STRATEGIC TRANSITIONS FOR YOUTH LABOUR IN EUROPE

D 10.3 - Balancing Flexibility and Security in Europe: the Impact on Young People's Insecurity and Subjective Well-being

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i) to 'advance the knowledge base that underpins the formulation and implementation of relevant policies in Europe with the aim of enhancing the employment of young people and their transition to economic and social independence', and

ii) to engage with 'relevant communities, stakeholders and practitioners in the research with a view to supporting employment policies in Europe.' Contributions to a dialogue about these results can be made through the project website www.style-research.eu, or by following us on Twitter @STYLEEU.

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Executive Summary

This paper examines the relationship between so-called “flexicurity” systems and outcomes on insecurity and well-being for young people (15-34 years) in Europe during the great recession. A key tenet of this approach is that greater flexibility of labour supply is underpinned by a welfare system providing income support for the unemployed and active labour market policies that ease transitions back to employment. In principle increased employability reduces the costs of job movement for individuals, so that longer-term employment stability is traded for short-term job instability. However, there is a risk that young people tend to experience greater job insecurity – objectively and subjectively – without the benefit of income security or employment security.

We focus on objective and subjective insecurity and well-being drawing on data from the work, family and well-being modules in rounds 2 (2004) and 5 (2010) of the European Social Survey (ESS). The study asks how flexibility, security and welfare state configurations interact to influence overall levels of objective security (for example fixed-term contracts, unemployment), subjective job and employment security (employability) among various groups of young people. Secondly, using multi-level models, we test if flexibility-security arrangements as captured by institutions such as financial supports for unemployed youth, Active Labour Market Policy (ALMP) spending, access to training and the regulation of employment moderate the effect of unemployment and insecurity on the well-being of young people.

Key words:

wellbeing; insecurity; flexibility

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Abbreviations

ALMP	Active Labour Market Policies
EPL	Employment Protection Legislation
ESS	European Social Survey
ICTWSS	Institutional Characteristics of Trade Unions, Wage Setting, State Intervention and Social Pacts
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
LFS	Labour Force Survey
MLM	Multi-Level Model
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
PLMP	Passive Labour Market Policies
WHO	World Health Organisation

1. Introduction

The impact of labour market regulation on overall performance and the integration of labour market participants has been a preoccupation of policy makers and researcher's alike for many years (Freeman 2005; OECD 1994; 2006; Addison et al. 2015). A key concern has been balancing the security needs of participants with pressures for flexibility driven by volatile product markets, international competition and greater uncertainty. These debates and concerns have driven policy making in Europe within the framework of the European Employment Strategy (1999-2010) and the subsequent Europe 2020 strategy (2010-onwards). However, there is evidence that policy makers have tended to concentrate on promoting flexibility with the security needs of participants given less attention (Burroni and Keune 2011). Young people are at particular risk of falling between the promotion of greater labour market flexibility and the limited levels of security on offer (Madsen et al. 2013). As new entrants to the labour market they are less likely to have established adequate contribution histories and are also in a weaker position vis-à-vis insiders with permanent positions and longer tenures. There is a significant body of literature which demonstrates that both insecure work and insecurities of not having work can have negative effects on psychological well-being and physical health, including for young people (Bell and Blanchflower 2011).

The promotion of so-called flexicurity policies by certain European member states – namely Denmark and the Netherlands – and subsequently by the European Commission was seen as an attempt to redress the imbalance of flexibility and security policies (Wilthagen and Tros 2004; EC 2007). Although young people were not central to the drive to promote flexicurity policy they had much to gain from addressing – at least in principle – the gap between insiders and outsiders and enhancing security for those most likely to experience precarious labour market transitions. The concept, and application in lodestar countries, relied heavily on the combination of flexibility of contracts and labour market institutions that provided the security and support for rapid and well-matched re-entry to employment – namely active labour market policies (ALMP) and income security measures. However, when applied across the EU there was a heavy focus on the flexibility measures with less attention to the security part of the portmanteau (see Eamets et al. 2015). As new entrants to the labour market young people are more likely to experience the accumulation of the numerical flexibility elements (Madsen et al. 2013). Furthermore the crisis put the concept under even greater pressure and exposed the weaknesses identified by earlier authors (Heyes 2011; Ibsen 2011). Perhaps as a result of this relatively poor performance but also reflecting considerable internal and external change at the EU policy making level (Smith and Villa 2012) the concept has been quietly dropped from the discourse of many policy makers (Smith and Villa 2013). Nevertheless the tension between these demands for flexibility and security remain central to the subjective and objective experience of labour market participants and their overall wellbeing, particularly young people as more marginal participants (Eamets et al. 2015).

It is therefore important to examine how different so-called "flexicurity systems" influence the level of subjective insecurity experienced by young people since these were the policy frameworks within which most European economies entered the 2008 crisis. The segmentation of young people into precarious labour market segments places them at greater exposure to non-standard contracts

shown to increase feelings of subjective insecurity (Scherer 2009) while unemployment places young people, often with limited access to income security measures (Madsen et al. 2013; Leschke 2013), at further risk of subjective insecurity. However, the perception of insecurity will be influenced by the institutional context in which young people experience precarious contracts and joblessness. Thus we suggest that it is important to examine how flexicurity arrangements were able to moderate the effect of unemployment and insecurity on subjective well-being among young people during the crisis.

In particular we explore how different flexibility and security policies influence the level of subjective insecurity experienced by young people and the degree of segmentation in perceived security. We further consider how flexibility and security policies arrangements moderate the effect of unemployment and insecurity on well-being among young people. Finally we analyse differences in the impact on well-being across countries/regime and explore whether variations in financial security or job prospects explain observed variations. We use data from the European Social Survey (2004, 2010) since this source contains measures of perceived insecurity, contract status, and outcome measures such as life satisfaction. We are also able to take advantage of world health organisation (WHO) measures of well-being in order to assess the general mental well-being in relation to other labour market participants within the same institutional setting or “flexicurity system”.

This paper is structured around five sections. After this introduction, section 2 explores the literature around subjective measures of insecurity and well-being of the unemployed and those working on precarious contracts, with a particular focus on the body of research relating to young people and the institutional arrangements for flexibility and security. The third section provides details of the two waves of the European Social Survey from 2004 and 2010 and the measures we employ to analyse the situation of young people across European member states. Section 4 presents both descriptive results and multi-level models for the subjective insecurity and well-being of young people in relation to adults. Finally the fifth section pulls together the results of our analysis and draws out the implications for research and policy in relation to young people and labour market policies that seek to balance flexibility and security.

2. Literature

There is a significant body of research which demonstrates the consequences of insecure labour market statuses on physical and psychological health and well-being. These studies can be broadly grouped around those that focus on unemployment (for example Bell and Blanchflower 2010) and those that focus on precarious contractual arrangements (for example Gash et al. 2007). However, the analysis of the impact of these statuses on young people is less developed and in particular the situation of young people across institutional settings.

There is a long and rich history of research on the link between unemployment and mental well-being dating back to the 1930s. This has been largely led by sociologists and psychologists although economists have demonstrated more of an interest in recent decades (see Flatau et al. 2000 for history). The literature on the psychological effects of unemployment supports the negative consequences of job loss on psychological well-being. A number of meta-analyses of the psychological literature confirm these findings but also a strong positive boost to well-being upon re-entering employment (for example McKee-Ryan et al. 2005; Paul and Moser 2009). McKee-Ryan et al.'s work draws upon more than a hundred other studies to confirm the negative impact upon mental health for the unemployed, particularly the long term unemployed with spells of 6 months or more.

The negative effects of unemployment extend beyond the pecuniary impact of being without work. Indeed there is some evidence to suggest that the economic situation of being without work has a weaker impact upon wellbeing than the actual status of being unemployed (Ettner 1996; Latif 2010) though the relative influence of economic and non-economic processes is still debated (Nordenmark and Strandh 1999). Economists such as Theodossiou (1998) demonstrate the negative consequences of unemployment on a number of indicators, in this case using the UK panel data although similar results are also found in USA (Ettner 1996; Blanchflower and Oswald 2004), Germany (Winkelmann and Winkelmann 1998), Canada (Latif 2010) and elsewhere (Bjorklund 1985; Junankar and Kapuscinski 1992; Clark and Oswald 1994; Korpi 1997).

Many of the studies observe differences in the strength of the relationship between unemployment and well-being based on the characteristics of the unemployed person, such as gender, social class, age and family status (Nordenmark and Strandh, 1999). A number of studies have found that the psychological impact of unemployment is greatest for prime age workers while younger workers and those approaching retirement age suffer less on a range of well-being measures (Theodossiou,1998, Latif 2010) though this finding is not universal (see McKee-Ryan et al 2005 for a review). Some have attributed the weaker psychological impact of unemployment among young people to lower employment commitment (Jackson et al. 1983; Carle, 1987) while alternative explanations relate to the greater financial and family commitments of prime-age workers (Jackson and Warr 1984). However, according to theories on labour market segmentation (Döringer and Piore 1971) young people are often categorised among outsiders on the labour market compared to older more established workers benefitting from the employment protection associated with insider status. Thus perceived lower commitment to employment may be hard to disentangle from institutional arrangements that act to exclude or limit access to secure positions for younger workers.

The detrimental effects of insecurity in employment on well-being are found to be of a similar order as the impact of unemployment (Burchell 1999; Dekker and Schaufeli, 1995). For example Gash et al.'s (2007) study of the health effect of different exits from unemployment in Germany and Spain found that those who obtained a temporary contract experienced much lower health gains. Insecurity also has implications for other aspects of quality of life, for example, Scherer (2009) shows that fixed-term contracts, and the job insecurity associated with them, exacerbate work-life conflict, economic pressure and low life satisfaction. Similarly delayed family formation and fertility decisions can be linked to economic insecurity and insecure contracts (Kohler and Kohler 2002).

The potential effects of youth unemployment and insecurity on well-being may not be limited to current experiences. A scarring effect of past unemployment (in the previous five years) on current well-being was found by Clarke et al (2001) while Bell and Blanchflower (2011) find that spells of unemployment in the early career were associated with lower life satisfaction, poorer health status and reduced job satisfaction more than 20 years later. For young people there is also the possibility that employment insecurity will influence fertility decisions and family formation (Scherer, 2007; Gonzalez and Jurado-Guerrero 2006, Blossfeld et al. 2005; Kohler et al. 2002) with mixed empirical support. These findings suggest that the cost of the current recession may continue to be felt many years in the future. At a macro level Bell and Blanchflower (2011) also show that the overall levels of happiness among young people fall as aggregate levels of unemployment rise, so the effects are not limited to those currently unemployed.

The relationship between unemployment, job insecurity and well-being, is also likely to be influenced by the social structure in which they occur. Most studies show that the experience of unemployment is not independent of the institutional setting in which labour market participants find themselves, although not all (see McKee-Ryan et al. 2005). Studies have often used the generosity of unemployment benefits as a measure of the institutional environment. For example Paul and Moser's (2009) meta-analysis of over 200 studies also confirms that the negative effects of unemployment on mental health are lower where there is unemployment protection, stronger economic development and lower level of income inequality. However, it is important to recognise that the constellation of institutional factors impacting upon the unemployed are more varied and complex.

In the case of unemployment there is a growing body of research that investigates whether the prevailing unemployment rate or economic situation influences individual experiences. One hypothesis is that 'unemployment hurts less when there is more of it about' (Clark 2003). One possible mechanism is that in periods or regions of high unemployment individuals reduce their expectations, this hypothesis reflects a broader theory that it is an individual's relative rather than absolute position that matters most for subjective well-being (Clarke and Oswald, 1996). High unemployment may also reduce the individual stigma of being jobless leading to better (or at least less severe) psychological consequences. Some researchers have suggested that high unemployment may lead to a devaluing of work (lower work commitment) and the formation of alternative sources of identity, thus reducing the links between unemployment, insecurity and well-being (for example Clark 2003). Alternatively it might be argued that high unemployment will aggravate distress because it depletes the level of support in wider social networks and because the perceived opportunity to escape current circumstances is reduced (see Gallie and Russell 1998).

To date the empirical results on the effects of the unemployment level on the well-being of the unemployed are mixed. Clark (2003) found that the well-being of the unemployed was higher when the regional unemployment rate was higher. However, Oesch and Lipps (2013) find no evidence in panel data from Germany (1984-–2009) or Switzerland (2000-–2009) that high regional unemployment mitigates the effects of unemployment on life satisfaction. Russell et al. (2013) found that high unemployment rates were not associated with a reduction in the life satisfaction deficit associated with unemployment.

When we extend the analysis to the impact of insecure contracts we need a more comprehensive view of the institutional arrangements impacting upon the labour market. Here policies towards flexibility and security can provide a useful framework with which to analyse the impact of precariousness and joblessness on well-being. As outlined above, the concept of flexicurity has received considerable criticism but one advantage is that it does emphasise the institutional interlinkages of policy measures designed to promote a dynamic labour market and those providing security for participants on insecure trajectories (Eamet et al. 2015). Indeed policy documents on flexicurity emphasise the link between institutional arrangements around employment protection, unemployment compensation and active labour market policies (EC 2007) and these will likely influence the relationship between insecurity, unemployment and well-being. In principle, flexicurity should protect individuals due to the cushioning effects of income supports, greater access to training and greater probability of re-employment (Wilthagen and Tros 2004).

These flexibility-security arrangements have been judged to assist more secure transitions in countries that have been seen as models that successfully balance flexibility-security tensions (Wilthagen and Tros 2004). In fact, even though there is evidence that elsewhere policy makers have over-emphasised external flexibility and employability (for example in Poland or Estonia see Burroni and Keune 2011) the balance of these measures – albeit often unequal - provides a useful means to group countries and their policies. Such an approach can bring together policy components from the welfare regimes literature (for example Esping Andersen 1990; Ferrera 1996) and those focusing more on the labour market traditions (for example Boeri 2011). Previously the European Commission (2006) attempted a categorisation of 22 flexicurity regimes in the EU in order to identify five categories or pathways to flexicurity: continental (Austria, Belgium, Germany and France), Nordic (Denmark, Finland, Sweden and the Netherlands), Mediterranean (Italy, Spain and Portugal), Liberal (the UK and Ireland) and CEE countries (Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Lithuania, Poland, Slovakia, Slovenia and Greece). These categorisations can be problematic: for example, the inclusion of Greece with the CEE countries or the treatment of all CEE countries as rather homogeneous. Nevertheless there is quite a lot of consistency between various authors using these approaches in their identification of similar arrangements in for Nordic, Continental, Mediterranean (usually including Greece), Anglo and CEE groupings (for example Eamets et al. 2015; Stovicek and Turrini 2012; Iacaovou 2010; Hemerijick 2013).

The role of these institutions in shaping the extent of subjective insecurity has received greater attention in recent years with the availability of large cross-national data-sets (for example Chung and van Oorshot, 2011; Erlinghagan, 2008). These two studies suggest that while institutional factors such as employment protection levels and social security spending were correlated with levels of subjective insecurity such factors were less important than individual/job characteristics and market conditions. The results of these institutional approaches are not consistent and require further

development. Chung and van Oorshot (2011) also found that subjective insecurity was associated with social security spending, employment protection levels. However, Erlinghagan (2008) found no effect of social security expenditure or degree of dismissal protection on perceived insecurity. Similarly Esser and Olsen (2012) found that there was no effect from employment protection legislation or unemployment benefit but that union density was associated with reduced subjective insecurity. Similarly other studies have not necessarily agreed on the role of macro influences such as GDP (Green 2009; Erlinghagan 2008) whereas the impact of the unemployment level seems to be more consistent (Green 2009; Gash and Inanc, 2013; Esser and Olsen 2012).

Burchell (2009) argues that an implicit assumption of 'flexicurity' is that job insecurity is no longer such a source of anxiety, however he found that the correlation between insecurity and stress were no lower in countries seen as exemplars of the flexicurity system. Burchell argues that flexicurity does not ameliorate non-financial costs of unemployment such as the loss of esteem/status, social involvement, and greater uncertainty.

Other studies such as Paul and Moser (2009) consider the "culture" of the country as a factor in determining the psychological impact of unemployment. While cultural studies have been subject to considerable criticism (Smith 2002), and we focus on institutional settings as a measure of the context for job loss and insecurity, there is undoubtedly a link between the cultural and institutional environment (Sorge 1995). Although the measurement of so-called cultural differences is contentious it is hard to deny a reciprocal link between institutional structures and social norms that shape the behaviour of labour market participants (Pfau-effinger 1998). Equally the conceptualisation of youth is subject to the influence of social structures and norms as well as institutional arrangements guiding the transition to adulthood. Across the EU there is a wide variation in the age when young people pass key steps of the transition to adulthood, for example typical ages when people leave the family home (Iacaovou 2010).

Drawing upon these studies we aim to extend the analyses of authors such as Burchell in order to examine age differences and to apply additional institutional and macro indicators. We examine how insecurity and unemployment affect the well-being of young people across Europe.

3. Methods, Concepts and Measurement

We use the ESS data rounds 2004 and 2010. These two rounds contained special modules on work, family and well-being and include a wider range of variables relating to job conditions, including perceived security and employability and to subjective well-being. We limit our sample to the countries that are available in both waves (N=20) (Belgium, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, United Kingdom). Details on the sample can be found in annex 1. Pooling the 2004 and 2010 data allows us to include 2 observations per country for the macro effects in the multivariate models. The macro institutional variables are listed by country and year in annex 2.

Our descriptive analysis will first compare subjective insecurity experienced by young people and the degree of segmentation – particularly between young and older workers – in perceived security across different flexicurity regimes. We use both subjective (in)security measures (percentage who believes that job is insecure, how easy to get similar or better job) and objective measures (type of contract). In the second part of our analysis we ask whether flexicurity arrangements moderate the effect of unemployment and insecurity on well-being among young people and if these moderating effects are better accounted for by variation in financial security, or through greater job prospects. Our dependent variable for this part of the analysis is life-satisfaction on a 10-point scale (from 0 extremely dissatisfied to 10 extremely satisfied). In order to test the stability of our results, we also run the models on an alternative well-being variable the construction of which follows the WHO5 definition. Our analysis shows that very little of the variance in the WHO wellbeing measure occurs at the country level, though we also find that relationship between wellbeing and unemployment varies significantly across the countries. Given the greater societal level variance in life satisfaction and its wide usage in the literature (Diener and Suh; Clark 1996; Wulfgramm 2014; Russell et al. 2013) we adopt this measure for the analysis presented (models based on the alternative indicator are available from the authors). Our research question calls for a multi-level model setting which will allow us to introduce both individual level and institutional level variables capturing the flexicurity arrangements.

On the individual level, our main interest lies in the impact of employment stability on well-being. We expect that young persons who were currently employed and have not experienced unemployment during the previous five years have higher well-being than who are currently unemployment and those who have recently experienced unemployment. Based on the previous literature we include a range of control variables that are found to influence subjective well-being. We control for gender, self-defined health status, age, type of household (using the household grid we identify whether the respondent is living with either or both parents, we also identify whether the respondent is living with a partner, and if not whether the respondent was previously married), children of the respondent aged under 18 in the household, social support, highest education level and financial hardship. The measure of financial hardship included in the models comes from a question on how the respondent's household is managing on their current income: those who are finding it difficult or very difficult to cope are compared to the rest of the population.

In order to tackle our research question on the moderating effect of flexicurity arrangements on well-being, we include a range of institutional and macro variables in our model (annex 2). We are particularly interested in the potentially different effects of institutions granting financial security compared to those increasing employment prospects either directly through participation in training or ALMP and thereby targeting employment/employability security or more indirectly by impacting on job security (see Table 1). The choice of institutions is inspired by the flexicurity literature (e.g. Wilthagen Tros 2004; Jørgensen and Madsen 2007; Leschke/Schmid/Griga 2007) which maintains that the right combination of different forms of flexibility and security will lead to better outcomes both with regard to employment prospects and beyond including individual well-being. Some approaches and particularly the ones based on the Danish model have stressed the importance of a combination of reliable unemployment benefits, participation in active labour market policies and life-long learning – the so-called Golden Triangle – (for example Madsen 2004) and some have added the importance of collective bargaining (Ibsen and Mailand 2010). The European Commission, on the other hand, emphasised the move from job security for so-called insiders to employment or employability security – particularly in the pre-crisis period (e.g. European Commission 2007; European Expert Group on Flexicurity 2007). The strong focus on the assumed negative role of employment protection legislation for regular jobs, in particular, has been criticised by trade unions and a number of researchers (for example Burroni and Keune 2011; Heyes 2011) particularly in light of the recent crisis experience where countries with more encompassing employment protection legislation have tended to shed less labour due to the widespread use of working time adjustment measures.

In a first step we include the different variables as outlined in table 1 separately into the model. Where possible we distinguish between institutions for youth and adults. Taking account of the small sample and using a stepwise approach, the final model contains only three institutional variables: change in total unemployment rate, EPL for regular contracts and ALMP spending per unemployed.

Table 1: Institutions and macro variables included in our models

Employment prospects		Financial security
Job security	Employment/Employability security	Income security
• EPL indicators separately for regular and temporary workers (OECD), • Share temporary employed for youth and total (LFS), • Perceived insecurity* (ESS),	• ALMP expenditure in % of GDP/unemployed (OECD) • Participant stocks in ALMP % of labour force (OECD) • Unemployment rate / change in unemployment , both for youth and total (LFS)	• PLMP expenditure in % of GDP/unemployed (OECD)
Collective bargaining coverage (ICTWSS); Trade union density (ICTWSS)		

*Note *employed who feel very insecure*

The EPL indicators, unemployment indicators and LMP expenditure items are standard variables usually included in papers testing the flexicurity framework (for example Burchell 2009, Chung and van Oorshot, 2011; see also section 2 above). There is widespread criticism with regard to the OECD EPL indicators including the fact that they take insufficient account of enforcement, the role of collective agreements and case law as well as exemptions for small firms for example (Addison and Teixeira 2003; Deakin et al 2014). This criticism has in parts been acknowledged and taken account of in more recent waves of the EPL (Venn 2009). More importantly, the evidence on their impact on employment is inconclusive at best (for example OECD 2004; ILO 2012, ch. 2) with several cross-

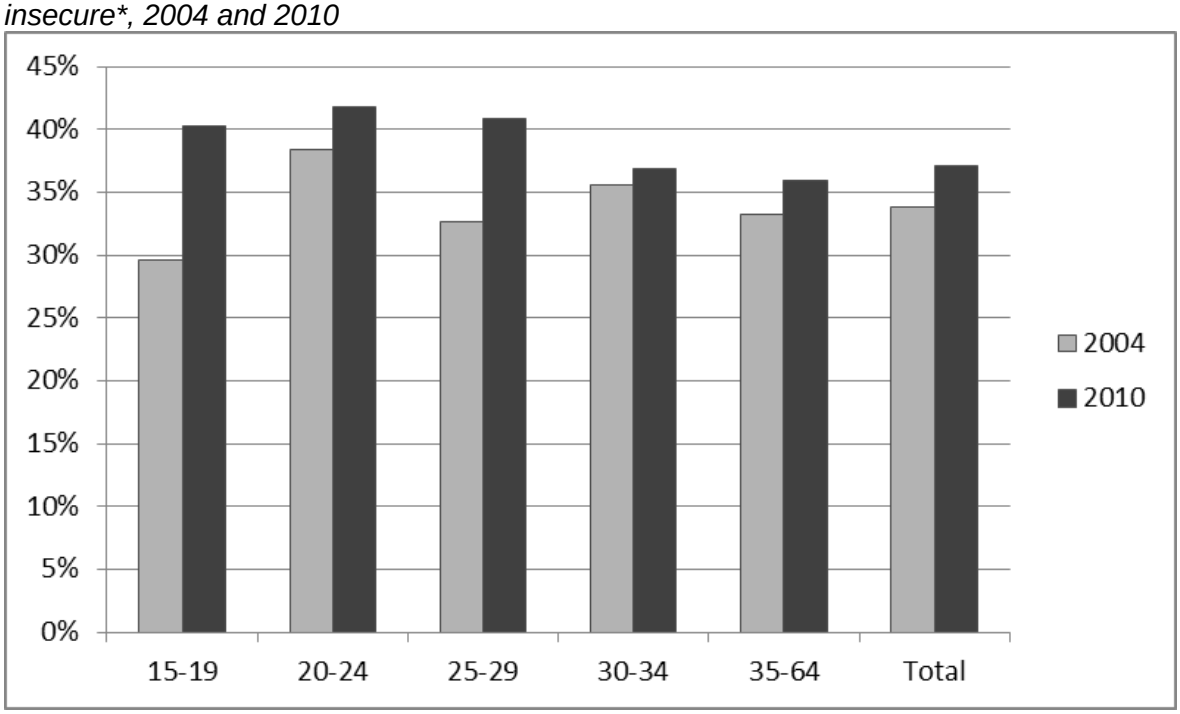
country studies not finding a robust impact of overall and decomposed EPL indicators on unemployment in multivariate settings (Avdagic and Salari 2013) including for disadvantaged labour market groups such as low skilled (Oesch 2010) or long-term unemployed (Heyes and Lewis 2015). We therefore test two alternative measures that capture the job security dimension: the share of temporary in total employment and perceived insecurity derived on the country level from the ESS data. Additionally, and also in line with the critics of EPL, we include collective bargaining coverage and trade union density in our models as contextual factors.

4. Descriptive and Multivariate Results

4.1 Descriptive Results

In the following we compare subjective insecurity experienced by young people and the degree of segmentation – particularly between young and older workers – in perceived security across different flexicurity regimes.[1] We use a range of complementary measures. Figure 1 illustrates that perceived insecurity (not at all or only a little true that a job is secure) is higher for youth up to 29 years with more than 40% who believe their job is insecure in 2010. Overall there is only a small difference between the age groups. With the crisis perceived insecurity seems to have increased among all age groups and in particular for the youngest youth group and the 25-29 age group.

Figure 1: Perceived Insecurity, average across 20 European countries: % who believe job is insecure, 2004 and 2010*



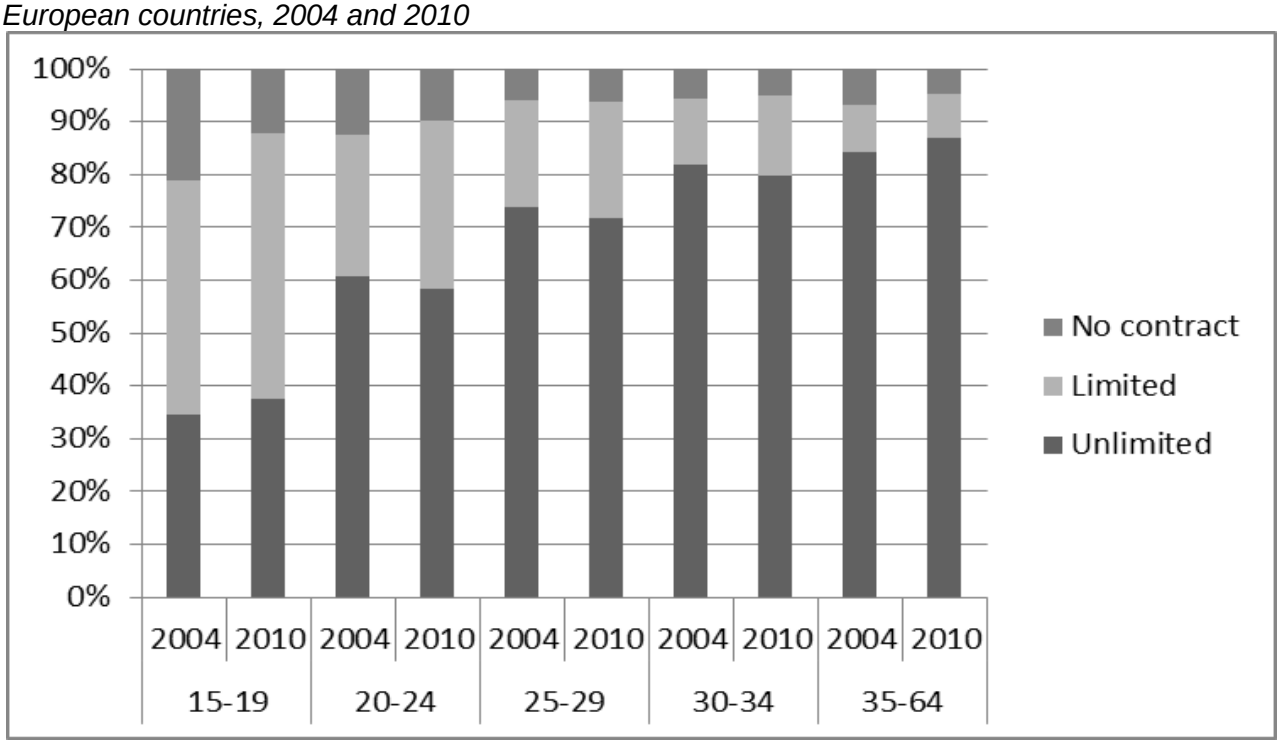
*Note: * not at all or only a little true that job is secure.*
Source: ESS data, own calculations. Students excluded.

Figure 2 uses an objective measure of insecurity – contract type. The share of temporary and no contracts is considerably higher among youth than adults and the younger the age the higher the share in temporary employment and employment without a contract. The youngest age group is by far most affected by non-permanent jobs with more than 60% of respondents reporting a non-permanent

[1] We use the standard flexicurity regimes derived from the welfare regime literature (Esping-Andersen 1990, Ferrera 1995) and applied in a range of flexicurity papers and thus distinguish between Nordic countries, including the Netherlands, Continental countries, Liberal countries, Eastern European and Southern countries.

contract or no contract. On average across 20 European countries there are only small differences between 2004 and 2010 with most notably the share of no contracts for the youngest youth group having increased. The comparison with subjective job security (Figure 1) which was distributed much more evenly across age groups shows that not all temporary jobs are associated with low job security. And it is in fact well known that in those countries that have a strong tradition of vocational training, namely Germany and Austria, many of the temporary jobs among youth are due to training contracts (LFS data, not shown). In fact, a main problem with this more objective indicator is that due to the stark differences in employment protection legislation the degree of security associated with permanent and temporary jobs varies widely across countries.

Figure 2: Contract Type Among those Currently Employed by Age Group, average across 20 European countries, 2004 and 2010



Note: weighted data, students excluded.
Source: ESS data, own calculations.

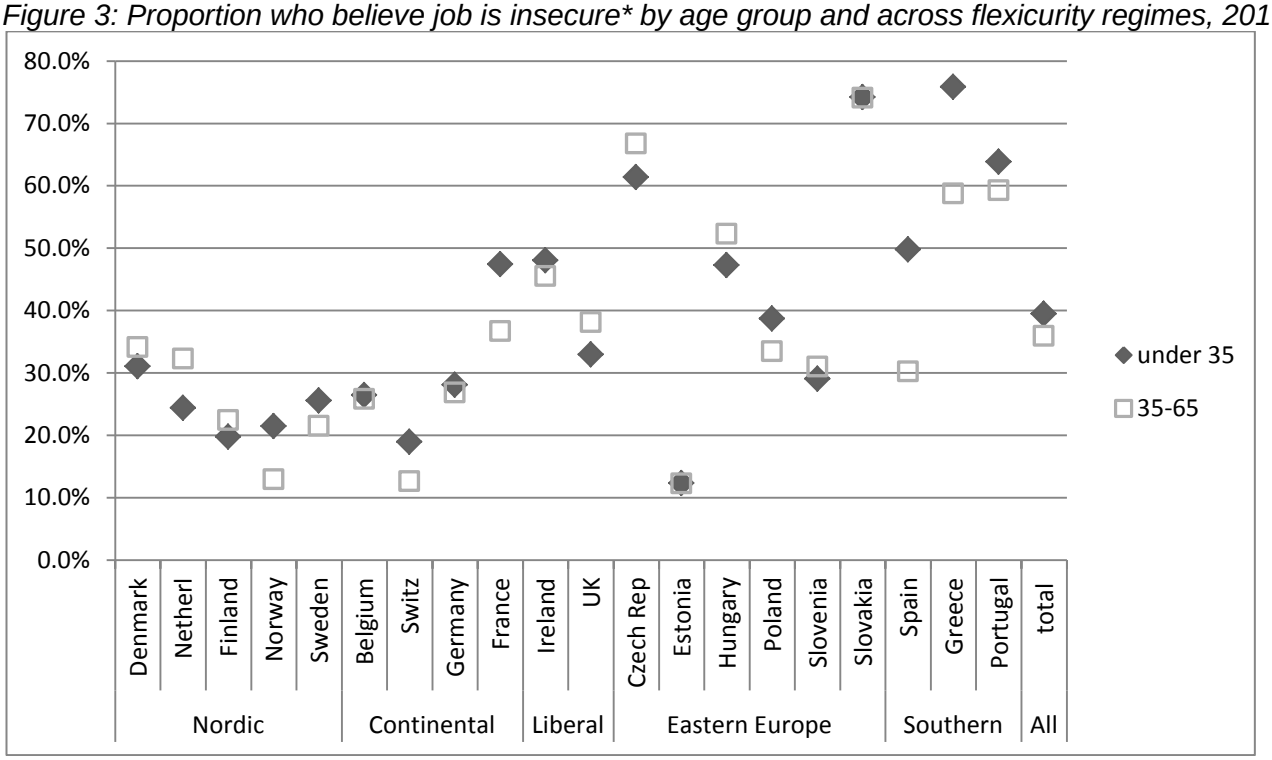
Figure 3 shows subjective insecurity separately for youth and adults and across flexicurity regimes for 2010[2]. First of all there is no clear division between adults and youth, in some countries youth are feeling more insecure, in particular Greece, Spain whereas in other countries, for example in the Netherlands, the UK and the Czech Republic adults are feeling somewhat more insecure. With few exceptions the differences are not very pronounced. As regards flexicurity regimes, Southern and Eastern European countries, the latter with a few exceptions, particularly Estonia, seem to have higher insecurity across both age groups than particular Nordic and continental countries with the exception of France.

The distribution of non-permanent contracts also shows some clustering by flexicurity regime (Figure 4), although this measure does not pick up the wide variation in conditions attached to the contracts in

[2] The 2004 patterns are very similar. For presentational reasons we focus on 2010 here.

different regimes. The differences in the contractual position of older and younger workers are smallest in the UK, Czech Republic, Hungary, Estonia and Slovakia, while in all remaining countries younger workers are much more likely to be insecure. The proportion of young people on non-permanent contracts is particularly high in Southern Europe, but also in Poland and Ireland.[3]

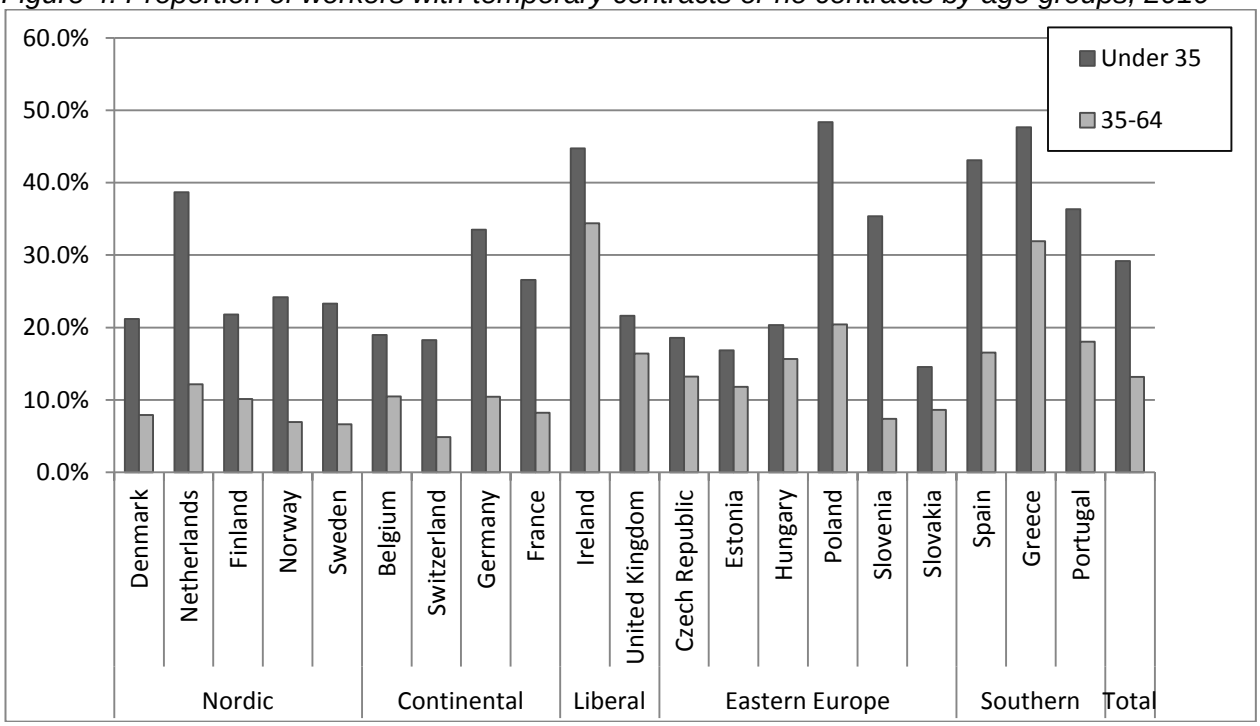
Figure 3: Proportion who believe job is insecure by age group and across flexicurity regimes, 2010*



*Note * not at all or only a little true that job is secure.*
Source: ESS data, own calculations.

[3] In Ireland an exceptionally high proportion (31%) of workers say they have no contract but a follow up question in round 5 suggested that in 61% of cases the respondent said that the job was viewed as permanent when they were appointed. In the UK an above average proportion of respondents also report having no contract (12%).

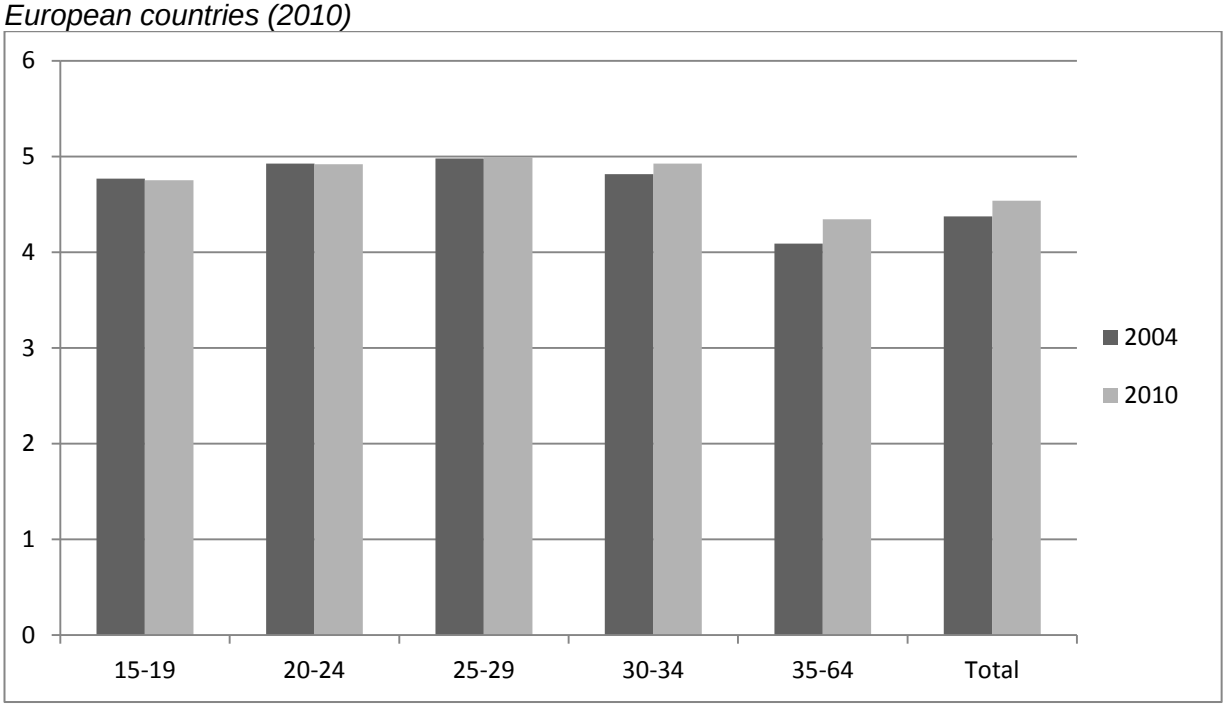
Figure 4: Proportion of workers with temporary contracts or no contracts by age groups, 2010



Source: ESS data 2010, own calculations. Currently employed excludes students and self employed.

We now look at a third measure of insecurity; namely the assessment (on a scale from 0-10) of how easy it is to get a similar or better job with another employer. This measure illustrates the complexity of the insecurity concept as for this more indirect measure on security – in fact, in the flexicurity terminology it could also be called perceived "employability" – youth is doing better than adults with the middle age group (20-29 years) having the most positive outlook on their employability. It's the older adults who have the lowest score on this measure (not shown). On European average, comparing the 2004 and 2010 outcomes, there seems to be little discernible impact of the crisis. For adults self-assessed employability even seems to have increased slightly.

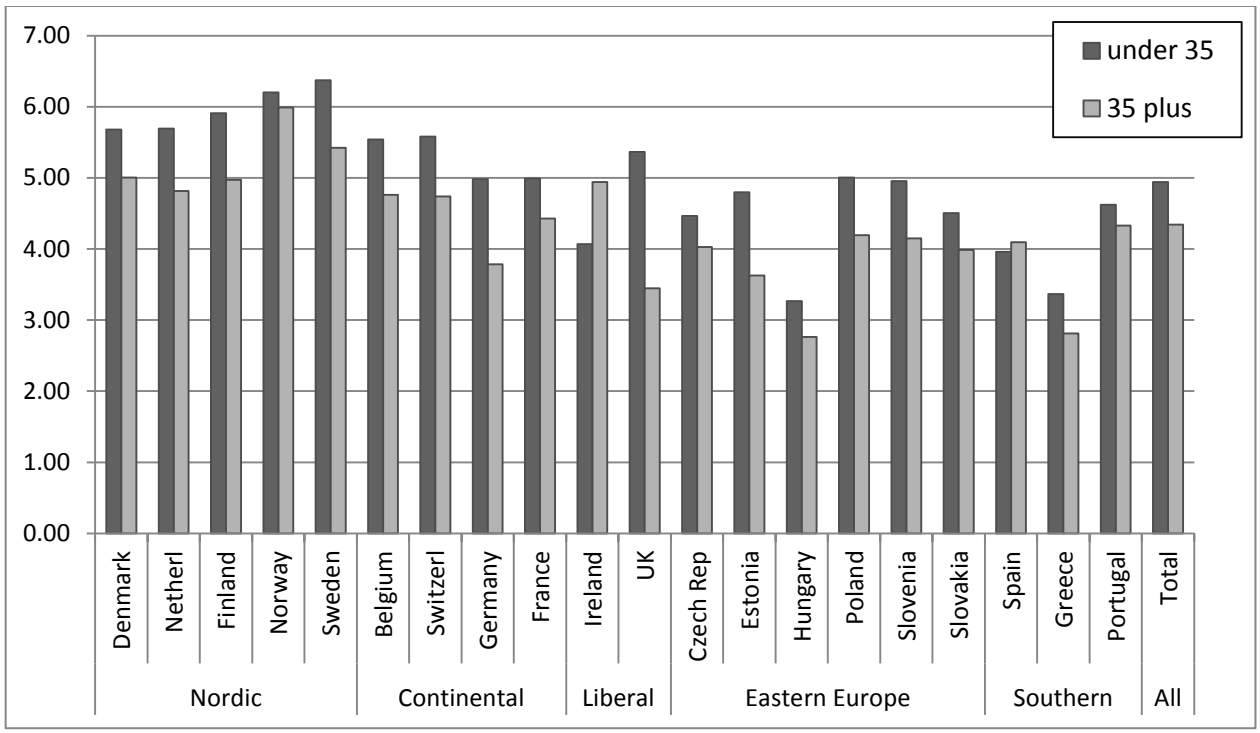
Figure 5: Employability: How easy to get similar or better job with another employer across 20 European countries (2010)*



*Note * Mean Scores 0 (extremely difficult) to 10 (extremely easy).*
Source: ESS data, own calculations.

We now inspect this measure by flexicurity regime for 2010 (Figure 6). With the exception of Ireland and Spain, youth are more positive about their employability than adults, the difference is largest in relative terms in the UK, Estonia and Germany. In comparative perspective, youth in Nordic regimes are most positive over their employability and least positive in the Eastern and Southern European regimes, and in particularly in Hungary and Greece. Considering only youth, Ireland and Spain but also the UK experienced the largest decline in employability perceptions between 2004 and 2010, Germany and Poland the most notable increase (not shown). This is in line with labour market impacts of the economic crisis.

Figure 6: How easy to get similar or better job with another employer by age group and across flexicurity regimes 2010*



Source: ESS data, own calculations.
**Mean Scores 0 (extremely difficult) to 10 (extremely easy).*

In a last descriptive step we want assess the differences in well-being and life-satisfaction between employed and unemployed across flexicurity regimes. We show the complete table but comment on youth in 2010 only. Employed and unemployed youth in 2010 report very little difference in well-being when using the WHO measure in the large majority of countries. We see as good as no difference in a varied set of countries: Norway, Belgium, Switzerland Hungary, Poland and Spain (Table 2). Large differences in favour of employed are only evident for Slovakia. Assessment of well-being is on average more similar for unemployed and employed youth than for unemployed and employed adults.

Table 2: Well-being ratio employed to unemployed by country, ESS2 and ESS5

	2004				2010			
	under 35		35-64		under 35		35-64	
	emp	unemp	emp	unemp	emp	unemp	emp	unemp
NORDIC								
Denmark	6,71	6,20	7,19	6,83	7,08	6,71	7,15	5,77
Netherlands	6,67	6,08	6,46	5,44	6,88	5,92	6,81	4,74
Finland	6,10	6,01	6,23	5,52	6,25	5,93	6,26	6,24
Norway	6,68	6,17	7,05	5,85	6,77	6,67	7,00	6,55
Sweden	6,69	6,78	6,84	5,67	6,51	6,07	6,89	6,23
CONTINENTAL								
Belgium	6,56	6,29	6,55	5,93	6,84	6,78	6,79	5,25
Switzerland	6,87	5,76	7,01	6,21	6,80	6,66	7,06	6,82
Germany	6,74	6,10	6,31	5,53	6,57	5,87	6,48	5,57
France	6,86	6,22	6,30	6,03	6,55	6,05	6,36	5,29
LIBERAL								
Ireland	7,42	6,03	7,09	6,84	7,68	6,80	7,07	6,32
United Kingdom	6,34	6,42	6,11	5,42	6,65	6,13	6,40	5,47
EASTERN EUROPEAN								
Czech Republic	6,65	6,37	6,19	5,21	6,77	5,77	5,90	4,51
Estonia	6,19	5,34	5,56	4,48	6,37	6,11	6,19	4,97
Hungary	6,55	6,31	6,16	5,33	6,93	6,83	6,31	5,49
Poland	6,57	6,45	6,12	5,00	6,85	7,07	6,34	5,26
Slovenia	6,66	6,80	6,33	6,09	6,95	6,46	6,54	5,64
Slovakia	6,30	5,67	5,81	4,35	7,41	5,81	6,40	5,17
SOUTHERN								
Spain	6,90	6,36	6,71	5,47	7,14	6,94	6,74	6,24
Greece	6,49	6,44	6,12	5,08	6,61	5,72	5,87	4,29
Portugal	6,90	6,60	5,88	5,01	7,85	7,46	7,06	6,22
Total	6,67	6,25	6,43	5,43	6,89	6,43	6,56	5,57

Source ESS data, 2004 and 2010 wave.
Note: Weighted by post stratification weights.

Replicating this figure on the ESS life-satisfaction measure shows more discernible differences between employed and unemployed for the vast majority of countries than the above well-being measure. Only in Slovenia and to a lesser degree in Portugal are there as good as no differences in life satisfaction assessment between employed and unemployed youth in 2010 whereas for all the other countries employed display higher life-satisfaction than unemployed (table 3). The differences between the two groups are largest in Sweden, Estonia, Hungary and Slovakia. As with the well-being measure, life satisfaction is on average somewhat higher for youth than adults and adults on average have larger gaps in life-satisfaction between employed and unemployed than youth. Table 3 suggests that there is no clear link between flexicurity regime and life-satisfaction with regard to this measure.

In fact, these findings indicate that we have to go beyond welfare state institutions in our models and additionally also check for household context and other factors that might generate resilience and thereby increase well-being.

Table 3: Life Satisfaction ratio employed to unemployed by country, ESS2 and ESS5

	2004				2010			
	under 35		35-64		under 35		35-64	
	emp	unemp	emp	unemp	emp	unemp	emp	unemp
NORDIC								
Denmark	8,44	6,72	8,59	7,93	8,39	7,02	8,40	7,04
Netherlands	7,84	5,28	7,59	6,67	7,98	7,31	7,81	5,89
Finland	8,17	6,76	8,05	6,79	8,02	7,04	8,02	6,94
Norway	7,89	6,71	7,84	5,67	7,93	7,41	7,94	6,88
Sweden	7,92	6,90	7,85	6,31	7,99	5,80	7,95	6,91
CONTINENTAL								
Belgium	7,59	6,43	7,43	6,53	7,70	6,73	7,58	6,16
Switzerland	8,01	5,84	8,00	6,52	7,94	7,19	8,10	7,14
Germany	6,98	5,06	6,89	4,79	7,39	5,98	7,28	4,91
France	7,02	5,66	6,36	3,88	6,81	5,63	6,11	4,78
LIBERAL								
Ireland	7,55	5,86	7,76	6,43	6,92	5,65	6,58	5,16
United Kingdom	7,16	6,37	7,12	5,86	7,05	6,24	7,16	5,42
EASTERN EUROPEAN								
Czech Republic	6,76	4,98	6,55	5,02	6,78	5,69	6,39	4,88
Estonia	6,38	5,12	5,77	3,95	7,03	5,56	6,49	4,92
Hungary	6,14	4,74	5,39	3,35	6,46	4,85	5,86	4,38
Poland	6,67	6,16	6,19	4,14	7,43	6,78	6,96	5,37
Slovenia	7,36	7,44	6,79	5,48	7,53	7,45	6,91	6,22
Slovakia	6,23	4,49	5,50	3,84	7,05	5,48	6,45	4,95
SOUTHERN								
Spain	7,24	6,09	7,16	5,79	7,56	6,65	7,42	6,73
Greece	6,69	5,80	6,56	5,04	6,04	5,53	5,67	4,33
Portugal	6,14	6,08	5,60	4,77	6,62	6,35	6,06	5,43
Total	7,21	5,86	7,05	5,25	7,29	6,08	7,07	5,47

Source ESS data, 2004 and 2010 wave.
Note: Weighted by post stratification weights.

4.2 Model results

4.2.1 Individual level predictors of life satisfaction

In the first model we examine the individual level effects of levels of life satisfaction (Table 4, model 1). We include both current unemployment status and experience of unemployment in the past 5 years as previous research suggests (see above) that past unemployment can have a lasting

'scarring' influence on well-being. The reference group consists of those currently employed who have not experienced any unemployment spell, of 3 months or more, in the preceding five years. We focus on the individual level effects for young people aged under 35, however the model results for those age 35-64 are provided in Table 4 (model 1 Ad) for comparison.

Among young Europeans life satisfaction is highest among those who are economically inactive (including students) and have no recent unemployment experience, followed by the employed with no past unemployment. Those with recent unemployment experience have lower satisfaction levels even if they are currently employed or non-active. The unemployed group has the lowest satisfaction scores.[4]

The models control for household financial difficulty which suggests that the unemployment effect, both past and present, has a significant non-financial dimension.[5] Financial hardship is one of the strongest predictors of life satisfaction, reducing life satisfaction by almost one point on a 10 point scale for young people.

Availability of social support has been found to be a key component of wellbeing and a moderator of stressful life events (including unemployment) on psychological distress as the social resilience literature (e.g. Hall and Lamont 2009) among others suggests. We find that for both age groups more frequent contact with friends/family/others plus the availability of a close confidante are significantly associated with enhanced life satisfaction. However given the cross-sectional nature of the data neither causality nor the direction of this relationship can be established. The unemployment effects are net of any detrimental effect that being jobless might have on social supports (see above).

There is no difference in the life satisfaction of men and women among young Europeans; however, being female has a positive effect on satisfaction for the older age group. The age coefficients suggest that the younger age groups have significantly higher levels of satisfaction compared to those aged 30 to 34 years. This is consistent with the U-shaped relationship between life satisfaction and age found in other studies.

Co-residence with two-parents is associated with higher levels of life satisfaction among young people, suggesting an advantage in terms of supports and resources. In fact, we cannot rule out that both material and immaterial family resources act as functional equivalents to institutions. Interestingly, young people living with a lone parent have significantly lower satisfaction compared to those living independently, which may be associated with the significantly greater levels of poverty among lone parents in many European countries. Having a child/children does not influence life satisfaction amongst the under 35s, living with a partner is associated with higher satisfaction but those who were previously married have significantly lower satisfaction scores.

[4] Separate models for 2004 and 2010 show that this pattern of effects is the same in both years.
[5] Note that if financial difficulty is not included in the model, the coefficient for unemployment is -1.06, the coefficient for employed with recent unemployment is -.44 and for inactive with recent unemployment is -.45.

Table 4: Multi-level Model of Life Satisfaction (scored 1-10) Individual and Institutional Level Effects

		Model 1	Model 2	Model 1 Ad	Model 2 Ad
		Under 35	Under 35	35-64	35-64
		Coef.	coef	Coef.	coef
ref employed + no unemp in Last 5 years	Employed + unemp in last 5 years	-0.370 ***	-0.361***	-0.380***	-0.375***
	Inactive +unemp in last 5 years	-0.292 ***	-0.278***	-0.470***	-0.463***
	Inactive + no unemp in last 5 yrs	0.154 ***	0.160***	-0.0519*	-0.0493*
	Unemployed	-0.777 ***	-0.768***	-0.721***	-0.710***
ref: Male	Female	0.042	0.0413	0.155***	0.154***
Self rated health good/v. good	Health (fair/bad)	-0.852 ***	-0.853***	-0.798***	-0.794***
Age Ref 30-34yrs	Age 1519	0.454 ***	0.462***		
	Age 2024	0.172 ***	0.172***		
	Age 2529	0.081 **	0.080**		
Age ref 35-44yrs	Age 45-54			0.030	0.0291
	Age 55-64			0.265***	0.258***
Social support	Frequent Socialise	0.171 ***	0.170***	0.135***	0.134***
	Someone for support	0.608 ***	0.609***	0.515***	0.516***
Household	Live with one parent	-0.108 **	-0.117**	-0.029	-0.0291
	Live with two parents	0.108 ***	0.101***	-0.015	-0.0166
	Child(ren) under 18	0.025	0.0225	0.081***	0.0787***
ref = single, Never married	Live with Partner	0.484 ***	0.486***	0.406***	0.412***
	Widowed	-1.050 ***	-1.032***	-0.076	-0.0642
	Separated/divorced	-0.199 **	-0.200**	-0.159***	-0.153***
Education	Less than lower secondary	-0.264 ***	-0.264***	-0.064	-0.0790**
	Lower secondary	-0.233 ***	-0.232***	-0.039	-0.0471
	Upper secondary	-0.166 ***	-0.159***	-0.097***	-0.0957***
	Post Secondary	-0.234 ***	-0.226***	-0.157***	-0.157***
(easily) Coping on present income	Difficult/very difficult to cope on hh income	-0.878 ***	-0.865***	-1.270***	-1.256***
year 2004	Year 2010	0.107 ***	0.175***	0.0859***	0.146***
Level 2	Change in unemp rate		-0.0255***		-0.0299***
	Protection of regular contracts		-0.257***		-0.409***
	ALMP spending per unemp		4.287***		7.026***
	Constant	5.991 ***	6.293***	6.051***	6.491***
	Null Model Rho	.0780		.1484	
	Observations	20,654	20,654	37,356	37,356
	Number of groups	20	20	20	20

*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

Note Shaded means not included in model

Rho for the Null Model shows that 8 per cent of variance in life satisfaction occurs at the country level. This proportion is higher (15%) for adults aged 35 to 64 years, suggesting that institutional effects may be weaker for the younger age group. The multi-level model is a significantly better fit than a linear regression. We first tested a random intercept model with a fixed unemployment effect, including all the individual level variables listed above. The model explains about half of the country level variance, and explains 84% of individual variance. Allowing the effect of unemployment to vary by country further improved the model fit, and could account for 95% of the country level variance. Therefore this is the model specification used, and which produces the coefficients presented in Table 4.

Table 5: Model fit statistics for MLM Under 35 Years

	Null Model	**+ Individual level controls**	**+ Individual level controls: Model 1, Table 2**	**+ country level (almp unemp & EPR) Model 2, Table2**
Model spec		random intercept with fixed unemp effect	random intercept plus country slope for unemp	random intercept plus country slope for unemp
var(unempall)			0.1554	0.154513
var(_cons)	0.3248	0.1543	0.1534	0.081182
var(Residual)	3.7493	3.1465	3.1346	3.12898
Total	4.0741	3.3008	3.4434	3.364675
LR test vs. linear regression:	1540.14***	734.64***	781.58***	
Rho	0.079	0.04675	0.080	
% of variance at country level explained		47.5%	95.1%	72.6%
% of variance at indiv level explained		83.9%	83.6%	83.5%
% of total variance explained		81.0%	84.5%	82.6%

*Note *** P<.0001*

4.2.2 Institutional level effects

We test a range of institutional country level variables that reflect the aspects of the flexibility/security nexus (described above). We first examine the influence of each variable separately (Table 6) before testing the effects simultaneous for a sub-set of variables.

Among young people, two of the indicators of **the job security dimension** are found to be significantly associated with life satisfaction: the level of employment protection for those on regular contacts and the proportion of employees who feel very insecure. Higher levels of protection for those on regular contracts (a reflection of lower flexibility) are associated with lower life satisfaction. This result is more consistent with insider/outsider theories in that younger people may feel that high levels of employment protection reduce their employment opportunities. However there is no evidence that this effect is weaker for those aged 35 to 64 years, or that it is stronger for those who are unemployed (interaction with level 1 unemployment is insignificant).

The proportion of those in employment who feel insecure is also associated with lower life satisfaction, among the working age population as a whole. There is no significant interaction with personal unemployment status.

The second set of measures relate to **employment security or employability**. This encompasses measures of the extent of unemployment in the national labour market and investment in active labour market policies. Greater security in terms of higher ALMP spending per unemployed person, and lower rates of unemployment are significantly associated with life satisfaction for young people under 35 years and those aged over 35. The proportion of the labour force in active labour market schemes has no influence on life satisfaction, this may arise as it is a more ambiguous indicator, incorporating as it does, both levels of intervention and extent of under-employment.[6]

The reduction in life satisfaction associated with recent increases in unemployment rates is found to be weaker among those who are currently unemployed (level 2 by level 1 interaction) but is only statistically significant for adults (35-64 years). This result suggests that a higher national level of unemployment reduces the influence of unemployment on well-being. It has been suggested that this may occur because there is a normalising of joblessness, and that the stigma attached to being unemployed is reduced because it is seen more as a societal problem than an individual failing (see discussion above).

Income security as measured by spending on unemployment benefits (adjusted by unemployment rate) does not have an influence on life satisfaction either for the working age group as a whole or for those who are currently unemployed. This may arise in the case of younger people because in many countries relatively few are covered by such income supports (Leschke 2013). Moreover the influence of the welfare system for the unemployed is already likely to work through the indicator of financial difficulty at the individual level. As noted above, the coefficient for unemployment is significantly reduced when financial difficulty is included. Moreover previous research on life satisfaction using the ESS found that the level of financial difficulties among the unemployed is strongly patterned by welfare regime and that the influence of regime groups declines when financial difficulty is controlled (Russell et al. 2013).

Finally we test two **contextual** variables union density and bargaining coverage. Bargaining coverage is found to be associated with lower levels of life satisfaction. This result is not confined to the unemployed (no significant interaction) or to those aged under 35 as might be suggested by insider/outsider accounts. It was not possible in the current models to test whether the effect was different for those who are union members but such analysis could be carried out for current employees.

[6] The alternative measures of unemployment had a similar influence on satisfaction with average rates of unemployment in the last five years or changes in youth/adult unemployment in the preceding years all reduced life satisfaction scores (results for average stock of unemployment not shown).

Table 6: Level 2 Effects - Institutional and Labour Market Characteristics Model of Life Satisfaction, (from separate models)

	Under 35 yrs		35-64 yrs	
Job Security	Coef.		Coef.	
Employment protection regular contracts	-0.186	**	-0.267	***
Employment protection temp contracts	-0.018		0.075	
Temp emp all 15 to 74yrs lagged 1 yr	0.008		-0.014	**
Temp emp youth 15 to 29yrs lagged 1 yr	0.005		-0.008	**
Propn of employed v insecure	-3.505	***	-4.330	***
Employment/Employability Security				
ALMP spending % GDP adjusted by unemp level	4.465	***	7.260	***
Participant stocks in ALMP (cat 2-7) as % of labour force	0.002		-0.027	
Change in total unemp rate lagged 1 yr	-0.028	**	-0.021	**
Change in youth unemp rate lagged 1 yr	-0.024	***	-0.018	***
Income Security				
Passive spending % GDP adjusted by unemp level	0.288		0.451	
Contextual				
Union density	0.000		-0.028	***
Bargaining or union coverage	-0.008	**	-0.022	***
	Under 35 yrs		**35-64 yrs**	
Level 2 * Level 1 (unemployed) interactions				
Employment protection regular contracts	0.140		0.090	
Total unemp rate * person unemployed	-0.016		-0.028	
Change in total un rate	0.035		0.047	*
Change in youth Un Rate	0.031		0.037	**
PLMP spending	-0.584		0.779	
ALMP spending	-0.945		1.753	

Note: The results are taken from multiple models in which each institutional variable is separately evaluated. The models with level 1 and level 2 interactions also include the main effect of the institutional variable tested.

In our final model (Table 6, Model 2 and Model 2 ad) we enter the institutional level variables simultaneously. Due to the small number of cases at the second level there is a risk of over-specifying the model. We adopt a stepwise approach which adds all eligible societal level indicators and removes those with weakest explanatory power at each step, combined with checks of combinations of variables which result in unstable estimates. This process results in a final model containing 3 institutional variables: change in unemployment rate (using the total unemployment rate for those aged 35-64 years and the change in the youth unemployment rate in the models for those aged under 35); ALMP spending adjusted by unemployment; and employment protection for those on regular contracts. These results suggest that the employability dimension of flexicurity plays a key role at the societal level, nevertheless the strong role of financial difficulty at the individual level means that the role of income security for life satisfaction should not be under-estimated.

5. Conclusions

The first part of the paper considers how “flexicurity systems”, or more accurately, combinations of policies that address job, employment and income security, influence both the level of insecurity and its distribution across younger and older workers. The results are found to differ with the measure of security used. Pooling ESS data for 20 countries and focussing on 2010, subjective job insecurity is found to be somewhat higher among youth and particularly the 20-29 age group but age differences are generally muted, perceived employability (employment security) is more strongly patterned by age, but it is older workers (35 to 64 years) who feel most insecure on this measure. In contrast, using an objective measure of job security based on contract type, it is younger workers and especially the youngest age group 15-19 who are most disadvantaged. These contrasting results underline the complexity of the phenomenon, and re-iterate the point made in earlier studies that ‘permanent’ employment is not always associated with security. This observation is particularly pertinent in cross-national comparisons where there is variation in employment protection for permanent workers. The subjective measures too have their weaknesses, and are likely to be influenced by expectations which are not independent of country- specific settings.

The comparative results on insecurity do not map neatly onto a flexicurity regime typology, although there is some clustering of results. This is most evident for subjective insecurity (figure 3), where the employed in Southern and Eastern European countries, report higher insecurity across both age groups than those in the Nordic and Continental countries, although France and Estonia are obvious outliers. There is less support for flexicurity regime patterns for employability (figure 6) where there appears to be as much variation within regime clusters as across regimes, perhaps with the exception of the Nordic regimes which show more within-regime coherence.

The second goal of this paper was to explore whether flexicurity arrangements moderate the effect of unemployment and insecurity on subjective well-being among young people. Here we use the world health organisation (WHO) measure on well-being and the ESS item on life-satisfaction. Again we find some clustering of results by flexicurity regime but results do not map neatly onto a flexicurity regime. For example, there were no differences in well-being of employed and unemployed for young people across a wide range of regimes including those from Nordic, Continental, Eastern and Southern regimes. Likewise there was no clear link between flexicurity regime and life-satisfaction. Indeed our results perhaps indicate that we have to go beyond welfare state institutions in our analyses and examine the household context and other factors that might generate resilience and impact upon well-being.

In a last part of the paper we considered the extent to which country differences are better accounted for by variation in financial security, or better job prospects. Here we found remarkably similar results for young people and adults across the models. What was perhaps surprising here was that there were similar effects for employment protection regardless of contract and that the results for both age groups for unemployment spending were non-significant.

We also explored the employability dimension – in line with the original Commission interpretation of flexicurity strategy job prospects (EC 2007) – and find that investment in active labour market policies and the extent of unemployment seem to play a key role at the societal level. Although there are no

significant effects for unemployment benefits at level 2, there was an important role of income security accounted for by being in financial difficulty at the individual level and a strong positive impact of living at home with two parents. Here we see signs of welfare at the household level which can act as functional equivalent of weak welfare state provision. Finally our analysis for the dualization hypothesis confirms that the job security and labour market flexibility dimension is relevant in so far as strict employment protection (EPL) for regular jobs is associated with lower life satisfaction. This result holds both for youth and adults.

The results of these analyses allow us to draw out a number of implications for both the methodologies for researching labour markets and for labour market policy makers.

Methodologically

- In spite of the criticisms of flexicurity as a concept the flexibility-security nexus remains useful for highlighting important dimensions of labour market and welfare institutions and for discussing complementarity of institutions.
- Our results raise a number of questions about the applicability of institutional variables for the analysis of cross-country differences in labour market outcomes. The available institutional data are found to be particularly poor, for example with regard to the income-dimension of the flexibility-security matrix in relation to benefit coverage rates. This deficiency is particularly problematic for assessing the impact of policy changes promoted under the flexibility-security banner in the 2000s and since then under the Europe 2020 strategy.
- Given the poor state of available measures, and the limitations of cross-sectional data, we propose the use of different specifications and alternative measures in order to try to take account of potential problems with the institutional variables where possible.
- Our reliance on standard measures of employment protection legislation (EPL), with the impact on adults being somewhat larger whereas we would have expected a stronger impact on youth as outsiders, underlines the need for improved measures to assess labour market regulation in a comparative context. This is particularly important when considering the impact of regulations on sub groups of the labour market such as young people.
- Including young people up to the age of 34 allows us to address societal variations and norms around the transition to adulthood. While this approach helps capture differences in the conceptualisation of age and, in particular “youth”, it also underlines the heterogeneity across contexts and risks merging “young” people at different “lifecourse” stages. To account for this we do control for different age ranges in the multivariate models though and also display differentiated descriptive results.

From a policy perspective

- Our results underline the complexity and layers of influences within different national contexts. Thus the widest consideration of the impact of policy changes on individuals, households and labour markets is required in order to assess the possible mechanisms by which adjustments to employment protection are translated into individual experiences on the labour market.

- The variety of results across and within policy “regimes” further demonstrate the complexity of policy changes and the limits to transferability of prescriptive measures towards national labour markets, for example employment protection legislation.
- Given the centrality of labour market policy to the well-being and life satisfaction of EU citizens it is important that institutional measures applicable to various populations groups – young and old, men and women, etc. – are enhanced to improve the analysis of policy measures promoted at the EU and national level.

Finally for both researchers and policy makers our results underline the importance of a broader perspective towards the impact of economic developments beyond standard labour market measures. We underline the importance of a wider interpretation of the intended (and indeed unintended) consequences of labour market policy so that the impact of economic and social policy on well-being and life satisfaction is taken into account in policy planning and implementation and in evaluation by researchers.

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7. Annex 1: The European Social Survey

The study draws on the Round 2 and Round 5 of the ESS, carried out in 2004 and 2010 respectively. The ESS is a high quality harmonised survey which is administered via face to face interviews. As we are interested in the influence of labour market status on well-being we exclude individuals aged 65 and over, due to the focus on young people we do not impose any lower age restriction. The unweighted sample numbers in the selected age range are outlined in Table A1. Response rates for each country are also presented in Table A1. The descriptive figures presented in the report are adjusted using post-stratification weights, these correct for non-response by age, gender, education level and region. Further information on the ESS methodology and data is available at http://www.europeansocialsurvey.org/methodology/

Table A1: Sample Numbers Unweighted: Respondents Aged 15 to 64 years

	2004		2010		
	N	Response Rate	N	Response rate	Total N
Belgium	1451	61.2	1378	53.4	2829
Switzerland	1693	48.6	1187	53.2	2880
Czech Republic	2306	55.3	1939	70.2	4245
Germany	2263	51.0	2386	25.8	4649
Denmark	1220	64.2	1229	54.9	2449
Estonia	1528	79.1	1348	56.2	2876
Spain	1319	54.9	1539	68.6	2858
Finland	1605	70.7	1440	59.4	3045
France	1399	43.6	1344	47.0	2743
United Kingdom	1446	50.6	1805	56.3	3251
Greece	1705	78.8	2097	65.6	3802
Hungary	1229	65.9	1253	60.2	2482
Ireland	1827	62.5	2054	59.6	3881
Netherlands	1473	64.3	1391	60.1	2864
Norway	1489	66.2	1257	58.5	2746
Poland	1479	73.7	1464	70.0	2943
Portugal	1461	71.2	1396	67.1	2857
Sweden	1563	65.4	1123	51.8	2686
Slovenia	1129	48.6	1107	64.4	2236
Slovakia	1261	62.7	1420	74.7	2681
	30846		30157		61003

8. Annex 2: Institutional Variables

Job Security

Country	Temp. Emp. Lagged 2003 - total 15-74	Temp. Emp. Lagged 2009 - total 15-74	Temp. Emp. Lagged 2003 - youth 15-29	Temp. Emp. Lagged 2009 - youth 15-29	EPL Regular contracts, version 1 - 2004	EPL Temporary contracts, version 1 - 2004	EPL Regular contracts, version 1 - 2010	EPL Temporary contracts, version 1 - 2010
BE	8,60	8,20	20,00	20,40	1,81	2,38	2,00	2,38
CZ	9,20	8,40	12,20	12,40	3,31	0,50	3,05	1,31
DK	9,50	8,70	21,30	19,90	2,13	1,38	2,13	1,38
EE	3,10	2,50	5,70	6,30	2,74	1,88	1,81	1,88
FI	17,90	14,60	40,90	32,00	2,17	1,56	2,17	1,56
FR	13,20	14,30	31,40	33,50	2,47	3,63	2,38	3,63
DE	12,20	14,50	37,00	41,30	2,87	1,00	2,87	1,00
GR	11,30	12,30	18,40	22,50	2,80	2,75	2,80	2,75
HU	7,60	8,50	12,00	14,80	2,00	1,13	2,00	1,13
IE	4,70	8,80	8,70	16,50	1,44	0,63	1,27	0,63
NL	14,50	18,20	29,30	38,10	2,88	0,94	2,82	0,94
NO	9,50	8,10	22,50	19,90	2,33	2,75	2,33	3,00
PL	18,90	26,40	38,00	46,00	2,23	1,75	2,23	1,75
PT	20,60	21,90	36,90	44,70	4,42	2,56	4,13	1,94
SK	4,90	4,40	7,60	7,30	2,22	0,63	2,22	1,63
SI	13,70	16,30	37,30	47,90	2,65	1,81	2,65	1,81
ES	31,90	25,20	52,50	44,30	2,36	3,25	2,36	3,00
SE	15,80	15,30	39,00	39,70	2,61	1,44	2,61	0,81
CH	12,10	13,30	32,70	37,00	1,60	1,13	1,60	1,13
UK	5,90	5,60	9,10	9,40	1,20	0,38	1,20	0,38
Source	LFS	LFS	LFS	LFS	OECD	OECD	OECD	OECD

Employment/Employability Security :

Country	ALMP cat.2-7 exp 2004 in % GDP/unemp 2004	ALMP cat.2-7 exp 2010 in % GDP/unemp 2010	Participant stocks in ALMP (cat 2-7) as % of labour force - 2004	Participant stocks in ALMP (cat 2-7) as % of labour force - 2010	Average unempl. Over 5 years (1999-2003) - total 15-74	Change unemp. 2002-2003 - total 15-74	Average unempl. Over 5 years (2005-2009) - total 15-74	Change unemp. 2008-2009 - total 15-74	Average unempl. Over 5 years (1999-2003) - youth 15-34	Change unemp. 2002-2003 - youth 15-34	Average unempl. Over 5 years (1999-2003) - youth 15-34	Change unemp. 2008-2009 - youth 15-34
BE	0,06	0,07	4,78	6,46	7,22	0,80	7,84	0,90	11,10	1,97	12,71	2,20
CZ	0,02	0,03	1,15	1,23	7,98	0,60	6,30	2,30	11,17	1,00	9,13	4,23
DK	0,26	0,22	5,06	6,52	4,70	1,10	4,38	2,60	6,12	2,67	6,15	3,67
EE	0,00	0,01	0,17	0,91	11,88	1,30	7,50	8,00	14,51	3,63	9,63	10,83
FI	0,08	0,10	3,81	4,09	10,80	0,10	7,52	1,80	15,71	0,00	10,85	3,23
FR	0,08	0,09	5,54	5,65	9,62	-0,10	8,44	1,70	14,03	-0,50	13,08	3,03
DE	0,08	0,08	3,94	4,19	8,58	1,30	9,10	0,30	8,23	1,77	10,60	0,63
GR	0,01	0,02	0,41	1,83	10,62	-0,60	8,96	1,80	18,45	-0,63	16,07	2,40
HU	0,04	0,05	2,10	4,89	6,12	0,20	7,98	2,20	8,47	0,73	12,37	4,00
IE	0,12	0,06	3,59	4,31	4,50	0,30	6,38	5,60	5,44	0,23	8,64	7,93
NL	0,20	0,18	4,67	4,45	2,92	1,00	3,60	0,60	3,59	1,37	4,16	1,17
NO	0,15	0,14	2,70	2,35	3,72	0,20	3,18	0,60	6,56	0,23	5,33	0,80
PL	0,02	0,06	2,88	4,09	17,30	-0,60	11,32	1,10	24,29	-0,77	15,83	1,83
PT	0,08	0,05	2,68	3,62	4,66	1,60	8,18	1,90	6,71	2,87	12,17	2,67
SK	0,00	0,02	4,29	3,83	18,04	-1,60	12,46	2,50	23,48	-2,43	16,25	4,53
SI	0,04	0,05	1,63	2,57	6,50	0,50	5,54	1,50	9,69	1,03	8,79	3,07
ES	0,06	0,04	9,79	12,82	12,44	0,10	11,02	6,60	16,99	0,37	15,57	9,47
SE	0,13	0,10	3,68	4,38	5,68	0,60	7,14	2,20	8,17	1,17	12,04	3,30
CH	0,14	0,11	1,62	1,47	3,06	1,20	3,94	0,70	4,29	1,83	5,49	1,90
UK	0,01	0,01	0,34	0,23	5,24	-0,20	5,74	2,00	7,22	-0,10	8,58	2,93
Source	OECD	OECD	OECD	OECD	LFS	LFS	LFS	LFS	LFS	LFS	LFS	LFS

Income Security :

Country	PLMP cat.8-9 exp 2004 in % GDP/unemp 2004	PLMP cat.8-9 exp 2010 in % GDP/unemp 2010	Adjusted bargaining (or Union) coverage 2004	Adjusted bargaining (or Union) coverage 2010	Union Density 2004	Union Density 2010
BE	0,32	0,27	96,0	96,0	53,1	50,6
CZ	0,03	0,05	35,9	47,1	21,0	17,3
DK	0,51	0,24	85,0	85,0	71,7	68,5
EE	0,02	0,05	28,0	25	11,9	8,1
FI	0,20	0,21	88,3	89,5	73,3	70,0
FR	0,19	0,16	92	92	7,8	7,9
DE	0,22	0,19	65,8	61,1	22,2	18,6
GR	0,04	0,06	65	65	24,5	25,4
HU	0,06	0,07	43,5	33,5	16,9	16,8
IE	0,20	0,21	41,9	42,2	34,8	36,6
NL	0,45	0,39	84,7	84,3	21,6	19,3
NO	0,15	0,14	73	74	55,0	54,8
PL	0,05	0,04	38	28,9	19,0	14,1
PT	0,19	0,13	90	90	21,4	19,3
SK	0,02	0,04	40,0	40,0	23,6	16,9
SI	0,06	0,09	100	92	43,7	26,3
ES	0,14	0,16	77,4	73,2	15,3	15,6
SE	0,21	0,09	94,0	91,0	76,9	68,9
CH	0,23	0,17	44,1	49,1	19,5	17,2
UK	0,04	0,04	34,7	30,8	28,3	27,1
Source	OECD	OECD	ICTWSS	ICTWSS	ICTWSS	ICTWSS

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WP7 SELF-EMPLOYMENT AND BUSINESS START UPS

Business Start-Ups and Youth Self-Employment: A Policy Literature Overview
Sheehan and McNamara (2015)
STYLE Working Papers, WP7.1

Country Reports
Business Start-Ups and Youth Self-Employment in Germany
Ortlieb and Weiss (2015)
STYLE Working Paper WP7.1 Germany

Business Start-Ups and Youth Self-Employment in Estonia
Masso and Paes (2015)
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Business Start-Ups and Youth Self-Employment in Spain
González Menéndez and Cueto (2015)
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Sheehan and Mc Namara (2015)
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Pocztowski, Buchelt and Pauli (2015)
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10. Research Partners

1. University of Brighton – BBS CROME – United Kingdom
2. Institute for Employment Studies – United Kingdom
3. Institute for the Study of Labor – Germany
4. Centre for European Policy Studies – Belgium
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22. Swedish Institute for Social Research – Sweden
23. Koç University Social Policy Centre – Turkey
24. University of Turin – Italy
25. EurActiv – Belgium

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11. Advisory Groups

Consortium Advisory Network

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www.businesseurope.eu

ETUI: European Trade Union Institute
www.etui.org

European Youth Forum
www.youthforum.org

European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions
www.eurofound.europa.eu

ILO: International Labour Office
www.ilo.org

OECD: Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development
www.oecd.org

OSE: Observatoire Sociale Européen
www.ose.be

SOLIDAR: European network of NGOs working to advance social justice in Europe
www.solidar.org

EurActiv
www.euractiv.com

European Commission, DG Employment, Social Affairs & Inclusion
http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?langId=en&catId=1036

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