perceived employability and employment serves practice. Employers may assess first time job seekers' employability as low due to a *lack of experience*, an exception being countries with an established apprenticeship system (like Austria) – at least for those economic sectors concerned – or countries with a fast developing high skill service sector that mainly recruits university graduates. In some countries public employment services prioritise adult family breadwinners when it comes to placing unemployed in job vacancies. Therefore, young people are victims of competing social policy principles. Inasmuch as young people do not get the opportunity to show their skills and to gather experience they are kept in a waiting position. One may also refer to this constellation as age-related discrimination (see Table 9; cf. Pugliese, 1996). However, also in those contexts in Europe where those with higher qualifications are equally affected by unemployment or even more so than early school leavers, in the long run education remains a better predictor of career opportunities in terms of status, income and stability.

There is a widespread common assumption that compared to all-age unemployment youth unemployment is often short-term reflecting processes of job search and fluctuation, whilst it is mainly *long-term unemployment* that is associated with social exclusion. Also here we find considerable difference among countries (see Figure 13). Countries with both low and high

early school leaving have high rates of long-term unemployment, which means that other factors need to be taken into consideration.

Figure 13: Long-term unemployment (>1 year) among under 25 year olds by gender 2004 (Eurostat LFS)



According to Table 10 in particular the overall labour market situation and the coverage of active labour market policies (e.g. Individual Action Plans, see below) – play a decisive role (European Commission, EES, Evaluation). Long-term unemployment is low in Denmark, Finland and the UK. Among these countries unemployment particularly affects early school leavers and active labour market policies have obtained a high degree of coverage (share of young unemployed involved in Individual Action Plans). It is medium in Austria, Portugal and Spain with a mixed picture regarding intervening factors. Finally, the group with the highest long-term unemployment (except for the case of Slovenia) shares high all-age unemployment and a low coverage of activation policies.

Table 10: Factors and constellations of long-term youth unemployment

Long-term unemployment rate	*Countries*	*Overall unemployment*	*Unemployment among early school leavers*	*Coverage of ALMP**
High (> 50%)	BG, GR, IT, PL, RO, SI, SK	High (except SI)	Lower: IT, GR, RO Higher: BG, PL, SI, SK	Low (except SI)
Medium (30-50%)	AT, ES, PT	Low: AT Medium: PT High: ES	Average: ES, PT Higher: AT	High: AT, PT Medium: ES
Low (< 30%)	DK, FI, UK	Low: DK Medium: UK High: FI	Average: DK Higher: FI, UK	High

* According to NAPs and national reports (see Annex III)

A key concern is that early school leavers are often not registered as unemployed but have disengaged from the formal transition system. This *'status zer0'* situation of the 'hard-to-reach' (Williamson, 1997) results in considerable risks of permanent social exclusion while leaving policy actors without a target. There is no reliable data on the extent of this problem and whilst they included in the group of the economically inactive – which varies between less than 1% in Slovenia and approximately 16% in Bulgaria but also around 9% in the UK – this is an unreliable indicator as it include those occupied by domestic obligations (e.g. parenthood) and those in mandatory military or civilian service. In this study an attempt was made to compare (national) rates of registered unemployed with unemployment rates deriving from the Eurostat Labour Force Survey. But also this resulted in a distorted picture with LFS rates ranging from 50% above the registered rate (in Denmark, Spain and the UK) to 40% below in Italy due to the different conditions for registering. However, difficulties do not only result from access and measurement but also from the diversity of phenomena in so far as unregistered unemployment includes those who are not registered but are actively seek work as well as those who have given up job search and have adapted to a lifestyle beyond paid employment. Participants in active labour market policies may also be removed from the register while describing themselves as actively seeking work. While precise quantitative measurement remains ambiguous researching 'status zer0' needs to consider potential factors such as entitlements for social benefits which may attract young people to engage with public employment services (see Table 1).

Table 11: Factors and constellations of 'status zer0'

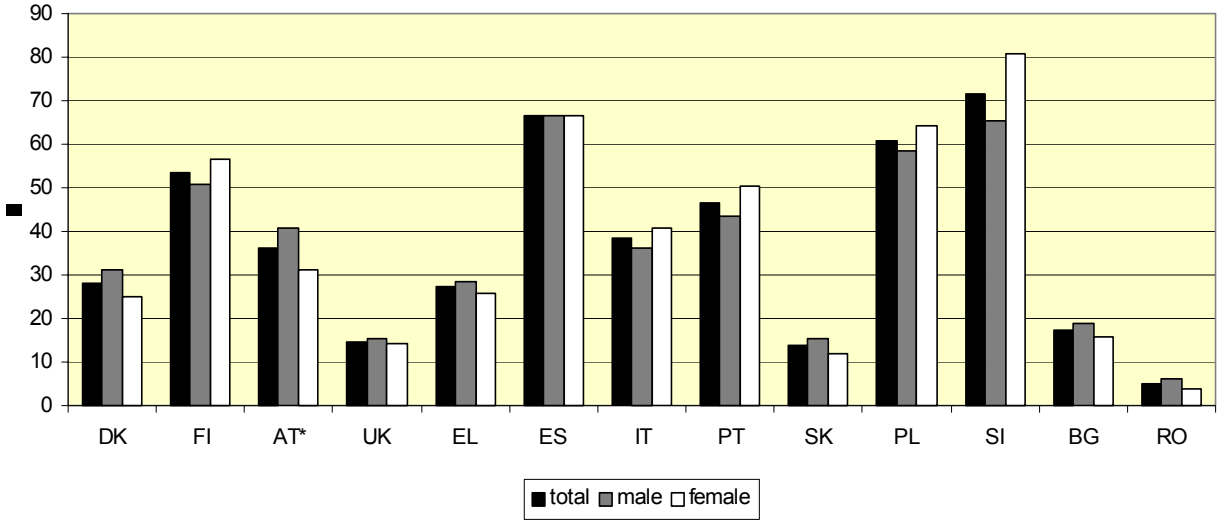
*Level of inactivity**	*Countries*	*Benefit entitlements***	*Early school leaving****	*Explanations*****
Low < 3%	DK, SI	Universal: DK Limited: SI	Low	Lack of eligibility (under 18, DK; living with family, SI); Pressure of coercive activation (DK); lack of trust in PES (DK, SI)
Medium 3-6%	FI, AT, PT, SK, GR, IT	Universal: FI Limited, AT, PT, SK None: GR, IT	Low: AT, FI, SK Medium: GR High: IT, PT	Lack of eligibility (except FI); lack of trust in PES (all); avoid stigmatisation (AT); informal economy as alternative (GR, IT)
High 6-10%	ES, PL, UK	Limited: ES, PL Universal: UK	Low: PL Medium: UK High: ES	Lack of eligibility (ES, PL; in UK under 18), Lack of trust in PES)
Very high > 10%	BG, RO	Limited: BG, RO	High	Lack of eligibility; lack of trust in PES; informal economy as alternative

* See figure 19 (Eurostat LFS for 2004); ** Guaranteed = all job seekers > 18 years, limited = depending on family income and previous employment status, none = virtually no individual benefit entitlements for young people (EC, 2004i); see figure 8 (Eurostat for 2004); **** research literature (Walther, Stauber et al., 2002; Weil et al., 2005; MacDonald & Marsh, 2005).

These are universal (while not unconditional) in Denmark, Finland and the UK, virtually non-existent in Greece, Italy and Spain and limited (according to age, previous employment status and family income) in all other countries in terms of the amount and eligibility. Besides, in all contexts young people share a lack of trust in the efficiency of public employment services and the extent to which they are willing or able to take individual needs and interests into account. However, according to qualitative research there are different reasons for the form and the consequences of such distrust. In countries like the UK (similar in Austria and Germany) a significant share of disadvantaged young people express disappointment that is sometimes expressed in terms of high levels of hostility. In Denmark accounts of institutional experiences seem more balanced reflecting a principal trust in the fairness of the welfare state. Negative judgements refer to individual counsellors and their performance in achieving the most for their clients. Reference to a so-called 'threat-effect' of activation policies needs to be analysed in a context where a variety of remunerated education and training options are accessible while the labour market is characterised by a relative availability of job opportunities (Rosholm & Svarer, 2004). In Southern European countries as well as in Bulgaria and Romania the accounts of young people primarily express the desperation of feeling abandoned. Interestingly, in countries in which recent developments have resulted in an improvement of the coverage of PES (e.g. Spain) young people's accounts assimilate those of UK and German young people (Bentley & Gurumurthy, 1999; Kieselbach et al., 2001; Walther et al., 2004; MacDonald & Marsh, 2005; Weil et al., 2005).

Defining disadvantage in terms of labour market entrance should not solely be restricted to unemployment but also include the variety of *forms of precarious employment*. In some countries deregulation aimed at reducing the costs of hiring young people has increased the rate of fixed-term contracts (Figure 14) whereby differences between early school leavers and overall rates are not relevant. This is especially the case in Southern countries, but also relevant in Poland and Slovenia. In Spain unemployment among youth has actually decreased but the on the other hand the poverty rate has increased – while only in Denmark, Finland and Slovenia social rights have been adapted accordingly (see below).

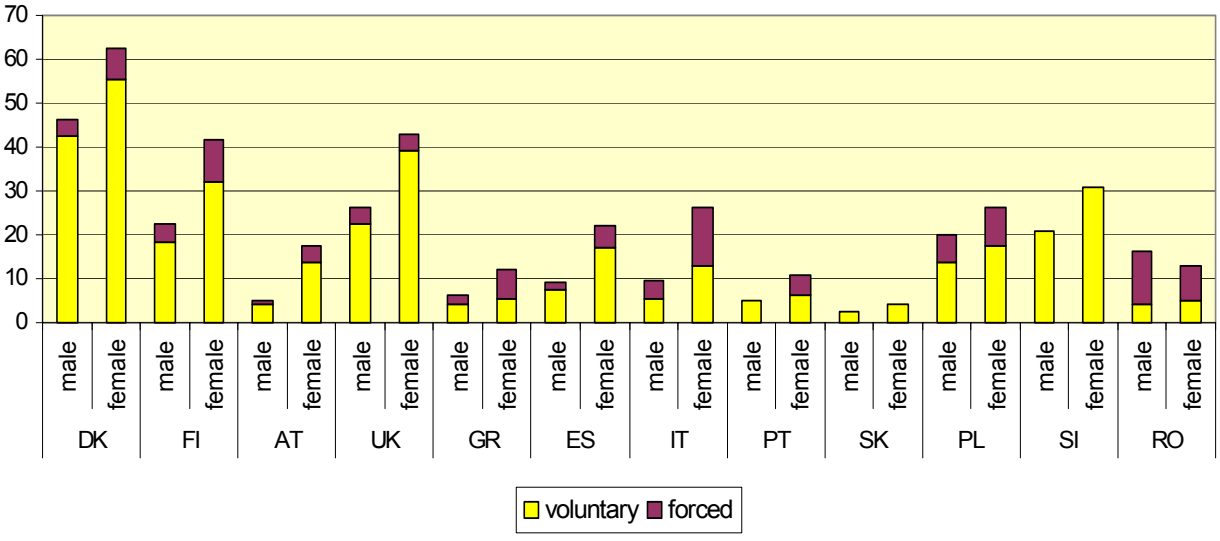
Figure 14: Young people with fixed-term contracts according to gender 2004 (Eurostat LFS)



* Austrian figures include apprentices

Another indicator of precarious employment is the rate of non-voluntary part-time workers. While in general more women work part-time and although some may chose this option they are more often forced to do in comparison to young men. In Southern and Central Europe part-time work is less frequent while the percentage of those who have not chosen this option is higher (Figure 15). In the Nordic countries and the UK non-standard employment among young females more often coincides with individual preferences, while in the South and East it appears to be viewed as the only opportunity available to enter the labour market at all.

Figure 15: Voluntary and forced part-time work of young people by gender (Eurostat LFS)



Another form of precariousness employment is undeclared work in the *informal economy*. While debates in most countries concentrate on the issue of tax evasion the analysis of

informal work among young people is more ambiguous. It is important to stress that informal work implies a lack of security in terms of contract, social insurance and a decent income and it has been highlighted how it often becomes a trap without bridges to regular employment. However, some authors also stress that compared to a potential situation of long-term unemployment, informal work can represent an alternative to social isolation while also providing work experience. The key issue is whether or not is whether it can provide a bridge to other labour market segments. In this respect social networks need to be mentioned – thereby indicating a dimension of social inequality within informal work, whilst a distinction may be made between those who work informally alongside studying compared to the unemployed, in particular among those with low qualifications (Borghi & Kieselbach, 2000; Mingione, 2001; Ghezzi & Mingione, 2003).

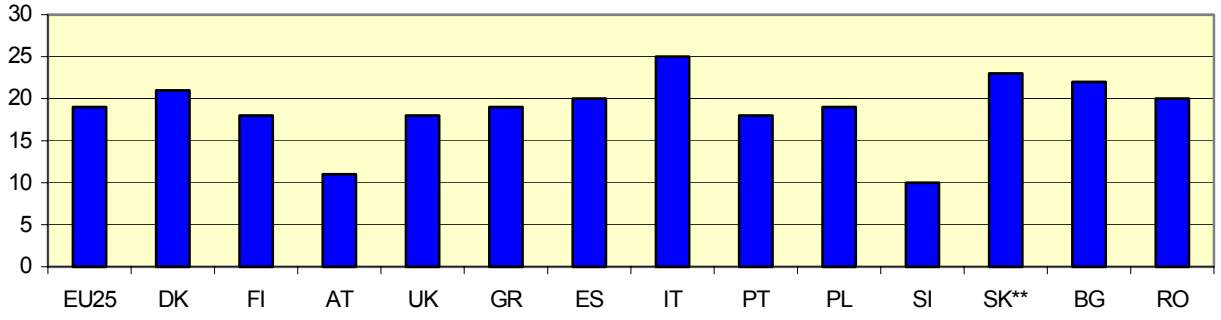
Another strand of discussion centres on the normative aspects of distinguishing formal versus informal work according to a contract regulating the exchange between work and payment. Especially (mainly female) housework needs to be considered as a part of the body of socially useful work, which is rarely included in such analysis. But even if leaving aside the issue of housework, unpaid work in the family business, communal work in the neighbourhood or voluntary work constitute a form of informal work which is not remunerated according to contracted formal standards, but reflects a social demand for goods and services. Such a discussion may not directly contribute to processes of policy making, they do point to the narrow and one-dimensional normative rationale of labour market policies according to which some relevant sectors of work are criminalized, neglected or devaluated (cf. Gorz, 1999).

Different forms of informal work depend on different cultures of work, as it needs to be shared both by employer and worker. In terms of constellations, forms of partly illegal undeclared work predominate in Southern Europe where Fordist labour regulation has always only covered a limited part of the labour force. The fact that it seems to be higher in Greece and Italy than in Portugal and Spain may be related to the fact that in the latter countries deregulation towards atypical work arrangements has removed some of the barriers of formal employment more effectively, whilst at the same time 'legalising' precarious work conditions (Ghai, 2003; EC, 2004f). In Eastern Europe, in particular in Bulgaria and Romania, domestic work and work within the family business is also relevant. In the Nordic countries, Austria and the UK undeclared work appears to be a minor issue although some studies suggest it is more prevalent among young people, especially from ethnic minorities (Renoy et al., 2004).

Another obvious indicator of precariousness in transitions, either associated with unemployment or non-standard employment, is the *poverty* rate among young people. Whilst

this is a reflection of the overall level of inequality within a society, especially if looking at young people the picture may be distorted which has partly to do with measurements of relative poverty – especially if comparing countries with extremely low and high average incomes (e.g. Denmark compared to Romania). It also needs to take into consideration that university students may live on incomes qualifying as 'poor' while being much less at risk of exclusion than young unemployed with no or low benefits or those in precarious work. So, poverty rates are relatively high in Denmark and Finland although access to social benefits is universal (see also Chapter 7.1.1; cf. Fahmy, 2005). This is also the case in the UK where however the low value of benefits coupled with the high rate of working poor and the rigid interpretation of workfare policies results in a rather high poverty rate. In contrast, in Austria and Slovenia the poverty rates are the lowest of the countries studied despite of limited access to benefits. In Slovenia this may result from a low overall degree of social inequality while in Austria a large share of young people hold an apprenticeship contract securing them a low wage while many of them still live at home. Noticeable differences among Southern European countries like Greece and Italy may be explained by the high regional inequalities and high overall poverty rates which affects young people who live for a long time at home while having no access to social benefit.

Figure 16: Poverty rates* among 16-24 year olds 2001 (Eurostat)



* max. 60% of national average income; ** data for Slovakia for 2003

Precariousness and poverty are closely related to what in recent years has increasingly been referred to as *multiple disadvantage* (Kieselbach et al., 2001; Berthoud, 2003; Prince's Trust, 2005; McDonald & Marsh, 2005). This relationship goes in both directions, deprivation during early socialisation may lead to early school leaving and subsequently to unemployment; whilst unemployment also increases the risk of poverty, especially where access to welfare is restricted or non-existent and where the family of origin for what ever reason is unable to support their off-spring. The multi-dimensional nature of these cases often

coincides with a complex interaction between structure and agency – the limited resources and opportunities of the individual and his or her attempt to cope with difficult life situations. Coping strategies themselves are affected by a lack of resources and therefore often become labelled in terms of either sickness (e.g. psychological disorders, addiction) or deviant behaviour (e.g. crime, vandalism, 'hanging around'; cf. Stone, 1992). Especially, where young people actively develop (sometimes sub-cultural) coping strategies they risk of being perceived in a moralistic way as the 'underclass' of the 'undeserving poor' (Levitas, 1996).

4.3 Conclusions

The picture outline in this chapter, while far from being complete, reveals both the complexity and the diversity of constellations of disadvantage of young people in their transitions to work. 'Old' structures of inequality prevail but in combination with new lines of segmentation 'new' forms of disadvantage emerge. Combining the most relevant indicators Table 12 presents an overview of country-specific constellations of youth unemployment, early school leaving and precariousness according to education level, gender, ethnicity, long-term unemployment, precarious work as well as poverty rates. In Chapter 7.1.1 these constellations will be dealt with in detail in relation to the policy mixes adopted in the respective countries and to the transition regime contexts in which they are embedded.

Table 12: Constellations of disadvantage by countries

	Economic develop-ment	*Social inequality*	*Early school leavers*	*Change 1994/ 2004**	*Unemploy-ment*	*Change 1999/ 2004***	*Unemploy-ment < ISCED 2*	*Unemploy-ment > ISCED 3*	*Long-term unemploy-ment*	*Immigrant/ Minority youth*	*Informal work*	*Fixed-term contracts*	*Unemploy-ment/gender*	*Poverty*
DK	Average	Low	Low	- 0.5	Low	+ 1.1	Average	Lower	Low	2nd gen.	Low	Medium	More males	Low
FI				- 2.4	High	- 0.7	Higher			Refugees		High	Balanced	
UK	Average	High	Medium	- 15.6	Low	- 0.7	Higher	Lower	Low	Refugees, Colonies	Low	Low	More males	High
AT	Below-average	Medium	Low	- 4.4	Low	+ 2.7	Higher	Lower	Medium	2nd gen	Low	Medium	More females	Low
GR	Above-average	High	Medium	- 7.9	High	- 5.0	Lower	Higher	High	Repatriated, Roma	High	Medium	More females	High
ES			High	- 6.0		- 3.6	Average	Average	Medium	New immig.	Medium	High		
IT	Below-average	*No data*		- 11.6		- 8.7			High		High	Medium		
PT				- 4.9	Medium	+ 6.5		Higher	Medium	New immig., Colonies, Roma		High		
SI	Average	Low	Low	- 3.3	Medium	- 3.6	Higher	Lower	High	Roma***	Medium	High	More females	Low
SK	Above-average	Medium		+ 1.5	Very high	- 4.8					Medium	Low	More males	High
PL	Average	*No data*		- 2.2		+ 9.4	Average	Average			Medium	High	More females	
BG	Above-average	*No data*	High	+ 1.1	High	- 9.3	Higher	Lower	High	Roma, Turkish	High	Low	More males	Medium
RO	Average			+ 3.9		+ 4.2	Average	Average						High

For indicators see tables above, except: * Finland 1996/2004, Austria 1995/1996,Slovenia, Poland and Bulgaria 2001/2004, Slovakia 2002/2004, Romania 1997/2004 ** Bulgaria and Romania 2000/2004 *** very low in Slovenia and Poland

5. Policy approaches and policy mixes

5.1 Introduction

In this chapter we will take stock of policies addressing disadvantaged youth in the different countries. We will analyse commonalities and differences, again it needs to be said that of course not all single types of policy measures can be dealt with in detail, while factors of success will be dealt with in Chapter 6. As already introduced in Chapter 3 we concentrate on two levels of analysis: firstly we relate existing policy mixes to the constellations of disadvantage prevailing in the different contexts, especially in terms of changes in socio-economic indicators; and then we look into specific realities of policies which in their given context are referred to as good practice in terms of meeting the respective constellations of disadvantage by an appropriate combination of individualising and structure-related components (see Volume 2, Annexes II and IV). What we cannot do is to apply a single matrix to all policy measures of interest, especially not in a quantitative perspective based on coverage, placement rates and cost-effectiveness. Apart from not being feasible within the framework of this study, it remains highly debateable whether it is possible or desirable and whether such an assessment would reproduce a one-dimensional policy objective with narrow definitions of success which in many occasions have already been highlighted as being part of the structural contradictions in youth transitions (López Blasco et al., 2003; Walther et al., 2004; Weil et al., 2005).

The analysis presented in this chapter is structured according to the concept of disadvantage developed in Chapter 3. We distinguish between individualising and structure-related approaches as well as preventative and compensatory policies (see Table 13).[4]

Table 13: Main orientations of policies for disadvantaged youth

	Compensatory	Preventative
Individualising		
Structure-related		

The dimension individualising/structure-related is assessed in terms of the target of policies:

- Individualising measures address individual capabilities to cope with school-to-work transitions and with labour market demands;

[4] See Chapter 3 for the distinction between 'individualising' and 'person-centred' measures.

- Structure-related measures address either the socio-economic aspects or the institutional set-up of transitions, be it the conditions under which young people develop human capital (school structures), or the conditions under which they enter the labour market (structures of labour market entrance and demand for labour).

The dimension preventative/compensatory is related both to a time line and to a continuum from general to targeted policies:

- Preventative approaches are those aimed at preventing the development of disadvantage to by addressing key background factors in a general perspective;
- Compensatory approaches are those that react to the specific articulations of disadvantage in terms of 'repairing' problematic transitions.

This distinction first serves to provide a differentiated overview; second it results from referring to constellations of disadvantage rather than to individual deficits. This of course does not imply that it is only those policies which are preventative and structure-related that are seen as appropriate. In fact, insofar as early school leaving and unemployment exist individualising compensatory measures are still needed. However, one may say that in providing policy solutions to transition problems and getting closer to the Lisbon targets that countries will need to invest significantly in prevention on the structural level.

The scheme and its categories represent an ideal type perspective while broad types of policies may be applied to different cells depending on their specific implementation. For example, training can be preventative if they are part of general education reforms to diversify trajectories; or they can be compensatory if they specifically address unemployed youth.

In Section 5.1 we deal with early school leaving policies distinguishing between general, school-related and training measures, Section 5.2 focuses upon active labour market policies for young people, especially counselling and measures aimed at facilitating labour market entrance, whilst Section 5.3 aims to summarise country-specific policy-mixes.

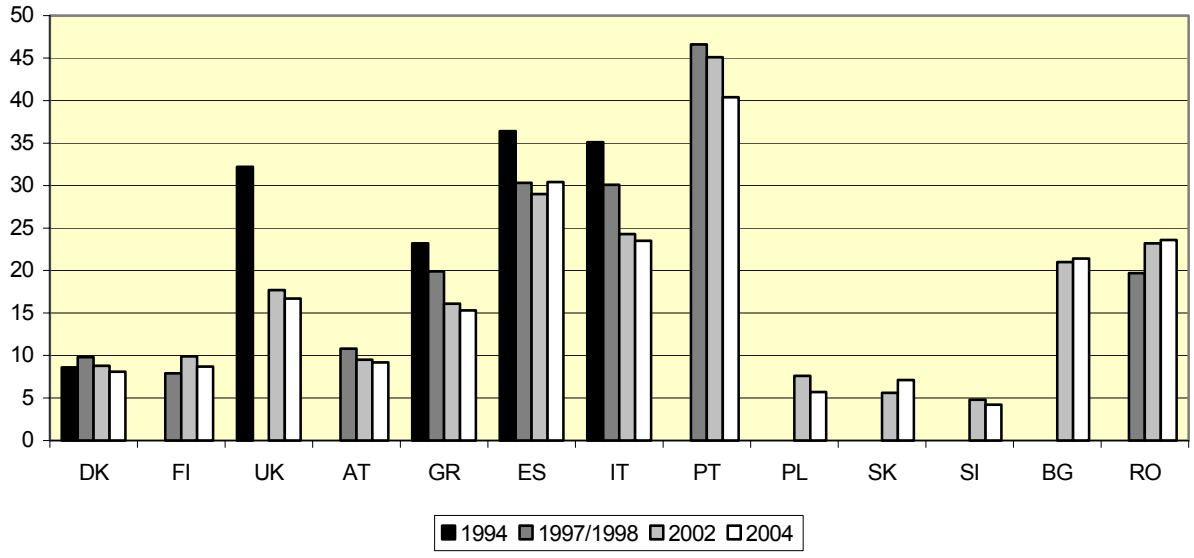
5.2 Policies against early school leaving

In so far as qualifications are a key factor influencing social inclusion and exclusion, policies aimed at increasing human capital have to be understood as the basics not only of welfare but also of economic development in a knowledge-based society. Apart from being a means to combat youth unemployment higher qualifications need to be seen as an investment in the development of a knowledge-based economy (Rodrigues, 2002) whilst also clarifying young people's citizenship status as one structured by education rather than by employment or unemployment. In Chapter 4 the main predictors of early school leaving were social

inequality and families, institutional structures of school and training, the overall unemployment level, signalling either a low value of education or keeping young people away from the labour market, the subjective and objective relevance of education and training in terms of match with labour market demands, and gender.

Before entering a detailed discussion of policy measures it may be helpful to look at how early school leaving has developed in the last decade (see Figure 17). The greatest declines in early school leaving are evident in Greece and the UK (and Italy but still remaining on a high level), it has remained stable at a low level in Austria, Bulgaria, Denmark, Finland, Romania and Slovenia (low levels in Poland and Slovakia may also be referred to, although with caution due to data only being available for a short period while in a worst-case scenario may imply rising rates if youth unemployment is not reversed in the near future). Of course, changes may also independently result from changes in educational decisions of young people and their families.

Figure 17: Changes in early school leaver rates 1994-2004 (Eurostat)



5.2.1 General measures

Starting from a policy perspective that is structure-related and preventative, we need to first of all consider general *reforms to school and training* provision. These may relate to the duration of compulsory education, to the permeability between different routes, to the relevance of curricula and qualifications or to the economic and socio-political aspects of education.

- *Extending compulsory education:* A basic reform undertaken in various countries is to extend the period of compulsory education. In Romania and Spain lower secondary education has been extended by two years, in Bulgaria, Italy and Slovakia the first year

after lower secondary education is compulsory, while in Bulgaria and Italy one year of pre-school has also become obligatory; whilst in Poland compulsory education has been raised to 18 years. However, while being a key structural prerequisite the mere extension of compulsory education does not necessarily mean a sustainable gain in human capital if it is not linked with other reforms and policies, especially introducing, integrating and modernising vocational routes and broadening access to higher education (see 5.1.3; cf. Young, 1998; Wolf, 2002).

- *Removing mechanisms of selection by making different routes more permeable:* while many countries introduced comprehensive compulsory education systems in the 1960s, the UK in particular, since the 1980s, has created a flexible system of entrance and exit points and the possibility to switch between different trajectories which – accompanied by the postponement of benefit entitlements – has resulted in a dramatic decrease in early school leaving. Alternating between different post-compulsory routes has also been made possible in Slovenia and Denmark. A key prerequisite of permeability leading to higher education is the development of comprehensive (national) *frameworks of qualifications* that allow learning achievements to be accredited within different routes (such a system is also in the process of implementation in Italy but not yet fully operative).

Good Practice Slovenia: Modularisation of education and training

The Framework of National Vocational Qualifications approved in 1999 and the modularisation of the education and training system constitute a path which also aims to decrease the number of young people without any vocational qualifications. This situation also enables individuals to gain vocational qualifications outside the regular school system based on previously acquired knowledge and skills. Apart from this, the legal foundations for the modularisation of educational programmes within lower secondary and secondary vocational educational system have been approved since 2001. These policies "acknowledge that large numbers of young people cannot complete existing vocational education programmes, mainly because the programmes are too demanding, or cannot motivate them sufficiently to complete the education. This module-based platform is designed to encourage both adults and young people without any formal education to successfully obtain new qualifications. But mostly it will enable them to achieve higher levels of education." Modularisation combines two main parts – the first one derives from existing vocational standards, the second part leads towards new vocational qualifications. Therefore, young people who have left the educational system without a final certificate, still have options as any successfully finished module contributes to achieving a national vocational qualification. This requires that individuals in their first or second years of education need to gain sufficient classified knowledge and skills. In short, the system enables the certification of education on a step-by-step basis (see Volume 2, Annex II).

- *curricula reforms* relate to either the subjective relevance of education for young people or objectively in terms of external recognition by employers and further education and training institutions; they are on the agenda not only in new member states and accession countries (BG, PL, RO, SI, SK) reflecting the changing nature of labour market demands

but also in other countries in reaction to the results of the recent PISA studies (OECD, 2004), while in the UK life skills curricula have been included within the National Vocational Qualifications framework. In general, curricula reforms require the involvement of other stakeholders in the steering of education and training such as social partners or – yet less frequent – youth work, youth organisations, or young people themselves. This means that national qualification frameworks need to be seen as dynamic rather than static while single schools may use increasing autonomy to organise feedback both from students and actors from the local community and economy in terms of the relevance of learning inputs and outcomes (e.g. vocational schools in Denmark).

- Social inequality has been identified as a key factor in early school leaving. Correspondingly, general social policies that succeed in reducing inequality have to be seen as a main – yet indirect – investment in human capital building. While not addressing overall social inequality *education allowances* can play a role in minimising the economic constraints and setting positive incentives against early school leaving. The most universal approaches are to be found in Denmark and Finland where broad access symbolises that education and training are recognised elements of citizenship (see Chapter 3).

Good Practice Denmark: Educational Maintenance Allowance

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 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) (see Volume 2, Annex II).

While means-tested allowances exist in several other countries, in some cases on a low level (e.g. Greece, Romania), their recent introduction in the UK has had apparently positive effects in reducing the NEET group (Not in Employment, Education nor Training; Maguire & Rennison, 2005). In countries like Bulgaria, Greece, Romania and Slovakia in areas with high early school leaving and/or high levels of Roma population the introduction of free school books and meals at school is also intended as an incentive to make school more attractive. Material incentives can also be applied in a negative way by making family entitlements to social assistance or insertion income conditional on

children's attendance at school (especially in Portugal and Slovakia). However, it is debatable whether any potential positive effects on school attendance can be seen as a success in terms of inclusion in so far as they result from turning ethnic or social disadvantage into a moral issue based upon the stigmatising distinction between the 'deserving' and the 'undeserving' poor (cf. EC, 2004e).

The situation in Central and Eastern European countries deserves particular attention, as higher education in particular has experienced a boom both in terms of young people's choices and policy-making priorities with rapidly rising enrolment rates. While it is unlikely that this will significantly improve the general problem of mismatch there are two ambiguous effects of this development: firstly educational investment is often motivated as an investment towards emigration; yet, due to the limitations of work migration to the EU-15 this can result in considerable over-qualification. For example, in the Eastern part of the Slovakia Public Employment Services facilitate mobility of young people with university degrees to work in low-skilled jobs in the catering and tourism sector in Western Europe by using the European Employment Service System (EURES; Council of Europe, 2005). The other ambiguous effect is that in parallel to the increase of mass higher education there is an even more rapid development of private education institutions, which introduces new lines of segmentation and inequality (cf. Jung, 2005).

5.2.2 School-related measures

While the measures described above address the general structures of the education system, there are other policies which are more oriented towards providing support for (weaker) pupils or students within or in relation to given school structures. Our second focus therefore is on *flexible support* and *inclusive education* within regular schools among which some are more preventative and others more compensatory in nature:

- *counselling* is probably the most widespread and potentially the lowest-threshold approach of influencing individual educational decisions, attitudes and careers. Whilst almost all school systems adopt some form of counselling both the quantitative coverage and quality differ. In many countries, counselling is restricted to teachers who are selected as counsellors or teachers of confidence which may be approached by pupils and students in times of need or who intervene in conflict situations (Italy). In Finland, Poland and Slovenia social work is established within schools – at least in lower secondary education, in deprived areas and/or where the share of immigrant youth is high – to deal with social conflicts emerging in school and with social conditions that affect young people's learning

achievements; whereby counselling is of a more problem-oriented and compensatory nature. In a few countries, pedagogues and psychologists are regularly included among the school staff to complement the teaching staff with regard to general and specific counselling tasks. This reflects the fact that education and learning have not only become more and more important for every individual, but has become more increasingly complex and contradictory whereby counselling is regarded as a normal prerequisite for successful educational careers (especially in Denmark and Finland). Both, school social work as well as counselling can be either integrated into school structures or be provided through coordinated networks (Austria, Slovenia, Spain, UK) or through mixtures of both (Denmark, Finland) (for good practice examples, see section 5.3).

- *support teaching* and *special needs education* within regular school reflects the different learning needs and rhythms of pupils and students without placing them in separate and often lower status courses. The integration of special education for those with learning difficulties within mainstream education is an increasing trend in most countries, yet to a different extent. In principle, this means that pupils with special needs are assisted individually in order to cope with a personalised curriculum. Integration of special education in mainstream schools therefore needs both additional (and specialised) staff as well as class-room procedures that are compatible with and open for the involvement of additional staff and concurrent teaching and learning processes. Support teaching, in contrast, indicates that special needs are catered for in additional lessons. While in many countries additional teaching is organised through the private market, in Greece support teaching is provided by the State and free for those who need it.
- In the case of special needs education for ethnic minorities *assistant teachers* from the same community are often trained and employed (especially Bulgaria, Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia). In particular, in terms of younger pupils in pre-school and primary school the objective of assistant teachers is to build cultural (language) and social bridges between the demands of mainstream school teaching and specific individual needs. This often includes the involvement of parents in the supervision of children's school attendance and supporting them with homework etc. Where there is part of a broader strategy as in the case of Romania (see below), where the effects of Roma assistant teacher programmes are noticeable.
- It should be highlighted that there are still contexts in which weaker pupils are segregated in *special schools*. In most countries special schools exist for the physically, sensory and

mentally disabled pupils, special schools for those with learning difficulties exist only in Austria, Bulgaria, Denmark, Finland, Poland, Slovakia and the UK. There are clear trends towards inclusive education within regular schools in Austria, Denmark, Slovenia while in Southern European countries low rates of separate special education leaves unclear how many pupils with special needs are effectively included in the education system. Separated special education is highest in Finland and Slovakia with a percentage of 3,6% of the total school population in the period 2002-2004 (Eurydice, 2005). The dilemma with special needs education is to balance between the optimum of personalised specialist education and to avoid stigmatisation through segregation and/or low leading only to second class qualifications. In some contexts (especially Slovakia) the rate of ethnic minority youth in special schools is especially high reflecting both a strong reproduction effect of social inequality and the inability of mainstream schools to deal with diversity (cf. Nind et al., 2003; Evans, 2003). An exception, which needs to be evaluated with regard to single cases and contexts, are schools for minorities with teaching and didactical material in minority languages and considering minority culture and history while providing the same qualifications as mainstream schools (e.g. Greece, partly also Bulgaria, Romania).

- Combining formal education with *non-formal learning* is a strategy of supporting individuals by alternative methods of learning and by providing successful experiences and thereby instilling a positive motivation to learn. In some cases non-formal learning situations are arranged within formal education, which probably is most common in Denmark while also the Austrian commercial schools are seen as good practice:

Good Practice Austria: Team-teaching for immigrants at commercial schools for employed

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. However, due to language deficits many participants have problems following the lessons resulting in a high dropout rate among foreign students. The programme “team-teaching” offers these students’ accompanying lessons both in German and in their own language. The programme is based on an “open learning” and “intercultural learning”-concept. Classes are divided in groups in the subjects “German”, “Business Administration” and “Accountancy”. Working in small groups guarantees the integration of students and especially of young women through comparable education for all students and a tolerant climate of work and learning. A key success factor is that all actors are involved in the planning process and evaluation. Of the 634 participants in 2004, 94 participants dropped out of the programme, half of them, because they entered the labour market. While the language skills of students improved as well as their knowledge in other subjects the overall high drop-out-rate of immigrant students has decreased since the initiation of this measure. The programme is funded under the ESF-Objective 3 as a pilot project within the regular education system. The budget for three years (2003 – 2006) amounts to 4 Million €. All in all, it is planned to involve 1950 first year students in 13 schools in classes with high proportions. Funding is only secured until 2006 (see Volume 2, Annex IV, Chapter 1).

Contexts both of support teaching and non-formal education can be in the form of *all-day-school*s which traditionally have not existed in all school systems. In the aftermath of the PISA study and the need to compensate disadvantaged children with a lack of family support extended school hours have recently been introduced (in Austria and Greece while already in existence in Denmark, Finland and the UK; cf. OECD, 2002; 2004).

More often non-formal education takes place outside of schools in the context of *youth work* and *youth organisations*. While there is broad evidence for the positive effects on young people's learning biographies the capitalisation of such experience is left to young people's initiative. Non-formal learning remains subordinate to formal education and it is only in exceptional cases where relations are dialogical and integrated into everyday practice. Still there are no mechanisms of recognising non-formal learning in a way that does not undermine its motivating potential. Apart from this the funding of non-formal learning is far from stable so that organisations often struggle to maintain continuity or even expand activities towards the 'comfort zones' of the more hard-to-reach. In many cases youth work organisations find it difficult to get access to schools and to be recognised as equal partners (European Youth Forum, 1998; Council of Europe, 2003; Pais & Pohl, 2003; Walther et al., 2004; see also Chapter 6).

While all the measures presented aim to prevent early school leaving before students have dropped out there are also measures aimed at those who have left school with no or low qualifications. In principle there are two main types of programmes in this respect:

- *Second chance schools* aim to provide those who have left school early a possibility to achieve missed qualifications. Such programmes either have to be compatible with other obligations such as work or family, for example in then form of evening schools or they are organised full-time. The latter however necessitates that participants are entitled to some form of benefits otherwise the motivation and possibility of participation are reduced. With respect to the assumed negative learning experiences second chance programmes often apply a mixture of formal teaching and non-formal learning. While such experiences exist in some form in almost all countries they play a more prominent role in Austria, Finland, Greece, Poland and Romania. In particular the case of Greece should be taken into consideration where 6% of 14 – 24 year olds are enrolled in evening education. While shedding a critical light on the quality of regular schools this needs to be seen within the context of high seasonal work (often informal), especially within the tourism sector. Apparently, however evening education is structured in a way that is both

attractive and manageable for a high share of early school leavers (see Volume 2, Annex IV, Chapter 2).

- *Preparation/re-orientation towards education* in many cases needs to precede re-entering education, whether regular or second chance, in order to motivate early school leavers. That is by helping them to develop a life-plan that is worth investing in education, by providing successful educational experiences and by assisting in the choice of educational destinations. In this respect it should be mentioned that a highly successful programme has recently been curtailed: the Danish Open Youth Education that provided young people the opportunity of individual education plans that combined formal and non-formal education. Among the reasons for stopping the programme was that it was not restricted to early school leavers or weak pupils and therefore a considerable share of other young people also participated who apparently could have coped without it. This case is mentioned because one of the success factors of this programme was the heterogeneity of participants that facilitated peer learning. It also should be reflected to what extent such a diversification of educational pathways helps to avoid school failure due to de-motivation.

Good Practice UK: Getting Connected

Getting Connected is a curriculum framework concerned with providing disengaged young people (mainly aged 16-25) with a new route back into learning by aiming to achieve a closer fit between the policies and providers of learning and skills and the needs and interests of young adults. Through action research in social circumstances and experience of young adults' learning ways of teaching, learning and assessment are being developed in nine units: Knowing myself; Coping with feelings; Holding Beliefs; Handling relationships; Getting and giving support; Exploring risks; Managing myself; Using information; Rights and responsibilities. The success of the programme hinges on effective relationships between young adults and (mentor) practitioners: youth workers, Connexions Personal Advisers, health workers, probation staff, social workers or volunteers in a variety of contexts. The curriculum can be either used informally as a framework for working with young people, or – if accredited and if at least four of the units mentioned above are included – for providing recognised qualifications (NVQ Level 1). Due to its informal nature, there are no numbers on how many young people have been involved in Getting Connected so far. However, from 1999 to 2004 almost 3,500 young people got their involvement accredited. Apart from this, qualitative evaluation has highlighted that the programme supports both young adults' learning, behaviour; interpersonal skills and confidence. Young people appreciate the relaxed style of learning and enjoy the feeling of success from participation. Many had moved on to mainstream education and training.
Getting Connected has been established by the Young Adults Learning Partnership, a joint initiative between the National Institute for Adult and Continuing Education and the National Youth Agency. From 2000 to 2004 Getting Connected has expanded from 18 to 120 registered centres. It is not part of existing statutory or legal frameworks but entirely flexible in terms of delivery and funding (see Volume 2, Annex IV, Chapter 3).

The only example of compensatory that is a structure-related measure is the ex-post *recognition of informally acquired skills*. While theoretically facilitated by national

qualification systems (such as in UK and developing in Denmark and Slovenia) specific access points and procedures are required in order to attract people with no or low qualifications.

Good Practice Portugal: RVCC – Recognition, Validation and Certification of Skills Centres

With regard to the low education and qualification levels in Portugal RVCC was implemented in 2001 to provide adults (from 18 years onwards) who have not completed compulsory education and who wish to follow subsequent education or training a system of recognition, validation and certification of skills acquired in informal and non-formal contexts. The main purpose is to evaluate individuals' skills by means of portfolios, interviews and tests and to validate and certificate candidates or to guide them to courses to acquire missing skills. The Key Skills Reference Guide is organised on the basis of 3 levels, equivalent to the basic education cycles and is structured around four areas: Language and Communication; Citizenship and Employability; Information Technology; Mathematics for Life.
The 56 RVCC centres are located in selected public or private institutions with on average six trainers and professional counsellors each. Success factors are the specialist training for the staff as well as the fact that operating through networks involving vocational schools, business associations, basic education and secondary schools, vocational training centres, associations of municipalities etc.. Apart from the overall monitoring a mid-term evaluation was conducted by an expert team carrying out case studies in 2003. Between 2001 and 2003 the programme enrolled 60,130 individuals among which 1,600 individuals under 25 years of age. More than 11,000 certificates were issued. The budget is funded by the Operational Programme for Education of the third Community Support Framework for the period 2001-2006 is 34,64 Million €. RVCC is managed by a partnership between the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs (see Volume 2, Annex IV, Chapter 4).

Considering the fact that individual educational decisions are influenced by structural background factors, which in are interrelated in complex ways, the most interesting approaches are those policies that coordinate a range of different preventative measures within a comprehensive framework. These can be policy strategies addressing social (or ethnic) disadvantage in a multi-dimensional way like the Romanian programme "Access to Education of Disadvantaged Groups with a Specific Focus on the Roma" (see also Chapter 6.2); these can be youth policies trying to complement the formal education system by non-formal approaches (Youth Society Guarantee, Finland, see also Chapter 6.2, and the Italian Law 285/97 on rights and opportunities for childhood and adolescence); they can be policies starting from individual counselling and including different actors in a flexible way depending on the individual needs emerging from the counselling process (like the Danish Counselling System or Total Counselling in Slovenia; see also Chapters 5.2 and 5.3) or like the UK Connexions programme especially when its is combined with financial incentives:

Good Practice UK: Connexions / Education Maintenance Allowance

The aim to increase the skills base and participation in post-compulsory education and training is central to the agenda of the UK government. This includes a reduction in the number of young people not in education, employment or training (NEET) Most important measures in this respect are the Connexions Service and Educational Maintenance Allowance (EMA):

Connexions addresses all 13-19 year olds in England and is part of a radical change in the structure and delivery of guidance services for young people. It is a national policy delivered at the local level by 47 Connexions partnerships in which young people, parents and communities collaborate rather than agencies working in isolation. While the objective is to provide career, education and training information and advice to all 13-19 year olds, in practice, the focus lies on intensive and sustained support for those with multiple problems and at risk of disengaging. Key principles are raising individual aspirations, removing barriers to learning; meeting individual needs; community involvement. Inclusion through education and training is designed to be combined with brokering access to local welfare, health, arts, sport and guidance networks. Programme guidelines foresee that young people are involved in all aspects of the design, delivery and evaluation including hard to reach young people.
At the heart of the Connexions Service are Personal Advisers recruited from qualified careers advisers, youth and social workers. Based in schools, Connexion Centres, one-stop-shops or through outreach work they provide a single point of support for young people across a wide range of issues – either directly or by brokering advice through local partnerships. They may be delivering universal careers guidance, working with those with specific problems or on special projects as part of a multi-agency team. Aside from local delivery there is a web-based information point on diverse issues (careers, education and training, health, housing, rights, money, relationships etc); Connexions Direct Advisers are available 7 days a week to provide confidential advice via various communication media (phone, SMS, on-line chat); a Connexions card that provides for discounts and reward points for participation in education and training and recognised voluntary activities.
A key principle is that of evidence based practice based on rigorous research and evaluation into 'what works' through process and expert evaluations of pilot schemes; outcome based targets in relation to NEET; official inspection of local programmes. However, assessment of the programme as a whole is difficult due to the diversity of ways in which it has been implemented. The participatory and holistic approach when well established is evaluated as successful as well as the reflexivity of advisors and inbuilt mutual learning practices. Young people view the service positively as do most stakeholders although the hasty implementation resulted in the alienation of parts of the youth work sector. At the current time the future of the Service has become uncertain; especially with regard to the relation between targeting disadvantaged youth and the universal provision of guidance while there is also some resistance against the holistic practice. Another controversial aspect is the tracking and monitoring of young people deemed at risk among agencies.
Connexions is an infra-structural policy measure funded by the Department of Education and Skills with a total annual budget of approximately 750 Million €. Funding for local partnerships is distributed according to the number in the age group, numbers in NEET, and youth unemployment. End of April 2005, 343,000 young people were involved in Connexions interventions (see Volume 2, Annex IV, Chapter 1).

b) The Educational Maintenance Allowance Scheme was implemented in 1999/2000. It is paid to young people between 16 and 19 who are in full-time education or training on a means-tested basis (with three levels according to three household income thresholds; Maguire & Rennison, 2005).

It is widely held that both measures reinforce each other and have resulted in a reduction of the numbers of NEET by 14% between 2002-2004 although it is difficult to attribute effects. Concerns have also been expressed over the emphasis in getting young people into any form of employment, education or training at the expense of their long-term interests.

5.2.3 Training

A considerable part of the debate as well as of the policies aimed at reducing early school leaving and increasing human capital relates to the area of vocational education and training (VET), especially forms of company-based and/or dual training which combines theoretical

and practical elements. First, many (not only but especially weaker) pupils criticise school education for a lack of practical applicability. Second, youth unemployment is very often related to a mismatch between qualifications and employers needs as well as with a lack of work experience among school leavers. It is widely held that this mismatch is lowest where the economic system is involved in the steering and delivery (and financing) of training, while learning is facilitated through doing 'real' work. In Austria the 'dual system' of apprenticeship is able to absorb a large share of young people providing them with post-compulsory certificates and facilitating a smooth transition to skilled employment. Although there are concerns in relation to the lack of modernisation of training in-line with changing labour market demands. Third, vocational education and training may potentially serve as stimuli for economic development (e.g. development of the service sector). However, in this case this requires stronger innovation in a mid-term perspective in terms of extending vocational routes from traditional manufacturing towards competence profiles relevant in the service sector and link these developments together with regional and national economic development policies.

Across the countries under analysis the following types of measures have been identified:

- *Modernising VET:* In countries where VET is or has been mainly school-based the introduction of alternation between theoretical instruction and practical experience as well as in the steering of VET is a priority of education reform and active labour market policies (in fact it is often difficult to decide under which responsibility training policies fall). Another focus is to upgrade vocational routes to upper secondary level (Lasonen & Young, 1998; CEDEFOP, 2004). While this can make VET more attractive it implies that respective routes are merely chosen as easier routes towards higher education and thereby lose its relevance for employers (as happened in Southern Europe until the early 1990s). In the Central and Eastern European countries this situation is rather new as under socialist conditions vocational schools and companies were closely linked as regards both the steering and the delivery of training. With the economic transformation basically 'training has gone back to school' while young people react to the freedom of choices by preferring university studies. In so far as new structures need to be implemented, without significant contributions from employers, such programmes depend heavily on the European Social Fund (traditionally in Southern Europe, but recently also in new member states). In Italy VET reform implies forms of alternation in upper secondary routes supported by an accreditation framework which however is not yet fully implemented.

- *Apprenticeship systems:* Despite of the impossibility to copy either historical roots or cultural and economic embedding of well-established dual systems as in Austria and Germany a few countries have made further steps in re-structuring apprenticeship training (especially Italy, Portugal, Poland and UK). However, only in Portugal and the UK these provide to some extent recognised upper secondary qualifications. A key challenge is to convince employers to collaborate, especially also in the more modern economic sectors, without relying on the resource of a historically grown training culture. Therefore such programmes are smaller in scale and depend on public funding.

Good Practice Portugal: Apprenticeship System

The apprenticeship system addresses those who are over the age of compulsory education and have not yet reached the age of 25. It is part of a set of offers in the education/training systems aimed at reducing early school leaving by diversifying the learning pathways and simultaneously improving the initial qualifications of young people with poor socio-economic background. The system includes overall training, preparing for specific jobs in the labour market and provides professional (level I, II, III and IV) and ISCED certification (1,2, 3). Introduced in 1997, the number of participants has raised to approx. 26,000 per year, two third of whom on ISCED 3 level. The double qualification is one of the particularities of the system whereby contributing simultaneously to raising the Portuguese population's low educational levels and vocational qualification levels. The proportion of 22-year-olds with upper secondary education level was 47.6% in 2003 while the 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. From the approximately 27,000 trainees enrolled In 2004, 8,600 were new entrants and 4,456 achieved the third year certificate (ISCED 3) while 500 dropped out.
The system is steered by the Institute of Employment and Vocational Training (IEFP) and operates in alternation from a vocational training centre and a company. It contains both traditional crafts and modern IT professions. The challenge of getting employers to collaborate is being solved in two ways: the training allowance for the apprentices is paid by the State while training companies also profit from organisational development. There are also plans to make the duration of courses more flexible (see Volume 2, Annex IV, Chapter 4).

- *Pre-vocational measures* in most cases address early school leavers who are assumed to be incapable of meeting the demands of regular post-compulsory education and training. In some cases this may include long-term unemployed youth in order to provide them re-orientation towards work and training and to instil a sense of work ethics and discipline. I some cases pre-vocational measures imply the updating of qualifications (while in some cases allowing for accreditation of later qualifications). The focus lies on non-formal learning, the achievement of personal competencies and practical learning in workshops or placements with companies. The main critical aspect of pre-vocational measures is their function as 'holding patterns' especially where they do not provide qualifications with extrinsic value. Although they are often the result of increased competition due to a lack of regular training places they often redefine participation in terms of an individual lack of 'trainability'. In principle they can provide a broader access to regular education and

training based on relevant and flexible forms of personalised curricula and there are some practices worth mentioning:

Good Practice Denmark: Production Schools

Production schools were developed in the 1980s to combat youth unemployment by offering young people who do not complete regular education alternative education to improve labour market integration. The main goal is young people's personal development through education. Focus is not only on academic skills but an approach of *life learning* regarding social, personal and physical skills which is complemented by a qualifying process of more formal knowledge and skills. Learning processes are organised through workshops and ordinary teaching but every young person is free to organise an individual course in which challenge and confidence building are balanced. The production schools are built upon learning by doing in a range of different production workshops depending on the specific school: e.g. carpeting, catering, construction, electronics, health, administration, tourism, textile, media, drama, metalwork etc. Everything that is produced whether it is a material good, a service or performance is sold so that the young people get recognition for their work. The workshops co-operate both with each other but also with other production schools and the local community. In addition, pupils are taught maths, languages, computer skills etc. However, all classes are voluntary without any exams and pupils can be accepted at any time over the whole year. Parallel with their stay at the school students may also attend other certified courses outside of the production school for up to 12 hours per week, an opportunity that is widely used. Participants can do a 4-week apprenticeship in public or private contexts or participate in an exchange programme; this period can be prolonged if the young person benefits from it. They receive a weekly allowance: ca. 70 € under 18 years, 140 € over 18 years. Since 2005 eligibility for participation has been restricted to those under 25 years who have difficulties in acquiring academic qualifications, those who have dropped out of secondary education; and those with social or behavioural problems. At the moment there exists around 100 production schools in Denmark with 1,769 pupils enrolled in this form of education. Apart from continuous evaluation by the State an evaluation report by the OECD in 1994 confirmed that the production schools succeed in motivating and challenging the young people in ways the formal education system cannot. Production schools are administrated according to specific legislation and supervised by the national Ministry whilst each is school free to interpret, construct and develop their aims and activities in accordance with regional demands. Funding consists of basic grants from local or county authorities and state funds related to running costs. For pupils in activation specific rules exist considering the distribution of funds between municipality, state and employment service (see Volume 2, Annex IV, Chapter 3).

Good Practice Austria: Vocational preparation courses

Vocational preparation courses offer additional apprenticeship training places in special institutions for young persons who have not found a suitable apprenticeship place after compulsory education, participants in earlier schemes; disabled young persons; apprenticeship seekers from earlier school-leaving years; long-term unemployed; persons with learning difficulties as well as school drop-outs. The general prerequisite for participation is registration with the Public Employment Service as seeking an apprenticeship and the evidence that at least five applications for apprenticeship have failed. The measure is a temporary bridging solution until a regular apprenticeship place can be found in a private enterprise while attention is paid to learning and personal deficits. It comprises the following types of action: vocational guidance and/or vocational preparation with specific support for girls to expand their range of occupational choices; 10-12 month courses in training institutions, to teach first-year apprenticeship skills and knowledge in occupations actually in demand on the regional labour market, the share of practical training being at least 60% including search and applying for apprenticeship posts (in case of failure in finding a private apprenticeship the measure can be extended, even until completion of the apprenticeship); counselling for enterprises related to training.

Main indicators of success are, first, the number of placements in an apprenticeship; second, in relevant labour market positions (employment, subsidised employment, qualification, unemployment). In 2004, 67% had found an apprenticeship 12 months after ending the programme and 21% were unemployed. Other effects are the personal stabilization and the acquisition of soft skills. The experience of the companies with former participants is positive and reflected by additional apprenticeship places created. The action runs under the Youth Training Consolidation Act (JASG) and is part of the NAP programme, i.e. labour market policy on the national level. Main actor is the public employment service, assigned by the Federal Ministry of Economic Affairs and Labour. In the year 2003/04 the programme had 5,500 participants with a budget of 57 Million €, in 2004/2005 6,800 participants with a budget of 71 Million €. Due to decreasing apprenticeship places in the next years, the measure will be extended to 8,000 apprenticeship training places in the following year (see Volume 2, Annex IV, Chapter 3).

While the Danish Production Schools are typical for and relevant within the Danish system of 'education for all' based on a broad concept of education, the Austrian vocational preparation courses are connected to the dual apprenticeship system. The value of the measure of course depends on the receptiveness of this system because it is being distorted into replacing the dual system with a second-class version.

- *Labour market training:* In many cases, training schemes are being implemented as a direct response to youth unemployment (Bulgaria, Greece, Poland, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain). Companies receive subsidies connected to the obligation of retaining the individuals for a fixed period while training standards are low and not always well monitored. A key prerequisite in this respect is tripartite contracts between the young person, the State and the employer in which the rights and responsibilities of those involved as well as standards and assessment of training are included as in the case of the Polish 'First work' programme. There are also examples where practical training is being delivered by public or private training providers without or with only partial involvement of employers (Bulgaria, Greece, Romania, Slovakia, Spain). In particular Spanish 'training workshops' have become quantitatively important and although not being incorporated into the regular education system insertion rates are around 70% (see Volume 2, Annex IV, Chapter 4).

Good Practice Bulgaria: National Programme 'Computer Training of Young People'

The programme, which has a national coverage, is one of the most popular programmes among unemployed young people. Due to a lack of training in ICT skills in the general education system, there is a huge mismatch between young people's skills and labour market demands. The programme is directed towards the employability of the young unemployed through IT training. Its main tasks are to provide computer training for the young unemployed; offer apprenticeship places in the real economy for the participants; and train trainers for the programme in order to ensure its effectiveness and sustainability. An important aspect is the voluntary principle of involvement rather than forcing addressees into the programme due to a fear of losing their benefits or rights of registration. 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. In 2004, instead of planned 1,500 participants, 1,800 attended the

training while 138 could be placed in apprenticeship places with private companies. The target group of the programme is young people with secondary and university education registered as unemployed. 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 Ministry of Labour and Social Policy, the Employment Service, the Bulgarian-German Centres for Vocational Training (in three towns), the Business and Information Centres created under J.O.B.S. (employment through support for the businesses), 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. Apart from that there is cooperation with Microsoft in Bulgaria to fund and provide the practical training of the trainers while the main funding for the three years is provided by the state budget. The programme has not been evaluated yet and there is no information about how employers value the qualification. However, The fact that the curricula for training both of the trainers and the young people are provided by Microsoft is a guarantee for the applicability of the training in real work situations (see Volume 2, Annex IV, Chapter 4).

There are two general observations worth mentioning. First, while a frequent approach to reducing early school leaving is to increase vocational routes it seems to be in contradiction with the fact that phenomena of dropping out is more common in vocational compared to general education. While the labour market relevance and the pedagogical quality of vocational routes needs to be evaluated in this respect it should also be considered that weaker pupils tend to participate more often in vocational rather than general or academic routes. Second, One may argue that the effectiveness of training policies is hampered by the contradiction between the objectives of integrating weaker pupils and closing the mismatch in terms of changing labour market demands. While the broad direction of overall economic development points in the direction of the service sector and the knowledge economy, many training programmes concentrate on professional courses in crafts and industry (Kolev & Saget, 2005). On the one hand this is explained as due to the limited learning abilities of the trainees, on the other hand – and this seems problematic – with the fact that training providers delivering the practical and theoretical instructions are based in workshops related to traditional occupations and cannot afford to invest in new technologies for training.

5.2.4 Policy-mixes in relation to early school leaving and human capital building

After having introduced the range of existing policy approaches in relation to early school leaving and illustrating them with good practice examples we can now look at the different policy mixes adopted by the countries involved in the study. Table 14 gives an overview sorting the countries by levels and developments in early school leaving.

Table 14: Policy-mixes against early school leaving

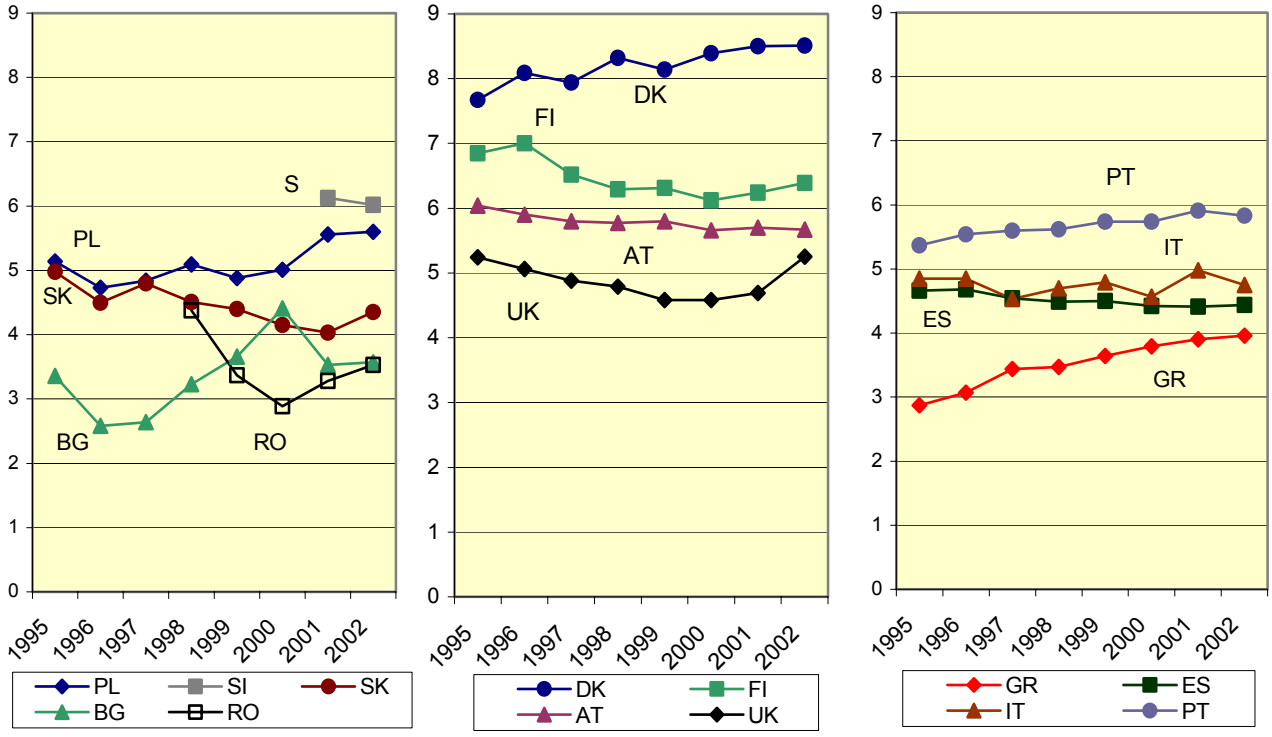
Level and dynamics of ESL	*Country*	*School reforms and structural prerequisites*				*School-related measures*				*Training*			*Coordinated policies*
		Extension of comp. Education	Permeability	National Qualific, Systems	Allowances	Coun-selling	Inclusive education	Special schools (learning disability)	Second chance	Preparatory pre-voc. courses	Training for unemployed youth	Apprentice-ship systems	
Low (< 10%)													
Stable	DK	-	+(+)	+	++	++	+(+)	+	+/-	++	++	+	++
	FI	-	+(+)	+	++	++	+(+)	+	+/-	++	++	+	++
Decreased	AT	+/-	+	-	+/-	+/-	+(+)	+(+)	+	++	+	++	+
	SI	++	++	++	+/-	+	++	+	+	+	+(+)	+	++
Unclear	PL	++	+(+)	-	+/-	+	+	++	+/-	+	+	+	+/-
	SK	++	+	-	+	+/-	+/-	++	+/-	+	+	+/-	+/-
Medium (10-20%)													
Decreased	GR	+	+	-	+(+)	+/-	++	-	++	+/-	+	+/-	+/-
	UK	-	++	++	+(+)	+(+)	+	+	+/-	+(+)	++	+	++
High (> 20%)													
Stable	PT	++	+	+	+/-	+/-	+	-	+	+/-	+	+	+/-
Decreased	ES	++	+	-	-	+/-	+	-	+	+/-	++	+/-	+
	IT	++	+	+	-	+/-	+	-	+	+/-	+	+	+
Unclear	BG	+	+	-	+/-	+/-	+	+	+	+/-	+	+/-	+/-
	RO	++	+	-	+	+/-	+(+)	+/-	+	+/-	+	+/-	+(+)

Rating: - non-existing; +/- not very relevant; + quite relevant; +(+) relevant; ++ highly relevant; according to estimations, national reports in Annex III, relevance in NAPs and NAPincls; EC, 2004d; European Commission, 2004; Assessment of EES; relevance defined by relative quantitative coverage and investment and by qualitative factors of success; for dynamics of ESL see figure 16.

In summary, the existence of policy reforms does not necessarily relate to the actual levels or dynamics of early school leaving (in fact recent or current reforms in most cases were a reaction to high levels of early school leaving and negative PISA outcomes). However, allowances, flexible support in education and learning and coordinated policy approaches are the most important ways in reducing early school leaving:

To assess national policy efforts against early school leaving in general terms one may apply two perspectives: the extent of investment in education and the dominant directions of policy approaches in terms of individualising versus structure-related and preventative versus compensatory measures.

Figure 18: Development of expenditure for education as % of GDP 1995-2002 (Eurostat)



A widely adopted comparative measure of policy investments is to contrast levels of expenditure for distinct policy areas expressed as a percentage of GDP. Figure 18 shows the level and recent trends of national expenditure on education between 1995 and 2002. The effectiveness of sufficient funding with regard to preventing and/or reversing trends of early school leaving becomes visible in Table 15 where levels of expenditure are related with early school leaving rates. There is a clear relationship between low rates of early school leaving and high levels of expenditure in Denmark, Finland and Slovenia. It is important to that differences in expenditure are not only related to secondary and tertiary education but also

primary education where the foundations for later learning biographies are developed. In Greece rising expenditure on education has corresponded with a decline in early school leaving (Eurostat data, cf. OECD; 2001; 2004).

Table 15: Level of early school leaving (ESL) and expenditure (% of GDP) on education

GDP / ESL	Low	Medium	High
Low	SK	AT, PL	DK, FI, SI
Medium	GR	UK	
High	BG, IT, ES, RO	PT	

While comparing expenditure allows an assessment of the quantitative direction of policies it is of course not sufficient to assess whether the policies adopted point in the right direction. With regard to the dominant rationales behind policies they can also assessed according to the dimensions of individualising/structure-related and preventative/compensatory (Table 16). It should be noted that such a scheme is crude, as it is based on a relative rather than absolute scale and aims to serve heuristic rather than descriptive purposes. In reality most measures will be located somewhere in between:

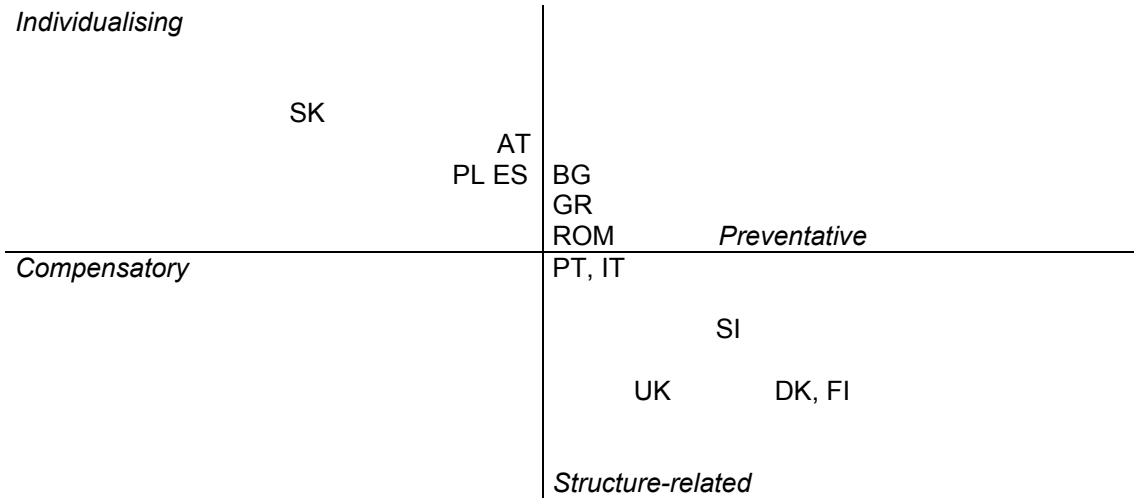
Table 16: Main orientations of policies for disadvantaged youth

	Compensatory	Preventative
Individualising	Second chance schools (GR, AT, PL, ROM) Pre-vocational and preparatory measures (AT, DK, FI, PL, UK) Special schools (AT, PL, SK) Training for unemployed youth (DK, ES, FI, SI, UK)	Counselling and social work (DK, ES, FI, PL, SI, UK) Inclusive education (AT, DK, FI, GR, IT, PL, UK)
Structure-related	Recognition (PT, partly DK, FI, SI, UK)	Extension (BG, ES, GR, IT, PL, PT, ROM) Permeability (DK, FI, SI, UK) Allowances (DK, FI, partly UK, GR, ROM) National qualification systems (UK, SI, partly DK, FI) Apprenticeship systems (AT, partly DK, FI, IT, PT, SI) Coordinated policies (DK, FI, SI, UK)

If one combines the most important policies of the specific countries to country-specific policy mixes as tentatively has been done in Figure 19, it shows that those countries with lower rates or a large decline in early school leaving are those where preventative and

structure-related policies measures prevail. Again, these schemes need to be read with caution. Based on the analysis of Table 14 they represent broad directions of policies rather than assessing performance of school systems and policy measures. Of course, it needs to be taken into account that countries with low early school leaving may have implemented less policy measures compared to those starting from a higher level. As well countries grouped together must not be seen as clusters as policy mixes may consist of different measures.

Figure 19: Main orientations of policy mixes against early school leaving*



* see table 14 for single policy measures taken into account

By way of summarising one may say that inclusive education means accessibility, manageability and relevance of education and training, while any assessment of policy needs to include the subjective views of young people and their families. A general orientation towards preventative and structural measures suggests that most of all school systems need to change and the creation of training programmes for unemployed youth should be secondary. In the following, some success factors of policies against early school leaving are highlighted:

- Taking economic – and this means socio-political – aspects of educational decisions into consideration requires both educational allowances and generous family policies;
- Counselling needs to be implemented as a standard feature of education for all students;
- Young people need options for choice between and within different educational routes;
- Schools need to be involved in local social policies implying both making them accountable for inclusion/exclusion and connecting them with the wider community;
- Modularised qualification systems allow for accrediting different forms of learning;
- Relevance of curricula and qualifications can be secured by a dialogue with stakeholders;
- Involving young people in the design, delivery and evaluation of education and training can enhance identification and effectiveness;

- Teaching and learning need to be diversified by integrating formal and non-formal forms.
- Sufficient funding is needed for inclusive education policies and education allowances;
- Socio-pedagogical aspects of inclusion need to be included into school systems (e.g. curricula and teacher training; see also Chapter 8).

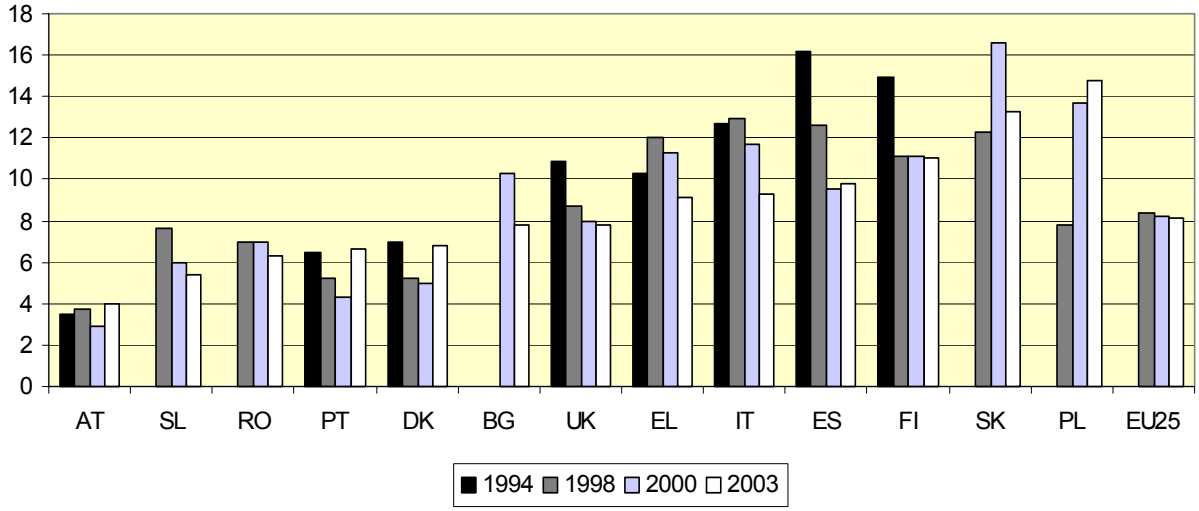
5.3 Policy-mixes against youth unemployment

For a long time, European governments did not regard youth unemployment as a structural phenomenon. It was regarded as a temporary phenomenon related to the friction caused by new entrants to the labour market (O'Higgins, 2004). With mass unemployment becoming a permanent feature of European societies, this view changed and reducing youth unemployment has become one of the prime concerns of national and European policy-makers. In this section, we will assess how governments try to tackle youth unemployment comparing structure-related to individualised approaches. We will also assess the policy-mixes in this field against our scheme of more preventative versus compensatory approaches. This section is divided into three sub-sections dealing with different aspects of tackling young people's difficulties to enter the labour market: activation as a common trend in European countries from passive towards active labour market policies (ALMP) (5.3.1), different types of ALMP measures (5.3.2), and their role in different policy mixes (5.3.3).

Assessing the effects of policy measures aiming at reducing youth unemployment face some specific challenges. First of all, these challenges are not youth specific. Evaluations covering a wide range of effects and not limiting themselves to employment or income effects are expensive. Also, to attribute the effects of programmes to the treatment alone, experimental or quasi-experimental study designs would be need and governments seem to be reluctant. There are difficulties in obtaining datasets and studies that could cover the micro-economic effects of single programmes and policies. If there are such studies – and for some countries like the acceeding and candidate countries evaluations are scarce (Kolev & Saget 2005, OECD 2005, Walsh et al. 2004, O'Higgins, 2003) – they rarely focus on disadvantaged young people or young people in general. On top of this, micro-economic and econometric evaluations only capture direct effects of measures and have difficulties to assess the indirect effects (Konle-Seidel, 2005; Ochel 2004, Martin & Grubb 2001). Therefore the approach taken in this study – as explained in detail in Chapter 3 – is to relate macro-economic indicators with knowledge gathered from the literature, through national expertise and consultation, and from detailed good practice descriptions. Figure 20 provides an overview of the extent of young people

being concerned by listing the youth unemployment ratios – that is the shares of unemployed among the whole youth population – for the countries covered by our study.

Figure 20: Youth unemployment ratios (<25 years) 1994-2003 (Eurostat LFS)



This measure is able to demonstrate how the shares of young people in a state of unemployment compared to the whole population between 16 and 24 differ from country to country. The numbers range from 4 per cent in Austria to more than 14 per cent of the youth population in Poland. Although these figures have to be matched against the shares of young people in education and training and the ratios of inactive persons (see Chapter 4.2), it provides a good means to show the quantitative dimensions of the youth population suffering from unemployment and how this has developed over time. Some countries managed to reduce this ratio considerably over the past ten years like Finland, Italy, Spain and UK. Others, like Poland, have seen a fairly negative development with significant increase in the shares of the youth population being unemployed. The majority of countries though, are faced with a relatively stable share of young unemployed. The stagnant results alone show the urgent need for action in this field.

5.3.1 Activation policies: individualised guidance and counselling

The state's commitment to full employment was a core of the Keynesian economic policy and a precondition for the development of modern welfare states with their universal social rights and the de-commodification of labour (Esping Andersen, 1990; Korpi & Palme, 2003). However, since the 1970s European countries have experienced rising unemployment rates, which have placed increasing pressure on welfare structures, thus challenging Keynesian economic and welfare policy. A central consideration in this new approach was that

unemployment was a structural phenomenon, rather than caused by a temporary slump in demand due to economic downturns. External explanations for the situation included the challenges of globalisation and a knowledge-driven economy, while internal explanations referred to inflexible labour markets and generous European welfare states (Larsen, 2003).
This development also led to a need to make labour market policies more efficient. Since the 1990s there have been calls for member states of the European Union to shift from a passive to an active labour market policy (OECD, 2004). General assumptions behind this are (see Malmberg-Heimonen, 2005):

- that self-sufficiency in relation to welfare benefits is a precondition for individual welfare and for the welfare of the state (Goul Andersen & Jensen, 2002).
- that welfare dependency in the longer-term promotes poverty, inequality and long-term unemployment and that unemployment benefits can have a disincentive effect on job search and re-employment (Torfing, 1999).
- Furthermore, generous replacement rates increase the level of minimum wages, which in turn decreases an individual's financial incentive for re-employment (Torfing, 1999; OECD, 2004, 2005).

Recent policies aimed at reducing unemployment in general, and the integration of disadvantaged youth in particular, have stressed a shift to active labour market policies and the need to mobilise individuals to engage more actively in their own processes of social inclusion and labour market integration. This is reflected by two key policy trends:

- activation refers to an overall policy direction of setting incentives for participation in active labour market policies; these can be either positive incentives such as choice among options and allowances which exceed the level of benefits; these can be negative by lowering the overall level of benefits and by making benefit entitlements conditional on compliance with active labour market policies (Van Berkel & Hornemann Møller, 2002; Lødemel & Trickey, 2001; Serrano Pascual, 2003; Torfing, 1999);
- individual action plans are one of the fundamental means of activation policies by which assessment of needs and agreements upon integration steps between institutional actors, mainly the public employment service, and individual job seekers take place.

Comparative assessment may refer quantitatively to the percentage of young unemployed who have received any offer of re-integration and qualitatively by distinguishing different types of activation and individual action plans. However, data are available only for EU-15 countries

while reference measures are unclear, especially as Denmark appears with a minimal ratio (cf. EC, 2005b).

Taking into account parameters like the level and conditionality of benefits, the available training and education options, we can distinguish the following types of activation approaches:

- *Supportive activation*: "safety net" activation policies with *universal* access to family-independent benefits and a broad range of educational and training options; priority of intrinsic motivation (Denmark and Finland; see Volume 2, Annex IV, Chapter 6);
- *Workfare*: Restricted choices while access to benefits is universal but conditioned by negative incentives – *'workfare '* (reduction of benefits and sanctions in case of non-compliance; especially the New Deal in the UK which was the first large-scale, comprehensive activation policy programme in Europe consisting of a gateway phase compulsory for all job seekers after 6 months of unemployment, followed by choice between one of the options subsidised employment, education and training, voluntary work or an environmental task force; see Volume 2, Annex IV, Chapter 6);
- *Limited activation*: In cases of limited benefit entitlements, activation policies have a limited scope. In these countries, the restriction of access to counselling and training in the case of non-compliance and removal from register is prevailing (Austria, Portugal, Spain). In Bulgaria, Poland, Romania, Slovakia limitations also result from incomplete coverage of PES. In Slovenia allowances are linked to participation in education measures, thereby providing positive incentives.
- *No basis* for activation: In countries with PES still not reaching all jobseekers and young people virtually not entitled for benefits activation is hardly not applicable (Greece, Italy).

The fundamental objective of most activation policies is to prevent unemployment to become long-term and thereby to lead into social exclusion. It has frequently been shown that unemployment has several adverse individual consequences, e.g. decreased mental well-being and health or a declining probability of re-integration into work (Kieselbach et al., 2001).

A key measure to prevent long-term unemployment among young people is that of providing counselling and guidance before unemployment spells reach a critical duration. Individual Action Plans (IAP) are one of the agreed measures to provide this guidance. Most countries understand IAP's as a written document which, based on evaluation of personal circumstances, abilities and the professional skills of the individual, determines the type and scope of assistance required and sets out specific procedural steps for occupational insertion.

The implementation of this into services for young people ranges from a focus on job seeking activities to continuous guidance in different contexts while differentiation extends to the organisation of IAP. We can discern the following approaches to implement Individual Action Plans for young people:

- *Employment-focused*: IAP by Public Employment Services (PES) with a clear focus on employment (Bulgaria, Poland, Slovakia, Romania, Greece, Italy, partly in Austria) and the recruitment of job-seekers for activation programmes; however, full coverage not yet achieved (in Bulgaria and Romania only marginal);
- *Multi-disciplinary*: IAP by PES centred around employment but allowing for more targeted approaches in a multi-disciplinary perspective of teams made up of specialized workers (Portugal, Spain, Slovenia and UK).
- *Coordinated Services:* IAP by PES and other actors (often schools, social services or youth work) integrating vocational guidance and information in other contexts (Greece, Italy, Poland, Slovenian "Total Counselling Network").
- *Multi-service agencies* or "one-stop-shops": IAP based on stable cooperation between employment offices and social welfare agencies; not only circulating clients but addressing different problems (Finland; elsewhere restricted to 'multiple disadvantage').

Good practice Finland: One-stop shop Joint Service Centers

An important development in the strategy to help the hard-to-serve job-seekers in Finland has been to collect the relevant authorities´ service packages together as a one-stop-shop to solve the problems. These kind of one-stop shop Joint Service Centers (JOIS) have been created by the employment offices, the municipalities and the Social insurance institution (SII) together on local level. The idea of a joint service centre is not only to stop circulating the customers between the authorities, but to try to solve the problems together. One target of the experiment was to create stable cooperative model for the employment office, the municipalities' social welfare agencies and the social insurance institution because evaluation has proven that the most important aspect is to create broad networks. The customers can enter the one-stop shop service center via the PES, municipal social work or directly. The social insurance institutions´ services are also available at these centers, but this is not a customer entrance route. The facilities and personnel costs are covered on a 50-50 basis by the PES and the municipality and in addition to this the SII takes care of its own costs. In 2003, almost 50,000 customer services were provided by JOIS. Within this framework, youth joint service centres have been established. One aim of the youth joint service centre is to be a low step place were the young can get multi-professional support, i.e. information, counselling and support for education, working life and questions about life control. An important aspect is to get the cooperation between different authorities and Third sector organisations active and functional. The different orientations of the PES and municipalities at the one-stop shop service centers have raised some contradictions, as well. The orientation of the PES officials at the centers seem to be too much or too directly labour market oriented from the social workers´ point of view and the orientation of the social workers seem to be too slow taking the whole life situation into account from the PES officials´ point of view. This difference in professional orientation requires a common framework and sufficient training to insure the quality (see Volume 2, Annex IV, Chapter 6; Räisänen, 2004; cf. http://www.peerreview-employment.org).

- *"Whole systems working"*: IAPs are implemented in and coordinated between different actors (school, vocational guidance and employment services), often under control of local authorities (e.g. in Denmark); starting from the individual perspective education, career and personal development plans are developed in a cross-sector perspective.

Good practice Denmark: Guidance and Counselling reform

In August 2004 a new Danish Guidance Reform came into force. The primary reason for this initiative is the fact, that it shall be much easier to find and choose respectively education and occupation. 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. Counsellors need a minimum of 2 years higher education plus 2 years of professional experience. They get a 6 months full time training programme comprising lessons in guidance theories, methods, labour market conditions, the education system, life situation of different target groups, human development and learning theories. In order to optimise the qualifications of the counsellors, a Centre of expertise for guidance has been established under The Ministry of Education. 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. An example is the counselling provision of the Municipality of Silkeborg based on the following principles of guidance and counselling: a follow-up of clients until 2 years after they have left upper secondary, the confidentiality of the counselling process, a personalised approach based upon the individual's interests and personal qualifications, independence of institution- and sector specific interests. One objective of the centres is to act as a sign-post for the young people between different services and institutions such as secondary schools and youth education institutions in the area, regional guidance centres and local business life and public employment services.
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 (see Volume 2, Annex IV, Chapter 5).

Drawing these findings together we can distinguish certain policy models which implement activation aspects with individual approaches to counselling and guidance. We can distinguish these approaches on the basis of their position on a continuum between approaches that are centred around employment and approaches that have a wider focus. The one extreme of approaches is to rapidly bring young people into work or active labour market measures while the other end of this continuum is to provide young people with support to become reflexive actors of their own transition processes. Table 17 does not cover all structures of counselling and guidance in the respective countries but concentrates on those which currently are most prominent and developed towards mainstream provision.

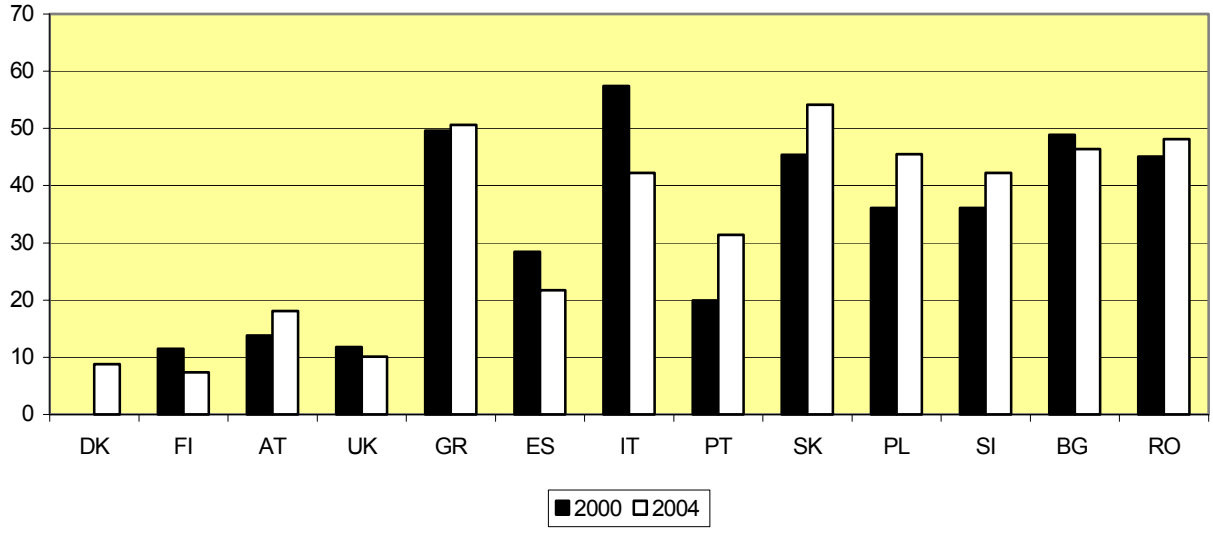
Table 17: Types of counselling and individual action plans in the context of activation policies

Type of counselling	*Countries*	*Target group*	*Activation model*	*Actors*	*Focus*
Employment-focused	BG, PL, RO, SK (not full coverage)	All job seekers	Limited	PES	Job search, ALMP recruitment; Nearly complete separation of other services
	GR, IT (low coverage)		No basis		
Multi-disciplinary	AT, ES, PT, SI	All job seekers	Limited	PES	Job search ALMP recruitment; In some cases, also education, and social situation
	UK (New Deal)	Unemployed Scaling of groups	Workfare		
Coordinated services	GR, IT and PL (in progress, low coverage), SI ("Total Counselling")	School leavers, job seekers	Limited	PES, Schools, Social services	Professional information and guidance;
Multi-service agencies (one-stop shops)	FI	More disadvan-taged youth	Supportive	PES, School (UK), Social Services, Social Insurance (FI)	Job search ALMP recruitment; Multi-professional work on health, psycho-scoial and financial situation
	UK (Conne-xions)		Limited		
'Whole system working'	DK	Many contexts from school to vocation to employment	Supportive	PES, School, Social Service, Local Authority	Life planning through education (job search and ALMP secondary)

Sources: national reports (see Volume 2, Annex II) and NAPs 2004

While all countries have agreed to the Lisbon target of offering every young person becoming unemployed a training or employment opportunity within 6 months time, there are huge differences between countries in reaching this target. While counselling schemes can not influence labour market structures they can impact on the duration of spells of unemployment before job seekers are offered measures to improve their skills and qualifications, to re-orientate, to undergo work experience or participate in job creation. Therefore, the share of long-term unemployment can be seen as an approximate indicator for the coverage and efficiency of how IAPs are realised (not necessarily the quality of IAP processes; see Chapter 6). Long-term unemployment rates are below 20% in Austria, Denmark, Finland and the UK (although rising significantly in Austria together with overall youth unemployment), they reach a medium level in Portugal and Spain which may be explained by the deregulated structure of labour markets, thereby implying a high level of precariousness. In all countries, they reach levels over 50% and have increased between 2000 and 2004 (see Figure 21).

Figure 21: Long-term unemployment (>1 year) among young unemployed (< 25 years) 2000 and 2004 (Eurostat LFS)



Success factors for activation policies and Individualised Action Plans are hard to generalise, because evaluation of nearly none of the recently introduced changes regarding their impact on disadvantaged youth has been completed. Some cautious conclusions from qualitative evidence are:

- Activation may have less unintended side-effects like pushing young people into inactivity if it can rely on more positive incentives like a generous "safety net" in terms of the general level of benefits available to young people. Given the high rates of inactivity in some countries, activation is to be measured on the scale of user value it is able to convey.
- Establishing negotiation processes between the institutions and the young people may help to avoid dis-engagement of the harder to reach groups. Negative incentives alone may lead to de-motivation if real options and choice are not available. This is especially true for policy models in a labour market environment with a high share of informal and undeclared work.
- Policy models where PES coverage is still low should strive for quantitative expansion with a clear qualitative strand, i.e. assure the quality of the services offered.
- Evaluation of the efficiency of these policies has to take into account that the quality of the activation policies largely depends on the quality of options available.

While it is clear that the coordination of services and policies is highly recommended, it remains to be seen which type of counselling service can achieve this objective best: it remains to be seen whether the Danish model of "whole systems working" or the Total

Counselling model in Slovenia are able to actively involve all necessary actors like for example employers, but the approach of obliging municipalities to organise local networks is promising. The one-stop-shop model, Finland and other countries have introduced, will have to be closely evaluated whether it is reaching disadvantaged young people better than employment-centred services. Up to now, only few evaluation results of these relatively recent developments are available, and it remains unclear what consequences these programmes have for particularly disadvantaged young people. Experiences from Denmark show that 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). The success of these approaches will depend highly on the quality of counselling and case management installed. More research will therefore be needed to shed some light into the micro workings of service implementation with a special focus on the quality of the case management implemented into IAP policies (cf. McDonald & Marston, 2005; Lindsay & Mailand, 2004).

A more accurate understanding of young people's disposition (or habitus) could offer a great deal to policy and practice. It helps account for individual agency, including the pragmatically rational aspects of career and lifestyle decisions (Colley, 2003). This means for instance embedding activation into personal counselling process where negative incentives prevail. The availability of meaningful options that allow for biographical progress has to be made the scale against which these policies have to be evaluated against. It is important to avoid negative incentives, especially if real options and choice in terms of jobs, education and training or work experience are not available.

Mentors and case managers should be able to acknowledge the social and economical factors which influence young people's situations and perspectives. Such a perspective avoids the danger of self-blame when the labour market is not easy or attractive to enter (Roberts, 2001).

Local structures need the capacity to plan strategically as well as function operationally. The capacity to function strategically as well as operationally implies that organisations should work towards joint planning and budgeting arrangements which can make coordination institutionally-based rather than depend predominantly on the actions of charismatic individuals. Local structures need also access to the range of services which will be required in finding holistic solutions for those who are a long way from the open market and who may

have severe multiple and persistent problems. The Danish experience shows that such a functioning needs to be based on a "culture of dialogue" which would also avoid that the issue of unemployment of young people gets "de-politicised" (Serrano Pascual, 2004).

5.3.2 Active labour market policies

The success of early intervention measures into youth unemployment such as job search assistance and IAP depends on the quality of the options available. Active labour market policies try to build bridges into the labour market and as we have seen, their improvement has been on eof the key priorities of policy-making. The implementation of the call to move from 'passive' to 'active' labour market policies has been a challenge for European states.
In the following we will give an overview over the most important policy measures applied and how countries make use of these instruments to tackle youth unemployment.

- *Deregulation of labour market entrance* has tried to reduce the costs connected to hiring young people by introducing forms of employment contracts with reduced levels of protection (student jobs in Slovenia, "project work" and other types in Italy, giving way to fixed-term contracts, especially in Finland and Spain), reducing the overall level of dismissal protection (Denmark and UK). While in some countries this has been accompanied by social rights, activation policies and the expansion of education and training (Finland, Slovenia and especially Denmark) this has not been the case in Southern Europe where precariousness and poverty among young people have in fact increased (Spain, Italy, Greece and Portugal; see also Volume 2, Annex II).
- *Labour market training.* Low or lack of qualifications and mismatch with labour market needs are the key problems. Therefore nearly all countries have introduced training as one key measure of active labour market policies. The range of training measures has already been analysed in 5.2, where the embedding of these measures into a context is stressed as a key factor to success. Broad inclusion of young people into ALMP seems to be one way of dealing with large shares of qualification mismatch. This is especially true if ALMP are integrated into a policy model of developing a life-cycle oriented approach of vocational training and education. Training especially for young people with de-motivating experiences in education and training has to ensure that the training provided is not "more of the same", but rather it should be combined with other policies like guidance, job creation or work experience. Inasmuch as such programmes depend on incentives for employers to provide possibilities of work-based training they overlap with subsidy schemes.

- *Subsidies* aim to compensate employers for hiring young people despite of their lack of experience: wage subsidies or incentives for employers aimed at school graduates (first time job seekers) to compensate mismatch and lack of work experience; this is especially important in Central and Eastern European countries (Bulgaria, Romania, Poland, Slovenia, Slovakia, but also in Italy); there are also wage subsidies aimed at long-term unemployed to provide work experience and re-socialise towards work; often also for over 25 year olds (Denmark, Finland, UK, Greece or Portugal). In so far as such programmes are intended to have a learning-by-doing effect (especially in terms of practice and experience) they often overlap in targeting graduates and/or long-term unemployed (e.g. Italy and Poland). However, they also create a youth labour market with specific rules which may contribute to the replacement of regular jobs and contribute to deregulation. Dead-weight losses also is an issue for the efficiency of wage subsidies. In most cases, subsidies are granted to foster labour market participation of specific young disadvantaged groups, and not the young as a whole. This is, for example, the case of the Portuguese programme "Employment-Life", targeting drug addicted, in which employers can benefit from a subsidy for each trainee they hire (see Volume 2, Annex IV, Chapters 7 and 8).
- *Creating new employment opportunities*: In a way, subsidies can be considered also job creation policies, but the difference is in the scale involved: while subsidies target only specific cases and rather influence employers' recruitment practices, job creation policies aim at making young people's transitions independent from the demand side of the labour market by creating additional work opportunities and to create self-sustainable growth. In fact, this kind of measures can Employment schemes in most cases address the long-term unemployed, especially those with disabilities and health or psychosocial problems (e.g. in Austria, Denmark, Greece and Poland).
- *Job creation in the third sector* however is regarded as a successful way engaging the more hard-to-reach groups (e.g. Austria, Denmark) and while embedding employment in social milieus has also considerable effects on motivation and employability (e.g. the social cooperatives in Italy). In terms of job creation employment in the social economy or the third sector is seen as the most effective measure. While on the one hand combining entrepreneurial reality with social embedding and protection the mixture of public funding and income from own market activities also allows to explore and develop new economic niches in the local market. The most promising tool in this regard are cooperatives which represent the most democratic and participatory (see below) work setting thereby

reconciling employment and citizenship and which especially in Italy profit from a differentiated legal framework.

- While job creation in the public sector is less important in most countries as it was in former times (except the French 'Emploi-jeunes' programme), *self-employment* programmes have increased: they are most relevant in contexts where a high percentage of skilled unemployed suffers from lack of jobs and/or segmented labour market structures (especially in Greece, Italy, Poland); often women are explicitly addressed.

Good practice Italy: Support to self-employment and entrepreneurship

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.
As a matter of fact, levels of self-employment and small enterprises in Italy are very high, and many of the most successful economic activities are based on SME networks. Even though some commentators 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 innovate an endurable path of Laws supporting juvenile entrepreneurship. Thus, self-employment is believed to be a good solution also for deprived areas - if adequately supported in order to achieve a modern management, infrastructure facilities, network activities, and innovation. 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. The yearly budget sums up to more than 2,500 millions/euro. Some 1 million euro are used to fund 57,000 enterprises. In the last years, the measure is progressively improving its 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 fact, in 2004 three applicants out of four became recipients, while the mean of the decade is only 37%.
Criticism about this programme mainly concentrates on its high costs, the high proportion of businesses in the trade sector and the poor follow-up on participants (see Volume 2, Annex IV, Chapter 7).

- Finally, *anti-discrimination legislation and policies*, especially regarding gender, ethnicity but also age can be applied to overcome barriers of labour market segmentation which are based on traditional normative and ideological assumptions. The European Anti-Discrimination Directive is a key step forward in this regard although up to now it can not be evaluated to what extent ratification by member states has relevant impacts on the transitions to work of ethnic minority and immigrant youth or of young women (see Chapter 6.2).

Table 18 gives an overview of the different profiles of active labour market policy mixes for young people (excluding counselling and vocational guidance) with separately in the previous section) whether priority is laid on deregulation, training, subsidies or job creation.

Table 18: Active Labour Market Policy mixes

Level of youth unemployment		*Countries*	*Labour market deregulation***	*Relevance of VET measures****	*Relevance of subsidies*	*Relevance of job creation*****
Rate	*Ratio**					
Low (<10%)	Low	DK, FI	++	++	+/-	+/-
		AT	+/-	++	+/-	+/-
		UK	+(+)	+(+)	+	+/-
Medium (10-20%)	Low	SI	++	+(+)	++	+/-
		PT	++	+(+)	+	+/-
High (>20%)	Medium	GR	+	+	+	+(+)
		ES	++	+	+	+
		IT	+(+)	+	+(+)	+(+)
	High	PL, SK	+	+	++	+/-
	Low	BG, RO	+	+	++	+/-

* Low = < 7%; Medium = 7-10%; High = >10%; ** reflected by level of fixed-term contracts and fixed-term work experience arrangements (e.g. graduate practice, progetti lavoro etc.; EUROSTAT LFS, 2004; NAPs 2004); *** by increase in VET rates (EURYDICE, 2005) and relevance given in NAPs 2004; **** in Greece and Italy especially self-employment; in all countries social economy for those with reduced employability (yet to limited extent; NAPs 2004; national reports);
Rating: - non-existing; +/- not very relevant; + quite relevant; +(+) relevant; ++ very relevant; according to estimations, relevance in NAPs and NAPincls (see national reports in Annex III), funding, participants; relevance defined by relative quantitative coverage and investment.

Hence, to better qualify the situation of some countries, it is proper to take into account also other indicators already discussed earlier on in this chapter. In this way, the institutional effect on labour market barriers for young people is made clearer.

The cluster of countries with low and medium unemployment is characterized by a clear prevalence of VET measures which in Denmark and Finland primarily implies referring young unemployed towards regular education and training while in UK the picture is mixed between VET and labour market training and in Portugal low youth unemployment primarily relates with early entry into precarious jobs while the PES also covers a high share of registered unemployed. Comparatively this cluster shows also the low duration of employment searching (with the exception of Slovenia), and a low level of gender segmentation.

The cluster with high unemployment is characterised by a low level of coverage ALMP. Policies adopted in the Southern European countries are primarily structure-related, yet in an ambiguous way as deregulation and the massive introduction of new forms of non-standard arrangements prevail. However, in Greece and Italy, labour market segmentation is also addressed by job creation policies, especially in terms of self-employment, also because the in the average young unemployed are highly qualified. It is worth to consider that other

countries address structure-related policies by providing compensation and safety-net measures against the risks coming from an uncontrolled labour market.

Within this cluster, in fact, youth unemployment is very high (rates over 20% and ratios about 10% in IT, GR and ES). The majority of young people spends more than one year in searching for a job (GR and IT show a share of long-term youth unemployed close to 60%), and more often the job career of young people is characterised, from the beginning, by a high level of precariousness. Besides, this model seems to be unable to overcome the gender divide, a problem which characterises these countries in the EU context.

The instruments adopted among Eastern European countries are similar to those adopted by South European countries. Here, especially subsidies, most often for graduate job seekers, prevail within this sub-cluster (BG, RO, PL, SI, SK); mainly to compensate the low competitiveness of young people through financial support aimed at stimulating young people's recruitment among employers.

5.3.3 Active Labour Market Policies and policy mixes

If we want to analyse, how the policy-mixes in different countries combine the different instruments, we have to look at the expenditure side to see which priorities governments accord to different constellations of disadvantage on the labour market. This poses several methodical problems. To start with, for some countries the relevant data are simply not available. For example, there is no breakdown of active labour market policy participants by age groups in the LFS data. Second, data on expenditure by policy type often do not provide insight into the policies targeting young people specifically. Third, the breakdown of expenditure into youth-specific and apprenticeship measures, besides lacking data for many countries, has severe comparability issues. Therefore, our approach is to use several rough approximations to analyse the youth-specific priorities in countries' investment into active labour market policies.

The first one is to look at the overall level of ALMP expenditure compared to the gross domestic product (GDP). Table 19 relates overall ALMP expenditure to the level of youth unemployment. Denmark displays a very high level of expenditure with low youth unemployment rates. Low expenditure and low rates apply for Austria where the apprenticeship system absorbs a high share of school leavers and the UK although here the share of youth related expenditures is relatively high, compared to other countries. However, also a higher rate of inactivity needs to be taken into consideration. The high-low corner with Slovakia, Poland and Romania features those countries with high youth unemployment rates

and low levels of expenditure compared to the GDP. The cluster characterised by high unemployment and medium expenditure shows a rather diverse picture with additionally high inactivity in Bulgaria and fragmented ALMP, high deregulation and precariousness in Spain; a relatively high share of ALMP towards youth and training related measures in Italy while in Finland ALMP are confronted with a specific economic situation (see Chapter 7). This diversity accounts as well for the cluster with low expenditure and medium youth unemployment (Portugal: early entry into unskilled precarious; Greece and Slovenia: high share of higher education students).

An important evidence emerging is that countries that are spending a relatively high level of resources in education (see 5.2) – with the only exception of Finland and Poland – show lower unemployment rates (e.g. AT, UK, PT, DK, SI).

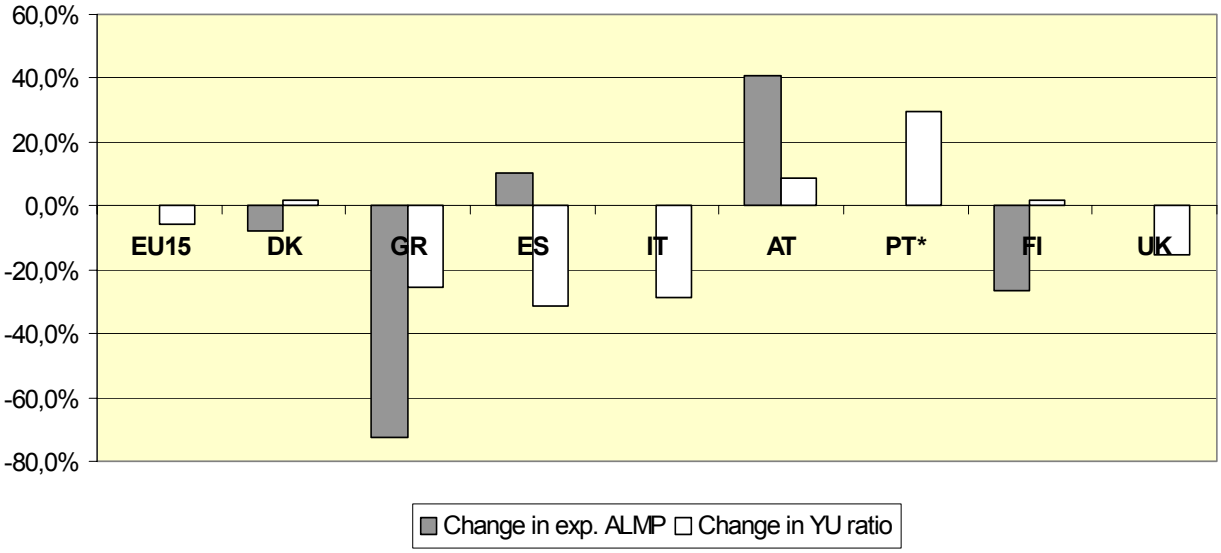
Table 19: Level of youth unemployment rate (YUR) and expenditure (% of GDP) on active labour market policies (Eurostat LFS; OECD)

GDP / YUR	Low	Medium	High
Low	AT, UK		DK
Medium	GR, PT,SI		
High	PL, RO, SK	BG, ES, FI, IT	

This approximation has several weaknesses, as diverging interpretations are possible. For instance, low expenditure and low rates can be seen as an indication that policy-effort and urgency of the problem are in line to each other. UK is a good example that this can be misleading because the youth share on the total of active labour market policies of over one third is comparably high. Therefore the effort UK are putting into the reduction of youth unemployment is under-estimated by this calculation.

If we try to single out the share of active labour market policies benefiting young people, we nevertheless run into another set of problems. Data on the investment into youth specific measures have many gaps and serious comparability issues. Calculations to distinguish expenditures related to youth from overall ALMP (e.g. EC, 2004d) are restricted to youth specific measures which however may only represent a part of the expenses in favour of young people. Before this background Figure 22 is a cautious and modest attempt to see whether the efforts spent on ALMP correspond to some of the changes in the share of young people among the total population over a period of 5 years.

Figure 22: Change in expenditures on ALMP (% of GDP) and change in youth unemployment ratios 1998-2003 (Eurostat LFS; OECD)



While the uncertainty about the extent to which young people benefit from ALMP expenses remains, there is also no linear pattern in this relationship. Some countries who have seen a major decline in the ratio of youth unemployment have at the same time reduced the spending on youth specific measures (Greece) or on the contrary increased (Spain) or maintained their effort (Italy and UK). Finland and Denmark have at the same time seen a slight increase in the share of young people in unemployment and reduced their spending. We can summarize that looking at macro-economic indicators does not deliver a clear tendency of youth specific efforts in active labour market policies.

If we come back to our heuristic model to characterise policies on the scales of their tendency towards prevention and structure-related versus individualising solutions, active labour market policies can be roughly attributed according to the following table (Table 20).

Table 20: Concepts of and measures against youth unemployment

	Compensatory	Preventative
Individualising	Workfare policies (UK, partly SK) Labour market training (AT, BG, ES, FI, GR, RO,	Choice-based activation policies (DK, FI) Supported options (back) into mainstream education, training and employment (AT, DK, FI, SI)
Structure-related	Subsidies (BG, GR, IT, PL, RO, SK, SI) Self-employment (GR, IT) Employment schemes (partly AT, BG, DK, FI, GR, SK)	Deregulation (DK, ES, FI, IT, PT, SI, SK, UK; partly PL and SK)

If we look at the prevention column of table 100, we can add all measures that try to improve young people's employability and other social inclusion factors on a long-term scale like activation policies which are based on a wide variety of progression options and support measures to facilitate re-entrance into mainstream education and training which target primarily the individual. On the structure-related side, de-regulation of labour market entrance fulfils a preventative purpose by lowering the employment threshold for new entrants. But, as we have shown above, the latter has severe drawbacks by increasing of non-standard work arrangements which can lead to an increase in working poor. On the compensatory side, the classical repertoire of active labour market policies can be found: wage subsidies, promotion of self-employment, job creation and public employment. As these measures do in their rationale relate to the weaknesses of labour markets, they can be labelled as structure-related, while workfare policies target individuals and as stated above run the risk of individualising structural problems.

If we try to bring these findings into our original heuristic model of structure vs. individualising and compensatory vs. preventative models and relate this to the discourse level and the overall tendency of welfare provision we arrive at a more illuminating picture which we will be able to relate to constellations of disadvantage in the following chapters.

Figure 23: Main orientations of national policy mixes against youth unemployment *

		Individualising		
	SK	RO, PL	AT	PT **Preventative**
Compensatory	GR, IT	BG	ES	UK, SI DK, FI
				Structure-related

* see table 20 for single policy measures taken into account

Figure 23 considers the national ALMP model as a whole regarding the main overall direction of policy measures which does not necessarily reflect national performance. At the same time countries positioned close to each other must not be seen as clusters inasmuch as possibly consisting of different policy measures. New tendencies seem to start a sort of convergent path: as a matter of fact, on the one side activation and individualization are more and more

percolating into the national discourses on social policies; on the other side, in many European countries labour market deregulation has been one of the major issues at stake.

Anyway, the effects of this (possibly) beginning convergence are not self-evident, because the starting gap between different countries can widely deviate the national outcomes of common policies. In fact, Figure 23 shows the range of policy-mixes in a simplified way. More specifically, Eastern and Southern European countries are more likely to implement compensatory measures, even though Mediterranean countries seem to focus more on structure-related ones. On the other side, preventive measures are a goal for almost every country, but the target population and the structure of the measure produce different levels of individualization and prevention.

Also structure-related preventive measures produce different outcomes due to specific national policy mixes able to compensate (or not) after-effects of market deregulation. High compensatory social assistance schemes (e.g. Denmark, Finland) help people coping with de-regulated labour-market policies.

Also subsidies to employers, even though we have clustered them altogether, can rely on very diversified institutional arrangements able to steer their direction: the role of involved enterprise, for example, can vary according to the strength of economic tissue and the dependence relationship between market and state.

According to the results briefly described above, to answer the multi-factor nature of disadvantage a variety of active labour market policies is needed that can provide a number of different routes to/back to employment and qualification. It is evident that the mix of measures that in the different countries represent a good practice in promoting youth's employability seem to be characterized by the interaction between high diffusion of individualized active labour market policies linked with efficient education and training systems capable to answer, quickly and efficiently, both to the labour supply requirements and to the needs of labour demand. The success factors to support youth's employability may be synthesized as follows:

- Development of ALMP should consider coverage AND quality where PES do not reach the majority (Italy, Greece, Romania, Bulgaria, Poland); with regard to both funding is crucial.
- Counselling and guidance need to be adapted to the needs of different target groups, low-step services and those based in the third sector are needed to target the hard-to-reach; early and continuous intervention provide for a life-cycle approach. Disadvantaged youth

benefit only from multi-professional approaches which are embedded in local and regional networks.

- Offers for young people disengaged from education and training as well as from the labour market need to provide them with a concrete user value that is more attractive than short-term rewards on the margins of the labour market. This includes that activation depends on passive measures in terms of benefit entitlements constituting a relevant user value and attractor for young people which allow young people to take risks of exploring routes into the labour market and thereby can serve important motivators for young people;
- Coordination of ALMP with regional economic development; this not only implies that ALMP adapt to economic development but that vice-versa success factors of ALMP are integral and binding objectives of economic development (which obviously is only rarely the case). Sustainability also requires systems to recognise prior learning in order to make individual (informal) experience visible.
- Coordination with local labour market actors such as training providers, employers and the education system: For example, the UK "New Deal for Young People" foresees local partnerships under the coordination of Job Centres, whose aim 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.
- Guidance and monitoring are crucial in order to guarantee the quality and relevance of experience that young people make in subsidised work. Such an action becomes fundamental in economies experiencing deep and fast changes and fragmentation under the pressure of globalizing trends. An interesting example is the Danish programme providing guidance and counselling, whose aim is the promotion of easier educational and professional choices through a support able to compound individual and social needs.
- Insertion and upward mobility need to be facilitated by providing reliable bridges into recognised activities such as regular employment, further training or self-employment. For example, in Italy measures supporting self-employment, targeting in particular the young and the women, has been implemented for some twenty years. The aims of this measure include also the regularization of informal work and the enhancement of youth's position in the labour market.

- A balance between labour market and individual policies is needed, in order to tackle both structure-related and person-related failure. This is particularly important for policies targeting long-term unemployed: in fact, their position is often due both to a chronic weakness of labour market entrance and to personal conditions of disadvantage (gender, cognitive skills, etc.).
- To measure the effects of active labour market policies, a longitudinal perspective in indicators and variables is needed. Recent studies in the US and Switzerland have shown that if the evaluation period of single policies is extended to a long-term perspective of several years, training and employment subsidy measures can be as effective as a concentration on individual measures' short-term effects (OECD, 2005). Evaluation indicators should be broadened to cover undesired side-effects – like stigmatising effects of being stuck in the informal labour market/training schemes or revolving-door effects – as well as the effects of policies on engagement into life-long learning (see also Chapter 8).

6. Factors for sustainable inclusion of disadvantaged youth

What determines whether policies addressing early school leaving and youth unemployment are effective and successful in reversing negative trends and in facilitating sustainable inclusion? And how can policy makers profit from comparative policy analysis and evaluation in designing and implementing better measures? This chapter deals with these questions in three sections. First, we will pose the question how to conceptualise success in policies to include disadvantaged youth (6.1). Based on this, we will, second, draw together the most relevant factors of success that can be generalised from the various good practice examples and from socio-economic performance indicators referred to in the previous chapters (6.2).

6.1 What means 'success' in policies for disadvantaged youth?

In order to answer this question it is necessary to distinguish between normative and operative policy objectives. *Normative policy objective*s are values which motivate – or which legitimise – state actors to invest in policy measures to achieve and/or maintain them: for example human dignity, democracy, justice, citizenship. *Operative policy objectives* in contrast are sub-ordinate steps that need to be achieved on the way to reach the overall normative objectives. In Chapter 3 we have suggested to distinguish between *social integration* – the sociological term describing a state of social cohesion in which individual needs and subjective aspirations are balanced with collective demands and systemic functions – and *social inclusion* as measures to achieve this, especially by concentrating on social disadvantage. While it is of course a success if addressees targeted by policies as disadvantaged actually participate in measures of inclusion this relates only to a necessary prerequisite on the way towards the 'real' goal of social integration. This means that social inclusion which aims beyond an operational, administrative perspective still needs to be assessed against social integration. The same accounts for the distinction between labour market integration and social integration. While it is obvious that work is a key prerequisite for social integration it is not identical. In fact, not only the increasing number of working poor but also humiliating processes of 'cooling out' that especially young people with less resources and opportunities experience in their transitions to work show that labour market integration actually can counteract social integration; which has been referred to as 'misleading trajectories' (Walther, Stauber et al., 2002).

We suggest to take three dimensions into account in differentiating policy objectives:

a) *Narrow versus holistic*: The success of policies against youth unemployment normally are measured exclusively by the increase of young unemployed placed in employment or by the decrease of those leaving school with no or low qualifications. While neither jobs nor qualifications are ends in themselves such a perspective risks being reductive also because in many cases school and transition problems are too complex while requiring psychosocial stabilisation, health related intervention, housing or debt relief prior to labour market integration (cf. Kieselbach et al., 2001). In a worst case scenario – which however is not at all exceptional – measures dealing with young people facing multiple problems are stopped because of low rates of successful placement in employment although participants have made significant progress in regaining control over their lives. While for the individuals this means that trustful relationships and meaningful life perspectives are cut off, in fact stopping such measures causes more socio-political costs as in many cases inclusion has to start from zero while having to overcome additional distrust into institutional actors (Walther et al., 2004; Weil et al., 2005).

- *Short-term versus long-term*: This relates to the dimension of time which itself needs to be taken into consideration for three different aspects:

- first, not only processes of personal development but also labour market constraints may imply that the insertion of a young person takes longer than prescribed by the duration of standardised measures;

- second, it needs to be questioned whether progress is sustainable, whether jobs are fixed-term or psychosocial stabilisation has been achieved in a way to stand the pressure of regular work;

- third, in a more general perspective preventative policy measures which address the structural factors of early school leaving or unemployment may take longer time while effects are more difficult to be ascribed directly to policy intervention.

- In fact, the overview of policy measures in Chapter 5 suggest that in many contexts short-term objectives of compensatory policies prevail. While it is necessary to understand that priorities on short-term intervention result from the pressure of legitimacy on policy makers – both regarding the public and other departments competing for limited resources – it needs to be made clear that this does not guarantee success; in contrast, success necessarily requires long-term policy perspectives.

- *Subjective versus systemic*: In so far as social integration depends on the reconciliation of individual and systemic perspectives in the transition from school to work it is necessary

to take subjective satisfaction as one dimension of policy success into account. On the one hand, this is inherent to the values of democracy, justice and citizenship; on the other hand however this is also central for the effectiveness of inclusion and active labour market policies inasmuch as they depend on the active collaboration of their addressees. It has therefore been suggested to pay more attention to the processes of young people's motivation and de-motivation with regard to their transitions in general and to their engagement with policy measures in particular (Walther et al., 2004; cf. Kieselbach et al., 2001; Weil et al., 2005).

These three dimensions are cross-cutting the dimensions *structure-related versus individualising* and *preventative versus compensatory* introduced in Chapter 3 and applied in Chapter 5. Referring to a broad range of international literature in Chapter 2 we have argued that a serious assessment of cost-effectiveness relations of inclusion and active labour market policies is not possible with existing data. With the reflections made above we want also to argue that applying standardised measures of success is counter-productive to the success of such measures itself. An additional purpose of reflecting the meaning of success in policies is that processes of mutual learning and comparative analysis may be distorted if concentrating on the know-'how' of specific measures and thereby neglecting the 'what for'.

6.2 Factors of policy success

In the following we will analyse factors of policy success according to five key areas relating both to the policy-mixes of the well-performing countries and to single good practice policies.

6.2.1 Funding

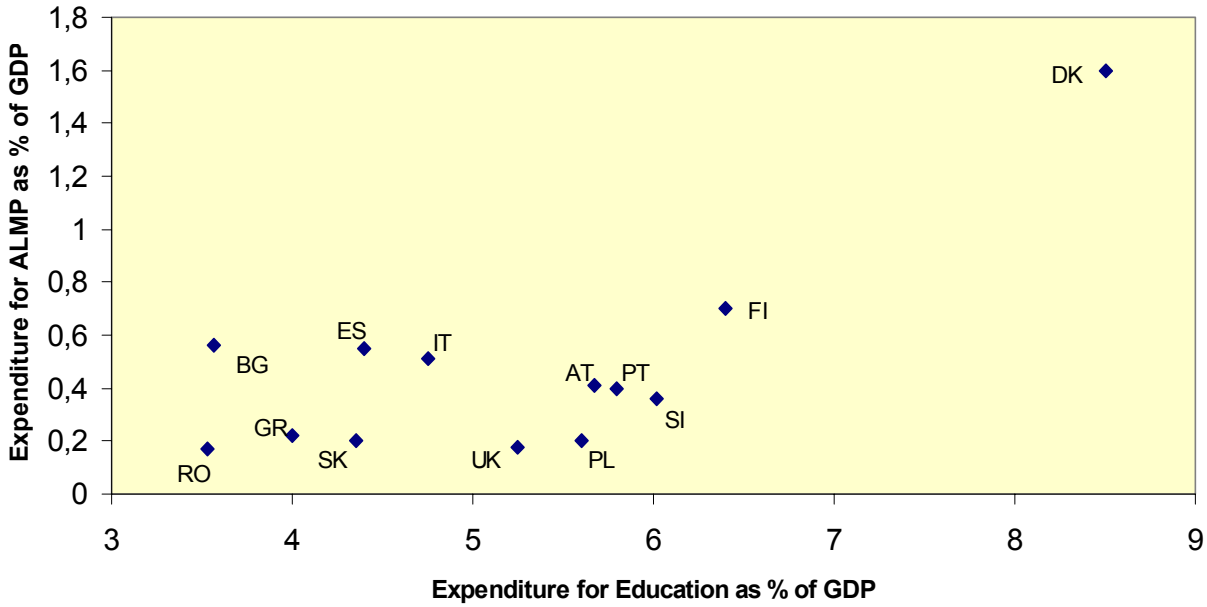
It seems banal if we start with the issue of funding as first and basic prerequisite of successful policies. Nevertheless, the funding on which single measures and actors can command arises as one of the most crucial factors of the analysis. The amount of funding has *quantitative* aspects as regards the coverage of policies – can theoretically all potential addressees profit or only a limited number? – but also *qualitative* aspects as regards the training of professionals, allowances paid to participants, incentives for employers, or the investment to provide training workshops with technology to offer relevant training which is up to the standards of real production settings as well as in line with the directions of economic development; especially as regards the service and knowledge economy.

We have argued that cost-effectiveness analysis can only be done adequately on a small-scale level while requiring a comprehensive set of evaluation tools. Apart from that a comparison of

policy measures according to costs needs to take into account whether existing infra-structures can be used for new policy measures or if these have to be funded as well. Innovations in counselling may be cheap while effectiveness depends on the quality of the options available where guidance may lead the young people. It may also be misleading if it is not taking into account whether large-scale policies for early school leavers have to compensate for deficits in schools or with regard to family-oriented social policies.

We will therefore stick to assess national expenditure on education and active labour market policies (as percentages of GDP; see Figure 24; cf. Chapter 5.2 and 5.3) which shows the overall resources invested in the implementation of policies. And it stands for the political will associated with the inclusion of disadvantaged youth across the different countries.

Figure 24: Investment in Education and ALMP as % of GDP, 2002 (Eurostat; national information on ALMP for BG and RO; OECD LMP database, for PL, SK and UK)



The picture revealing the distinct position of Denmark in this regard is confirmed if considering social protection expenditures for family and children which is a rough indicator for measures related to disadvantaged youth (expenditures for the 15-24 year age not being available). These figures (for 2002; EC, 2005d) vary between 4% of GDP spent for families and children in Denmark and 0,53% in Spain.

In Chapter 5 we have evaluated national policies not only in terms of level of expenditure but also how the relation of expenditure on education or ALMP and youth unemployment and early school leaving has developed over time. It is obvious that with regard to ALMP decreasing expenditures may also result from dropping unemployment and corresponding lower need of policy measures. And of course measuring expenditures in percentages of GDP

neglects that poor countries (low overall GDP) may need to spend a higher percentage to overcome a critical threshold where investment makes a difference. It is a principle dilemma of some countries, especially Bulgaria or Romania, that a relatively low overall GDP reproduces a vicious circle. The poor economic potential which has to be seen as a key reason for both unemployment and early school leaving at the same time sets limits to effectively combating these phenomena. While this reveals the dependency of policies on macro-economic factors which both reduce problem pressure and provide resources allowing for good governance it justifies redistribution within Europe through the structural funds – especially the European Social Fund (ESF) – although targeting may include not only economic and labour market objectives but also inequality and school.

In terms of overall strategies, European comparison suggests a relation between a high level of redistribution, high expenditure on education and high share of employment in the service sector (especially Denmark and Finland). In contrast, higher employment in the industrial production as in Spain goes along with a higher inequality (or lower redistribution) and a lower expenditure in education (cf. EC, 2004d; see also Chapter 8 for recommendations).

6.2.2 Targeting the disadvantaged – questions of access and flexibility

We have argued above that sufficient funding is crucial for guaranteeing an appropriate coverage of inclusion and active labour market policies. However, policy assessment needs also to take into consideration whether – apart from quantitative sufficiency – the target groups are actually reached or if certain constellations of disadvantage are either neglected or not properly assessed. There are several indications that often this is not the case. It is often argued that measures which are not targeted entail the risk that weaker addressees are displaced by stronger ones – which is referred to a 'creaming' – a mechanism reproduced by professionals in order to increase the success rate of the own measure. Some aspects are:

- the *under-representation of ethnic minorities* in many policy measures which emerges both from policy evaluations where differentiated by ethnicity (such as 2nd generation immigrant youth only partly reached by the Danish counselling system, see Annex III; or ethnic minority youth in the UK who in the New Deal less often progress to unsubsidised work while over-represented within those leaving with 'destination unknown'; DWP, 2004). As regards the Central and Eastern European countries especially the Roma are under-represented in active labour market policies which results both from a formal understanding of anti-discrimination not singling out the Roma in registering the unemployed and from the segregation of the Roma from public social infrastructures (cf.

Kolev & Saget, 2005); while there are more measures addressing the Roma with regard to early school leaving (see Chapter 5.2; Volume 2, Annex II and Annex IV, Chapter 1).

- There are no general indications for an *under-representation of young women*, except for subsidy and training measures, and especially in Southern Europe (partly also in Central and Eastern Europe); and in the UK young women less often leave the New Deal to enter employment while their percentage among the 'destination unknown' is higher (e.g. New Deal; DWP, 2004); in some cases however also among those returning to education (cf. Dietrich, 2003; Julkunen & Malmberg, 2003). In general however, a focus towards gendered inequality seems to have weakened, partly because disadvantage of women has partly been reversed (in the Northern and Central and Eastern European countries), partly due to (yet superficial) gender mainstreaming policies replacing approaches targeted towards equal opportunities (Behning & Serrano Pascual, 2001).
- persistent phenomena of *status zer0* youth are another key aspect of policies failing in reaching their target groups. In Chapter 4 we have referred to the variety of constellations of status zer0 between those who are simply not reached by institutions and policy measures and those who actively disengage from the formal transition system. Although activation policies are primarily concerned with excluding the options of unemployment and inactivity, even in contexts as Denmark, Finland and the UK where activation and Individual Action Plans have reached a high degree of coverage the size of the status zer0 group is estimated between 25% and 50% in relation to registered unemployed.

From our analysis it emerges clearly that those with lower qualifications, from ethnic minorities and in tendency more women than men are excluded where measures are clearly too small to cover the target group. At the same time there is no clear evidence in national reports and research literature that narrowly targeted approaches have a higher probability to reach those with the highest needs; or the outcomes do no justice to the objective of sustainable inclusion (Roberts et al., 1999; Nicaise & Bollens, 2000; Walther et al., 2004; Weil et al., 2005). As an example may again serve the British New Deal where – starting from the observation that those with more complex needs have profited to a limited extent while the 'hard-to-reach' often were actually not reached. More and more targeted approaches have been established, yet the inactivity rate remains on a level which is clearly above that of other Western countries (Bentley & Gurumurthy, 1999; Prince's Trust, 2004). This accounts also for special schools. Despite of a highly differentiated pedagogical system they can not compensate with the stigmatising effects of segregation which often is reflected by the fact

that regular qualifications can only 'in principle' be achieved while still being less recognised (Evans, 2003; Nind et al., 2003). Among the policy examples studied more in depth, there is only one measure – the Portuguese Employment-Life programme – which has success in addressing a single targeted group (drug abusers) which may be associated with the 'objective' problems affecting their lives (rather than disadvantage in relation to formal criteria) which implies a clear user value while making it easier to access external help.

Rather than to increase targeting of measures in a ever more differentiated way we want to suggest to shift towards reflecting prerequisites of *access* towards policy measures in a broader perspective by taking the following aspects into account:

- *Coverage*: it is obvious that reaching the target group requires sufficient places which in turn depends on the available funding. Targeting measures therefore often is also justified in terms of higher efficiency; which however only applies if these are really reached and their life situation improved (see above). The question of quantitative adequacy arises especially in Southern and Central and Eastern European countries where it reflects comparatively low levels of expenditure for both education and ALMP (see above).
- *Accessibility:* Coverage does not only concern a sufficient supply of policy measures, especially of the attractive ones, but also its territorial distribution. In Chapter 4 we have referred to the fact that regional disadvantage not only concerns labour markets but also social infra-structure. In fact, often policies for disadvantaged youth are delivered where providers (private as well as NGOs) already have established organisational structures; and very often these are concentrated in urban areas. Apart from measures being in reaching distance they need to be known among the addressees (and have a good reputation). This goes along with a decentralised approach inasmuch as government campaigns are much less likely to attract target groups than direct information, be it from friends or the family, be it from trustworthy counsellors, social workers etc. (Cuijpers, 2003). Accessibility also regards the regulations of access – whether all young persons with difficult transitions can refer to a measure (which does not exclude being passed on to other appropriate actors in the framework of reliable networks, see below).
- *Complex needs*: In Chapter 4 we have suggested to understand those normally referred to as multiple disadvantaged as those with complex needs. Heterogeneous life situations such as bad health, homelessness, drug addiction, immigration or single parenthood imply that other life issues are more pressing and more important than education or work. This means that only after problems related to these other issues are solved individuals can start

to deal with transitions to work whether this is child care, health or psychological treatment, regulation of personal debt, housing or questions related to status of residence (Nicaise & Bollens, 2000; Kieselbach et al., 2001; Walther et al., 2004; Weil et al., 2005).

The persistence of phenomena of 'status zer0' youth suggests that not only political, structural and organisational aspects restrict access of measures of inclusion but that individuals themselves disengage or refuse to get in contact with institutional structures. We will refer to this in a separate paragraph related to young people's *motivation* (see below).

Based on our analysis we suggest a threefold perspective in order to increase access:

1) *Intensify mainstream programmes where disadvantage culminates*. Rather than separating and segregating those assumed as having the highest need of support in targeted projects their benefiting of a measure can also be assured by increasing means, resources and opportunities in those areas where disadvantage is highest. In school this means to keep children with special needs together with other pupils but to provide them (or their classes) with additional specialist or assistant staff. With regard to social inclusion and active labour market programmes this can be and partly is translated into an area-based or territorial approach of targeting vulnerable zones (rather than individuals). In the UK this is referred to as 'education zones' (Hatcher & Leblond, 2001) or – in the context of the New Deal – 'employment zones'. While the experience of employment zones is still unclear – additional financial support and flexibility seems to have positive effects while its coercive aspects appear to be counter-effective (DWP, 2005) – this is less the case in education, especially since backed up by the Connexions programme and education maintenance allowances (see Chapter 5.2). Targeted funding can make sure that policy measures actually arrive where they are needed and that appropriate degrees of support – related to different areas of life affected by disadvantage – can be provided, whether this is long-term counselling, financial incentives and assistance towards maintenance and transport or the development of a social infrastructure where this does not yet exist. Such a strategy has the potential to control for mechanisms of creaming without having to stigmatise individuals as carrying personal deficits. However, in this regard it seems crucial to manage such programmes in a discrete way without stigmatising the respective areas. As a negative example for policies undermined by their own public relations campaigns may serve the French policies addressing the suburbs which reinforced both external prejudices and internal sub-cultural coping strategies (Marlière, 2005).

As good practice example we want to present the Romanian Strategy 'Access to education of disadvantaged groups' which aims at increasing the attendance of Roma children and youth in

the regular system rather than in special or separate minority schools (similar the Austrian 'Teamteaching'):

Good Practice Romania: Access to education for disadvantaged groups, especially for Roma

With regard to the significantly lower qualification level of the Roma population the programme "Access to education of disadvantaged groups" is related to the Government Strategy for Improving the Situation of Roma adopted in 2001 and the educational reform of the Ministry of Education and Research to improve access of disadvantaged groups. It is a national level project with a focus on decentralised implementation through partnerships of local authorities, non-governmental organisations and the Roma communities. The project objectives have been to increase enrolment to pre-school education, particularly of Roma children; to decrease the number of Roma children who leave school without completed compulsory education; to provide 'second-chance education' for young people who have dropped out of school. In its first phase (2002-2004) the project had two main components: institutional development through training, development of educational materials and community participation; and a grants scheme for 10 County School Inspectorates to rehabilitate schools and other measures to improve the educational environment for Roma children. Key activities were revision of curricula; training of school inspectors, teachers, and mediators; local implementation agencies; support teaching in schools; increasing enrolment of young Roma into second chance programmes; summer kindergartens; 'Roma mothers schools'. 74 schools participated in the project involving 9,759 Roma students. 80 teachers were trained to become teachers' trainers; 1,700 teachers were trained in inclusive education; 55 Roma students were trained to become teachers of Romani Language (by open distance learning courses); 67 school mediators work with pilot schools and Roma communities; 150,000 copies of various educational materials were distributed. The project is being evaluated on three indicators showing especially positive effects on pre-school and primary level: (i) enrolment rates increased in pre-school, primary education and Second Chance programmes; (ii) drop out rates decreased in pre-school and primary education; (iii) student achievement rose with regard to 55% of Roma students in the Project schools compared to the previous academic year. The programme is funded by the PHARE programme (7 Mill. €) and the Ministry. 1,33 Mill. €) and is expected to be continued until 2009 (see Volume 2, Annex IV, Chapter 1).

However, especially with regard to unemployment it is not enough to intensify active labour market policies; especially without labour market opportunities (e.g. the limited effects subsidy programmes in Poland or Southern Italy).

2) *Increase flexibility*: A higher degree flexibility is needed reflecting lack of employment opportunities in contracted labour markets but also to allow for individual choice, to reconcile attendance with the individual stage in the life cycle, to keep outcomes of guidance and counselling open and to take the complexity of individual constellations of disadvantage into account. The most flexible approaches are those that aim to broaden access and increase opportunities within regular systems of education, training and employment, while providing the flexible support that an individual needs for coping with the demands of transition:

- flexibility of the duration of a measure
- flexibility of the combination of elements and activities
- flexibility as regards outcomes and destinations

A good example from the British *New Deal* are the so-called tailored pathways in 17 pilot regions whereby mainly a greater flexibility in combining or varying the duration of options is intended. The Danish Counselling System, the Slovene Total Counselling system (see below) or the Finnish Service Centres similarly can be seen as allowing for flexibility which starts from individual needs rather than adapting a young person's needs and aspirations to existing offers (cf. Stauber et al., 2003; Walther et al., 2004; Weil, 2005).

3) *Anti-discrimination*: a final approach to assure the involvement of those who need inclusion and active labour market policies most urgent is – or could be – to refer to mechanisms of anti-discrimination; especially where access restrictions can be identified regarding gender, ethnicity, age, religion, or disability. The European Racial Equality Directive and the Employment Equality Directive (EC, 2005e; EC, 2005f) have shifted the burden of proof from the individual towards the respondent (in this case the actors of inclusion and active labour market policies). A perspective of anti-discrimination may be applied in both directions: claiming an increase of policy measures where these reveal to restrict access due to limited coverage, restrictive guidelines as well as questioning the legitimacy of existing restriction whether set in programme guidelines or existing de facto by recruitment procedures. While anti-discrimination laws have not yet been used to claim broader access for disadvantaged youth to policy measures this might be way that especially NGOs (trade unions as well as youth organisations) but also supranational actors as the European Commission may apply to increase opportunities of inclusion (cf. Ellis, 2005). It may further be analysed to what extent the reference towards lacking work experience whereby employers justify not to hire young job seekers is discriminatory – at least if not including assessment of work experience – or at least the lack of opportunities to gain work experience (see also Chapter 8 for recommendations).

6.2.3 Respecting prerequisites of young people's motivation

Corresponding to the understanding of social integration as consisting of systemic and subjective dimensions, not only the question of access but also the extent to which measure succeed in nurturing learning, life planning and job search needs also to be reflected in terms of young people's *motivation*; the user value of policy measures from the perspective of the target group. Motivation means the relation between subjective need or interest and the feeling of being in control of one's own actions. Currently, motivation is often stressed in the context of activation policies as these are concerned with enhancing individuals' active job search, attendance in labour market training and to accept jobs also if not corresponding to

individual aspirations. Compared to psychological insight such motivation theories are superficial. Nevertheless, they are referred to in legitimising reductions of benefits. In fact, lack of motivation is ascribed as an individual deficit rather than resulting from experiences of neglected agency. According to youth surveys and qualitative research findings young people's motivation and de-motivation relates to the following aspects:

- *Trust:* Apart from the lack of belief in the effectiveness of PES and guidance young people are critical as regards the trustworthiness of counsellors. This accounts especially for counselling in the context of activation policies which strongly rely on negative incentives such as sanctions. Trust requires first a continuous relationship with counsellors or project workers whom young people perceive as advocatory in their favour and not as the prolonged arms of 'the system'. This implies second that conditions of attendance in policy measures must be compatible with obligations emerging from other life spheres whether this is family, partnership, friends etc. This means third, to allow for 3rd and 4th chances if clients drop out for reasons and decisions related to other issues resulting from their complex life situations. Fourth, it is important – and even more so in institutional contexts in which easily administrative, bureaucratic principles get the upper hand – that aspects of individual dignity are respected, that individuals do not feel disregarded and humiliated. Especially, coercive principles of workfare policies applied in terms of 'either …or' are often experienced as extortionate whereby individuals are kept in a passive position rather than being put into a state of activity ('activation'). In contrast, trust requires that in principle subjective aspirations are recognised as legitimate and individual coping strategies – also if dysfunctional from an external view – as resulting from a subjectively rational assessment of own resources and opportunities. In this regard the principles of confidentiality and advocacy applied within Danish counselling programmes and the Slovene total counselling network (see 6.2.4) can be highlighted as good practice in instilling a feeling of trust in young people (cf. Williamson & Middlemiss, 1999; Böhnisch & Schröer, 2004; Walther et al., 2004).

- *Subjective relevance:* A key question is whether young people ascribe offered measures user value and perceive them as related to their life plans and their identities; or in terms of motivation: whether young people identify with the objectives and contents of a measure so that they find it worth to engage. In this regard, short- and long-term, intrinsic and extrinsic effects, aspects which are directly or indirectly related to transitions to work need to be taken into account which means that holistic, person-centred and flexible approaches are needed:

- *financial incentives* play an important role to allow for independent life and/or consumer lifestyles while being in transition (and even more so if these transitions are uncertain and insecure). At the same time, allowances symbolise a socio-economic value of activities providing them a citizenship status;
- *practical assistance* is another reason to engage with a measure whether this is access to other services (housing), access to the Internet, or the possibility to acquire professional skills which can be applied also with regard to everyday life management (e.g. ICT skills, mechanic skills).

While such indirect (extrinsic) effects of measures can not be assumed to be effective in developing and maintaining intrinsic motivation over time, they are vital to attract young to get involved in measures and thereby to allow for processes in which they make experiences which have an intrinsic value. This regards especially

- *occupational choices* associated with specific training or work experience programmes and which need to be related to subjective process of identity work; this requires that measures are and can be identified and presented as 'real' options for transitions to work and at the same time allowing for different cultural lifestyles;
- *self-esteem:* measures need to be reconcilable with individual self-concepts; even more it is important that measures are not exclusively targeted towards the most disadvantaged in a deficit-oriented way as attendance implies to accept a self-concept associated with personal failure.

- *Perceived effectiveness*: in general, young people do not ascribe public institutions as the PES or remedial training schemes a high effectiveness in providing them jobs and improving their life perspectives. In Southern and Central and Eastern European countries those who would or have involved the Employment Service represent marginal minorities (IARD, 2002; Informe Juventud, 2004; Walther et al., 2004; Kolev & Saget, 2005). In the countries where PES have reached a higher coverage also a minority of those who have already been in contact with professional guidance and activation programmes attribute them marginal effect. In fact, overall qualitative research confirms evaluation findings indicating that vocational guidance and employment service work for those with higher qualifications and a higher degree of orientation compared to those who neither know in which direction to plan nor disposing of sufficient qualifications allowing for significant choice. The scepticism towards PES extends to the (most often restricted) options

resulting from guidance processes such as for example remedial training schemes (cf. CEDEFOP, 2001; Walther et al., 2004).

- *Starting from individual strengths* is therefore crucial for motivating individuals rather than a priority of compensation of deficits compared to formally set standards. This means not to transfer mechanisms of selective education or segmented labour markets into the measures and thereby to restrict possible career perspectives. According to the principle of *empowerment* it is a requirement of both democracy and motivation that individual aspirations are taken seriously rather than cooled out in advance with regard to the scarcity of options (cf. Rappaport, 1981). Measures therefore need to be structured in a way that young people are encouraged to set goals and to take responsibility for own projects, that they provide space for self-experimentation, and that they connect to next steps rather than leading into dead ends of low skilled jobs (Illeris, 2003; Walther, 2003; Weil et al., 2005).
- *Choice* finally needs to be seen as the sine qua non of motivation, especially under contexts of individualisation. This regards first the choice whether to attend one measure or another; second, choices within measures as regards forms and contents of learning or working, and involvement in decision-making related to project-related procedures; and third, openness as regards the outcomes of counselling and guidance processes. Only by choice identification can be built with the policy measure which as a consequence extends to responsibility for the own transition process (Walther et al., 2004). Comparative studies on activation programmes have underlined that most individuals accept taking over responsibilities if they are conceded choice between options they perceive as of good quality and as relevant in improving their situation (Lødemel & Trickey, 2001; van Berkel & Hornemann Møller, 2002).

Summarising, reversing negative motivational careers of young people requires not to address de-motivation as personal deficit but to offer positive incentives and encouragement through experiences of success with regard to subjectively relevant activities. Apart from supporting young people in achieving self-chosen careers, non-formal learning opportunities are effective and crucial in this regard; especially in the area of performing arts (Miles et al., 2002; Walther et al., 2004; see also Chapter 8 for recommendations).

6.2.4 Integrated Transition Policies: a question of coordination and partnership

We have laid down in Chapter 3 the assumption that a life-cycle approach towards the fragmented and de-standardised nature of youth transitions implies that social integration can no longer be assumed as following directly from labour market integration. The issue of cross-sector coordination of different policies concerned with different aspects of social inclusion – Integrated Transition Policies (López Blasco et al., 2003) – has therefore been for some time on the agenda (cf.. Geddes & Benington, 2001; Serrano Pascual, 2001; Economix, 2004); and among the policy measures presented so far there are several examples of coordinated policy approaches (see above 'Improving Access of Disadvantaged Groups to Education, Romania'; but also Connexions, UK in Chapter 5.2 and Volume 2, Annex IV, Chapter 1). More and more also EU policies make funding conditional on partnership approaches; the EQUAL initiative being the most visible example. But what does this mean and under what conditions does it improve policy success? Coordination and cooperation, networking and joint ventures, round tables and partnership are been used in a variety of contexts and with an as broad variety of meanings and implications. We suggest to differentiate the dimensions of policy objectives, actors and activities:

Objectives and functions:

Why are policies being coordinated, networks developed and partnerships promoted?

- *Synergies*: in times of contracted public budgets there is an increasing pressure on institutions to avoid unnecessary expenditure; coordination in this perspective is expected to minimise overlaps, unutilised capacities or costs resulting from frictions among competing service providers;
- *Multi-dimensionality*: another objective results from the complexity of transitions and of constellations of disadvantage requiring different types of expertise: the economy to provide real work experience as well as later employment opportunities for participants of policy measures; counselling experts to assist individuals in reflecting decisions; and especially where life situations are particularly complex additional services such as child care, psychological expertise etc. in order to secure transitions into work;
- *Holistic objectives*: finally, coordination can also result from the insight that combating early school leaving and youth unemployment are only operative goals on the way to achieve the over-arching objective of social integration and that therefore in general such single policy strategies need to be linked and integrated with other policies addressed at other aspects of social integration.

Levels and Actors

what are the policy levels and who are the actors involved in the coordination of policies and what are their respective roles. The integrated approach of policies requires the involvement of different types of actors, at different levels and with different functions, such as the level of policy making, the level of delivery, and also the addressees. First of all, coordination should be sought among different types of institutional and individual actors from the State, the Market and Civil Society:

- The *State* (or: public institutions) of course matters as the societal actor responsible for social integration in terms of justice, democracy, human dignity and citizenship: the *national* policy level is indispensable as a warrant of funding and standards which are in line with fundamental normative objectives. The *local policy* level may be seen as the most important one – at least in terms of implementation because closest to the people and the socio-economic realities (cf. Economix, 2004; Geddes & Benington, 2001). The role of a *regional* level – depending on the size of a country – may especially be important to link social inclusion to dynamics of economic development which exceed local horizons (EC, 2001; White Paper on governance). Apparently, the high interest into regions as intermediate policy levels until the early 1990s has been slightly shifting back to the local and the national level; also because in times of supranational governance this role is more and more played by the nation state. The *supranational* – in our case of course EU – *level* appears on the one hand as a co-funder of national policies, especially where structures are lacking and national economies are too weak to make significant investments. On the other hand, EU policies aim at balancing wider economic and social perspectives although criticised as either ineffective due to principles of subsidiarity or as superficial while in essence subsuming all policy efforts under the strive for global competitiveness. However, where European policies are based on innovative concepts they have the advantage not to be linked to institutions with their inherent resistance to change whereby management by objectives such as the Open Method of Coordination has a – yet small – scope of influence (cf. Leibfried & Pierson, 1995; Serrano Pascual, 2003).

  However not only different levels are of importance but also different sectoral and professional perspectives which means that labour market and social policy actors have to make sure that also *youth workers* are involved who are in a direct and informal contact with young people on an everyday basis; this extends to *economic policy actors* (see below); and of course for *schools* which in many countries still insist on a self-referential status which relates to external actors only when suitable for internal purposes while

resisting against demands of cooperation and social responsibility from the community, except in the Nordic countries, Slovenia and the UK (where however the boundaries between socio-political accountability and market competition tend to be blurred).

- The role of the *Market* is related both to the delivery and the reference system of policies for disadvantaged youth, that is the need of linking counselling, training and active labour market policies with existing – and potential – labour market demands and of providing opportunities of practical experience. This refers first of all to *companies*. While the claim and respective campaigns for corporate social responsibility (EC, 2003c) is legitimate and important, it does not seem as if conditions of globalised competition is favourable for the rise of a culture of responsibility if not connected to concrete structures (even in countries like Austria and Germany the responsibility of companies to engage in the dual training system has declined over the past decades; cf. Baethge & Baethge-Kinsky, 2003). Inasmuch as public policy – for the same reason of globalisation – more and more avoid to increase legal obligations of companies incentives such as subsidies on wages or allowances, on technological investment if related to significant training, and on organisational support and consultancy. *Employers associations* of course can not create jobs or training facilities but they have influence on companies to do so, to organise a dialogue between policy and companies, and to support companies (cf. EC, 2003c), especially the smaller ones to develop responsibility, engage in training or take the risk of employing inexperienced job seekers. This regards also not to concentrate only on member companies and those sectors and companies where jobs and training traditionally emerged but especially to include newly emerging niches and sectors also if this may require new forms of organisation both on the company and the representation level (cf. Baethge & Baethge-Kinsky, 2003; Kolev & Saget, 2005). Referring to 'the' economy may therefore also imply *economic policy* and those policy actors concerned with economic development. While often promoted and legitimised with job creation it is rather the exception that economic policies are made accountable for the added value in terms of jobs, training and social inclusion they create. Investment in industrial parks and the attraction of external capital needs to be assessed against the training and jobs created – in quantitative and qualitative terms – while the social inclusion of disadvantaged youth needs to be made a key criteria for regional development. In this regard, also the *social economy* (see below) needs to be seen as actor of regional development (EC, 2003b).
- The *Civil Society* is the other pillar of delivery on which a great part of policy measures rely. Trade unions and third sector organisations are indispensable for representing the

views and interests of the young people but also as service providers which are embedded in the communities and life-worlds of young people. The competencies and resources of *youth organisations* lie in their advantages in getting access to disadvantaged young people (depending on their socio-cultural orientation) and their experience in arranging settings of non-formal learning. However, there appear to be only few youth organisations with a clear orientation towards disadvantaged youth. In these case it is either other young people or (young) adults representing disadvantaged youth and in fact more and more youth organisations do so (partly because of funding reasons). While this is in principle a positive trend, awareness of socio-cultural gaps is necessary. *NGOs* in the social sector are often involved as providers of training and counselling. There advantage often lies in being social embedded while performing a high level of professional work. In some contexts however relation with public funders have developed into corporatist structures which are reproduced by the need of the organisations to survive and the advantage for public authorities to have reliable providers and interlocutors fulfilling the prerequisite of subsidiarity. In such cases the innovative potential of public-private partnerships may decrease over time. The *social economy* represents a specific way of mediation between individual needs and economy inasmuch it represents a form of economic activity which follows both social and democratic principles which are the normative objectives of these organisations while the economic activities are the operative objectives. As a good practice in this regard may serve the Italian regulations in favour of cooperatives providing a highly differentiated way of assisting both productive and social cooperatives (cf. IRIS, 2000; Burgess, 2003). The role of *trade unions* apparently is less clear than one may expect. Sufficient policy efforts, equal access into measures, fair treatment within measures and of course also the representation of young people in atypical, precarious jobs are issues for which trade unions seem to be the most appropriate actors. While in some European contexts (for example Italy) unions have diversified their activities – and actually try to approach a diversified youth labour force with a diversified offer of services and forms of representation – and are active in local partnerships, in other situations they appear paralysed by the dilemma between representing those in work and creating access for those out of work as well as by the declining attractiveness for young people. This if for example the case when it comes to modularisation of skills within the framework of national qualification systems. What can be promoted as increasing flexibility and allowing more disadvantaged youth to acquire recognised skills is at the same time contested as de-qualification giving way to social dumping (cf. Serrano Pascual, 2001).

However, involving the civil society requires reliable funding mechanisms (while trade unions may need to become more independent from members' contributions if expected to engage more as representatives of the excluded) which allow to provide young people with continuous support. However, often the working situation of project workers is as precarious as that of the young people they work with. In fact partnerships and involvement of the third sector serve to flexibilise social services while passing associated cuts in budgets to the providers (cf. Serrano Pascual, 2001; Powell & Geoghegan, 2004).

- *Addressees*: Finally, young people themselves may be seen as members of partnerships for inclusion – inasmuch as activation policies anyway conceptualise them as co-producers of welfare (Hudson, 2005). In a way active labour market policies operating on the basis of tripartite contracts are networks between individuals, companies and the State while increasing it is claimed that young people should participate in designing not only 'soft' youth policy but 'hard' policies such as education, training, inclusion and active labour market policies (see example below; Walther et al., 2004).

Coordination processes

How are coordination processes initiated and set into practice?

- *Top-down*: coordination and partnership can be imposed by programme guidelines (like EQUAL) as condition of funding for regional and local actors; at the same time especially partnerships of inclusion require a coordinating/controlling body which is responsible for the relation between normative and operative policy objectives; especially where partnerships operate locally local authorities may be best suited for such a role of mediating between 'higher' policy levels, economic and social aspects, institutions and individuals (cf. Geddes & Benington, 2001).
- *Bottom-up*: local networks may build to coordinate own activities and join efforts both with regard to attract new funding and to rationalise delivery. However, two variants of local or regional partnerships need to be distinguished: on the one hand, institutional networks centred around organisational issues and grass-root networks starting from self-help initiatives and third sector organisations;
- *Person-centred networks:* Most promising examples of coordinated policies start from the biographical perspective of the individual, for example on the basis of face-to-face counselling where the demands of coping with transition problems arise and the necessary resources and opportunities are identified that require the involvement of further actors.

Good practice in this respect are the Connexions programme (UK; see Chapter 5.2), the Danish Counselling and Guidance Obligation (Chapter 5.3) or the Total Counselling Network (Slovenia; see below). Personalised networks emerge ad-hoc in relation to individual needs and life plans. This means they require institutional networks in terms of reliable but informal and flexible agreements rather than institutionalised protocols of cooperation (cf. Walther et al., 2005).

Activities and services

Finally, in terms of practice the question is what actually is coordinated and to what extent:

- *Integrated services* imply that different actors add their previously separated activities into a programme of merged provisions whereby specific constellations can be served without having to switch between different providers; this principle is also referred to as One-stop-shops (e.g. the Finnish Service Centres, see Chapter 5.3);
- *Connected services* represent a looser form of cooperation whereby single service providers 'buy' certain services of other actors to complement their own repertoire or that individual clients are 'passed on' to other members of the partnership. While such networks allow for a greater variety of service profiles and thereby increase the chance of real personalised approaches they require a high degree of flexibility as well as a culture of dialogue among all actors (e.g. Danish Counselling Obligation, Chapter 5.3).

In the following we will present a set of good practice policies which have their focus in different strands of including disadvantaged youth while applying effective forms of coordination and cooperation. The fact that all of these policies are initiated from national government levels results from the focus of this study while not implying that this is seen as necessary prerequisite of functioning partnerships. The first is a measure for early school leavers which starts from individual counselling and reaches out into the community:

Good Practice Slovenia: Total Counselling

The main objective of the Total Counselling programme is to provide a holistic counselling and guidance to early school leavers between 16 and 25 years who find themselves in a 'status zer0'. A key principle is to start from young people's needs and take their whole life-situation into consideration by means of a platform where specialists from different fields work together (guidance counsellors, financial advisors, sexual educators, social counsellors, school counsellors etc.).
The programme is an inter-ministerial cooperation with the Employment Service, coordinated by the Centre for Vocational Education and Training and set into practice on the regional level by Resource Centres for Vocational Guidance. The project is organised in form of local networks in which counselling for young people is provided: individual counselling, professional and educational guidance while

including also setting up databases on early school leavers, training for counsellors and other experts involved in the network, evaluation and monitoring – and networking with school counsellors, social work, sports clubs, health services, youth organisations and other NGOs. The networks on the one hand provide information on early school leavers, on the other hand function as access points for the young people in order to attract as many young people as possible. Individual counselling consists of the following stages: establishing an appropriate counselling relationship and agreeing on basic rules, a verbal or written agreement on rights and duties, identifying obstacles in the educational career and strengths that can be mobilized also in areas like sports, arts or other forms of socialization, defining the goal and shaping steps in this direction which can be monitored and thereby improving self-image, self-confidence and motivation.

The relationship between the counsellor and the client shall be symmetric and confidential as the young people have experienced failure after failure and have developed strong defence mechanisms against the feeling of failure (e.g. passivity or aggressiveness). Both may object if disagreeing while the client has the right to decide and the counsellor is obliged to respect such a decision. The role of the counsellor is to create a space and an atmosphere to empower the client to consider all options and thus take the best decision possible in the given moment. Frequently, other persons play a significant role in the process, for example, parents, relatives, partners, peers etc. Initiative may come from their side while often they prove to be an additional supporting pillar if the client is informed about and consents to their involvement. Evaluation includes the opinions of young people who continually report on how their needs were met during the counselling process.

The programme runs in six regions and covers the period from September 2004 to the end of 2006. In the first six months 143 organizations were included in the network, 852 information-oriented interviews and 372 counselling sessions were conducted reaching 920 young people. It consists of three main phases and is planned to cost 321.666 €. Expansion to other six regions is scheduled for the period from 2007 to 2113 (see also Volume 2, Annex IV, Chapter 5).

The second measure presented is the Polish programme 'First Work'. Although unemployment is still high, the programme is remarkable as it succeeds in involving employers on the basis of a binding contract allowing for supervision, monitoring and recognition:

Good practice Poland: Tripartite contracts and the "First Work" programme

'First Work' is a national programme for the professional activation of graduates which was started in 2002. At the beginning the programme addressed only young graduates seeking work whether registered with the employment services or not. In the meantime also long-term unemployed youth up to 25 and early school leavers under 18 are included. Apart from labour market policy it has been extended to educational policy while its implementation not only relies on labour offices but also actors as the Voluntary Labour Corps (OHP) providing counselling and training programmes for early school leavers, school career centres, local information centres and academic labour offices. Since 2005 is seen no longer as a pilot but as long-term activity working on both regional and district level. It consists of three key elements: subsided traineeships and dual training (which are both organized in terms of tripartite contracts) and pre-vocational measures run by OHP including group counseling and workshops for individual action plans, professional information and job fairs. The tripartite agreements involve the young unemployed person (graduates aged 18-24), local authorities, the labour office and the employer (which can also be a NGO). Traineeships with the employer take 12 months while professional preparation courses (for the long-term unemployed without school qualifications) with an employer take 6 months. Both traineeships and preparation for a profession include a placement with a given employer according to the contract (location) which specifies the type of profession, the scope of activities, the qualifications or skills to be acquired, the procedure for certification (official assessment of these skills or qualifications), and the person responsible for the trainee. The labour office has the

general supervision over the training process and issues a certificate on the acquired skills. Trainees are entitled to allowances at 40% of unemployment benefits. Between 2002 and 2004 over 550,000 young people participated in First Work measures from which 55% in traineeships and other 15% in dual training. According to the Ministry for the Economy and Labour, without First Work the probable level of unemployment among young people in the years 2002-2004 would have been about 20% higher while labour offices state that 183,000 young people who had been involved in First Work measures took up employment. Initial funding in 2002 was earmarked about 75,000,000 Euro coming from the Labour Fund, the PHARE programme and the World Bank. The extension of the programme in 2004 was possible by additional grants from the Ministry for Economy and Labour (see also Volume 2, Annex IV, Chapter 7).

The highest level of policy coordination in most countries is to be found with regard to constellations of multiple disadvantage such as homelessness, young orphans (e.g. the Romanian Anchor project) or lone mothers (e.g. the Sure Start Plus programme in the UK). Such constellations distinguish from the disadvantage resulting from early school leaving and unemployment by the fact that they are aggravated by 'objective' facts and barriers – which apparently makes it easier both for society and institutions to concede holistic objectives and for the individuals to accept additional support without feeling stigmatised. In these cases, coordination results from the need to provide support in relation to a variety of needs as in the case of drug addiction:

Good practice Portugal: EMPLOYMENT – LIFE

The objective of the Employment-Life programme is to complete the treatment of ex-drug addicts by reintegrating them into employment and society. It is a national policy, coordinated by the Employment Service in cooperation with the Institute for Drugs and Drug Addiction implemented by five regional agencies based on networks of 300 mediators and linked to treatment centres and therapeutic communities. It thereby strengthens inter-institutional cooperation. The main activities are intermediation and personal coaching for training and employment; social and occupational integration traineeships (9 months on-the-job-training); a social and occupational integration programme (2 year subsidy for a contract over at least 4 years); employment support (a 4 year subsidy for a permanent contract); and support for self-employment. The initiative starts from the individual together with the staff from treatment centres or therapeutic communities. Each participant plans his or her own trajectory together with a mediator who accompanies the beneficiaries and the employers for a period considered necessary for full integration. 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.

Between 1999 and 2002 more than 4,500 participants were involved in specific measures, over 600 in general measures. While the cooperation with other actors, especially labour market actors could be still increased and while – due to the specific profile of the target group – dropping out remains to be relatively high, the effects are largely positive. Not only have participants improved family and personal relationships but over 60% were working after participating in the project and over 30% were still in the same job at the time of survey (2004). Between 1999 and 2002 the costs for the programme were 17,579,144 Euro (see also Volume 2, Annex IV, Chapter 8).

Finally, we want to present one of the rare cases in which a participatory youth policy approach is applied explicitly to the transition phase of disadvantaged youth. That means that spaces and possibilities are created that young people experience themselves as active and responsible for realising self-chosen aims. From a perspective on social integration as combining systemic and subjective dimensions and subjective motivation resulting from interest and the feeling of control we argue that this needs to become a key priority in inclusion and active labour market policies for young people.

Good Practice Finland: Youth Participation Project

The programme 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 (see Volume 2, Annex IV, Chapter 8).

Similar participation projects can increasingly be found in the UK and also the Italian Law 285/97 promoting rights and opportunities for childhood and adolescence represents a move in this direction, however without reaching a critical mass of restructuring the sector of non-formal learning in its relation to school (see Volume 2, Annex IV, Chapter 8).

In general, coordination of policy measures seems better developed with regard to constellations of multiple disadvantage and early school leaving than with regard to active labour market policies. In the case of unemployment and labour market policies there is a current trend in many countries towards integrating social assistance and unemployment benefits however the integration of services and policy sectors in most cases lags behind. It needs to be said that often national employment services in charge of policies for disadvantaged youth tend to see themselves as monopolist actors who do not depend on and

are often not used to collaboration with partners holding different perspectives (Walther et al., 2004; Weil et al., 2005). Exceptions relate to programmes that address the labour market integration of so-called multiple disadvantaged young people (e.g. drug addicts, homeless).

What are the *key factors* in a coordination of policies making a difference?

1) Who has to be involved with what role?

A first prerequisite is that State, Market and Civil Society are involved which does not only require that cooperation with is allowed and encouraged (rather than imposed) but also implies demands towards potential cooperation partners. While the *State* needs to be involved as those potentially mediating between different interests, *local authorities* may be best suited to coordinate and implement partnerships (cf. Economix, 2004; Geddes & Benington, 2001). The potential of *supranational* actors especially lies in supporting actors in overcoming the inherent resistance of existing institutions for realising innovative approaches towards social inclusion. On the side of the *Market* social responsibility is required both to increase the supply of training and jobs but also to cooperate in identifying growth areas and skill needs. The *Civil Society* finally needs to be involved both to give young people a voice but also as community-based service providers. While this requires improved funding mechanisms allowing for continuity, especially youth organisations need to engage in broadening for new clienteles, especially disadvantaged youth who often are not reached by youth organisations. Finally, rights and procedures of participation need to be established empowering *young people* to become involved as actors of partnerships of inclusion themselves; not only via youth organisations but individually as service users and citizens.

2) Structures and processes - or: What needs to be done to allow for successful coordination?

As regards the level of structural and process-related prerequisites on the one hand single factors can be identified, on the other hand however it reveals that these factors may contradict each other. Therefore an overall success factor is to achieve a dynamic balanc*ing* (not static balance) between actors, interests and between normative and operative objectives.

- A first factor which results from this overall perspective is *flexibility* in defining and negating rights and responsibilities of partners between bottom-up and top-down: flexibility of policy guidelines to be adapted to different local realities and different local partnerships consisting of different actors with different interests; but also flexibility of actors as they have to open their organisational cultures and to act differently in different

occasions; in principle to act and cooperate differently with regard to every individual person whose trajectory they are concerned with;

- Flexibility requires *trust* among actors of a partnership as well as towards the main funding institutions. In Denmark the success of flexible and coordinated policies is partly explained with regard to a 'culture of dialogue' which implies a smooth flow of communication using informal channels as well as formal ones. However such a culture itself requires a level of mutual trust not to lose grounds in a competition of influence and resources. This means that partnerships need a balance of power and formal and informal mechanisms allowing for 'win-win'-situations and that coordination is not simply imposed as a condition for funding with the intention or legitimacy to balance reduced financial means by a higher level of synergy. Such situations are likely to enhance distrust inasmuch as competition for scarce resources is transferred into the partnership process.
- Trust and balance of power do not contradict with the necessity of a *coordinator* who feels responsible for the overall process and the overall (normative and operative) objectives of the partnership (see above).

3) What means success in coordinating policies?

While there is an apparent analogy between factors allowing for access (see 6.2.2) and factors allowing for effective coordination, the relation between flexibility, trust and power mentioned above points to the level of *objectives and functions* of coordinated policies – or: Above it has been highlighted that success of policies – coordinated or not – is the social integration of young people who face difficulties in their transitions from school to work.

- A first prerequisite therefore is that partnerships start from the needs of individuals rather than from an institutional partnership. However, often its is presented as a success that it has been possible to get certain actors 'at the table'. This implies considerable energies spent on procedural activities which normally are not foreseen in the budgets of the actors involved. Also considerable resources are spent for making institutional partnerships visible both by investment in public relation and by visible joint measures. We argue that partnership approaches to make a difference should be viewed more modestly as means of working together on a flexible basis starting from the *needs of the individual* rather than from institutional perspectives;
- A second prerequisite therefore is either to concentrate on the *connectivity* between different measures within national or regional accreditation systems and local transition systems or on the flexible *integration* of services to avoid 'revolving door' effects and

scheme careers (Walther, Stauber et al., 2002; Weil et al., 2005). A third and more radical and innovative approach – to shift from providing specific measures towards networks supporting individuals in entering and coping with the regular systems of education, training and employment in terms of 'individualised systems of social capital' (Raffo & Reeves, 2000; cf. Walther et al., 2005).

- Finally, this means that coordinated policies, networks and partnerships need to be assessed against the degree to which they are committed to *holistic objectives* which do not restrict to stabilising vulnerable individuals to the degree needed for labour market integration. Holistic approaches are no ends in themselves but need to be interpreted in terms of social integration: social justice, human dignity, democratic citizenship (see also Chapter 8 for recommendations).

6.2.5 Institutional reflexivity

As a fifth perspective on success factors in including disadvantaged youth we want to introduce the issue of reflexivity whereby we refer to the complex processes and mechanisms related to designing and conceptualising, monitoring, evaluating and assessing, reflecting and communicating policies. If we start from the assumption that transitions have become de-standardised, that disadvantage evolves in constellations which are both complex and diverse according to individual cases, that policies therefore need to be more and more and flexible while the overall success criterion of social integration implies to consider both systemic and subjective dimensions it is obvious that standardised approaches are outdated. In fact institutions are more and more trapped in policy dilemmas resulting from contradicting objectives: lifelong learning or employability, formal qualifications or non-formal learning, specialised vocational or general transversal skills, targeted measures for the disadvantaged or mainstreaming flexible and inclusive trajectories, motivating young people or imposing straight adaptation towards labour market demands (Walther, 2003)? We argue that there is no policy measure in which policy dilemmas similar to those presented do not occur. The shifts towards individualisation and flexibilisation requires to look at individual cases and biographies rather than at overall policy performances; which means that the model problem diagnosis, policy planning, implementation, delivery, assessment needs to be replaced by more dynamic and diversified ways of (self)observation and reflection. At the same time dimensions of evaluation become more complex to be grasped with one-dimensional input-output calculations while input refers both to the funding invested and the young people

entering a policy measure (and then exiting with higher qualifications and/or towards employment). Nevertheless, not only in the policy measures analysed in this study but also with regard to international research literature education, training and labour market schemes are still almost exclusively evaluated in a linear quantitative perspective in which social integration is reduced to (any) job although many articles have been written and published on the fallacies of policy assessment (cf. Martin & Grubb, 2004; Schröder, 2004; Speckesser, 2004).

The persistence of such perspectives results from the increasing challenge of policy making, that means reducing risk and uncertainty, and the increasing risks in late modern, post-Fordist societies. Evaluating policies according to numbers of participants, rates of dropping out versus employment after the measure and the funding invested suggests clear picture of the adequacy of problem solving – of 'what works'. Following authors who have analysed mechanisms of policy making under conditions of reflexive modernity (Beck, 1992; Castells, 1996; Evers & Nowotny, 1997; Urry, 2000; Bauman 2001), we suggest that policy assessment cannot replace the direct communication between institutions and individuals (as well as within partnerships). Improving institutional reflexivity has two main implications concerning the evaluation of policies and the interaction between policies and clients (cf. Walther, Stauber et al., 2002):

- *Evaluation:* The design of evaluation mechanisms is closely related to the question how success of a policy measure is defined. While the trend that more and more policies are being evaluated is rather related to the necessity to legitimise expenses under conditions of constrained public budgets, it is definitely a positive sign that methods of evaluation diversify and that more and more policies apply different approaches. As a good practice in terms of policy evaluation the British New Deal must be mentioned. Since its beginning in 1997 a huge range of studies have been commissioned, carried out and published covering quantitative monitoring, analysis of cost-effectiveness, qualitative studies into the experiences of both clients and advisors, single studies with regard to distinct elements (gateway, options etc.) as well as in relation to the modifications made following previous evaluation (see http://www.dwp.gov.uk/resourcecentre/research_analysis_stats.asp).

  However, also with regard to such a well researched programme policy makers have to accept uncertainty as it is not totally clear how many 'status zer0' youth have not been reached, who profits in which regard from the different measures, what will happen if the economy regresses, and rely on 'estimations' concerning the costs 'within the range of

5,000 to 8,000 £' per additional person in employment (National Audit Office, 2002); without allowing any conclusions regarding the sustainability of such outcomes. We therefore argue that apart from extending evaluation in terms of taking different perspectives it needs to be extended over time allowing for assessing *long-term effects*. However, rather than just commissioning more and more additional studies we suggest that at the same time the practice of delivery needs to become more reflexive itself:

- Programmes with inbuilt *follow-up* procedures do not only provide their clients with the offer of continuous accompaniment if problems arise after a later stage after leaving the measure, they also are a solid basis to investigate participants' destinations in a longitudinal perspective. It would be most effective if this would be done by Public Employment Services as follow-ups of Individual Action Plans who are intended to be carried out with all registered unemployed. However, given the current situation the distrust of young people towards this institution appears to high that from such a procedure reliable findings could be expected.
- At the same time, this implies to *integrate evaluation into everyday practice* by forms of self-evaluation and by dialogic exchange between practitioners and evaluators rather than to separate both processes and either to set evaluators under time pressure and/or to confront practitioners only years later with findings (Julkunen et al., 2005).

- *Interaction with young people*: Inasmuch as the need for a higher level of institutional reflexivity regards the delivery of practice itself – rather than reflecting on the practice from outside – this regard especially the interaction between institutional representatives and young clients. Potentially, any encounter of the both is a source of information providing the institution a feedback; if this is wanted and if communication situations are structured in a way allowing for open reactions. In fact we have shown in Chapter 3 that the level of trust from young people towards the representatives of the transition system is rather low, especially where formal institutions such as school or employment service are concerned. Positive evaluations relate either to individual advisors (reported from different contexts where evaluation includes qualitative instruments such as for example New Deal and Connexions, cf. DWP, 2004) or to the few policy examples in the study in which symmetric communication situations were secured: the Danish guidance obligation and the Slovene Total Counselling. In these measures, young people's negotiation rights are assured by the principles of equity and confidentiality encouraging young people not

to behave strategically but to tell their true feelings and opinions about the relevance of available options for them.

This means that trust of young people into institutional actors is not only needed for assuring their access to measures of inclusion but also to allow for a higher institutional reflexivity (see also Chapter 8 for recommendations).

6.3 Conclusions

Based on the data and the descriptions of good practice we have tried to identify key success factors of policies for disadvantaged youth, especially in terms of funding, access, motivation, coordination and reflexivity. However, we have also argued that policy success depends on how success is defined. One dimensional definitions of success in terms of labour market integration or increased qualifications may be hard to achieve in some cases, especially in terms of sustainability while other effects and outcomes may not be perceived. Definitions of success need to relate to the wider objective of social integration, thereby implying both systemic and subjective dimensions.

Another limitation relates to the relevance of policy design compared to the relation of inclusion and active labour market to the macro-economic and wider policy contexts in which they are embedded. If we look at the three contrast countries *Austria, Denmark* and *Slovenia* selected for their relatively successful two major context factors reveal as important: the economy and the relation between social inequality and general social policy. Denmark and Slovenia have shown a stable economic development in the recent years while in Austria economic stagnation has caused a noticeable rise in unemployment which is stronger among young people than with regard to the overall level. All three countries are characterised by low or medium levels of social inequality with low overall poverty rates which is reflected by low early school leaving across different education and training systems. This means that on the one hand inclusion and active labour market policies are confronted with less severe problems while public expenditure is less constrained by high unemployment (see Volume 2, Annex II).

This is not meant to undermine the importance of inclusion and active labour market policies. However, it needs to be underlined that the necessity of structure-related and preventative policy approaches extends to policies addressing macro-level developments. In the following chapter we will therefore relate policy analysis to the perspective of path dependency with regard to the context of wider transition regimes.

7. Good practice in including disadvantaged youth in comparative perspective: implications for mutual learning.

After having reflected on the factors of success for policies for disadvantaged youth in more general terms, in this chapter a comparative perspective will be taken to reflect upon what this implies for mutual learning and transfer of good practice. We will first come back to the perspective of transition regimes developed in Chapter 3 and relate this to the constellations of disadvantage and the respective policy mixes identified in the different countries. The aim is to distinguish mechanisms of path dependency, which restrict the scope of policy change. Second we will make some suggestions how mutual learning and good practice can actually be understood and applied.

7.1 Path dependency of national constellations of disadvantage and policy mixes

In Chapter 3, the concept of *transition regimes* has been introduced as country clusters according to similar patterns in which socio-economic, institutional and cultural factors are related thereby stabilising dominant trajectories between school and work and creating a climate of normality. In so far as regimes reflect different historical developments they are structured by *path dependency* which in particular applies to institutions such as education, training and the welfare state. In so far as they are related to the legitimacy of individual aspirations and collective demands they not only serve as an orientation for policies and institutions but also for individuals' life plans. Although this suggests little scope for variation, there are apparent differences regarding changes in national policies (Pierson, 2000; Pfau-Effinger, 2004).

Reference to a transition regime model, even if only of a heuristic rather than descriptive value, fulfils three purposes: it allows to take an overview by systematising a complex sample of countries; it provides a rationale to cluster apparently similar countries and to analyse commonalities and differences between as well as within these clusters. By relating constellations of disadvantage and policy mixes to wider socio-economic, institutional and cultural factors the scope for replacing dysfunctional policy measures by apparently more successful ones from other contexts can be assessed. This assessment will follow a two-step procedure: first, transition regimes will be related to the specific constellations of early school leaving, unemployment and precariousness in the clustered countries; second, it will be analysed in terms of the extent national policy-mixes are consistent with regard to the respective constellations of disadvantage and the regime typology.

7.1.1 Constellations of disadvantage across different transition regimes

We start the comparative analysis of constellations of disadvantage across transition regimes in terms of *early school leaving* (see Chapter 4.1), keeping in mind that the key factors were social inequality, school structures in terms of the permeability between routes, levels and the inclusivity of education, the linkages between training and the labour market, and labour market signals (see Table 21):

- There is a high level of similarity in the cases of *Denmark* and *Finland* characterised by a stable and low level of early school leaving and a clear trend towards higher education. The only difference is that this is more accentuated in Finland than in Denmark where more young people choose higher professional education routes (ISCED 4). Both countries show clear relationships between low social inequality, inclusive education and low early school leaving. This clearly corresponds to the *universalistic transition regime* based on a highly inclusive welfare system. However, especially in the case of Denmark the 'education for all' philosophy does not succeed with regard to immigrant youth.
- In *Austria* low early school leaving primarily results from the receptiveness of the dual system of apprenticeship training. However, also here immigrant youth experience higher problems of access. This is associated with a high reproduction of inequality through the selective school system, which at the same time restricts increased access to higher education. The described constellation corresponds well with the *employment-centred transition regime.*
- The *UK* situation is characterised by a clear break in the tradition of direct labour market entry after compulsory education. Vocational education and training as well as higher education have experienced significant increases in participation rates. Therefore transitions are both prolonged and diversified in comparison to the original implications of the *liberal* regime pathway. However, early school leaving is still clearly above the EU average also due to the high levels of social inequality that is reproduced through education. This applies especially in the case of ethnic minorities, although this varies across different ethnic groups.
- The *Southern European* countries share a tradition of high early school leaving associated with relatively high levels of social inequality, a growing mismatch between education and employment with the tendency of especially male students to drop out of upper secondary education in order to enter low-skilled (often precarious) employment. Before this common background however a differentiation of trends can be noticed. An overall

trend of reducing early school leaving and increasing higher education enrolment is clearest in *Greece*, the only one of these countries in which early school leaving has dropped to the EU-average. In *Spain*, the increase of school-based VET rates rather represents a change in the preferred transition routes towards high education which have also increased notably. In *Italy* and *Portugal* rates in VET and higher education increase more modestly. In contrast to Italy where early school leaving has dropped considerably Portugal still the highest rate of early school leaving in Europe which is associated with the persistent phenomena of child work in rural areas and immigrants from the former colonies in the urban contexts.

Table 21: Constellations of early school leaving according to transition regimes

Transition regimes				*Related indicators*			*Performance*	
Type/ Countries	*School*	*VET Structure/ Coverage*	*Access to Higher Education*	*General trend*	*Social Inequality*	*PISA: SES Effect*	*Early school leaving*	*Trend*
Universalistic								
DK, FI	Compre-hensive	School/ Medium	Low/ Medium	VET -> HE	Low	Low	*Low*	Stable
Employment-centred								
AT	Selective	Apprentice-ship/High	Low	Stable	Medium	High	*Low*	Stable
Liberal								
UK	Compre-hensive	School/ High	Medium	-> VET & HE	High	Medium	*Medium*	Strong decrease
Sub-protective								
GR	Compre-hensive	School/ Low	High	-> VET & HE	High	High	*Medium*	Strong decrease
ES, IT	Compre-hensive	School/ Low	Medium	-> VET & HE	Medium-High	High	*High*	Decrease
PT	Compre-hensive	School/ Low	Low	-> VET & HE	High	High	*Very high*	Decrease
Post-socialist countries								
SI	Compre-hensive	School/ High	High	VET -> HE	Low	Low	*Low*	Stable
PL, SK	Compre-hensive	School/ High	Low/ medium	VET -> HE	Medium	Medium	*Low*	Stable
BG, RO	Compre-hensive	School/ High	Low	VET -> HE	Medium-High	High	*High*	Increase

For explanation of indicators see Chapter 4.1

- *Central* and *Eastern European* countries to a certain extent reflect the diversity among the four transition regimes. Yet there are shared trends such as a move from VET (which since the restructuring of the planned economy has lost its close links to the employment system) towards Higher Education; an increase of private education contributing to an increase in inequality in the education system. In terms of performance we find that in

Slovenia (comparable to the universalistic regime type) low social inequality, high access to higher education, relatively low youth unemployment combined with a low level of early school leaving. Early school leaving is also very low in *Poland and Slovakia* although levels of inequality are higher, whilst access to higher education has not yet reached the same level as in Slovenia. A clear exception is the Roma who represent a relevant minority confronted with high levels of school failure while also often lacking the infrastructure necessary for regular school attendance. Especially in Slovakia, they are over-represented in special schools and therefore segregated from recognised trajectories. The disadvantage of young Roma is also an issue in *Bulgaria and Romania* where social inequality as well as early school leaving in general are higher and still increasing.

In general, there are no surprising deviations from what could be expected from the regime typology. It can be said that early school leaving is stable on a low level in the universalistic and the employment-centred regime contexts (also if considering countries not involved in the study); it has significantly decreased in the liberal regime. Sub-protective regimes still display relatively or very high levels although these have been reduced in recent years. In Central and Eastern countries the situation is mixed between very low levels in contrasting contexts and high levels in those contexts characterised by a general structural deficit and high levels of poverty.

In particular the general *structures of education and training* and the extent to which the welfare system succeeds in compensating for *social inequality* are reflected in both the level and the trends regarding early school leaving. The effect of *labour market signals*, or potential 'discouraged worker' effects which results in staying on in education due high unemployment compared to leaving school early to enter low-skilled work are unclear. In the UK low early school leaving has been interpreted as a reaction to high unemployment (discouraged worker effect) which may also apply as well for the current situation in Poland and Slovakia. It is however unclear how long this trend will persist or whether in turn, if the current high levels of unemployment are not reversed in near future, young people will lose faith in the value of education and increasingly try to enter informal and/or low-skilled, precarious work instead. This in fact is the case in Southern Europe as well as in Bulgaria and Romania. General factors are *gender* in so far as early school leaving is a predominantly male problem and *ethnicity* with ethnic minorities and immigrants being especially affected.

The relation between transition regimes and constellations of *youth unemployment* is much more differentiated (see Chapter 4.2). Compared to the constellations of early school leaving there are greater variations within regime types (see Table 22):

- In *Finland* unemployment is clearly higher than in *Denmark* although in both countries economic growth is stable around the EU average. The reason for this can on the one hand be explained with the long-term consequences of economic restructuring in the early 1990s after the changes in the Soviet Union, previously a main trade partner of Finland, and with the high level of fixed-term contracts in Finland requiring more frequent job changes and job search. While in both countries the share of early school leavers is low, due to the higher overall level of unemployment, these are much more affected by unemployment in Finland compared to Denmark. This means that the *universalistic regime* requires differentiation with regard to the levels of youth unemployment. A common feature of both countries is that young men are slightly more affected than young women and that the share of those who are long-term unemployed is comparatively low.

Table 22: Constellations of youth unemployment by countries

<table>
<tr><td colspan="2">Transition regimes</td><td colspan="2">Performance</td><td colspan="3">Performance indicators</td><td colspan="3">Related indicators</td></tr>
<tr><td>Country</td><td>Labour markets</td><td>Unem-ployment</td><td>Change 1999/ 2004</td><td>Long-term unempl.</td><td>Higher unempl./ gender</td><td>Higher unempl./ education</td><td>Early school leavers</td><td>Fixed-term contracts</td><td>Recent economic dynamics</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="10">Universalistic</td></tr>
<tr><td>DK</td><td rowspan="2">Open, flexible</td><td>Low</td><td>Increase</td><td rowspan="2">Low</td><td rowspan="2">Males</td><td rowspan="2">Balance ESL</td><td rowspan="2">Low</td><td>Medium</td><td rowspan="2">Stable</td></tr>
<tr><td>FI</td><td>High</td><td>Stable</td><td>High</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="10">Liberal</td></tr>
<tr><td>UK</td><td>Flexible, risky</td><td>Low</td><td>Stable</td><td>Low</td><td>Males</td><td>ESL</td><td>Medium</td><td>Low</td><td>Stable</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="10">Employment-centred</td></tr>
<tr><td>AT</td><td>Regulated, closed</td><td>Low</td><td>Increase</td><td>Low</td><td>Balance</td><td>ESL</td><td>Low</td><td>Medium</td><td>Stagnant</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="10">Sub-protective</td></tr>
<tr><td>GR</td><td rowspan="4">Closed, risky</td><td rowspan="3">High</td><td rowspan="3">Decline</td><td>High</td><td rowspan="4">Females</td><td rowspan="4">HE Balance</td><td>Medium</td><td>Medium</td><td rowspan="2">Dynamic</td></tr>
<tr><td>ES</td><td>Medium</td><td rowspan="3">High</td><td>High</td></tr>
<tr><td>IT</td><td>High</td><td>Medium</td><td rowspan="2">Stagnant</td></tr>
<tr><td>PT</td><td>Medium</td><td>Increase</td><td>Medium</td><td>High</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="10">Post-socialist countries</td></tr>
<tr><td>SI</td><td rowspan="5">Regulated, closed, risky</td><td>Medium</td><td rowspan="2">Decline</td><td rowspan="5">High</td><td>Females</td><td rowspan="2">ESL</td><td rowspan="2">Low</td><td>High</td><td>Stable</td></tr>
<tr><td>SK</td><td>Very high</td><td>Males</td><td>Low</td><td>Dynamic</td></tr>
<tr><td>PL</td><td>Increase</td><td>Females</td><td>Balance</td><td rowspan="3">High</td><td>High</td><td>Stable</td></tr>
<tr><td>BG</td><td rowspan="2">High</td><td>Decline</td><td rowspan="2">Males</td><td>ESL</td><td rowspan="2">Low</td><td>Dynamic</td></tr>
<tr><td>RO</td><td>Increase</td><td>Balance</td><td>Stable</td></tr>
</table>

For indicator explanations see Chapter 4.3

- In *Austria* the apprenticeship system provides a youth labour market and as a consequence youth unemployment is rather low. However, due its direct dependency on economic dynamics there has been a decrease in apprenticeship places that has affected youth unemployment; especially early school leavers who often fail to secure an apprenticeship place. Corresponding largely to the structure of the *employment-centred regime* results in higher female unemployment compared to males, yet to a decreasing extent.
- In the *UK* youth unemployment has declined rapidly since the 1990s. The radical shift towards the service economy has produced stable economic dynamics in the recent period; however, with the consequence that early school leavers are clearly over-represented. This has produced a pronounced reverse of gendered unemployment towards young men and for ethnic minorities in general. It is in line with the *liberal* transition regime that the flexibility of the labour market creates considerable in-and-out movements while long-term unemployment is comparably low.
- Among Southern European countries *Portugal* with a medium level of unemployment deviates from the picture of generally high youth unemployment. However, recent developments have been reversing the picture with declining ratios in *Greece, Italy and Spain* while the stagnant economy in Portugal has lead to a significant increase. Long-term unemployment is high in Greece and Italy and medium in Portugal and Spain although here the level of fixed-term contracts is high (medium in the other two countries; while estimations of undeclared work are higher for Italy and Greece). The not surprising key characteristics of the *sub-protective regime* are first that youth unemployment is higher among females – although the employment rate of young Portuguese women is significantly higher than in the other Southern European countries; second, due the general mismatch problem there are either no significant differences across different education levels or in the case of Greece leavers from higher education are more affected.
- Among the *post-socialist* countries *Slovenia* – has stable economic development – and is the only country in this group with a moderate level of unemployment (still declining). To a large extent this derives from the close relationship that the Slovene economy has with Western neighbour (Austria and Italy) that had already been developed during the Socialist period. The dynamic economy in *Slovakia* and *Bulgaria* has supported slight declines yet on very high levels while youth unemployment has increased in *Romania* and especially in *Poland*. In all countries long-term unemployment is very high. In Bulgaria, Slovenia and Slovakia early school leavers are more affected, whilst in Poland and

Romania it is balanced according to education reflecting a general mismatch between education and employment that crosses different levels of early school leaving (see above). In Poland and Slovenia young women are more affected, in the other countries young males; however the differences are not highly significant.

Again we can summarise that on the one hand there are variations in performance both within and between regime types, on the other hand, these differences are either gradual or related to macro-economic differences like for example in Finland and Portugal. Differences between regimes relate not only to the level of unemployment, but also to its duration that is associated both with the level of overall unemployment and the coverage of active labour market policies. Other variations in line with the regime types are in terms of gender and the relationship between youth unemployment and level of education. In the post-socialist countries, it is clear that no single regime type applies although there are in fact general traits such as the mismatch between education and employment and the general lack of labour demand (except Slovenia). And even between countries such as Slovakia and Poland or Bulgaria and Romania which seem to have some features in common noticeable differences arise: for example, fixed-term employment in the case of Slovakia and Poland, or the composition of unemployment according to gender and education in Bulgaria and Romania.

We have also looked into the degree to which disadvantaged young people in their transitions to work experience *precarious situations* in terms of poverty, atypical work such as fixed-term contracts with limited social security or undeclared work, and those who prefer and/or are trapped in situations of 'status zer0' (see Table 23; cf. Chapter 4.3):

- In *Denmark* and *Finland* surprisingly the poverty rate of young people is relatively high. On the one hand this derives from the labour market deregulation and increased part-time and fixed-term employment. On the other hand it can be explained by the fact that students very often live in own households on educational allowances, family subsidies and/or income from side jobs. If one takes into account that many of them consciously choose atypical jobs for a while to reconcile work with studies and/or life styles, these figures definitely have another meaning compared to other contexts. Also the high level of average income needs to be considered implying that an income of 60% may allow for a comfortable youth lifestyle – if it is temporary. However, also in the *universalistic regime*, there is the phenomena of 'status zer0' with its risks to reinforce marginalisation over time. Referring to the level of inactivity as a corresponding indicator this seems to be higher in Finland than in Denmark (cf. Fahmy, 2005).

- In the *UK* despite of low levels of unemployment, fixed-term contracts and undeclared work the youth poverty rate is comparatively high. This can be explained both by the low amounts of benefits and allowances – consistent with the *liberal* transition and welfare regime – and by high rates of inactivity. The persistence of status zer0 is associated with the pressure of compliance within the New Deal programme but also with a high level of lone mothers in the age group.
- In *Austria* poverty among young people is low although the welfare system provides protection it does so on an unequal basis according to whether or not young people have contributed to social insurance, those who have not either are not entitled to benefits at all independent of their families or they receive social assistance. Unexpectedly for the *employment-centred transition regime* based on standard work arrangements fixed-term contracts among young people have reached a medium level, so has the rate of inactivity, this is partly associated with a lack of benefit entitlements and the experience of PES procedures as stigmatising.

Table 23: Constellations of precariousness

Transition regimes						
Country	*Welfare*	*Poverty rate**	*Fixed-term contracts***	*Undeclared work****	*Rates of Inactivity*****	*Factors for status zer0*
Universalistic						
DK	State	High	Medium	Low	Low	Avoid activation
FI			High		Medium	
Liberal						
UK	State / Family	High	Low	Low	High	Avoid pressure from coercive activation
Employment-centred						
AT	State / Family	Low	Medium	Low	Medium	Limited benefits entitlements, avoid stigmatisation
Sub-protective						
GR	Family	High	Low	High	Medium	Limited coverage of PES, no benefit entitlements, informal work
ES			High	Medium	High	
IT			Medium	High	Medium	
PT				Medium	Medium	Limited benefit entitlements, informal/precarious work
Post-socialist countries						
SI	Family / State	Low	High	Medium	Low	Early school leavers, lack of benefits entitlements, avoid stigmatisation, lack of trust
SK		High	Low		Medium	
PL			High		Medium	
BG		Medium	Low	High	Very high	Limited coverage of PES, limited benefits entitlements, lack of trust
RO		High				

* Low = ; Medium = ; High = > 18% in 2004 (16-25 year olds below 60% poverty threshold in 2003; PL, SI, BG, RO 2002; IT 2001; Eurostat); ** Low = <30%; Medium = 30-50%; High = >50% in 2004 (Eurostat); *** national estimations (see also Kieselbach et al., 2001; Ghezzi & Mingione, 2003; Renoy et al., 2004); **** Low = <3%; Medium = 3-7%; High = 7-10%; Very high = >10% in 2004 (Eurostat)

- In Southern Europe all countries display a high level of poverty, which is associated with both a lack of welfare entitlements and transition structures. This goes along with either high fixed-term contracts (in *Spain*), high levels of undeclared work (*Greece* and *Italy*) while in Portugal those who enter the labour market at early ages are at risk of poverty due to low wages and limited social security. Inactivity is medium to high due to the limited coverage of PES, lacking or limited benefit entitlements (which is less the case in *Portugal*) and a generally low trust in the effectiveness of PES. In sum, the high level of precariousness in youth transitions justifies clustering these countries in the sub-protective transition regime.
- The *post-socialist* countries range between the low level of precariousness in *Slovenia* and very high levels in *Bulgaria* and *Romania*. Poverty rates are low in Slovenia, medium in Bulgaria (while a low level of GDP per capita needs to be considered), and high in Poland, Romania and Slovakia which – like in Southern European countries – in most cases this is due high rates of family poverty and most young people of this age group are still living in the family home. In particular, in certain Roma settlements situations can be found where poverty exists not only in relative but absolute terms. Undeclared work increases and is especially high in Bulgaria and Romania where it is reflected by very high rates of (formal) inactivity. As in Southern Europe undeclared work is high where fixed-term employment is low, especially in Poland and Slovenia. Status zer0 also results from the low coverage of PES and limited benefit entitlements (except for Slovenia).

In general, there is a high coincidence between national performance and regime clusters which can be explained by the considerable comparative research that has been undertaken especially in terms of welfare systems.

7.1.2 Consistency of policy-mixes with constellations of disadvantage and transition regimes

In a next step, the policy mixes adopted by the respective countries are analysed in a double perspective: the adequacy of the policies in terms of the constellations and the consistency of policies in relation to the specific regime types (see Table 24). In particular, a focus lies on the question to what extent and in what form the trend towards activation policies is being realised in different contexts. In reaction to structural unemployment, activation stands for a shift from the Keynesian national welfare regime to the Schumpeterian workfare post-national regime characterised by the demands of greater labour market flexibility and a lower public social expenditure (Torfing 1999; Pierson 2001; Jessop, 1999).

Table 1: Consistency of policy-mixes with regard to constellations of disadvantage and transition regimes

Regimes	*Early school leaving*				*Youth unemployment*			
Countries	Constellations	Funding	Main policies	Consistency	Constellations	Funding	Main policies	Consistency
Universalistic								
Denmark	Low except for immigrants	High	Allowances, inclusive education, counselling, permeability, pre-vocational measures	Consistent exc. for immig. youth	Low	High	Supportive activation, counselling, education & training	Largely consistent
Finland	Low	High		Largely consistent	High, esp. ESL	Medium	Supportive activation, counselling, education & training, work experience	Consistent but insufficient
Employment-centred								
Austria	Low except for immigrants	Medium	Pre-vocational measures	Partly consistent	Low	Low	Limited activation, pre-vocational measures, training	Consistent depending on economy
Liberal								
UK	Medium	Medium	Counselling, nat. qual. System, allowances	Consistent but varying effects	Low but high inactivity	Low	Workfare activation, work experience, labour market training, subsidies	Partly consistent, high inactivity
Sub-protective								
Greece	Medium except for Roma	Low	Extension, inclusive education, 2nd chance	Partly consistent (compensatory)	High, esp. rural areas/females	Low	No basis for activation, subsidies, self-employment, labour market training	Inconsistent: frag-mented, insufficient
Spain	(Very) High, precarious jobs for ESL	Low	Extension, VET, integration with social services and non-formal learning	Partly consistent but fragmented and insufficient in coverage	High and high prec. work	Medium	Limited activation, Deregulation, labour market training	Inconsistent, leads to precariousness
Italy					High, esp. South/ females	Medium	No basis for activation, Subsidies, self-employment, labour market training	Inconsistent: frag-mented, insufficient
Portugal		Medium	Extension, VET, skills recognition		Medium, high prec. work	Low	Limited activation, labour market training	Partly consistent,
Post-socialist countries								
Poland	Low	Medium	Extension, VET	Largely consist.	Very high, esp. ESL	Low	Limited activation, subsidies, labour market training	Inconsistent: fragmented, insufficient
Slovakia	Low except for Roma	Low		Few policies but segregating		Low		
Slovenia	Low	High	Nat. qualific. system, counselling, VET	Consistent	Medium	Low	Supportive activation, counselling, labour market training, subsidies	Partly consistent
Bulgaria	High, especially for Roma	Low	Extension	Unclear	High and high inactivity	Medium	Limited activation, subsidies, labour market training	Inconsistent: frag-mented, insufficient
Romania		Low	Extension, Access for Roma	Consistent but insufficient		Low		

For indicators see Chapters 4 and 5.

This regime shift began in the 1970s, when liberal European welfare states, such as the UK, began to emphasise labour market flexibility to increase employment in the low-wage service sector:

- In general terms the policies adopted by *Denmark* and *Finland* can be characterised as putting a focus on education, primarily in preventing but also in combating youth unemployment. Labour market deregulation has also taken place, however backed by supportive activation policies that provide universal access of all young job seekers to social and/or unemployment benefits. The citizenship status of young people is the backbone for this policy-mix whereby all young people receive state funding if registered with the public system. Supportive activation relies on a broad concept of activity – whether education, training, work experience or employment – and guarantees that involvement pays, with allowances exceeding the level of social benefits. Activation policies have been introduced as early as the early 1990s reacting to the severe labour market crisis. However, they do not have to rely on sanctions very often, because normally individuals are offered different options to choose from (cf. Torfing, 1999; Kautto et al., 2001; van Berkel & Hornemann Møller, 2002; Serrano Pascual, 2004). In so far as policies apparently recognise the crucial role of the intrinsic motivation of individuals, counselling and support are very much structured according to educational and social work standards. However, the difficulties in including immigrant youth suggest that an active use of personalised counselling requires a cultural model of individualised biographical construction that cannot be taken for granted (cf. Walther, 2006). The fact that Finnish activation policies are knit more tightly while pre-vocational and training measures are less flexible and personalised than similar Danish programmes. This can be ascribed to the more pressing labour market situation in Finland which narrows the scope of legitimacy of policies with vaguely defined open outcomes (cf. Kautto et al., 2001; Hämäläinen & Olikainen, 2004). It will strongly depend on the move towards a diversified service economy whether the considerable success of Finnish education policies (cf. OECD, 2001; 2004) will have positive employment outcomes.

  The general correspondence of policies in both countries with the structures of the *universalistic transition regime* are reflected in the level of funding allocated to education and active labour market policies. The State takes responsibility which is also reflected by the fact that third sector organisations play a complementary role while receiving most of their expenses reimbursed from state funding. Still, there are considerable differences between Denmark and Finland with regard to both education and ALMP. The higher

Danish education budget among others results from the generous education allowance which alone accounts for 0.8% of GDP. The result of such policy efforts is obvious: Denmark has the second highest youth employment rate across Europe (after the Netherlands). Both significant investment in young people's transitions and the predominance of preventative policy measures – which includes accepting that neither outcomes nor cost-effectiveness can be measured directly – pay off in terms of young people entering the labour market early as a qualified level as well as gains in tax returns and savings in passive labour market expenses (Eurostat).

- *Austrian* policies regarding both early school leaving and unemployment primarily refer to the existing structures of the apprenticeship system. Although the PES has adopted activation mechanisms the options resulting from individual action plans are mainly of a pre-vocational nature with the objective of subsequently including participants in the dual training system. Both the low levels of early school leaving and youth unemployment do not create pressure to modify the policy pathway decisively, which reinforces structural conservative mechanisms. This includes the acceptance that the education system reproduces a high level of social inequality affecting in particular the 2nd and 3rd generation of immigrant youth. However, in comparison with Germany, a country with a similar combination of a selective school and standardised training, the Austrian transition system appears to provide more scope for action and choice for young people due to the existence of a broad school-based VET system alongside the dual system. While this allows both to compensate for cyclical changes in the supply of apprenticeship places, it is also used by immigrant youth as a way of accumulating qualifications while methods of intercultural learning can be applied. The Austrian case shows that path dependency – in relation to the *employment-centred* regime – can be a resource and a limitation at the same time. On the one hand, the apprenticeship system profits from a historically grown and culturally rooted responsibility on the part of employers that provides opportunities for potential low achievers to attain a recognised vocational qualification. On the other hand, the corporatist structure sets limits to a both more inclusive and more activating approach overcoming the segmentation of the labour market into a protected and regulated core and a precarious periphery; and limits the potential to create new trajectories with regard to the service and knowledge economy. This becomes particularly clear in times of economic downturn when not only unemployment but also long-term unemployment rise. The question is for how long a structural conservative approach will succeed and whether policies that concentrate on preserving existing structures do not increasingly undermine

the scope for change once they become necessary (cf. Schmid & Gazier, 2002). The corporatist structure is also revealed by the fact that non-statutory organisations delivering policy measures are most often very closely related to national policy and in order to secure their survival they often turn into quasi public institutions reinforcing the structural conservative nature of policies (Ranci, 2002).

- The *UK* is often referred to as having left the old *liberal* regime pathway in favour of a so-called Third Way (cf. Giddens, 1998). At first sight, a considerable increase in post-compulsory education rates as well as investment in large-scale policy measures such as the New Deal and Connexions confirm such a diagnosis. The mix of broadening and opening post-sixteen education routes within a modularised national qualifications system, postponing benefit entitlements until 18 while introducing education maintenance allowances and activation measures both in terms of school and the transition to work. This has replaced the normative expectation of direct labour market entry after compulsory education and has contributed to a clear decline in both unemployment and early school leaving over the past decade. However, there are also lines of continuity, in so far as the prevalence of the work option in the New Deal and an interpretation of activation in terms of 'workfare' with a clear recourse to sanctions in the case of non-compliance show that the imperative of early economic independence persists (cf. Lindsay & Mailand, 2004). A second continuity is the low level to which careers actually are secured. Although the share of atypical work arrangements in a European comparison is still low, careers are characterised by a high level of mobility and flexibility while the poverty rate both among youth and among the total population are among the highest in Europe – despite of low levels of unemployment. From this perspective the new state activism may be interpreted as a modernised liberal approach in times of post-Fordist knowledge economies, where investment in education in terms of human capital for the marketing of which the individuals are self-responsible (cf. Field, 2000). It needs to be said that 'third way' governance is characterised by a high degree of reflexivity in terms of comprehensive evaluation and flexible responses to dysfunctional policies. One sign for the contradictions and limitations within this approach may be the high level of inactivity among young people – beyond being in education, training, work, parenthood or registered unemployment. This may be interpreted in terms of both the State neglecting the complexity of social integration and the individuals refusing to be forced into careers that they perceive as an 'unfair' treatment; especially in relation to the predominance of male and 'black' unemployment. Whilst expenditure on education has gradually been

increased, the constant low level of expenses for ALMP suggests that the New Deal in fact is virtually the only ALMP for young people giving a limited effort which – roughly speaking selects between those entering employment, a small group catered for with targeted measures and a rather large group disappearing in inactivity and/or status zer0.

- The *Southern European* countries display a broad spectrum of approaches in order to close the gaps in the transitions systems whereby differences increase. In fact, in a general perspective all is done whereby young people get included into the system in one way or the other: first, extension of compulsory education; second, approaches of developing vocational training; third, deregulation of labour market entrance; fourth, subsidies to facilitate labour entry of school leavers; and fifth, assistance towards self-employment. However, these measures play a different role in the respective countries. *Portugal* has strongly aimed to increase the professional skills and productivity of the labour force by introducing and modernising vocational training routes, especially through formally certificated apprenticeship training; however the high level of early school leaving has not yet been effectively reversed due to a lack of general school reform and inclusive education. Another focus is the inclusion of groups with multiple disadvantages like (ex-) drug users. The rather low level of unemployment is related to the specific economic development following the revolution in 1974 and an efficient use of European structural funds to develop economic sectors such as the textile industry. A result of this there is also a high share of low-skilled, low-wage and insecure employment. However, it needs also to be mentioned that Portugal is the only Southern European country where the PES effectively reaches all registered unemployed young people. In *Greece* apparently education plays a greater role than ALMP's, which is also reflected by the lower rate of early school leaving. Major effort is put into either the development of inclusive education within regular education or on second chance education and evening schools. In terms of labour market policies, priority lies on expanding PES structures. While subsidies and labour market training are applied, also self-employment programmes play a distinct role. This accounts also for *Italy*. In fact self-employment is seen as a key means to overcome structures of labour market segmentation, which in Southern Europe in particular affect women, young people and immigrants. This accounts as well for the role of the social economy, especially the cooperatives which allow a balance to be maintained between the economic, social and democratic aspects in shaping young people's transitions to work. However, while cooperatives profit from the fact that social services are being outsourced, low and discontinuous funding leads to a high level of fragility and precariousness (IRIS,

2000; Ranci, 2002; Burgess, 2003). In Italy apart from the particular focus on modernising vocational routes (both apprenticeship programmes, yet without providing formal qualifications and vocational upper secondary education) whilst in terms of ALMP subsidy schemes for school leavers also play a major role. In *Spain*, in the last decades the education system has experienced ongoing reforms, and attempts made to increase the attractiveness and relevance of vocational routes. However increasingly school leavers enter university. With regard to ALMP a main aspect of policies has been the deregulation of the labour market which has lead to a shift from unemployment to a high rate of precarious, atypical work often characterised by high-levels of over-qualification. Attempts of re-regulation and incentives for employing young people by permanent contracts have not yet had significant impact. For those leaving school with low or no qualifications workshop-based training schemes have been introduced which display high insertion rates; yet without providing formally recognised qualifications beyond ISCED 2. The relevance of deregulation applies in particular to the cases of Portugal and Spain. One might argue that this results in a slightly lower degree of undeclared work than in Greece and Italy. However, in so far as there are no significant differences in terms of precariousness, entrapment and marginalisation on the side of young people deregulation cannot be recommended as a policy of inclusion by reducing informal work.

It needs highlighted that activation and personal guidance do not play a major role; and young people also do not enjoy genuine benefit entitlements. In this respect, activation policies have no substantial basis in *Greece* and *Italy*. In Portugal and Spain activation is limited due to an insertion benefit introduced in Portugal (similar to the French RMI) and PES reaching larger shares of the young unemployed (Darmon, 2004). This creates the contradictory situation that institutions on the one hand complain that young people – especially those with medium or higher qualification – passively wait for the right job to come whilst no incentives are provided. Current policy trends and performances appear to gradually dissolve the picture of a common sub-protective regime pathway by including both employment-centred and liberal aspects. In fact, the structural deficit increases the pressure to apply any measure, whilst the weight of existing institutions resisting against innovation is probably lower than in other regime contexts. Nevertheless, it should be noted that all policy measures adopted in the Southern countries continue to rely on the *family* in so far as measures do not include allowances or these are not sufficient for an autonomous life. This means, that despite of the adoption of policy elements from other contexts, pathways are (slightly) modified rather than left and replaced (Ferrera, 1998).

This is also confirmed by the general low level of expenditure on education, ALMP and also social protection for families and children.

- In *Central* and *Eastern Europe*, as expected we find an even more diverse picture with the only unifying asset is that countries struggle with the problem of labour market mismatch and a low demand for labour. Therefore the main common policy feature is to provide school leavers with work experience, especially in Poland, Slovakia and Slovenia where only few leave school with less than upper secondary certificates. However, it is necessary to make a distinction in the case of *Slovenia* where not only in term of constellations of disadvantage but also the policy mix resembles the universalistic regime type: education is the clear priority which is reflected in high expenditure; measures are framed by a national qualification system; while early school leavers are addressed by a counselling system which primarily aims to enhance intrinsic motivation. In Poland and Slovakia the situation is characterised by low early school leaving but very high levels of unemployment. As regards policy mixes, in *Poland* there has been a strong shift towards education although this is only partly a result of policy choices – mainly to extend compulsory education to 18 including vocational routes. Increasingly school leavers choose to enter university, however this does not significantly improve their career chances and the First Work programme primarily aims to provide work experience and labour market training. In *Slovakia* after restructuring secondary education and upgrading vocational routes (while maintaining one of the most differentiated system of segregating young people with special needs in special schools), policy efforts appear to be more accentuated with regard to ALMP. The main programmes are the graduate practice while as a new element training firms will be introduced and re-training courses address those with no or low qualifications. Among the low qualified Roma young people are over-represented and there inclusion– asides from high unemployment – is Slovakia's key challenge. Given the low school attendance rate, a high rate of children with a Roma background being enrolled in special schools and unemployment in some communities reaching 100%, policy efforts focus on pre-school education, Roma assistant teachers, tying families benefits to children's school attendance and training of Roma social assistants. However these policies are insufficient to overcome not only marginalisation but also segregation that has increased due to cuts into social benefits.

  The issue of the Roma is also relevant in *Bulgaria* and *Romania* where they are also over-represented among early school leavers and the unemployed which both reach relatively high levels; especially if one also counts levels of inactivity among young people. In

particular in Romania there is considerable focus on education policies aimed at the Roma population. In general, in Romania education appears to be higher up the policy agenda compared to ALMP's for young people, whilst in Bulgaria the range of ALMP measures, especially in terms of labour market training and subsidies, appears to be more differentiated. As a general problem and one that also applies to Slovakia, the size of policies needs to be mentioned with respect to the limited funding available which s to a large extent still comes from the EU PHARE programme, the World Bank, or private funding such as through the SOROS foundation.

In terms of the consistency of measures, the central role of subsidies seems appropriate given the significant mismatch problem. However, as long as this mismatch is also a quantitative one in terms of a lack of demand for labour the effects of gaining work experience risk collapse after a period of time, whilst the same would apply for activation schemes. In all countries, young job seekers have a limited access to (rather low) benefits, especially in Poland and Slovakia (where these benefits have recently been reduced) introduced activation schemes include also coercive elements; although their limitation extends to the few options available within the schemes (Deacon, 2000; Council of Europe, 2005). The main motivation behind such policies is to wait for a boost stimulated by foreign investment and the newly created industrial parks, although the considerable amount of state funding in this respect rarely includes specific employment prospects as a binding criteria, and especially not in terms of young people. Therefore, the investment into education for young people increasingly turns into an investment into personal emigration projects; whereby the European Employment Service (EURES) reinforces over-qualification by placing degree holders in low-skilled jobs in Western European hotels and restaurants. However, the phenomena of emigration and 'brain-drain' seem to be less relevant in quantitative terms than is often assumed, also due to the EU-restrictions, rather than serving as individual and collective projections.

Except for the post-socialist countries, the path dependency of policies can be traced back to transition regimes regarding clusters of the broad policy rationales. Variations in performance are mainly due to macro-economic differences that in turn give way to specific policy choices; without however leaving shared avenues of policy making possible in a broad perspective. In terms of the trend towards activation the findings confirm the analysis of Serrano Pascual (2004) who highlighted a clear convergence in the establishment of an ideology of activation across Europe centred on individual self-responsibility. However, in terms of implementation and delivery activation policies can only start from the existing

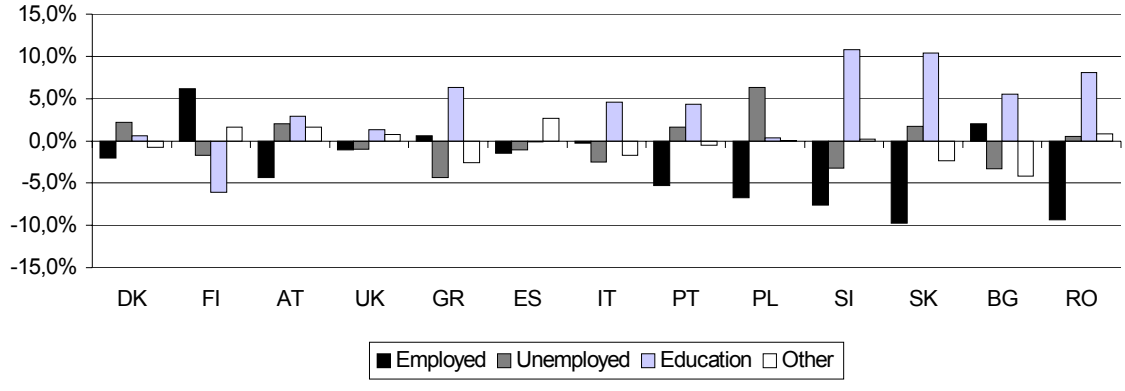
institutions and structures. Path dependency can be both a resource and a limitation, especially if a lack of funding inhibits meaningful investment.

Before entering into a discussion of what this means for policy making in a European perspective we will try to (re)gain an overview over this rather complex picture by sorting countries first according to their main policy focus on disadvantaged youth and second by relating these foci to the dimensions individualised/structural and preventative/compensatory. In terms of the main directions of policy (see Figure 25) we find a priority towards education in Denmark, Finland, Greece, Poland, Romania, Slovenia and a priority towards employment in Bulgaria, Slovakia, Spain, the UK (which have a less pronounced focus on education than the other countries; especially in the UK where there is a clear differentiation in terms of those under 18 and those between 18 and 24 years old). In Italy it is difficult to identify a clear focus while the prevailing orientation of Austria and Portugal towards vocational training orientation is located in between.

Figure 25: Priority directions of policies for disadvantaged youth

This partly corresponds to changes in young people's main status between 1998 and 2004 (Figure 26).

Figure 26: Changes in declared main status of young people 1998-2004*



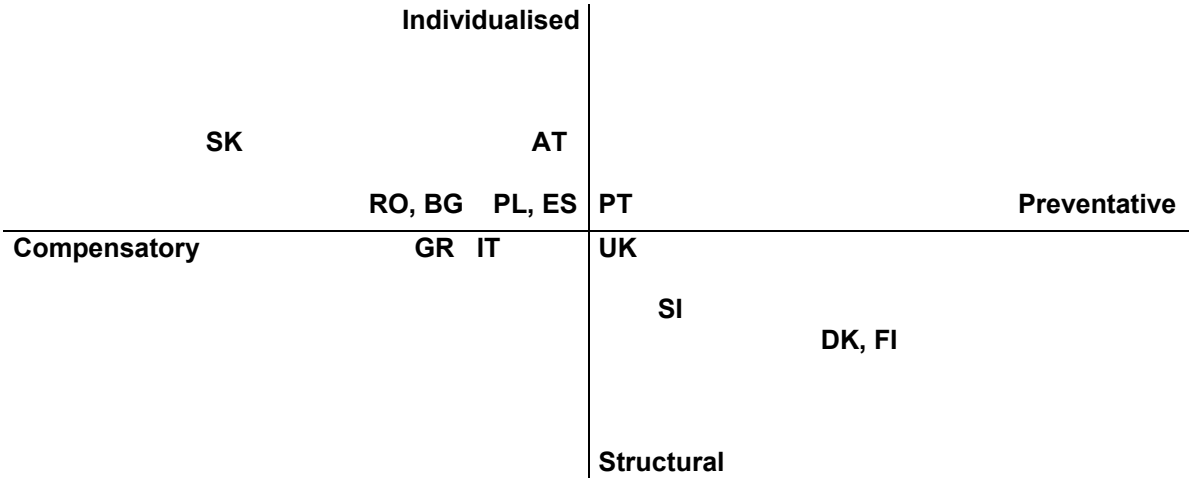
* Own calculations based on national information and Eurostat for Bulgaria, Spain (15-29 year olds) and UK (cf. Injuve 2000; 2004; UK LFS, 2005; MBMD, 2005).

In most countries education rates have increased, most clearly in Bulgaria, Greece, Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia; only in Finland the education rate has dropped. It is the only country with a clear rise in employment (minor in Bulgaria and Greece). The apparent differences between policy directions and the main status of young people can be due to different reasons. Education policies as a priority to maintain high education levels (Denmark), priority on ALMP's to counteract dropping employment rates while rising education rates result from individual decisions rather than from policy change (Slovakia, Spain). Apart from rising unemployment in Poland, but also Austria and Denmark, rising rates of inactivity should be taken into account (Austria, Finland, Romania, Spain and the UK), especially where these were already at a high level in 1998 (Romania, Spain and UK) whilst the highest estimated level still is to be found in Bulgaria.

As a concluding step of analysis we will come back to our initial perspective of analysing policies according to the dimensions structural versus individualised and preventative versus compensatory. It is evident that such a perspective mixes a descriptive with a normative perspective in so far as a negative connotation of individualised compensatory measures is implied as a mere cure of symptoms. This does not mean that an exclusively preventative and structural policy is appropriate in all cases which in fact applies to all the countries involved in this study. In fact, responsible policy making with regard to disadvantaged youth always has to address those who are currently unemployed and/or have left school with no or low qualifications – existing in all countries, yet to different extents – while at the same time investing in preventative measures and the reform of institutional structures which have been identified as being part of the problem. In ideal terms, a policy for sustainable social inclusion would gradually shift from an individualised compensatory approach towards structural and preventative one over time. This is exactly how the shift from passive towards active labour market policies is justified. However, our analysis shows that ALMP's are also compensatory in so far as they occur after a person has become unemployed and they mainly demand the adaptation of the individual. Precarious life conditions associated with some forms of activation that may force individuals to take premature decisions – whether in line with institutional demands or disengaging towards status zer0 – do not qualify as preventative approaches either. Yet, the perspective towards structural preventative measures is misleading in one respect: whereby the deregulation of labour market entrance may be seen as preventing unemployment by changing labour market structures. Even if we do not take deregulation policies into account, the following figure (Figure 27) assesses the orientation of policies

according to structural versus individualised and preventative versus compensatory measures. By no means it claims to reflect a mathematically precise analysis of the policy mixes in the respective countries nor does it reflect the performance of the national policies. It is meant as a stimulus for reflection based on tentative interpretations of policy objectives and structures:

Figure 27: Main orientation of national policy mixes for disadvantaged young people



Denmark, Finland and Slovenia clearly prioritise policies aiming at broadening structural access in a preventative perspective. Holistic objectives are central and addressed on a long-term perspective. In contrast, Austrian and Slovakian policies are still strongly oriented towards the individual compensation of deficits. Most countries are located in the centre of the scheme although levels of funding and performance indicators are considered.

7.2 Implications of path dependency for mutual learning

What are the implications of path dependency for mutual learning through good practice? In principle, the theory of path dependency suggests that transferring good practice is not possible as usually policy measures are a whole set of ideological assumptions, goals, actors and resources, embedded in a specific cultural, institutional and socio-economic context. Due to their regulative nature by raising mutual expectations and establishing reliable rules, institutions are increasingly costly to change and produce a self-reinforcing effect over time. In order to create a new and reflexive culture of policy making, the European Commission therefore there has adopted a management by objectives approach, the so-called Open Method of Coordination applied in the framework of the Employment Strategy, the Inclusion Process and also the White Paper process for youth. Apart from guidelines and benchmarks mutual learning is organised by the promotion of examples of good practice and peer reviews providing space for exchange and sharing of experiences (see also Volume 2, Annex IV).

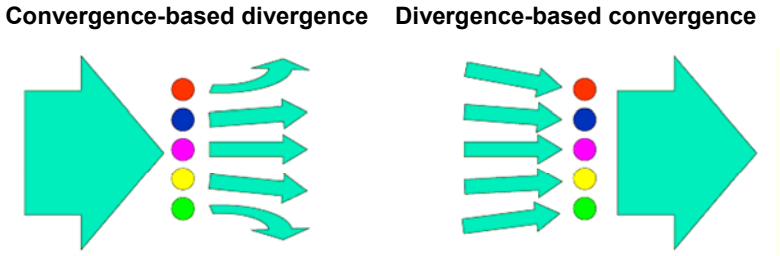
Mutual learning has to deal with the impossible situation of reproducing the specific mixes of prerequisites forming a good practice policy in another context (Casey & Gold, 2004). However, in many cases attempts are made to import the design of specific policies. The way in which this import occurs, however, is path dependent.

Path dependency is – from this point of view – an obstacle to change, except through incremental steps. And – with regard to the analysis in the last section – one may argue that – in an apparent analogy to Esping-Andersen's original term – the corporatist structure of employment-centred regimes is a specific barrier for changing policy directions. However, at the same time institutions are not uniquely placed to maintain stability. Institutions are also enabling contexts, which need to be re-interpreted and re-negotiated by actors. They can never fully determine action, nor they do permit any action whatsoever. Favourable conditions in this respect are the density of institutionalised regulations, the size of the countries, the relations of power and cooperation between different institutions and actors, the coordination of policy sectors on national, regional and local level; and last but not least the macro-economic context. This implies that paths may be changed, but that this possibility is related to the given contextual opportunity structure, available resources, leadership, willingness, etc.

If designs of policy measures are imported three different variations can be conceived of:

1) convergence-based divergence (comparable input, different outcomes);
2) divergence-based convergence (i.e the development of functional equivalent policies);
3) and creative implementations.

Figure 28: Convergence and divergence (Kazepov & Pohl, 2005)



This means that between input and outcomes a process of de-contextualisation and re-contextualisation takes place which may lead to unexpected effects if not reflected upon and consciously shaped. Figure 28 outlines the process of convergence and divergence in terms of activation, which has become a shared policy ideology, while implying different practice, resourcing and effects. A consciously steered process of de-contextualisation and re-constextualisation requires first of all a consideration of the wider 'regime' contexts in order to understand the general scope for variation, that is the normative policy objectives and the allocation of funding; and second an assessment of the micro-contextual, operating factors governing single measures:

- policy-related factors (why are certain measures funded and implemented),

- factors of delivery and process (how are measures organised and applied)
- actor-related factors (who is involved and why),
- target-group related factors (why is the measure attractive for the target group)
- factors of problem adequacy (is the policy reflexive, how are side-effects controlled).

For such assessment, normal evaluation studies do not suffice but comprehensive sets of criteria and methods are required including qualitative and longitudinal approaches; and they need to include an intercultural, comparative element to raise awareness for different interpretations of success and failure – of individual transitions as well as of policies. Once, factors and functions are isolated it is possible to look for *functional equivalents*, that is other factors which may have similar functions. These need to be translated into the factors and resources inherent to the importing context (cf. Walther, 2000). A suggestion with regard to a further development of mutual learning may be to shift the perspective from export to import; from presenting and discussing single policy measures to provide countries with an overview of existing policies and then to organise exchange starting from single countries' policy needs – whether this relates to counselling, training or other policy instruments. However, also if it does not lead to the importing of policy measures or if these fail mutual learning processes have an added value as they facilitate more detailed reflection of policy success and the relationship between normative and operative policy objectives. This means to conceive of mutual learning as learning for institutional reflexivity. A final question remains in this respect: who is involved in mutual learning processes? In the framework of the Open Method of Coordination peer reviews are organised at the level of national governments thereby – in the best case – guaranteeing a maximum multiplier effect. Obviously, local policy actors are increasingly involved in trans-national exchange but to a much more limited extent and without significant exchange among each other. In a best-case scenario, top-down and bottom-up processes of mutual learning meet, however this is rarely the case due to a separation of contexts (different programmes or programme levels), due to a difference of priorities and perspectives, and due to a different degree of power and influence upon specific policy structures. In so far as mutual learning aims to implement policy measures that represent a break with policy traditions this means a change in pathway and cultural normality. Such a re-contextualisation or in other words: an appropriation of policy innovations can only be achieved if all actors and levels concerned with the respective policies are involved in mutual learning.

8. Conclusions

The overall objectives of the Thematic Study have been to identify constellations of disadvantage in terms of early school leaving and youth unemployment and the related precarious life situations of young people. It has of course not been possible to do justice to all the issues, and with a focus more on the larger mainstream and innovative policies other small-scale policy in the study have been overlooked. Related primarily to socio-economic indicators and to detailed information on good practice policies in one step we identified five key factors of success in terms of the sustainable inclusion of disadvantaged youth. In a further stage we assessed national policy mixes and their performance in a comparative perspective in order to allow for a reflexive way of applying comparative analysis and good practice in a policy making perspective. As a crosscutting theme we have been concerned with youth-specific aspects of disadvantage in order to provide evidence for a youth approach to inclusion and active labour market policies, therefore contributing to the objectives of the European Youth Pact. In this concluding chapter will therefore first outline a comprehensive policy model for the sustainable inclusion of disadvantaged young people and then break down this normative and conceptual level into specific recommendations for the design, implementation and delivery of policy. These are closely related to the success factors of policies identified in Chapter 6 of this report

8.1 Integrated Transition Policies

In Chapter 3 we introduced a theoretical perspective starting from an assessment of the increasingly de-standardised nature of youth transitions towards yoyo-transitions that are reversible, fragmented and increasingly insecure. Another basic assumption was that social integration needs to be understood as a relationship between social and institutional structures on the one hand and the subjective perspectives and the agency of individuals on the other. There are a number of implications of such a perspective; first this implies that the issue of social disadvantage requires a broader perspective that looks at constellations of disadvantage rather than a narrow focus on individual deficits and problem groups. Second it requires that motivation of young people to actively engage in their transitions is taken into account and is related to their structural opportunities and resources. From this follows that the transition problems of disadvantaged youth cannot be tackled by single measures but instead requires a life-cycle perspective of *Integrated Transition Policies* (Walther, Stauber et al., 2002; López Blasco et al, 2003).

Adopting such a perspective means to take the individual pathways and biographies of young people as a starting point for policy-development and to broaden the perspective from one of labour market integration towards social integration that also includes aspects of personal recognition, citizenship and the possibility to reconcile the demands and obligations that arise in different life spheres. In contrast to such a holistic perspective single policies often fail because they deal with individual biographies in a compartmentalised manner and therefore risk low levels of sustainability.

Youth mainstreaming – a way to strengthen policies for disadvantaged young people?

The European Commission's last Joint Reports on Social Inclusion (EC, 2004g; 2005c) have identified disadvantaged youth as a strategic target group and identified two key policy areas as increasing young people's labour market participation and tackling disadvantages in education and training (cf. EC, 2005g). The European Pact for Youth adopted in spring 2005 as part of the revised Lisbon Strategy (EC, 2005a) sees the social integration of young people as a way of creating sustainable and inclusive growth in Europe. One of its key characteristics is the claim for a life-cycle perspective which does not only have implications with regard to the individual life course but also to the relation between different generations. In a situation of an overall scarcity of jobs associated with problems resulting from the financing of pensions this however creates a dilemma. At present, in many member states the age of retirement is being raised which inevitably has negative effects on young people's labour market entry. A potential way to cope with this dilemma may lie in developing transitional labour markets (Schmid & Gazier, 2002) in the framework of which different activities such as education and training, dependent work – full-time and part-time – as well as self-employment, voluntary work and family work are integrated; thereby constituting bridges between different biographical periods and qualifying for entitlements of social security over the whole life span. This however implies that social integration and citizenship are partly de-coupled from a narrow concept of social integration in terms of labour market integration.

The Youth Pact builds upon the first cycle of implementation of the White Paper 'A New Impetus for European Youth' (EC, 2001a) which led to numerous initiatives for enhancing young people's participation and active citizenship. Due to the prolongation and the increased uncertainty and risk in transitions from youth to adulthood, citizenship status needs to be decoupled from stable employment; individuals not only need a job to achieve social integration but the process of labour market integration also needs to respect the principles of

citizenship. In a similar way, the White Paper on Youth (EC, 2001a) interprets young people's citizenship as a combination of four main aspects:

- access to formal education and the recognition of informal and non-formal learning
- employment opportunities which are characterised by quality work
- the right for an autonomous life
- active participation in terms of being in involved in all decisions concerning the own life.

These objectives are not explicitly integrated to the same extent in other policy sectors. For example, in the context of the Employment Strategy the relationship between education – work – participation and autonomy is still conceived of as a linear sequence; although the Joint Employment Report 2004 (EC, 2004c) does state that there is a need to strengthen integration with other policy sectors due to the problems ALMP have in attracting young people. A perspective of 'mainstreaming youth' therefore aims to introduce a more holistic and life cycle perspective into policy, and although participation is one of the main objectives of European policies for young people, it also needs to be extended from the explicit youth policy field into the 'hard' policy areas such as education and training, social inclusion and employment. In terms of current policy trends, this means to clearly define *activation* in a youthful and participatory way and to exclude approaches that reduce social integration to labour market integration – whilst at the same time not neglecting the importance of quality employment for sustainable biographical development. Active participation means that choice and decision-making are extended to the central aspects of individual lives like employment and social inclusion and secured by:

- social rights and guarantees during transition processes;
- individual negotiation rights for young people in terms of institutions and policy actors;
- participation of young people in the design, implementation and eventually delivery of inclusion and active labour market policies (e.g. by a 'youth audit' in all measures concerning young people).

Is youth everywhere better than youth nowhere? If we refer to the term 'mainstreaming' it means we should consider the objectives and experiences made with gender mainstreaming across different strands of policies. The clear advantage is to shift from a one-dimensional perspective – women or young people as problems or victims – towards a multi-dimensional perspective of gendered/youth-related identities and inequalities, and therefore to broaden the scope of equal opportunities policies. At the same time, mainstreaming runs the risk that specific and positive action is curtailed while the achieved standards blur and fade away.

A mainstreaming approach therefore by no means implies that specific policies for young people are replaced, but a youth mainstreaming approach can learn from gender mainstreaming in that successful implementation relies on a 'critical mass' of specialist expertise combined with political will (EC, 2004h; cf. Behning & Serrano Pascual, 2001; Woodward, 2001; Serrano Pascual & Mósesdóttir, 2003; Schmidt, 2005).

8.2 Policy Recommendations

In order to move forward this requires the achievement of a level of consistency between the policies and activities targeting young people, through a new level of cooperation between different policy levels, different disciplinary perspectives and between public policies and social partners, in particular youth organisations and regional and local authorities (EC, 2005a).

However, Integrated Transition Policies require a cross-sector perspective that starts on the macro-level and our analysis has demonstrated that inclusion and active labour market policies are most successful and innovative under certain conditions of macro-economic development and general policy contexts:

- *social policies* need to enable families to assist their children to achieve relevant skills and qualifications; the huge differences in social inequality across Europe and the clear relationship with early school leaving show that increased family and child related redistribution and decent levels of individual benefit pay off;
- *school systems* have to share accountability for the life chances of young people as well as for social disadvantage; although schools play a key role in (re)producing unequal starting positions among the young they often neither feel responsible nor are they open for cooperation with other actors from policy or the community in terms of making education more inclusive;
- *economic development* needs to include binding social criteria in terms of training and employment for socially disadvantaged young people; whilst it is obvious that dynamic economies provide favourable conditions for inclusion and ALMP's because they reduce the burden and increase financial resources, policies need to acknowledge that economic growth is a means for society at large and not an end in itself.

In more specific terms, five key success factors of inclusion and active labour market policies have been identified – funding, coordination of policies, institutional reflexivity, access and empowerment – on the basis of which policy recommendations can be derived. It is obvious

that in some of these areas recommendations can be specific (also in terms of addressing single countries) while others are more general in nature and need to be contextualised in terms of single policy cases.

Funding

Funding is a key factor that on the one hand allows for coverage and quality of policies (which includes qualified personnel as well as comprehensive evaluation) and on the other hand reflects the value that a society invests into the inclusion of young people. Sustainable inclusion measures require sufficient funding to cover all those who need support in their transitions from school to work as well as to provide quality services in terms of sufficient trained staff, accessible premises and allowances as positive incentives. This includes safety net policies and guaranteed access to benefits as a means to provide young people with citizenship status even when still in the transition to employment and full adulthood. One coarse financial indicator is expenditure on education and ALMP's expressed as percentage of Gross Domestic Product (although expenditure on ALMP's may also reflect different levels of unemployment). Analysis highlights that only one-country, Denmark, scores high on both scales while Finland and Slovenia also display above-average expenditure in terms of education and this is reflected in low early school leaving rates. The main message when trying to learn from each other is that countries with high expenditure rates are far more flexible in terms of offering a variety of measures.

1) Education expenditure: Sufficient funding is needed to mainstream inclusive education policies and education allowances whilst expanding relevant training routes. Analysis suggests that starting from a level of **6% of GDP** expenditure on education starts to make a difference:

- Austria, UK and especially Poland and Portugal are close to this threshold if continuing their efforts to increase expenditure;
- Italy, Slovakia and Spain need to make more effort which includes the political will to decide on a significant increase in expenditure;
- Greece has constantly increased the level of expenditure whilst still being far from a critical threshold;
- Bulgaria and Romania both need to consolidate expenditure that has fluctuated while a significant increase is required. In addition to reaching a critical threshold in percent of GDP additional external funding may be needed due to the low level of GDP.

2) ALMP expenditure should clearly correspond with the level of unemployment and adapted to local and regional context. Starting from an EU average of around 1% of GDP countries with unemployment at or above the EU average, combined with below-average expenditure in particular need to increase their efforts.

- This applies to Bulgaria, Greece, Italy, Poland, Romania, Slovakia and Spain; while for Finland, Portugal, and Slovenia this applies to a limited extent;
- In the UK both ALMP expenditure and youth unemployment are low; the high rate of inactive young people may require additional investment in diversifying ALMP;

- In general, young people need to profit from ALMP expenditure in relation to their proportion of all-age unemployment in order to achieve a reliable social infrastructure for the inclusion of disadvantaged young people.
- Statistical information on ALMP expenditure and participation by age group needs to be improved.

3) EU-policies, especially ESF and EQUAL initiatives need to consider policy measures for young people at least in relation to their proportion of all-age unemployment

Access

Inclusion and active labour market policies are only effective if they actually reach their target groups. In particular, immigrant and ethnic minority youth as well as young women are often under-represented in measures – or they profit less in terms of meaningful outcomes. Access relates to the quantitative and qualitative aspects of inclusion and active labour market policies such as policy coverage (and therefore funding), de-centralisation and low thresholds of entrance, information through reliable communication networks, unconditional access and flexible conditions of attendance. The persistent phenomenon of status zer0 suggests that limitations are not only structural and administrative but also relate to a lack of user value of measures.

4) Increase coverage and decentralisation of policies: inclusion and active labour market policies need to be implemented through a reliable infrastructure so that every individual young person has guaranteed access to personal support:

- In particular Greece and Italy but also Bulgaria and Romania and to some extent Poland and Spain have to increase the coverage of Public Employment Services (yet without neglecting quality);
- Counselling and personal support needs to be available and accessible for every pupil and student in compulsory and post-compulsory education. This requires increased numbers and professionalism of the support structures in all countries except Denmark, Finland and Slovenia. In Greece and UK already implemented policies need to be consolidated and open to all young people;
- In Bulgaria, Greece, Romania and Slovakia the prevalence of small-scale measures leads to insufficient and unequal access; successful pilots need to be broadened and mainstreamed.
- General measures need to be decentralised to provide access to youth in both rural and deprived urban neighbourhoods.

5) Access of immigrant and ethnic minority youth needs to be enhanced by removing barriers, increasing opportunities and integrating flexible support in mainstream education, training and ALMP while inequalities regarding the outcomes of policies need to be analysed and reduced.

- With regard to immigrant youth this applies especially in the case of Austria and Denmark but increasingly also in Italy and Spain;
- In terms of ethnic minority youth this applies in particular to Bulgaria, Greece, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia and the UK.
- **Anti-discrimination policies** need to be operationalised in a way that individual young people as well as other actors (e.g. youth organisations) can apply them easily to claim access to inclusion and active labour market policies.

6) Bridges of transition progress need to be built between single stages of school-to-work transitions and between single measures allowing for biographical progression rather than stagnation through 'revolving door' effects. Bridges of transition progress require:

- connectivity of measures in the framework of reliable transition networks
- accreditation of transition steps facilitated by national qualification systems.

7) Reduce stigmatisation: any procedures which are experienced by young people as humiliating and as lowering their social status in the eyes of employers, institutional actors, peers and families need to be removed. This means:

- to increase flexible support for all rather than organise access according to an assessment of failure and deficit;
- to locate support within regular education, training and the transition to work rather than segregation into specialised institutions;
- to prioritise rewarding incentives rather than adopting punitive approaches (such as sanctions in 'workfare' schemes, in particular New Deal, UK, but also Slovakia).

Coordination of policies

Integrated Transition Policies implies that the coordination of policies plays a crucial role. On the one hand, the complexity of constellations of disadvantage – not only in the case of multiple disadvantage – requires multi-disciplinary and integrated services. On the other hand social integration needs to be understood and addressed in a holistic way embracing issues of both of systemic and subjective relevance. Given the constant under-funding of youth and social inclusion policies aspects of rationalising resources need to be clearly subordinate in this respect. The successful coordination of policies is required and one that goes beyond a partnership rhetoric:

8) Person-centred rather than institutional networks: Coordination has to start from the individual's perspective and needs rather than from the institutional perspective; networking and partnership are means rather than aims in themselves. Partnerships therefore need to be understood as creating networks of opportunities starting from individual counselling based upon trusting relationships and building bridges and access to meaningful learning and working with mentors and/or trusted guides. National and EU-policies (like EQUAL) based on partnership approaches need to strengthen the role of individuals as actors within such networks.

9) Flexibility and connectivity: Coordination of policies requires an increased degree of flexibility on the side of policies as well as of institutions, companies and organisations.

10) Involving State, Market and Civil Society …: Actors representing the different aspects of social inclusion and school-to-work transitions need to be involved in the implementation and delivery of practice. This requires that respective partners also show active interest and willing to make potential contributions. In specific terms, this applies to:

- companies offering training, placements and jobs
- employers associations mediating economic development and training needs
- trade unions engaging in finding solutions for inclusive youth labour markets

- youth organisations in giving young people a voice and providing non-formal learning
- social economy offering jobs in a safe environment
- social policy oriented NGOs providing socially embedded services and counselling.

11) … and young people: Individuals need to be seen as active partners rather than the addresses of networks and partnerships. This means that young people have rights to choose among persons and options within a local network. And this implies status and possibilities of membership and influence – or active participation.

12) Balancing top-down and bottom-up approaches: Rather than imposing partnership as a condition of funding for private and non-governmental bodies, public actors should be legally obliged to involve and enable private and non-governmental organisations. Reliable mechanisms and procedures need to be implemented to create trust and a culture of dialogue among partners.

Reflexivity

The factors of access and coordination have shown that flexible policy approaches are needed in order to provide meaningful support, as standardised approaches to counselling, education, training and employment assistance do not necessarily fit all constellations of disadvantage. Therefore mechanisms of institutional reflexivity should be inbuilt within policies that allow for the assessment of policy effects in the individual case as quickly as possible – including 'soft' as well as unintended side effects. The requirement of reflexivity relates firstly to individual needs, processes and outcomes of measures; contextual factors such as the economy and labour market, community and other actors of the transition system; to internal processes of organisations, companies and institutions; and, finally, to processes of mutual learning on the local, national, and international level. This means that communication and interaction, evaluation, and research are the key the mechanisms of reflexivity.

13) Symmetric communication between institutions/professionals and young people: Symmetric situations in counselling and guidance processes need to be created and secured by young people acquiring negotiation rights, whereby young people feel comfortable in expressing feedback in terms of their subjective perspective on jobs, education and training offers rather than adopting strategic behaviour (and dropping out afterwards).

14) Communication within partnerships and the public sphere: involvement of local and regional stake-holders among which young people themselves should be prominently placed is a key requirement in order to make their needs and conflicts transparent and to keep policies on track.

15) Evaluation: Rather than monitoring the turnover of policies, evaluation needs to assess processes and different levels of outcomes in a multi-dimensional perspective by:

- applying qualitative and quantitative methods;
- integrating evaluation into everyday practice by means of action research and self-evaluation;
- by assessing long-term effects through follow-up mechanisms.

16) Research needs to be developed in respect of:
- the relevance of inclusion and active labour market policies to individuals lives in relation to other biographical processes and life events;
- the relationship between single policy measures, other policies and the overall transition regime; this is especially important in terms of assessing the effects of ALMP;
- national and European surveys need to be improved to include longitudinal research, especially by linking or integrating labour force surveys with Household Panels or cohort studies;

Empowerment

It is counterproductive to address youth disadvantage in a one-dimensional way although this is tempting as the individual level is easier to address through policies. Policies need to start from an assessment that relates the constellations of disadvantage that result from socio-economic, institutional and individual factors and combine individual development by providing resources and structural opportunities. Policies blaming the individual for being in a disadvantaged situation risk undermining motivation, a central resource that the labour market integration of all young people depends upon. Although motivation is clearly an individual characteristic, it is strongly dependent on the structural resources and opportunities available. Empowerment, in the sense we use the concept, is best understood as an approach that centres around the motivation of individuals, in this case the motivation of young people, to actively engage in their transitions. Motivation requires an initial identification with a goal and then a feeling of control over reaching this goal; therefore it is related to both subjective and structural factors. Active participation within inclusion and active labour market policies in this respect is a paraphrase of empowerment. Empowerment therefore cannot be restricted to including young people in simply any kind of measure, but implies providing them with the rights and resources that enable them to take personal responsibility for their transitions.

17) Starting from strengths instead of deficits: An empowerment perspective is interested in enhancing agency rather than adapting young people to existing jobs or schemes. Policy design and service delivery must start from young people's strengths instead of focusing on deficits and problems.

18) Social integration or labour market integration? Activation policies need to be checked against more holistic success criteria: do they enable a person to be an actor of their own trajectory and mobilise him/herself, personal development and integrity as a priority, aim to achieve social rather than labour market integration. Analysis suggests that not all forms of activation are equally adequate in this respect:
- Countries with supportive activation policies need to assure achieved citizenship status, options for choice and negotiation rights of young people (Denmark and Finland);
- In particular countries with limited and workfare activation policies need to reflect if and where they disregard, dis-empower and undermine the motivation of young people (Austria, Poland, Portugal, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain and UK);

- Countries with no real basis for activation need to create policy structures that effectively address young people and apply a holistic social integration approach (Greece and Italy; partly also Bulgaria and Romania).

19) Motivation through participation: Within specific policy measures participation can enhance intrinsic motivation if connected with the following aspects:

- trust towards institutions and professionals through confidentiality, advocacy and continuity;
- spaces for self-experimentation and responsibility;
- rights and power in decision-making;
- possibilities of choice whether to participate and how to participate;
- open outcomes of counselling;
- access to resources.

8.3 European perspectives

This Thematic Study has primarily dealt with national policies, however it has done so within in a European perspective through a comparative assessment of constellations of disadvantage and policy mixes and it is embedded in a European policy process. Whilst the most relevant European policy is the Social Inclusion Process through the framework of which the study was commissioned, however the European Pact for Youth is also important, as it is concerned with the inclusion of vulnerable groups and its objectives correspond to what we have referred to as youth mainstreaming. Our findings and recommendations are also relevant in terms of the European Employment Strategy and the White Paper process for youth policy; as well as the increased coordination within the fields of education, training and lifelong learning. There are a number of ways in which the European Commission can enhance this process: the Open Method of Coordination, through specific EU programmes (Leonardo da Vinci, Youth Action) and through the structural funds (especially ESF and EQUAL). In fact, in many countries these EU-programmes play a major role in establishing transition policies for disadvantaged young people. Therefore, European policies can influence both the reflexivity and the specific implementation of inclusion and active labour market policies, and innovations in education and training and participatory youth policies.

19) Youth mainstreaming on the European level: The European Youth Pact can have considerable impact if successful in improving the coordination between the European Employment Strategy, the Social Inclusion Process, the Education and Training and Lifelong Learning Strategy and the White Paper process on Youth. This will require:

- rebalanced priorities according to a cross-sector understanding of youth policy as outlined in the White Paper;
- to open the Employment Strategy for a youth perspective based on a holistic understanding of youth which extends to funding guidelines and monitoring criteria of the European Social Fund (ESF) and related programmes (especially EQUAL); to make access of normally under-represented

categories of young people, especially immigrant and ethnic minority youth a hard criteria of funding;
- to include young people and youth organisations both in the design and the evaluation of European policies aimed at young people;
- to include 'hard' policy issues such as education, training, welfare and labour market into the White Paper Process

20) Increase reflexivity through mutual learning: European policies influence national policies through management by objectives but also through creating a space for exchange. These activities could be enhanced by:
- organising mutual learning not only in terms of exhibiting policies but also through a processes of dialogue for 'importing' ideas and experiences related to the policy needs of member states:
- involving local actors and non-statutory actors in mutual learning to avoid top-down policy making as an effect of mutual learning;
- establish a constant monitoring and analysis institution to make sure that a youth perspective is maintained in other fields of policy-making ("European Youth Observatory").

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